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Health, Wealth, & Happiness

Sleep Awareness Month

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Our Mission

Your Health, Wealth & Happiness explores the truth and facts not only within, but beyond the confines of your health, personal wealth, and individual happiness. We have one goal; to bring you the information you need to live a healthy, wealthy, and happy life. We find simple tricks to improve your health, and long term goals to stay on top of it. In this new age of ever expanding technology, there is an endless supply of new recipes, health care improvements, new operations, machines, vaccines, cures, research, even robots, and more. Keeping on top of Your HWH is crucial to living the best life possible. Cheers to growing a more healthy, wealthy, and happy lifestyle.

Contents

Introduction	3
Sleep Awareness Infographic	4
Raising Healthy Sleepers	4
Sleep Apnea: What You Should Know	5
Exercises That Put You Right to Sleep	5
Sleep & Your Health: What's The Connection?	7
Using Ayurveda to Support Sleep Health	8
5 Foods to Avoid at Night	10
Where Did My Money Go?	11
It Pays to Pay Attention to Store Closings	12
How to File Your Taxes	12
Find Your Zen with Yoga	13
Breaking Cabin Fever	13
March WNY Events	14
Recipe Corner	14
February 2018 Crosswork Puzzle Answers	14
March 2018 Crossword Puzzle	15

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SLEEP AWARENESS

WHAT ARE SLEEP DISORDERS?

Sleep disorders are any type of disorder that affects or disrupts sleep.



Sleep disorders effect
1 in 3 people

5 COMMON SLEEP DISORDERS

1. SLEEP APNEA

Occurs when the tissue at the back of the throat briefly collapses
Breathing can stop for only a moment or for a long period of time

2. INSOMNIA

It is the most common sleep disorder
~30% of people report short term issues and 10% report chronic issues
Characterized by trouble falling or staying asleep

3. NARCOLEPSY

Affects 1 in every 2,000 people
Characterized by uncontrollable and excessive sleeping tendencies

4. SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Occurs when a person obtains an inadequate amount of sleep
Affects brain and cognitive function

5. SNORING

Almost half of all adults snore
Throat muscles relax during sleep, causing the soft tissues in the throat to vibrate, producing a snoring sound

STATISTICS

38% 38% of adults reported unintentionally falling asleep during the day at least once in the preceding month



25 million U.S. adults have obstructive sleep apnea

35% 35% of adults report getting less than 7 hours of sleep during a typical 24-hour period



Drowsy driving is responsible for 1,550 fatalities and 40,000 nonfatal injuries annually in the U.S.

1/3 More than a third of American adults are not getting enough sleep on a regular basis

HOW MUCH SLEEP SHOULD YOU BE GETTING?

Adult	7-9 hrs.
Teen	8-10 hrs
6-12 yrs.	9-12 hrs.
3-5 yrs.	10-13 hrs. (Including naps)
1-2 yrs.	11-14 hrs. (Including naps)
4-12 mos.	12-16 hrs. (Including naps)

Sources: Sleepassociation.org
Medicinenet.com

Raising Healthy Sleepers

By Soda Kuczowski

Raising healthy sleepers isn't the easiest task. It takes consistent dedication on the part of often over exhausted parents struggling with their own sleep issues. In the society we live in it is often difficult to remember to practice self-care and we may unintentionally pass our poor habits on to our children. Many issues that arise from child sleep challenges correlate directly with factors that are within our control, but we're unaware of. Parents can overlook how important the role of sleep is in a child's development mentally, physically, and emotionally. They may be too close to see what could be contributing to sleep issues such as night awakenings and early rising.

The foundation for healthy sleep habits involves understanding how physical and emotional needs, developmental milestones, social factors, and the environment, play a part in its success; with consistency being the driver behind healthy sleep habits.

It is best when addressing a child's sleep to create an environment that is calming, safe and regimented. Children thrive with routine! It is how they learn, through repetition and consistency. Although outside factors can cause ripples in sleep patterns and pose challenges along the way, a strong, consistent sleep plan will help set the tone and positive relationship with sleep as they grow and develop. Routine helps children learn self-control, guide positive behavior, support

social skills, cope with transitions and serve as a connector for parent-and-child bonding.

Some great habits to incorporate into a child's bedtime routine include a bath, reading a favorite book, dimming the lights, as well as the use of darkening blinds to block out any potential light that may be disruptive during the night or cause early rising in the morning. The practice of breathing exercises and yoga have also increased in popularity. It is important to remember that the best way to develop a solid sleep plan is to also include assessing the entire family's sleep dynamic, because it is all interrelated.

