



THE Y AXIS



Wag More. Bark Less.

Got a furry, four-legged friend? If not, maybe you should.



Owning a pet might be a lot of work. (Think poop patrol, meals, vet visits, hairballs...)

But being a pet owner may be good for your health.

A Purr-fect Way to Lower Blood Pressure

Research shows that petting Fido or Mittens can help lower blood pressure.

One study followed a group of stock brokers taking medication to control blood pressure.⁵ Adding a pet to their treatment plan actually helped lower blood pressure better than medication alone.

Got high blood pressure?

Making friends with a dog or cat can help. Bow-wow...Meow.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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Eat Like a Winner with a Healthy Super Bowl Game Plan

Call these plays for healthy game-day eating

It's no secret that the Super Bowl is best-known for two things. Food and football. Ask any armchair quarterback, and they'll tell you every team has a game plan.

And you should too, when it comes to snacking and eating during the Super Bowl.

Fun fact: An estimated 113 million people will tune in to watch the San Francisco 49ers play the Kansas City Chiefs on Feb. 11 at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas, Nev., in Super Bowl LVIII.¹

Planning to eat your way through a Super Bowl party? It's time to get your game face on.

- You need to be ready to stare down that buffet table loaded with piles of food, drinks, and desserts.
- Try and wing it, and you run the risk of a penalty when you step on the scale.

Take control of your diet with these proven plays:

Play #1: Know your daily personal calorie limit

Find out how many calories you should be eating per day at <http://tinyurl.com/okelq8g>. Track your calories with a mobile app or food journal. Use

your daily calorie goal to help you decide what to eat before, during and after the game.

Play #2: Eat light earlier in the day

When you know you're headed to a big meal later in the day, cut back on calories before you go. Eat light. Choose a green salad, soup, or fruits and vegetables. Then when the dinner bell rings and it's game-on, you won't be as hungry.

Play #3: Sample everything in small portions

Unless you plan to burn as many calories as a pro-football linebacker in a tough game, forget about piling a mountain of food on your plate. Instead, dish up a small sample of everything. Take time to chew your food. Enjoy the conversation + cheering for your favorite team. You'll eat fewer calories and avoid overeating.

Play #4: Hustle away from the table

After the game is over, it's time to wrap up eating, too. Plan to take a walk and exercise to burn off a few of those extra calories. You might even organize a friendly game of football.

MORE

5 tips for healthy Super-Bowl snacking
<http://tinyurl.com/2wf6vx59>

The Surprising Truth About Soap: Antibacterial vs. Plain

FDA says plain soap and water is better, safer

It's no secret cold and flu season typically spikes in February.

And it's something celebrity Howie Mandell and host of *America's Got Talent* thinks about a lot. He only greets people with a fist bump to avoid germs. And he washes his hands a lot.

You should, too. But should you splurge on the more expensive antibacterial soap? Maybe not.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration found that many antibacterial soaps and body washes contain at least 17 chemicals that could cause health problems.² Health experts also believe these products may be a reason for a rise in bacteria that resist antibiotics.



Wash your hands with plain soap & water

It's a simple solution that works to help remove germs. The right way to wash your hands:

1. Rinse your hands under running water.
2. Lather up with soap.



Strawberry Banana Parfait

Hungry for a sweet treat that's healthy and super easy to make? Give this Strawberry Banana Parfait recipe a try⁴

Ingredients

- 1/2 medium banana, mashed
- 1/8 tsp vanilla
- 1/3 C non-fat plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 C fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1/2 C bran or wheat flakes cereal

Directions

1. Stir banana and vanilla into yogurt. Combine well.
2. In a 10-12-ounce glass, layer the yogurt-banana mixture, strawberries and cereal.
3. Serve immediately and enjoy

Serves 1. 190 calories per serving.

Slip THIS Fruit Into Your Diet for Better Health

Discover the health benefits of bananas

In the early 1900s, vaudeville performer “Sliding” Billy Watson saw a man on the street slip on a banana peel. The man twisted and turned. He flailed his arms. He tried to stay on his feet. But he couldn’t. Watson was thoroughly amused.

Not long after that, he performed the banana-peel scene for his stage show. Long before the Internet, this comedy sketch went viral. And it still gets some laughs.

You don’t want to slip on a banana peel. But go ahead and slip this fruit into your diet.

Bananas are good for your health.³ One banana is a good source of fiber, potassium, magnesium, vitamin B6, vitamin C, and more.

Research shows bananas can help:

- Regulate blood pressure
- Support bone health
- Reduce the risk for a stroke
- Lower heart attack risk
- Improve digestion
- Support weight management, and more



Hungry for a fast and healthy snack?

Eat a banana. It’s a delicious addition to cereal, yogurt, smoothies or a fruit salad. Mash some up and make muffins, or just have one for a snack.

Fun fact: The average American eats about 27 pounds of bananas a year. More than half of those are gobbled up at the breakfast table.

Daily dose: Most adults should eat 1-1/2 to 2 cups of fruit per day. But only 12 percent actually eat enough fruit.

Not eating enough fruit? Try a banana. Just make sure the peel ends up in the garbage or compost bin.

MORE

Health benefits of bananas
<http://tinyurl.com/2p9pnruxyvzy5x5d>

The Surprising Truth About Soap: Antibacterial vs. Plain (continued from page 1)

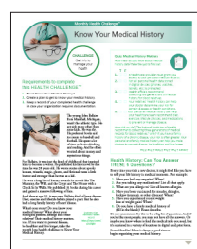
3. Rub your hands and fingers together for at least 20 seconds. That’s about how long it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice.
4. Rinse well.
5. Dry your hands with a clean cloth or paper towel.
6. If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door to leave the bathroom.

MORE

The science of hand washing
<http://tinyurl.com/y8kt57fh>

References

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2. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (2016). FDA issues final rule on safety and effectiveness of antibacterial soaps. From: <http://tinyurl.com/hqqs89p>
3. Pereira, A., et al. (2015). Banana...from peel to pulp: Ethnopharmacology, source of bioactive compounds and its relevance for human health. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, 160(3): 149-163. From: <https://tinyurl.com/uzazn9z>
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2020). Strawberry banana parfait. Choose My Plate. From: <https://tinyurl.com/Ybphsyew>
5. Allen, K., et al. (2018). Pet ownership, but not ACE Inhibitor Therapy, blunts home blood pressure responses to mental stress. *Hypertension*, 38:815-820. From: <http://tinyurl.com/3uxanzh>



Take the February Health Challenge!

Know Your Medical History: Get info to manage your health

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: What can I do to motivate myself to exercise?