

EXERCISING OPTIONS



MYRNA PARRICH

Stepping is safe fitness

Question: I enjoy your column each week and all fitness reading. I am a "dancer" of exercise at 48 years of age. I do some form of aerobics each day and about three or four classes per week. Do you feel step classes are any harder on your knees and calves than other low to medium impact aerobic classes? Also, I alternate with my stationary bike and walking to keep just to be safe.

Answer: Sounds like you have a great regimen. By giving yourself variety you use more muscle groups. Therefore, you're all-around training is safer and more effective.

Step aerobics was created by a nationally certified aerobics instructor from Atlanta who had sustained a serious knee injury. As long as it is taught properly, it is safe and effective.

Research conducted by fitness consultants Drs. Peter and Lorna Francis at San Diego University pitted step aerobics against treadmill workouts.

Volunteers walked and ran on treadmills and performed a typical step aerobics routine. Results, using oxygen volume and use, and impact forces measurements, indicated that the stress on the body by the step was as gentle as that from walking. The aerobic benefits were about the same as running a seven-minute mile.

When doing step aerobics keep these tips in mind:

- Don't step up too high, you're not climbing a mountain.
- Keep your pace slow. You should have enough time to step on to the center of your stepper and to a flat foot on the ground.
- Step down on your heel to protect your calves from excessive muscle overload.
- Use your entire body to execute a pivot.

Myrna Parrich is the co-owner of The Workout Co. in Bloomfield Hills. She is an appointee to the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and the Michigan Fitness Foundation. Send questions or comments to Myrna at: Myrna Parrich, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.

Dental care: Be a smart shopper

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

Fluoride-impregnated dental floss, teeth-cleaning chewing gum, waxed shaped toothbrushes. The dental care industry has gone out of its way to fill every niche in the market.

But with so many choices, consumers are getting dizzy trying to pick out new toothpaste.

Most are overspending, too.

"There are a lot of generic toothpastes on the market that are just as good as spending three or four dollars," said Dr. Marvin Novetsky, D.D.S., M.S., a Farmington Hills prosthodontist who specializes in the treatment of geriatric patients. "But if they're willing to pay that much more because it makes them feel good, I guess that's okay."

Like most dental professionals, paying extra for toothpaste and other dental products is a ludicrous - payoff for the dental care industry's successful marketing and advertising campaigns.

"Like everything else, there's a lot of hype. You have a lot of wives and daughters of dentists recommending toothpastes with peroxide and baking soda...but using baking soda goes back 75 years," Novetsky said. "The toothpastes that are really being advertised to the public - there isn't a remarkable difference in their effect."

Although toothpaste may be a drop of the hat in the greater scheme of things, some consumers pay up to \$7 for a three-ounce tube. A new whitening spray available in stores goes for about \$14. Toothbrushes start at around a dollar and reach into the hundreds for electric models.

"It's very difficult for the consumer to know what to purchase. It's even difficult for us to know," said Mary Kay Haines, a dental hygienist who works and lives in Oxford Township.

And although sticking with products approved by the American Dental Association is probably a good idea, most dental professionals agree it doesn't really matter what you use, just use it.

"It's not going to make a difference what's in the toothpaste...it's very hard to say one toothpaste does better than another," Haines said.

Television ad statements like "three out of four dentists prefer such and such a brand," are equally meaningless, Haines said. "It means that they ran their own study on X number of dentists...but they could be asking 10, 100 or 1,000 den-

tists."

Average consumers simply should follow the steps of basic oral hygiene: floss every 24 hours and brush with a soft brush at least twice a day, she said.

"But if you're happier with a certain toothpaste and it's working for you, use it."

Similarly, variations on floss and toothbrushes don't have a significant effect for the average consumer, according to professionals.

The exception comes for patients with special needs, including those with gum inflammation, root cavities and sensitive or older teeth, Novetsky said.

But these cases require dentists to make specific recommendations, many of which come in the form of products that are only available through the office or by prescription, he said.

Another auxiliary product that professionals consider futile are whitening agents sold in the form of toothpastes, rinses and sprays.

"At the last conference I attended, the speaker explained that there wasn't one whitening agent on the market that works as well as an office procedure," Haines said.

Mouthwashes not only are a hoax, but potentially dangerous, Novetsky added. "They're not effective at all. That's money wasted."

Mouthwashes increase the consumers' risk for oral and throat cancer because of their high alcohol content, especially when combined with cigarette smoking and prescription drugs, he said.