When it comes to children and sleep problems, parents should be conscious of unusual daytime sleepiness, behavioral issues and warning signs such as bedwetting, excessive sweating, difficulty waking up, restless legs causing tangled sheets and unusual sleep positions as well as witnessing snoring or abnormal breathing patterns especially pauses or gasping.

If it is suspected that a child suffers from a sleep disorder, parents should speak with a pediatrician regarding an evaluation with a sleep medicine doctor or seek a referral for a sleep study.

Sleep Apnea: What You Should Know

By Tehniyet Azam

According to Mayo Clinic sleep apnea is potentially serious sleep disorder in which breathing repeatedly stops and starts.

The three main types of sleep apnea are:

- Central sleep apnea
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Complex sleep apnea syndrome

Symptoms:

The signs and symptoms of obstructive and central sleep apnea overlap, making the type of sleep apnea difficult to determine. Common signs and symptoms of sleep apnea include:

- Loud snoring
- Episodes of breathing cessation during sleep witnessed by another person
- Abrupt awakenings accompanied by shortness of breath, which more likely indicates central sleep apnea
- Awakening with a dry mouth or sore throat
- Morning headache

Story Continues on Page 10

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Exercises That Put You Right to Sleep

By Shahneel Ahmed

A good night's sleep is essential for a person's health and wellness, and the quality of one's sleep can have a direct impact on his/her productivity during the day. Many people, however, do not get the recommended amount of sleep. Surveys conducted by the National Sleep Foundation reveal that at least 40 million Americans are suffering from over 70 different sleep disorders. Additionally, 60 percent of adults and 69 percent of children reported that they experience sleep problems a few nights or more during the week.

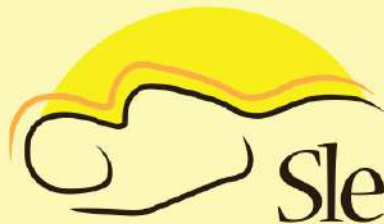
Although everyone's individual sleep needs vary, most healthy adults need about eight hours of sleep a night. To combat common sleep problems, keep a regular sleep/wake schedule, avoid drinking or eating caffeine four to six hours before bedtime; avoid alcohol and heavy meals before bedtime, and minimizing noise, light, and excessive hot and cold temperatures can help you fall and stay asleep throughout the night.

Also, exercising daily and practicing a relaxing bedtime ritual can help pave the way for better sleep. One relaxation technique involves focusing on your breathing. Just a few inhaled and exhaled breaths can drastically calm your nervous system. Take a deep breath into your lower belly, not your chest, and feel your abdomen expand with air. Next, hold this breath for a few seconds and then release it slowly. Continue to repeat this for a few minutes, making sure to notice the rising and falling of your belly. If you notice your mind wandering, gently try to redirect the focus back on your breathing.

Another relaxation technique involves tuning into your senses. This will keep you in the present moment and prevent you from focusing on sleep-inhibiting thoughts. For example, thinking about how the bedsheets feel against your skin and listening to any sounds outside the window can keep you in the present moment.

Tensing your toes is another way to relax before falling asleep. For this technique, you want to tense and pull your toes up and towards your face and hold them in this position for 10 seconds. Then, release them for another 10 seconds and repeat. By alternatively tensing and relaxing your toes, the rest of the body becomes relaxed and calm.

Lastly, guided imagery may help you fall and stay asleep. The goal in this relaxation technique is to focus your attention on an image or story, distracting your mind from any worries or thoughts. Visualize any image, scene, or memory that is calming, such as a favorite vacation spot. If your mind drifts, acknowledge it and redirect its focus. By incorporating these tips and relaxation techniques to your bedtime routine, you can get a good night's sleep and optimize your well-being.



