

TALK TO THE MIRROR



FLORINE MARK

Being active always brings solid benefits

We're a society that thrives on convenience, racing to beat the clock and searching for ways to make our lives simpler. We depend on remote-control devices to do all sorts of things, like change the TV channels, open the garage door, even start the car. We place a cordless phone nearby to avoid getting up when it rings. We're even starting to use the computer to bank, shop and keep up with the news, so we don't have to leave our homes.

We're so fortunate to have the technology that makes our lives easier, but what we've gained in convenience, we've lost to inactivity. Regular physical activity can benefit your health and weight-control efforts in so many ways.

Being Active Helps You:

- burn extra calories
- decrease body fat while conserving muscle
- increase your energy and endurance
- relieve stress
- reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers

AND it makes you feel great! To reap the full benefits of exercise, you need the right mix of aerobic activities, firming and toning activities and stretching.

Aerobic Activities: Aerobic activities use large muscles, such as the legs, in a rhythmic, repetitive way and is your best bet for burning calories and losing weight. Done regularly, they can help improve your fitness and health. You can walk, bike, swim, even dance your way to healthy weight loss.

It's normal to feel:

- an elevated heartbeat (pulse) that gradually returns to normal afterward
- a mild stretching or pulling sensation in the thighs, muscles and joints
- an increased but comfortable rate of breathing that gradually returns to normal after exercising
- mild perspiration

It's not normal to feel:

- an irregular heartbeat (pulse), particularly if your heartbeat was regular when you began exercising
- pain or pressure in your chest, neck, jaw or arms
- unusual or extreme shortness of breath
- nausea, dizziness, cold sweating or fainting
- chronic joint or muscle pain.

If you should experience any of the above symptoms, please consult your physician.

Toning Exercises: Toning exercises strengthen and tone your muscles. They also help you lose fat rather than important muscle tissue as you lose weight. There are lots of benefits from having stronger, more toned muscles.

- Routine activities, like carrying groceries and recreational activities, like tennis or skiing, are easier to do.
- You may fit into smaller size clothing.
- Your posture improves and your muscles look more shapely and toned.
- Your bones become stronger and more dense which can help prevent osteoporosis.

Stretching: Stretches increase the range of motion, or flexibility, of your joints and muscles. This helps prevent excessive soreness and injury when you exercise; it also helps relieve tight muscles. Done regularly, you'll find that you're able to bend, flex and bend farther than you did before.

Stretch It Safe: To avoid injury and get the most benefit when doing stretches:

- relax, breathe normally and feel the stretch.
- stretch gently without force.
- hold each stretch for up to 30 seconds and repeat 3-5 times.

It's best to do stretches immediately after an aerobic activity not before because the muscles are like rubber bands. Did you ever put a rubber band in the freezer? If you pull it, it will snap. But if the rubber band is warm, it will stretch easily.

When you warm up, more blood flows to your muscles, allowing them to stretch farther. However, stretching when your muscles are cold increases your risk of injury.

If you like to exercise or stretch early in the morning - before your day gets really busy - move around for about five minutes before beginning.

I love hearing from you! Please submit any questions, inspirational stories or suggestions for upcoming articles to: "Talk to the Mirror," Weight Watchers Corporate Communications, P.O. Box 9072, Farmington Hills, MI 48334-2974 or fax: (810) 653-7106.

Guidelines help kids eat healthier



■ Getting kids to eat healthy is a lot easier than you may think, according to Gale Cox of Botsford General Hospital.

Kids aren't big on reading nutrition labels. Left to their own devices, the average child's diet would resemble a high-fat, high-sugar, high-cholesterol, fast-food smorgasbord void of any real nutritional value. Their idea of a good meal is a sixth-grader's dream and a nutritionist's nightmare.

Your kids may be fending for themselves more than you like to think. Because many homes are headed by parents who work full-time, kids usually select most of what they consume. As a result, one in every five American children is severely overweight. How do parents find the time and energy to establish healthy eating guidelines for their children?

"Establishing good nutrition for a lifetime begins early and at home," says Health Development Network

registered dietitian Gale Cox of Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills. "Making sure your kids eat well is not rocket science, but it does mean taking a common-sense approach to setting guidelines for them and following tried-and-true strategies for preparing meals that your whole family will enjoy."