Similarly, some consumers find that particular toothpaste ingredients, such as chemicals added to control tartar, burn the mouth or bring on an allergic reaction, Haines said.

"There are some really good products out there in dental offices that have no alcohol and toothpaste that doesn't have ingredients that burn the gums," Novetsky said. "But the average person would do well just by using even a generic toothpaste with a good, soft, rounded-bristle toothbrush."



STAFF PHOTO BY LAWRENCE R. MCKEE

Keep it simple: Dr. Marvin Novetsky, a Farmington Hills dentist who specializes in prosthodontics and the treatment of geriatric patients, recommends keeping your dental hygiene simple. Those patients who need specialized products - not the average consumer - will receive a recommendation from their dentist. Novetsky is selecting a color shade for Farmington resident Lynn Ziadeh's porcelain crowns.

Toothpaste cents

The cost of toothpaste has a surprising range. Arbor drugs in downtown Birmingham sells the following brands for:

Peppermint (6 oz.):	\$1.39
Crest regular paste (6.4 oz.):	\$2.89
Crest multi-care (6.2 oz.):	\$3.29
Sensodyne (4 oz.):	\$4.69
Generic for sensitive teeth (4 oz.):	\$2.49
Mentadent refill (5.2 oz.):	\$3.79
Pearl Drops (5.5 oz.):	\$3.49
Yask + White (3.5 oz.):	\$4.99
Rembrandt (3 oz.):	\$6.99

HEALTHY LIVING

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

CHOPRA COURSE

A four-session course on Primal Sound Meditation, an ancient form of meditation that has been revised by best-selling author and teacher Deepak Chopra, is being offered Nov. 14-16 at the Center for Realistic Living in Troy. Cost is \$225. For information, call (517) 546-7436 or (810) 220-8812.

NEW VOICE CENTER

Patients with voice and resonance disorders will soon be singing the praises of Providence Hospital's new Voice and Communication Center in Southfield.

The center will provide comprehensive medical, vocal and speech analysis for children and adults. The Voice and Communication Center is designed to benefit the individual by providing a team approach to the diagnosis and treatment of voice disorders.

The multidisciplinary team, including physicians, a speech therapist, a voice coach, and the patient will all participate in patient care. Patients with diagnoses ranging from hoarseness to cleft lips to laryngeal cancer will be offered the latest technology in Rhinology, Stroboscopy for vocal cord assessment, Aerodynamic assessment of oral and nasal pressure and air flow and a computerized speech lab allowing visual display of speech patterns.

For more information, call (248) 424-5770.

based Image Sculpting, was recently selected as Michigan's FDA investigational site for the correction of farsightedness with the VISX excimer laser.

ORAL CANCER STUDY

Providence Hospital in Southfield will shed some light on an experimental treatment for oral cancer, which could save patients from undergoing potentially disfiguring surgery or radiation. The study, Foscan-mediated Photodynamic Therapy (PDT), uses an inert drug on "high-light" tumor cells, making them more sensitive to light.

A specially tuned laser is then focused on the lesion initiating a chemical change, which destroys the tumor. Temoporfin (Foscan) is given through an IV. During the four-day period following administration, the drug is excreted by healthy, normal tissue, but remains in tumor cells. The chemical change that is initiated by the laser therapy literally cooks the tumor from within, said Dr. Jeffrey Weingarten, otolaryngologist at Providence Hospital and Medical Centers. The study will analyze the complete response rate of participants' cancer, the number of treatments required for a complete response, and the rate of recurrence.

Safety parameters and quality of life measurements will be collected as well. Eligibility requirements for this study dictate that participants must have recurrent squamous cell cancer of the mouth at a site previously treated.

They must be free of metastases or spread within the lymphatic system. Males or non-pregnant, non-lactating females 18 years or older are eligible to participate. Providence Hospital and Medical Centers is one of two hospitals in southeast Michigan taking part in the study.

For more information about

study participation, call (248) 569-5985.

HEART ATTACK STUDY

The Research Department at St. Joseph Mercy-Oakland recently announced participation in a national study for persons, age 18 and over, who have had a heart attack more than six weeks ago.

The study will determine the effects of common antibiotics on heart disease. Study participants will receive at no cost: a physical exam, electrocardiogram and study-related lab tests and medication. For information, contact Kim Markowski at (248) 858-6767.