Sleep & Wellness Centers



Symptoms & Signs

Daytime Fatigue ♦ Snoring ♦ Obesity ♦ Hypertension ♦ Insomnia ♦ Depression ♦ Startled awakenings with gasping or choking
Poor concentration/memory loss ♦ Observed pauses in breathing by partner ♦ Night Sweats ♦ Morning Headaches
COPD Patients ♦ Diabetic Patients ♦ Neuromuscular Disease ♦ Impaired memory ♦ Impaired concentration
Restrictive Lung Disease ♦ Congestive Heart Failure ♦ Excessive sleepiness ♦ Witnessed apneas/irregular breathing

Comorbidities

Drug-Resistant Hypertension ♦ Diabetes ♦ Congestive Heart Failure ♦ Depression
Pacemaker ♦ Atrial Fibrillation ♦ Obesity ♦ All Hypertension ♦ Coronary Artery Disease

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Sleep & Your Health: What's The Connection?

By Soda Kuczowski

How is your sleep? These are the four words that could potentially prevent more traffic accidents, help in deterring the onset of disease and improve the quality of life as we know it. Everyone can benefit from talking about the benefits of a good night's sleep in our generation.

Sleep is arguably the body's best healing mechanism. It not only serves the purpose of energy conservation and memory consolidation but proves to be our most restorative function for keeping all of our biological processes running smoothly. It affects not only our state of mind, preventing the onset of Dementia and Alzheimer's as we age, but helps us manage our blood pressure, maintain our weight, and reduces the likelihood of stroke or heart attack. Approaching this conversation with your doctor could potentially save your life. Think about "How well do you really sleep?" It is an issue that spans mankind as cultures lose focus on the importance of its most precious and oldest secrets for optimal health.

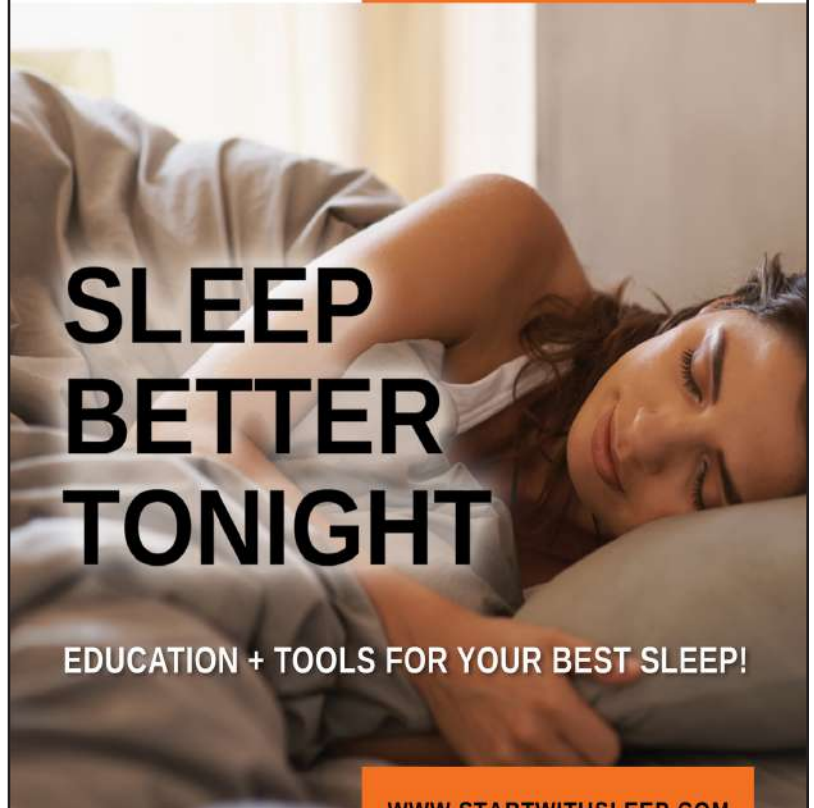
Sleep deprivation was declared a public health epidemic in 2015 by the Centers for Disease Control showcasing how we view sleep in terms of a healthy lifestyle. Sleep deprivation occurs when an individual fails to continually get enough sleep, resulting in a long list of health problems. Sleep deprivation can occur for a number of reasons, but it is most often due to unintentional voluntary behavior; not allowing yourself the right amount of sleep you need each night, work schedules and personal obligations, nutritional deficiencies, an underlying sleep disorder, health related issues, or medications.

When it comes to sleep, it's not just quantity that matters but the quality of your sleep. How you feel during your waking hours weighs greatly on how well you slept. Similarly, the cure for daytime fatigue and sleep difficulties can often be found in your daily routine. Your sleep schedule, bedtime habits, and day-to-day lifestyle choices can have an enormous difference on the quality of your nightly rest. A great tool is to keep a sleep diary. Doing so will allow you to see patterns and make it easier to change your behavior. It can also lead you to the realization that a medical sleep issue may be at play and that further evaluation or testing may be needed by a sleep specialist. Take the time to reflect on how well you sleep. Are you struggling with energy throughout the day, waking up with headaches, do you never feel rested no matter how much you sleep?

