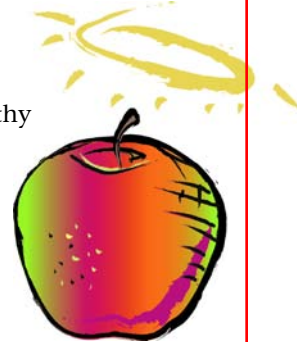


WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Orthorexia nervosa Coined by Dr. Stephen Bratman, a doctor based in Fort Collins, Colo., orthorexia nervosa means “fixation on righteous eating.” It’s a form of disordered eating in which people focus obsessively on eating only food regarded as healthy and feel intense despair when they fail to do so. Orthorexics can suffer social isolation and ill health. “While orthorexia is not a condition recognized in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, if you’re experiencing any kind of disordered eating, talk to a health professional to get back on track,” says Sandra Friedman, a Sechelt, B.C., counsellor who specializes in treating people with eating disorders.



Bothersome bladders

Researchers at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ont., may have developed an updated technique for treating interstitial cystitis, a painful chronic inflammation of the bladder that mainly affects women. Half of the patients in a small study had a mixture of lidocaine (an anaesthetic) and bicarbonate of soda (an alkaline that helps lidocaine penetrate bladder tissue) inserted into their bladders via catheters every day for five days. The rest received an inactive placebo. Treated patients were given the option of repeating the five-day lidocaine cycle. “About two-thirds of the patients who did the second drug trial had sustained relief — for days rather than hours — compared with the placebo group,” says the study’s author, Dr. J. Curtis Nickel, a professor of urology. “Alkalinized lidocaine is now part of our arsenal for short-term relief and might have long-term benefits in desensitizing painful bladders as well.”

THE AWFUL TOOTH

Test your dental smarts. Answer true or false.

- 1 Frequent marijuana smoking increases your risk of severe gum disease.
- 2 You should see a dentist immediately if you’re planning a pregnancy.
- 3 Heavy kids have more cavities than thinner kids.

1 True A recent study of 903 New Zealanders found that people who smoked pot about once a week tripled their risk of severe periodontal disease. Researchers speculate that cannabis smoking, like regular tobacco use, interferes with the body’s inflammatory response and immune function and inhibits blood flow in the gums.

2 True New research in the *Journal of Dental Research* showed that women with inflammatory gum disease were more likely to develop gestational diabetes, possibly because of a link between inflammation and impaired blood sugar control. Similarly, a study from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill found a link between gum disease and pre-eclampsia, a serious condition in pregnant mothers that includes elevated blood pressure.

3 False Researchers at the University of Rochester in New York looked at dental data on nearly 18,000 kids. They found no differences in cavity rates in children ages two to five regardless of weight and a decreased risk of cavities in overweight kids ages six to 18.

ANSWERS



SLEEP FOR SAFETY

We've all experienced a moment of klutziness brought on by lack of sleep. But a new study published in *Public Health Nursing* shows that toddlers who miss out on zzz's are much more likely to suffer injuries serious enough to require medical attention — most often from falls or bumping into objects. "The average number of injuries was two times higher in children whose mothers reported that their son or daughter was not getting enough sleep, compared with those who were," says study co-author Dr. Christina Koulouglioti, an instructor in the School of Nursing at the University of Rochester in New York. To help your little one get enough sleep, develop predictable daily routines for meals and bedtime, she adds. According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, 10 to 13 hours of sleep over 24 hours is appropriate for kids ages one to three.



ILLUSTRATION: CONNIE MORRIS; FROM TOP: MICHAEL KRINKE/ISTOCKPHOTO; ANDREW MANLEY/ISTOCKPHOTO

MOVE OF THE MONTH Make walking less pedestrian!

It's easy, it's free and almost anyone can do it: no wonder walking is a favourite fitness activity for Canadians. But it can be monotonous. Here's how to power up your walking workout, says Bev Hillman, a certified personal trainer in Delta, B.C.

Get SMART Set walking goals according to the acronym SMART: Specific (how long, how often); Measurable (check off your completed walk in your Day-timer or walk with a buddy); Attainable (be realistic); Relevant (walk appropriately for your age, health and fitness level); and Time (set specific dates and times for walking).

Add intensity Alternate a moderate walking pace with a brisker pace. Don't worry about timing yourself — try going faster from one telephone pole to the next or faster for one block and slightly slower for another. Are you walking fast enough? "Your breathing should be deep but not laboured, and you should be able to talk but not sing," says Hillman.

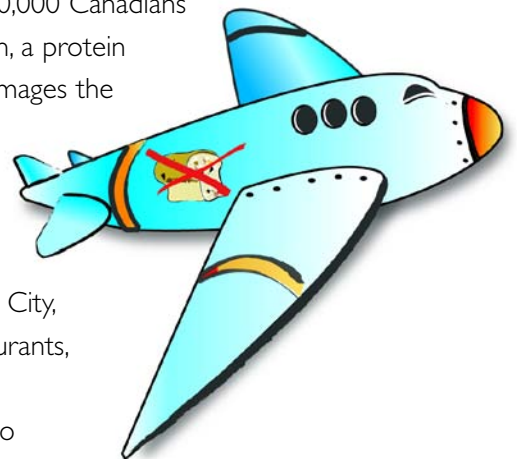
Change the scenery So you and your muscles don't get bored, take a different route that has more hills or hike a more challenging nature trail on the weekend. "Change is the most important thing in fitness," notes Hillman.



short takes

Gluten-free globe-trotting

If you're one of the more than 250,000 Canadians with celiac disease (in which gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley, damages the small intestine), dining out can be a challenge. Check out www.glutenfreeguidebook.com, a blog by Hilary Davidson, a Canadian now based in New York City, for reviews of celiac-friendly restaurants, breweries and snack stands from Las Vegas and Barcelona to Toronto and King's Landing, N.B.



