



Join the Avocado Fan Club

More than 108 million people tuned in to watch the Super Bowl earlier this year. But football fans did a lot more than just watch the game and commercials. They gobbled up an estimated 158 million avocados.

The green-colored fruit has officially joined the ranks as a party “must-have.” It’s used in salsa and guacamole. Recipes abound for avocados in sandwiches, salads, and even fruit smoothies, ice cream, and pudding. Sliced, diced, mashed, or even pureed in a blender, avocados are so very good for you.

Avocados have the highest fiber content of any fruit. They also contain healthy fats and antioxidants that have been shown to promote heart health, aid in weight loss, regulate



blood sugar levels, and reduce the risk for certain types of cancer. Research even shows that the healthy fats in avocados can help reduce cholesterol levels and prevent many chronic diseases.

If you’re looking for a way to liven up your menu, join the avocado fan club.

Super Bowl Sunday not required. Add diced avocados to a salad. Use mashed avocado in place of mayonnaise on a sandwich or bagel. Or make your own guacamole, and enjoy.

Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry. California Avocado Commission.

Try these avocado recipes
<http://tinyurl.com/ajh3yav>



Shake the Salt Habit for Heart Health

Imagine filling a teaspoon with salt and eating it. Your tongue and your brain would deliver an instant message: “Yuck! Too salty!” And you would be grasping for the nearest glass of water to wash away that sickening taste. Yet that’s how much salt most people eat every single day.

Most people consume more than double the amount of sodium than is recommended (less than 2,300 mg for adults) to keep the heart healthy. To put this in perspective, a typical fast-food hamburger with cheese contains 1,400 mg of sodium. Packaged and processed foods, sauces and dressings, potato chips, and soft drinks are also overly high in sodium. Too much table salt adds to the problem.

A diet high in sodium increases your risk for high blood pressure. And high blood pressure is a major cause

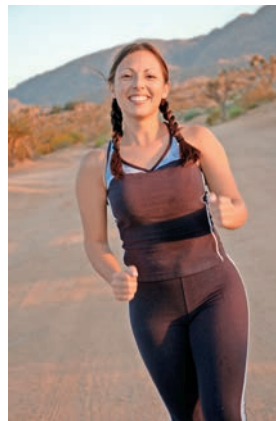
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Move Your Feet to the Beat

When NBC reporter Ben Aaron was on assignment in New York City, he stumbled upon a new fitness trend called dance-walking. “It combines my three favorite things: interacting with people, seeing the city, and dancing,” Aaron said. “This could be the workout I’ve been waiting for.” And he put it to the test by stepping into a crowd of pedestrians, playing some music on hand-held speakers, and dance-walking his way down the street.

When you hear a rhythmic beat, something usually happens. It might make you want to tap your foot, nod your head, or get up and dance like Aaron discovered. It’s the feel-good factor. Start moving to the beat, and health benefits will follow.

In a recent study, participants in a cycling class completed four different 40-minute workouts. In three of the workouts, they pedaled to musical tracks with varying tempos. In



the fourth workout, they pedaled without any music.

Researchers found that when people listened to upbeat music, they pedaled more during the workout session than when they pedaled without music.

For exercising, it doesn’t matter if you prefer classical music, pop, country, or golden oldies

– as long as the music is upbeat. Listening to music with an upbeat tempo will help you pick up the pace when you exercise.

You’ll also feel good listening to your favorite tunes. You’ll strengthen your heart, lungs, and muscles. And you’ll burn more calories when you exercise. All you have to do is press “play” and start moving.

Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation.

Watch Ben Aaron’s dance-walking in NYC
<http://tinyurl.com/836o4qv>

Save Your Life with Cancer Screening



No one expects to get colorectal cancer. But people are diagnosed with it every day. It's the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States. However, early screening, starting at age 50, is the best way to beat this type of cancer.

Here are four reasons to schedule a screening:

1. In the United States, an estimated 143,000 men and women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year. And it will claim the lives of about 53,000 men and women this year. Getting screened early is the best way to prevent colorectal cancer.
2. If you wait for symptoms to develop, it can be harder to treat. Symptoms can include a change in bowel habits, blood in the stool, or abdominal discomfort.

Weakness or fatigue, or unexplained weight loss can also be symptoms.

3. An early screening can find abnormal growths, or polyps, inside the colon. These polyps can be removed before they turn into cancer. Colorectal cancer is highly treatable when it is found early.
4. Getting screened can help your family. Colorectal cancer can run in families. If you find out you have polyps or cancer, your family members may be at higher risk for colorectal cancer. Then they may choose to be screened earlier than age 50 as a preventive measure.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
American Cancer Society.
National Cancer Institute.*

Check your risk for cancer
www.cancer.gov/colorectalcancerrisk

Shake the Salt Habit

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of heart disease and stroke. Too much sodium has also been linked to kidney disease and osteoporosis. Learn to shake the salt habit to protect your heart and your overall health. Here's how:

- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Buy low-sodium foods and soups.
- Read food labels to track your sodium intake.
- Drink water instead of soft drinks.
- Use low-sodium salad dressings made with extra-virgin olive oil or vinegar.
- Cut back on eating fast-foods and packaged meals.
- And keep your hands off the salt shaker.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

American Medical Association.

Enter the name of a food to check its sodium level
<http://tinyurl.com/4jtxl>

Improve Your Mood with Regular Exercise

Everyone has a bad day, or feels sad or depressed at times. But if that feeling lingers, it can leave you feeling stuck, hopeless, and discouraged for days.

Today, about 8 percent of Americans feel depressed. And 3.4 percent suffer from major depression. Currently, antidepressants are the most-prescribed medications in the United States. But a recent study suggests that exercise can be a great help in improving your mood.

For 16 weeks, researchers at Duke University studied 156 people who had clinical depression. Half of the group took medication to treat depression. The other half followed an exercise program and did not take medication. Researchers found that the exercise group improved just as much as those who took medication during the study.

Researchers then studied these two groups for another six months. They found that depression returned for only 8 percent of the exercise group. But 38 percent of the medication group reported feeling depressed. If you're ready to beat the blues, make time for exercise. Take a walk.

Go for a jog. Ride a bike. Or get to the gym. Exercise improves your mood and helps your heart, lungs, and muscles grow stronger. If you're not exercising, start slowly with just a few minutes a day. Then work up to exercising for 30 to 60 minutes a day for best health.

Duke University.

National Institutes of Health.



ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

Q: How much sleep do I really need to be healthy?

A: Go to www.wellsources.info/wn/ask-how-much-sleep.pdf to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: evan@wellsources.com, subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

Health Challenge: "Reduce Stress Naturally" available at: www.wellsources.info/wn/hc-reduce-stress.pdf
Manage stress in natural, healthy ways.