The areas of sleep health and sleep medicine are only now gaining momentum as we are starting to understand the important role sleep plays in our everyday lives. If you are struggling with sleep, take the time to speak with your doctor. Your well-being is too important to ignore the risks associated with the long-term effects of sleep deprivation or an undiagnosed medical sleep disorder that can have an impact on your overall health and quality of life. Do not wait for your doctor to ask "How is your sleep?" Make the choice to prioritize your sleep because **better sleep = better health.**

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WHY SLEEP IS IMPORTANT

Your health sets the tone for the quality of your life - that foundation starts with a good night's sleep. Whether you suffer from sleep challenges or are looking for strategies to manage your current health, the quality of your sleep is a commonly overlooked factor. **WE CAN HELP!**

- 01 **SLEEP CONSULTATIONS**
Looking to get your sleep back on track but don't know where to start? We offer maternity, child and adult sleep consultations.
- 02 **SLEEP COACHING SESSIONS**
Need help staying on track? We offer coaching sessions to help guide you to implementing daily healthy sleep habits.
- 03 **SLEEP + WELLNESS WORKSHOPS**
Looking to incorporate self-care into your daily life or a natural way to improve your energy and health? We offer interactive, sensory driven child and adult workshops that provide tools to master the art + science of a good night's sleep.
- 04 **SLEEP HEALTH PROGRAMS**
Looking to expand your knowledge of sleep health or incorporate it into your business or community wellness initiatives? We offer sleep challenge programs and presentations for organizations and schools.

Using Ayurveda to Support Sleep Health

By Jessica Mascle

At one time in my life, my inability to fall asleep consumed my being. Every night would come and there I was wide awake, anxious, and even sometimes in panic. What was wrong with me? Why couldn't my doctor figure this out for me? I prayed, I cried, I confided in anyone that would listen. I was desperate and surely driving my friends and family crazy.

I decided, after ten years of misery, to try something new. I learned about ayurveda and sought guidance from a qualified practitioner and wouldn't you know? I started to feel change.

Ayurveda is an ancient healing science from India. It is said to be at least five thousand years old. Ayurveda is the sister science to yoga which is wildly popular now in American culture gaining millions of new practitioners every year. In ayurveda, yoga is used as a tool for healing. Ayurveda teaches us to tune into ourselves at a very deep level and to listen to what our minds and bodies need. It forces us to ask, "What is the root of my problem?"

How did ayurveda help heal my struggle with insomnia? Below are my four recommendations for improving your sleep using ayurveda.

Know Your Dosha

According to ayurveda, each of us are made up of the five elements: space, air, fire, water, and Earth. Although we all have them all, each of us is born with a different proportion of these elements. An energetic dancer, abundant in the air element. A passionate activist full of fire. These elements form biological energies called doshas. When space and air come together they form an energy called vata. Most of us have one or two dominant doshas- some of us are vatas, some pittas, and others kaphas. Still others are vata-pitta, kapha-vata etc. This means that our mind and body systems behave in certain ways based on the amount of the elements and their qualities within us.



In regard to sleep, vatas tend to have irregular sleep patterns. Their sleep tends to be lighter and they get less of it. Vata's dreams are full of chasing, falling, and adventures. They are prone to awaken in the night and have a hard time falling back asleep. Pittas have issues with being hot at night. Their dreams are intense, vivid, and passionate. They may have a hard time falling asleep because they are overly ambitious and can't stop "working." Kaphas are heavy sleepers who love to cuddle in the covers. Their dreams are serene and romantic. They may struggle more with waking up. Learning your dosha is enlightening in so many ways, but especially for people struggling with sleep.

Tailor Your Diet and Digestion

Once you know your dosha you can begin to explore the types of foods that either help you or work against you when it comes to sleep. "You" is the operative word here as it is very important to understand that, what is good for one person when it comes to diet and sleep is not good for others. For pittas (the fiery ones) spicy foods can spell disaster at bedtime. But, for kaphas (the earthy ones) spicy foods can help them get out of bed easier. For vatas, sweet heavy foods can help them sleep through the night, but again, for kaphas, those same foods will prove it difficult to get out of bed the next day.