Cox reminds parents that they are their children's role models when it comes to eating, just as in everything else. Parents can help their children learn healthy eating by setting a good example by:

- eating breakfast everyday and having your kids do the same.
- teaching them that there are no "banned foods" - just some you eat in moderation.
- having your house a "good foods zone" by having a bowl of fresh fruit on the kitchen counter, washed and cut celery and carrot sticks in the fridge and whole-wheat (not white) bread on hand for sandwiches and toast.
- not having high-fat, high calorie

foods (chips, candy, soda, etc.) around the house; and eating healthy snacks (fresh and dried fruit, air-popped popcorn, vegetable sticks, low-fat yogurt).

"It's true that for the most part your kids will eat what you eat," Cox said. "But also remember that when they're younger, children do not have fully formed taste buds and may shun certain foods that they will love eventually."

Most kids like fruit and a wide variety of vegetables - including green beans, corn, carrots, cucumbers and red and green peppers, Cox notes. But don't push particular foods if you know they don't have the acquired taste for them yet. For example, a lot of kids just don't like cauliflower and peas, probably because they don't think they have much flavor. By serving children healthy food they prefer, Cox says, you'll be training your children to eat an early age to eat food not just as nourishment but as a source of enjoyment.

Finally, although every family seems to be eating on the run these days, try to eat at least one meal together every

day. Eating with your children fosters a healthy attitude toward food as well as creates good occasions to catch up with one another. Learning to enjoy family time, the art of conversation and even table etiquette are priceless gifts you can give your children.

Health and Development Network is a department of Botsford General Hospital offering health and wellness education programs to neighboring communities and industry.

For parents who would like to know more about the nutritional care and feeding of their kids, there's a special session in the HDN Healthy Cooking series in September. **Cooking For Your Kids**, presented by Gale Cox and Chef (father of two) Larry Jance, covers not only some great tips about enticing your kids to eat healthy, but an array of "kid-friendly" recipes that will be available for taste-testing by skeptical adults.

The session takes place at 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 25, at HDN, 39750 Grand River Ave. in Novi.

Call (248) 477-6100. The fee is \$6 and pre-registration is required.

Teens need realistic look at approaching world of work

When it comes to the world of work, teens usually hear what their elders heard - "Education is important - so study hard." Actually it is not quite that simple.

For example, a young person, who would have predicted the changes seen in recent years? New developments in technology - electronic devices unknown a decade ago - have had dramatic effects on the way we live.

Massive corporate layoffs, drastic downsizings, and complete reorganizations have become commonplace.

A realistic look

It is essential that teens get a realistic look at the world that is unfolding. They can then move forward, full of optimism and anticipation - prepared and excited to join the world of work. Here are significant factors to consider:

- The nature of global competition - the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary for success.
- The career or job search.
- The teen's role in self-development.
- The family's role in preparing the teen for the future.

Jobs: Past and Future

Many of the jobs our parents performed are now obsolete or they will be obsolete within the next decade. Jobs that are automated, but the number of jobs being done by employees with scanners, will one day be done by the customer, much as we now have self-service gas pumps with credit-card machines attached.

As jobs become more and more automated, both the number of jobs needed and the skill level of those employees are reduced. With the reduction in skills required comes a reduction in the salaries paid.

At the other extreme are jobs in computer technologies - from software programming and systems design and construction, to sophisticated medical equipment specialties. The complexity in many computer fields is so great and the skill level so high, that those who do can do the job are both in great demand and highly paid.

Planning: A critical first step

Many working adults came by their jobs by the luck of the draw, with little or no planning. In many cases, the jobs offer little or no pleasure, use none of the person's natural skills and, too often, are a drain on the emotional well-being of the individual and the family. Formulate a plan. The problem of choosing a career (for anyone)

often seems too big to handle, but planning and breaking the problem down into tasks may help. Ask your teen the questions listed below and then listen - really listen to the answers.

- Identify strengths and natural talents. Where do they excel? Physical ability, science, math, English, music or theater, computers, communication skills, people skills (listening and/or teaching) and mechanical ability are some areas to explore.
- Identify career learnings. What would they do even if they weren't being paid? What particular tasks do they dislike? What tasks do they enjoy? What activities do they absolutely love?

