



fitness
Barry Franklin

You can survive bad set of genes

A recent study analyzed the cause of death in almost 1,000 people who had been adopted at an early age. Purpose was to determine whether the cause of death of these adoptees would compare more closely with the deaths of their biologic parents or their foster parents.

Surprisingly, infectious diseases proved to be mostly genetic, inherited from the biologic parents.

On the other hand, cancer, which is often considered genetic, proved to be mostly lifestyle. Heart disease, however, wound up being influenced by genes and lifestyle alike.

Conclusion: Although you can mess up a "good" set of genes with a shoddy lifestyle, you may also be able to salvage a "bad" set with a healthy lifestyle.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...
• Skinless turkey contains about 30 percent less fat than skinless chicken.

• According to the largest international study ever undertaken, called the Intersalt Study, a low sodium intake was related to a low incidence of hypertension (high blood pressure).

• Salt sensitivity seems to increase with age. Why? Two recent studies suggest that as people grow older, they experience a decline in their ability to get rid of sodium. As a result, blood pressure may increase dramatically. Thus, the older you are, the greater the chance that a low-salt diet will be beneficial to you.

• Although most diet plans recommend that the dieting individual

eat the bulk of his/her food early in the day rather than at night, there is no evidence that calories eaten late at night turn to fat. Weight loss appears to be determined by the total number of calories ingested and calories expended, not when the calories are consumed.

• According to researchers at the University of Alabama, major league baseball players live about 6 percent longer than the general population. In contrast, the average age of death for NFL players appears to be considerably below that of the general population.

• Sales of home exercise equipment will exceed \$1.1 billion this year. Biggest sellers include "high-tech" stationary bicycles, rowing machines and treadmills.

Barry A. Franklin, PhD, is director of cardiac rehabilitation and exercise laboratories, William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, and associate professor of physiology, Wayne State University School of Medicine.

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How to select safe sunglasses

Dear Jo:

What type of sunglasses do you recommend for older persons? Also, are the expensive ones that much better than the cheap ones?

Miss M.F.,
Western Reader

Dear Miss F.:

If you have a problem with your eyes, you should consult the specialist who already prescribes your lenses to also prescribe your sunglasses.

If your eye changes are the usual ones that go along with the aging process, according to a study reported in the American Journal of Public Health (Vol. 78, No. 1), you can wear almost any type of sunglasses.

Researchers in Baltimore tested 32 pairs of "discount" sunglasses for their ability to block out cataract-promoting ultraviolet (UV) rays. In the laboratory, most glasses were found to screen out 98 percent of the UV rays present in natural sunlight. There was no difference in effectiveness between glass and plastic lenses.

WHEN RESEARCHERS used a

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A. Jolayne Farrell

special light detector to test the same glasses on mannequins in order to simulate human wearing conditions, they found the amount of UV light entering the eyes was considerably higher — as sunlight seeped over the top and around the sides of the glasses.

Results were also affected by how the glasses were worn. The amount of UV light that reached the eyes was greatly increased when the glasses were allowed to slip down the nose.

Researchers concluded that the best way to protect the eyes from damage by the sun's rays was to

wear large frames that are contoured to prevent light from entering the eye around the frames. They also recommended that the glasses be worn as close to the forehead as possible.

So, it looks as though it's not the price or quality of the lenses or frames of the sunglasses that's important, but their size and shape and how they are worn.

Dear Jo:

How old is old, anyway?

Mr. H.P.,
Windsor

Dear Mr. P.:

The term "old" is relative. It is an attitude — a state of mind. I have known many old teenagers and many young pensioners. My favorite definition of old is — it's 10 years

older than you are right now.

Dear Jo:

What is "white coat" hypertension?

Mrs. J.T.,
Ann Arbor

Dear Mrs. T.:

White coat hypertension is an elevation in blood pressure that only occurs when a person is being examined in the doctor's office.

Before a diagnosis of high blood pressure can be confirmed, several readings must be taken in the home setting or through the use of a special 24-hour blood pressure monitoring device.

Readers can write to Jolayne Farrell at 11 Cynthia Crescent, Richmond Hill, Ontario L4E 2P8.

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