In addition to eating for your dosha, ayurveda places a great emphasis on keeping a balanced digestive fire. According to ayurveda, all the food and drink we consume, the experiences and sensory information that we take in every day, and all of our past traumas and repressed emotions need to be digested completely for us to be healthy. When we have not fully digested and assimilated these things we are too "full" all the time. When we lay down to fall asleep or when we awaken in the middle of the night our minds may race with the millions of things we need to do, or we begin to obsess about a situation that happened at work that day. Both examples illustrate the consequences of not being able to properly digest our lives. Ayurveda teaches us how to eat the right foods for our mind/body types and how to kindle our digestion so that our days and lives are continually processed, assimilated, and cleansed.

Follow the Ayurvedic Clock

Just as animals and plants behave certain ways at different times of the day, during seasons, and during different stages of their life cycle, so should we. According to ayurveda, from 6AM to 10AM is the kapha time of day. The qualities of this time are heavy, slow, and dull. It is beneficial for all of us, especially kaphas, to get up before this time begins. If we can, we enjoy the benefits of waking during vata time which starts at 2AM and ends at 6AM. The qualities of this time of day are clear, light, and mobile. Getting up at this time gives us some extra momentum. At 6PM we start the kapha time of evening and it goes until 10PM. Going to bed during these hours is advantageous. At 10PM, pitta hours begin and these are the hours it seems some can easily catch a "second wind." During this pitta window from 10PM to 2AM our bodies and minds set out to digest all our food and experiences from the day so,



it is most important that we are asleep at these times. Come 2AM, vata time starts again and it is not unusual to wake for the bathroom and to be unable to fall back asleep.

Also, the stage of your life cycle plays a role in sleeping. From ages 25-55 are the pitta years of life. We are ambitious and focused on achieving our goals and for some that means sleeping issues. After this stage we enter the vata stage of life as things dry out and become subtler and light. It is not unusual for people in this stage to also struggle with sleep issues.

Regulate Your Nervous System

There are two parts to your autonomic nervous system, the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system serves as your fight or flight response. It is what "protects" us in the face of real or perceived danger. The parasympathetic nervous system is our relax response. It gives us the ability to assess a situation and be at ease with it. In people with sleep issues, often the sympathetic nervous system is "stuck" on and the parasympathetic nervous system is underdeveloped.

Creating routines throughout the day are great ways to soothe the sympathetic nervous system and to stimulate the parasympathetic. Routines help because they take a lot of guesswork off our nervous system. Our nervous system doesn't have to worry and wonder about when you will eat, sleep, or wake it already knows. Bedtime is a great time to start some routines according to ayurveda. Not eating past 7PM, omitting media after 9PM, using massage oils, aromatherapy, taking warm baths, journaling, breathing, and relaxation practices

are especially beneficial as bedtime rituals.

Learning to cultivate a smooth, even, deep breath has a soothing effect on your nervous system. Also, any deep relaxation practice like a body scan will help calm your nervous system and bring a sense of stillness and peace to your mind and body. If you think you have an issue related to an overstimulated sympathetic nervous system, classes like hatha yoga, restorative yoga, yin yoga, and yoga nidra may help you immensely.

If you are frustrated with sleep and looking for a natural way to compliment what you are already doing to promote sleep health, consider ayurveda. Learn and explore what your mind/body type or dosha is. With this knowledge, you can tailor your diet to support your efforts to sleep better. By working to cleanse and kindle your digestion you will feel clearer and more at peace; sleep will come more readily and upon waking you will feel refreshed. Take the time to design some routines and practices that support your unique needs and desires, like keeping bed and wake times that honor the ayurvedic clock. Establish a yoga practice that helps pacify imbalances, kindles your digestion, expels wastes, connect you with your breath, and learn to relax your body and mind.

Be on the lookout for a series called IN Balance: a new 6-week series focused on teaching you how to use sleep, nutrition, and movement to create a more balanced lifestyle at START WITH SLEEP. In this series you will learn how to use yoga and ayurveda to get a great night's rest.

5 Foods to Avoid at Night

By Katy Siwirski

From early morning risers to late night prowlers, it can be agreed that once we finally decide to lay our heads down, we want to sleep. But did you know that the food you eat before bed can affect your ability to get a good night's sleep? There's nothing wrong with a nighttime snack, but choose wisely, or else you may be tossing and turning in bed. Here are some foods to avoid before bed.