Once you find where your teens interests and abilities lie, help and encourage him or her to do the research available. For a detailed listing of jobs, including duties, skills required and salary ranges, see the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. This reference offers descriptions of jobs most people have never heard of, and may help your teen decide on a career or a field of endeavor. Talking to adults makes sense. After a job or field has been selected, encourage your teen to talk to people who are already in that job or field. Many people are flattered and happy to discuss their careers with others. Don't be reluctant to ask. Many will be pleased to have your teen spend time in their office or factory.

Good news for college graduates

A 1996 Michigan State University study of job prospects for the nation's graduating college seniors showed that a healthy economy will mean a stronger job market and increased job security for college graduates. The more than 600 employers surveyed anticipate a 6.2 percent increase job prospects, which will sustain an expanding job market for four more years, according to the 26th annual *Recruiting Trends* study. The study showed shortages of computer science majors, programmers, systems analysts, actuaries, transportation and logistics management majors and electrical engineers.

Patrick Sheetz, director of Michigan State University's Collegiate Employment Research Institute, reports that things look better than they have in a decade (December 1996).

"I'd tell high school and college students to go in there with the math and science classes," Sheetz said. The box below lists the academic majors predicted to offer the best and worst estimated starting salaries for 1996-1997 college graduates.

Top five starting salaries	
Academic Major	Estimated starting salary
Chemical Engineering	\$43,768
Mechanical Engineering	\$43,763
Electrical Engineering	\$43,751
Industrial Engineering	\$43,733
Computer Engineering	\$43,694
Bottom five starting salaries	
Liberal Arts & Letters	\$24,081
Natural Resources	\$22,950
Human Ecology	\$22,918
Telecommunications	\$22,447
Journalism	\$22,100

Where to get help

- Your high school's counseling department or career planning assistance programs. Ask about tests that help determine students' interests and areas of competence.
- College or university career centers (most have library references available).
- Your state's unemployment office.
- U.S. Armed Services recruiting offices: Some of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), without obligation to enlist. This test shows areas of aptitude and high interest areas.
- Local or school library. Web sites and books are listed in the resource section of *Healthy Teens: Success in High School and Beyond*.

Real work experience helps

Your high school may offer a work-for-credit program (co-op), internships, or vocational training programs in your teen's area of interest. Some cities receive funds from the Joint Training Partnership Act for summer employment (ages 14 to 21). Many community education programs and college continuing education (non-credit and credit) courses help individual's learn, develop, and refine the skills needed in the world of work. Real work experience - especially in an area of interest - will provide invaluable training for your teen. Even a fast food restaurant job teaches teens responsibility and provides experience in taking direction and working cooperatively. Try to help your teen find more meaningful work after his first job experience.

Avoid sleepless nights

Few discussions about the future are of greater concern - or cause more sleepless nights than a teen's choice about what to do after graduation from high school. The decision can set the tone for a teen's entire adult life.

As parents or guardians, you can advise, suggest, encourage or even veto, but when the decision is finally made, it must be your teen's choice. Your responsibility and obligation is to do all you can to help your teen make an informed decision, considering all the relevant factors surrounding that choice. (Birmingham resident and *Eclectic* columnist, Alice R. McCarthy, Ph.D., is a nationally known parent educator, writer and editor. She is the mother of five children and grandmother to eight young children. McCarthy's book, *Healthy Teens: Success in High School and Beyond* (twice edited) covers issues of importance to teens and families and has 14 pages of resources that families can access (E\$ 9.95 plus shipping and handling; call 248-646-1020 to order.) I received a message from Dr. McCarthy, from a teenage son, who said, "I'm really enjoying the book. I've written to her at The Eclectic Newspaper, 805 E. Maple Road, Birmingham, MI 48009."

HEALTHY LIVING

Healthy Living spotlights Oakland County-related health and medical news and information. To submit information, write: Healthy Living, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Or fax: (248) 644-1314.

FREEDOM FROM SMOKING CLINIC SET

The Oakland Athletic Club, located in downtown Birmingham, will offer the American Lung Association's smoking cessation clinic, "Freedom From Smoking."

The seven-week program offers the support, motivation and key tools to help people quit smoking. The clinic will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday evenings at the Oakland Athletic Club. The clinic will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 23 and run through Nov. 4. Call OAC's certified clinic facilitators Dana Mitchell or Tammy Delaney at (248) 640-9596 to register before Tuesday, Sept. 9. The cost for the clinic is \$150 per person, \$125 for club members.