HELPING HAND

Are you confused about many aspects of Medicare or Medicaid? The Mercy volunteers at St. Joseph Mercy-Oakland, in cooperation with the Area Agency on Aging, sponsor a service that can help. Knowledgeable counselors are available to provide assistance to groups or individuals who need more information about Medicare, Medicaid, Medicaid and Long-Term Care Insurance.

This free service includes assistance in organizing bills and forms, help with appeals for denials of service or payment and explanations of eligibility requirements and coverages. To make an appointment, call the Volunteer Services Department: (248) 858-3035.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT

Hospice of Michigan's Oakland County teams are planning volunteer training sessions in October. There is no charge for training, but advance registration is required. Call Beth Duncan at (248) 569-3193. Volunteers help Southfield-based Hospice of Michigan provide compassionate care to the dying. Anyone older

than 16 can volunteer. Many agencies are for evening and weekend work so students and people who work during the day shouldn't hesitate to volunteer. Volunteers are asked to work at least two to four hours a week and to commit to working for a year.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

■ Chad White, M.D., of Troy was recently appointed to the staff of St. John's Hospital and Medical Center, Detroit. White received his degree from Wayne State University in 1992 and completed his residency at Wayne State University/Hutzel hospital in 1996, with a specialization in Obstetrics/Gynecology. White joined the practice of Dr. Maserin and Dr. Nault, with offices at 39200 Garfield, Suite 303, Professional Building One. He is a member of the American Medical Association, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Wayne and Macomb County Medical Societies and Michigan State Medical Society. (313) 881-6488.

■ Bloomfield Hills resident William R. Gombeski Jr., formerly of The Cleveland Clinic Foundation, recently joined the Ford Health System as chief marketing officer and assistant vice president of the Department of Planning and Marketing.

■ Life Management Services of Bloomfield Hills is pleased to announce the recent addition of Debbie Schurgen, M.A., and Karen Schurgen, M.A., to their counseling practice.

■ Birmingham Maple Clinic recently announced the addition of the following therapists to its full-time professional staff: Deanna Farrar, M.S.W., A.C.S.W., B.C.D.; Paula Jorne, Ph.D., M.A., L.P.C.; Jane Maddox, M.A., L.L.P.C., C.S.W. and James Sutton, M.S.W., A.C.S.W., B.C.D., L.M.F.T.

Fears about HIV transfer in dental office are unfounded

BY DR. DAVID GEORGE BANDA

In recent years the remote possibility of being exposed to AIDS and other infections in the dental office has heightened the anxiety many patients experience about visiting the dentist.

But dentists take many precautions throughout the day to protect their patients. You should know about these measures, but may find that talking

All instruments that your dental team uses, including the hand piece (drill), are disposed of, disinfected or completely sterilized between each patient.

Treatment disinfection

Before you enter the treatment room, all surfaces such as the dental chair, dental light, drawer handles and countertops, have been cleaned and decontaminated.

I hope you can now see that the possibility of contracting an infection or disease from a visit to the dental office is practically nil. The dental profession takes extreme pride in virtually eliminating the possibility of any infection transfer to our patients. It may come as a surprise to you to learn that dental personnel are at a higher risk of contracting a virus or disease from you, than you are from him or her. That is why the vast majority of dentists and their employees have received hepatitis vaccines - to reduce the risk for contracting that disease.

If you would like more information on any aspect of this topic, you may obtain a copy of "ADA Cares: Talking Infection Control" by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ADA Cares, 832 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 830, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

GUEST COLUMN

with your dentist about these issues is difficult and uncomfortable. Not only can technological language get in the way, but so can fear and anxiety.

Remember that sterilization and other infection control procedures take place, but occur out of your view. Some of the precautions that dentists use are:

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are safety procedures established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Dental Association (ADA). They are used for each and every patient to prevent the transmission of the AIDS virus and other infectious diseases. These precautions require all dental staff involved in patient care to use appropriate protective gear, such as gloves and, sometimes, masks and eyewear. After each patient's visit, the gloves are discarded, hands are washed and a new pair of gloves is used for the next patient.

Instrument sterilization

(Dr. David George Banda, D.D.S., F.I.C.O.I., D.A.S.O., is a private practice dentist in Bloomfield Hills. He is a member of the American Dental Association, and Michigan Dental Association. He specializes in implant dentistry.)

INVESTIGATIONAL STUDY

The Laser Sculpting Center, a division of Farmington Hills,