Red Meat

Red meat is loaded with protein and fats that will make your body work hard throughout the night. If you want a good night's sleep, you want your body to be at rest when you go to sleep. Meats take longer to digest than any other food, so it is best to avoid them at night. This is not saying to avoid red meat, all together. Red meats have high levels of iron and tryptophan, which is important for one's daily intake. Simply avoid this type of food close to bedtime.

Cereal

Most cereals are high in sugar and carbohydrates. This can cause a spike and crash in your blood sugar levels, leaving your body feeling very off. It is not a good way to maintain your sugar levels before bedtime. If you feel like cereal is the answer for your late night snack, pick a cereal with whole grains and low levels of sugar.

Chocolate

Chocolate is loaded with calories, sugar, and caffeine. It's not a very filling snack either. You may crave it, but that doesn't mean you're hungry. Your sweet tooth is simply looking for some attention. Chocolate also contains stimulants, such as theobromine, which is known to increase one's heart rate. If you insist on satisfying this craving at night, give white

chocolate a try. It does not contain theobromine and usually has low caffeine levels.

Spicy Foods

Spices are a natural cure for a variety of ailments, but should be avoided when craving a snack late at night. Spicy food may upset your stomach, which is never fun when trying to fall asleep peacefully. Chemicals in spicy food may also stimulate your senses, which will make it even harder to fall asleep. Most of these foods are high in fat and calories, too. If you can't satisfy your late night craving for spicy food, try making a cheese quesadilla with corn tortillas, low-fat cheese, and cooking spray. If that isn't enough, there are low calorie frozen burritos out there that can satisfy that spicy desire.

Chicken

Chicken is similar to red meats on the night time snack list. It is loaded with protein that will force your body to work harder during the night while you are trying to rest. It is said that your body digests food 50% slower when you are asleep, compared to when you are awake. Once again, do not avoid chicken all together. Chicken aids in maintaining vitamin and mineral levels, losing weight, and reducing the risk of cancer. Simply avoid eating chicken when you're about to go to bed.

There are a variety of benefits and disadvantages of food before bed, but it is important to be careful with what you consume. It is also recommended to avoid caffeine, alcohol, and soda before bedtime. These three are empty calories that can trigger heartburn and stomach aches. If you are craving something to drink before bed, try low or non-fat milk, hot tea, or water. It may not satisfy your cravings, but you'll definitely get a better night of sleep, and that's what matters most.

Story Continued from Page 5

- Difficulty staying asleep (insomnia)
- Excessive daytime sleepiness (hypersomnia)
- Attention problems
- Irritability

Risk factors

- Excess weight. People who are obese have four times the risk of sleep apnea that people who are of normal weight. Fat deposits around upper airways may obstruct breathing.
- Use of alcohol, sedatives or tranquilizers.
- Nasal congestion. Difficulty breathing through your nose, whether from an anatomical problem or allergies, could result in obstructive sleep apnea.
- Stroke. People who've had a stroke are at greater risk of central sleep apnea.
- Heart disorders. People with congestive heart failure are at greater risk of central sleep apnea.
- Smoking. Smokers are three times more likely to have obstructive sleep apnea than people who've never smoked.

Smoking may increase the amount of inflammation and fluid retention in the upper airway. This risk likely drops after you quit smoking.

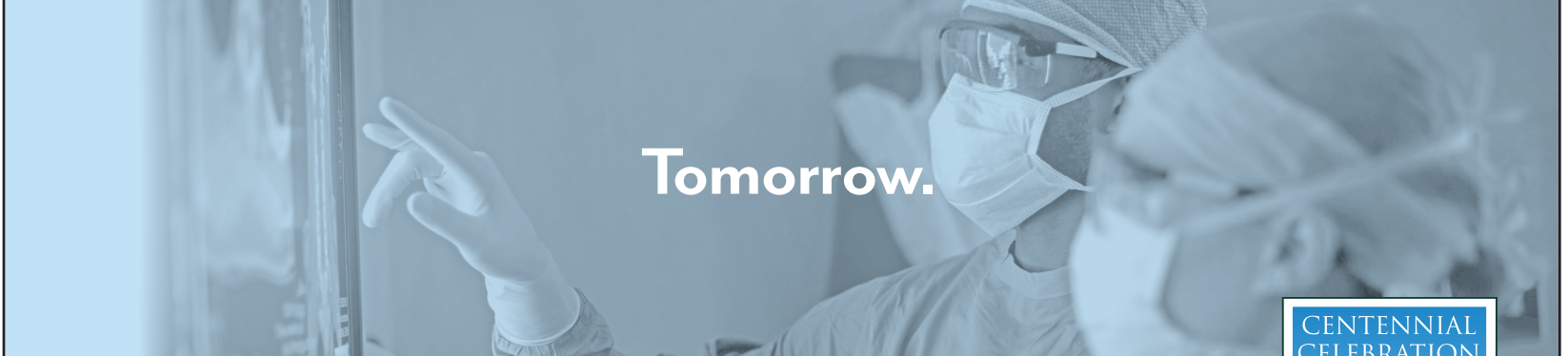
- Being male. Men are twice as likely to have sleep apnea. However, women's risk appears to rise after menopause.