BABY CARE/SAFETY

William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak will host a "Baby Care and Safety" class to teach basic care for baby's first year of life. The one-session class will be held on Saturday, Sept. 13 from 9 a.m. to noon in Beaumont Medical Building's first-floor classroom, 6700 N. Rochester Road, Rochester Hills. Another class will be offered on Tuesday, Sept. 30 from 7 to 9 a.m. at the Beaumont Medical Building's Conference Room A and B, 6900 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Call (800) 638-7377 to register. The cost is \$20 per couple.

CANCER PREVENTION

Recent statistics suggest that the incidence of breast cancer in the United States may be on the rise. However, the numbers also show the survival rates for women who detect the disease early have been increasing for the past 50 years. Over all more than 75 percent of all breast cancer patients survive their disease. To help educate women about the risks factors for breast cancer, prevention aspects, and breast exams, mammograms, the Wilson Cancer Center at William Beaumont Hospital in Troy is sponsoring a free program, "Preventing and Detecting Breast Cancer" on Tuesday, Sept. 9 from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Classroom G, ground floor, Beaumont Hospital, Troy, 44601 Dequindre (at M-59). For more information or to register, call Beaumont's Department of Education at (248) 628-6256.

FOR DADS ONLY

Remember the first time Ted Danson picked up his new baby in the movie, "Three Men and a Cradle"? Just about every new dad is a little nervous about handling their own baby for the first time, let alone feeding and bathing the baby. To help new dads learn the basics of infant-care techniques, William Beaumont Hospital is offering a one-session class, "For Dads Only: A Class for New Fathers." The class will be held on Saturday, Sept. 13 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Beaumont Rehabilitation and Health Center, 746 Purdy, Birmingham. The fee for the program is \$20. Call toll free 1 (800) 633-7377 to register.

PARENTS TO CUD

They're so cuddly and cute, but what do you really know about preparing for a new little person to share your life? If you're thinking of having a baby, or already have one on the way, Farmington Hills-based Botsford General Hospital offers "Great Expectations" for parents to be. It runs from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 13, at Botsford General Hospital, 28500 Grand River, Farmington Hills. It covers how to identify fertility signals, how to select a doctor, what your childbirth options are and how to choose the right one for you, the emotional and financial aspects of preparing for parenthood, how to deal with the stresses of family life, and good nutrition and fitness before, during and after pregnancy. The relaxed sessions are presented by professionals: a physician, psychologist and maternal child health nurse. The seminar cost is \$15 per person, which includes continental breakfast and lunch. Pre-registration is required. Call (248) 477-6100.

CANCER SCREENING

Southfield-based Providence Hospital and Medical Centers will host a free prostate screening on Saturday, Sept. 13, for men 40 to 70 years of age at four metro locations: Southfield, Livonia, South Lyon and Novi. For an appointment, call 1-800-341-0801. Last year, the screening caught 20 cases of prostate cancer.

TRIMMING DOWN

Would you like a trimmer you this fall? "Don't Give Up-Win the Weight Game," an alternative to dieting, will be presented from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 15 and 22, at The Community House, 380 S. Bates, Birmingham. Cost is \$24. Participants will learn how to develop a moderate approach to eating and exercise and acquire skills to stay motivated for a lifetime. To register, call The Community House: (248) 644-5832.

GOLD KEY BENEFIT

The Auburn Hills-based Mental Illness Research Association will host its fifth annual Gold Key Event to raise money for research projects relating to brain disease and to provide public education of the physical basis of mental illness. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 12, at the Northfield Hilton in Troy. Headliners will include Fox's anchor Rich Fier, WDIV Channel 4 anchor Devin Scillian, singer-songwriter Larry Santoro, Jill Puritan-Swoishe, Jessica Fungtarian-Harrell and the Johnny Trull Orchestra. Singer-songwriter Paul Williams will be special guest. Oakland County Executive Paul D. Brocks Patterson will be co-host, local personality Dick Pihan of WOLFM-FM (104.3) event chairman. The event has a deductible donation is \$25. Visa/MasterCard is accepted. For reservations, call 1 (800) 826-MIRA.