

Health and wellness tips for your
work and life—
presented by HealthCheck360



Only 3 Percent of Americans Live a Healthy Lifestyle

A study by researchers at Oregon State University found that the overwhelming majority of Americans do not live a healthy lifestyle. The study measured how people followed four healthy characteristics: moderate exercise, a good diet, not smoking and having a recommended body fat percentage.

The target for exercise was 150 minutes of moderate activity each week. Blood samples confirmed whether a person was a smoker, and body fat was measured using X-ray technology. A good diet consisted of consuming foods suggested by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The study found that 78 percent of adults did not smoke, 38 percent ate a good diet, 10 percent had a healthy body fat percentage, and 46 percent exercised regularly. However, less than 3 percent of adults achieved **all four** measures.

These measures are important because they reflect a lower risk for heart disease, cancer and Type 2 diabetes. This study indicates that Americans still have a way to go in adopting a healthy lifestyle.

The Health Benefits of Sunlight Exposure

Most people are familiar with the risks of unprotected sun exposure, such as sunburn, wrinkles, freckles, eye damage and skin cancer.

However, although overexposure to the sun is bad for your health, getting enough exposure to sunlight is necessary and beneficial. Adequate time in the sun gives you several benefits:

- A boost in serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates your appetite, sleep, memory and mood
- Support of your circadian rhythm, which leads to better sleep—sunlight “turns off” melatonin production each morning, which is the hormone that makes you feel drowsy as it gets darker at night
- Production of Vitamin D, which is needed for important body functions such as strengthening your bones and contributing to your immune system
- Relief of stress and pain, and help for individuals suffering from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), a type of depression

Lowered risk for nearsightedness—research indicates that children who spend more time exposed to sunshine outside may reduce their risk of becoming nearsighted the key to reaping the health benefits of sunlight while avoiding the risks is balance and moderation. The U.S. National Institutes of Health recommend about 10 to 15 minutes in the sun without sunscreen. The time of day and your skin pigmentation will affect how much unprotected time in the sun is healthiest for you.

It's especially important to wear sunscreen or limit direct sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are the strongest. In addition, while you are out enjoying the sunshine, don't forget UV-blocking sunglasses to protect your eyes.

Fried Rice

2 Tbsp. olive oil
3 cups brown rice (cooked)
1 carrot (cut into ¼-inch slices)
½ cup bell pepper (chopped)
½ cup onion (chopped)
½ cup broccoli (chopped)
2 Tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
½ tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. garlic powder
2 medium eggs (beaten)
¾ cup chicken (cooked, chopped)

PREPARATIONS

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
2. Add rice and stir for 5 minutes.
3. Stir in carrot, bell pepper, onion, broccoli, soy sauce, black pepper and garlic powder. Cook until vegetables are tender.
4. Remove mixture from pan.
5. Pour eggs into pan and scramble.
6. Put vegetable mix and rice back in the pan and mix with scrambled eggs.
7. Add chicken and cook until hot. Serve warm.

Makes: 6 servings

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Total Calories	203
Total Fat	7
Protein	9 g
Carbohydrates	26 g
Dietary Fiber	3 g
Saturated Fat	1 g
Sodium	269 mg
Total Sugars	2 g

Source: USDA

Stroke Awareness: What you need to know

Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Strokes occur when blood flow to the brain is blocked by a clot. The brain cells in the immediate area then begin to die because they are not receiving the oxygen and nutrients they need to stay alive.

Approximately 128,000 people die from strokes each year, and strokes are one of the leading causes of long-term disability in the United States. Common risk factors include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, diabetes and obesity. While strokes most often happen to the elderly, 25 percent of all strokes occur in those under the age of 60.

Each year, health organizations across the United States work to raise awareness of strokes and their symptoms. Common stroke symptoms include facial drooping, weakness on one side of the body and speech difficulty.

In addition to being able to recognize stroke symptoms, it is important to know what you can do reduce your chances of having a stroke. The infographic below outlines some of the steps you can take to start improving your health today.

Ways to Prevent a Stroke