Yesterday.

Today.



Tomorrow.

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In our 100 years of taking care of Western New York, much has changed within the world, the community, and even within our own walls at ECMC. But even as we prepare for our next century of delivering true care for patients and families, we know the most important thing—compassionate care for everyone who turns to us—hasn't. And never will.



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Where Did My Money Go?

By Timothy Kelheart

It's that time of year again when the W-2s start coming in the mail and you remember just how much you made last year. Usually it less than what we want to be making and seeing all the taxes that were taken out in the year is even more discouraging. But after all of the sighing and rubbing of your

forehead you have to collect all of your statements and figure out just where your money went this year.

The first step to this long process is collecting all of your monthly bills from the year. Those being credit card statements, bank records, car and insurance payments, utilities, school and property taxes, and any other documents you can round up. But don't just find all of your bills, find any statement that contributed to money you made this year, this could be stock and bond statements, new assets you acquired, or anything of value that you could sell if need be.

I recommend starting with bank statements and seeing if you gained or lost money in your accounts. Simply put if you didn't see an increase in your bank statement you most likely were in the negative for the year. But don't fret just yet, most people get a hefty sum of their taxes back in there tax returns meaning that you very well could have ended up in the positive this year.

For those who lost money this year, broke even, or even those who gained wealth it is important to remember that looking to see where your money was spent will give you the ability to cut out unnecessary expenses and tame your budget for 2018!



It Pays to Pay Attention to Store Closings

By Canney Savanney

There are some advantages to consumers when companies go bankrupt. Sure, it's not easy on the employees but some big corporations give incentives to their loyal employees who stick with them to the very end.

There are several types of bankruptcies that can be filed. Bankruptcy can be filed by an individual, entity, or a corporation. According to uscourts.org, most of the big corporations that file bankruptcy are Chapter 7 and Chapter 11. Chapter 7 bankruptcies call for businesses to liquidate their products, while Chapter 11 calls for businesses to reorganize their company. For example, Toys 'R' Us filed chapter 11 bankruptcy back in September 2017 but only during the month of January 2018 did they begin to close a number of stores to pay their debts.

So, you are thinking again how does this benefit you as the consumer? Sales! Final sales are constantly going on everywhere! It's in your best interest to go and purchase merchandise as soon as possible. A company's main goal when undergoing the process of bankruptcy is to liquidate their merchandise before their door's close one last time.

For instance, in Buffalo's very own backyard there is one big franchise closing their doors for good. The Toys 'R' Us branch known as Babies 'R' Us in the Boulevard Consumer Plaza is among one of the closings occurring. Babies 'R' Us nationwide will be closing their doors between February and April 2018 as they run their going-out-of-business sales. In an approach to avoid taking a financial loss, the company will conduct close out sales so they do not have to redistribute their merchandise to the remaining open locations.

The only flaw to these final sales to the consumer is they are indeed final. There is no opportunity for the consumer to go back to return or exchange it. So, when deciding to make a purchase at a store that is closing you better make sure it is worth your investment in the long run. Purchasing something for the sake of a deal of a store closing is not always the wisest choice when it comes to staying on track for a healthy budget.

How to File Your Taxes

By Webster Tilton

Yes, it's that time again.

Some people look upon tax season with hope, anticipating a refund. Others look upon it with dread, anticipating a hefty bill. And everyone, even those anticipating getting money back, consider it an annoying chore. But it's got to get done, so, how best to do it?