You ask, we answer



“VITAMIN R” REVISITED

My eight-year-old son has been prescribed Ritalin for ADHD. Will this stunt his growth?

Studies from the early 1970s to recent years have found no evidence that short-acting stimulants such as Ritalin and dexedrine or long-acting ones such as Concerta and Adderall RX reduce a child's ultimate adult height. “Some researchers have noted an initial slowing of growth in children, particularly in the first year of treatment, but that effect decreases in the second year and disappears by the third,” says Dr. Stacey Bélanger, a pediatrician and director of the ADHD clinic at CHU Sainte-Justine University Hospital in Montreal. Others have reported a small reduction in growth at puberty but, again, that stabilizes and has no impact on eventual adult height. “The medical consequences for most children are mild,” she says. One of the effects is reduced appetite, which, naturally, worries parents, and the height and weight of children on ADHD drugs must be carefully monitored. If a child loses appetite and weight, options include lowering the dose of the medication or switching to a different one, encouraging the child to snack later in the day when appetite-suppressing drug levels are lower, and giving high-calorie supplements. Though controversial, another strategy parents can discuss with doctors is drug holidays: kids stop medication on weekends and during vacations when they're not in school. — Diana Swift

Hello motherhood, goodbye cigarettes

A University of Montreal study of 1,288 pregnant smokers found that those who used smoking cessation aids such as nicotine patches or antidepressant-like-drugs decreased the risk of delivering underweight or premature babies.

If you're planning to have a baby, talk to your doctor about ways to quit.



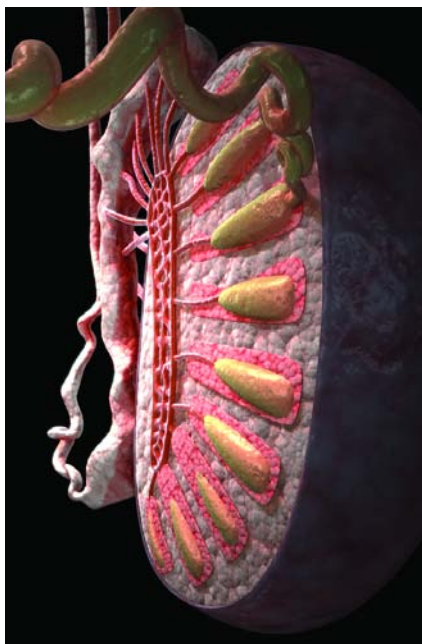
The Green House

Many conventional cleaning products are hard on people as well as the planet. Some contain harsh ingredients that can damage indoor air quality or increase the risk of developing adult asthma, according to studies from the University of California, Berkeley, and the American Thoracic Society. Check out the Environmental Health Association of Nova Scotia's product guide. Go to <http://lesstoxicguide.ca>. You'll find gentler cleaning alternatives as well as easy instructions on how to make your own inexpensive cleaners.

CARPET STAIN REMOVAL

Combine $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (75 mL) each vinegar, borax and salt to form a paste. Rub into carpet, let sit for several hours, then vacuum.





YOUR MEDICAL IQ

Testicular cancer is most common in men ages...

A 60 to 65; B 50 to 59; C 66 to 85;
D 15 to 49

Answer D In fact, testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men ages 20 to 44.

It's important to do a regular testicular self-examination (TSE) so you can track changes such as pain, a lump or any alteration in the size, shape, tenderness or sensation of your testicles and scrotum. Just after you've had a bath or shower, stand in front of a mirror. Look at the skin of the scrotum to see if there is any swelling. Feel the size and weight of each testicle by holding your scrotum in your hands. (It's common for one to be slightly larger or lower than the other.) Roll each testicle between your thumb and index finger. It should feel smooth, with a soft, tender tube toward the back. Talk to your doctor if you note testicular changes or a dull, heavy ache in your lower abdomen, a persistent backache, breast development or unexplained weight loss.

ILLUSTRATION: MASTERFILE

Items of interest

MD IN A BOX



Ever wish you could carry a doctor around with you in your back pocket? **Intelligent First Aid** has developed the next best thing: a medical emergency kit that, along with a thorough selection of first aid supplies for common injuries, has an audio device that gives step-by-step instructions for the administration of care. Injury types are broken down into such categories as Bleeding, Shock, Breathing and CPR. Each comes in a colour-coded package of supplies and instructions, available either on an illustrated written card or in an audio device. About \$130. www.intelligentfirstaid.com

SOOTHING SOUNDS



The acclaimed Canadian naturalist Dan Gibson has been making music out of the sounds of warbling mockingbirds, lapping waves and sighing winds for almost 30 years. If you're having trouble sleeping, sip a glass of warm milk,

pull on some socks to keep your feet warm and put on an album from his exceptional **Solitudes** line: it's sure to ease you happily into dreamland. From \$15.95. www.solitudes.com



LIMBER UP YOUR EYES

Looking for better vision? Put down the carrots and pick up the **Eyeport**, an FDA-approved electronic eye-training system. Eyeport is used to improve vision and reading comprehension and efficiency in about 10 minutes of exercise a day. No, really. A study conducted by the Pacific University College of Optometry in Oregon concluded that there was scientific ballast behind the boast, noting that "enhancements in reading performance were still present three weeks after cessation of training." Here's how it works: your eyes follow a programmed pattern of red and blue lights for a thorough workout. This may alleviate the eye strain that comes from prolonged reading and computer use in which you focus at close range, causing your focusing system to become stiff. About \$240. www.exerciseyoureyes.com 🏥