The simple answer is that it depends how complex your finances are. If you're not invested, and don't own much in the way of property, then doing it yourself is simple and cheap (possibly even free). This is because you simply don't have much in the way of deductions or liabilities to calculate. However, the better you're doing financially, the more complex it gets. Do you have children? Own a home? Invest in stocks? Have a retirement fund? Win any money gambling? Pay business expenses out of pocket? The list goes on and on. There is a reason why H&R Block and Jackson Hewitt continue to exist.

There's only one real question you need to answer when deciding whether to file yourself or pay a professional is; what way gets me further ahead? Places like H&R Block report that the average fee for preparing taxes is between \$150 and \$250. So, if you have reason to think that your refund will go up by at least \$200 (or your liabilities go down by at least \$200) then it's a good idea to hire a pro. If not, then do it yourself. Some good reasons to hire a professional include: correcting mistakes on past returns, marriage or divorce within the last year, residing or being employed in more than one state, owning foreign assets, starting a small business, adopting or giving birth to a new child, inheriting money or other assets, the death of a spouse, and supporting your elderly parents or grandchildren.

Any of these issues can easily complicate your taxes to the point where hiring a professional is a wise idea despite the cost. Remember that the more complicated your financial situation is the more expensive the tax preparation service will be. But an audit or a wrongly filed return could easily cost you more than the best professional help available.

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Find Your Zen with Yoga

By Oliver Clarke

The concept of using yoga to free yourself from stress and improve mental and physical health is so widespread now that it is almost cliché. From women's magazines to well-meaning aunts, if you have stress in your life, someone has suggested yoga. The vast majority of Americans have brushed off the suggestion without even trying it. However, yoga is not just for Aunt Carol; it's for everybody, and science says it actually works.

The vast majority of stressors in our world today are psychological; we may not have to run from a predator, but we have bills to pay, deal with screaming children, and have quick approaching deadlines at work. However, our bodies still react to stress in a very physical way, turning on genes that cause inflammation, a rush of glucose, and even an influx of cortisol and adrenaline. Over time, chronic stress takes its toll on the body, in the form of minor symptoms like headaches and poor eating habits, and in serious health problems like heart disease,

diabetes, obesity, and asthma.

Over 18 studies suggest that "mind-body interventions" such as yoga and meditation can help. Just 12 minutes of yoga per day can significantly reduce the genetic markers of stress, increase pain tolerance, reduce anxiety and depression, and create an overall feeling of wellbeing.

Yoga classes can provide a wonderful space for social interaction; you can make new friends or bring your family. If you are not in a financial position to pay for classes, you can watch free yoga videos online to practice the moves and stances.

Even if you experience physical limitations, there are more gentle forms of yoga than the stereotype of bending oneself into a pretzel. Additionally, the core principles of controlled breath and mindfulness can be practiced anywhere to great success. So, the next time you are stuck in bumper to bumper traffic, try slowing your breathing and focusing on your body, relaxing your muscles and release the stress from your body breath by breath. Starting a new habit of mind-body interventions may well make you happier now and save your future self from heart disease!

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Breaking Cabin Fever

By Lauren Antkowiak

March is here and with it should come warmer weather. But let's face it, this is Buffalo. So, while we find ourselves stuck inside a little bit longer, there are still ways to beat that cabin fever. Here are 5 things you can do to keep yourself from going crazy waiting for the weather to improve.

1. When your stuck inside, what better way to pass the time than cleaning. With spring just around the corner, get a head start on your spring cleaning! Or if cleaning is not your thing, you can always redecorate and rearrange your furniture while you clean to make it more enjoyable.
2. Spending time out in the sun during the winter months may seem impossible, but it is important for your health and will help improve your mood. When the temperature isn't insanely cold, find a way to be outdoors even if it's just for an hour. Go ice skating, sledding, take your dog for a walk, or start a friendly snowball fight with your friends.
3. Just because you are stuck inside doesn't mean you have to spend it alone. Host a party, game night, movie night, or a

kid's playdate. Surrounding yourself with others will make being stuck inside a lot more entertaining.

4. Start a new hobby. Most people like to read or knit during the winter, but there are many other indoor hobbies you can take up. Improve your cooking skills, try out a new recipe or revamp an old one, listen to a podcast, start crafting a scrapbook; there are countless hobbies that can help pass the time.
5. If the cold is too much, go on vacation. It's nice when you can take a break from the cold for a couple of days. Or plan something a little less expensive and take a day trip somewhere close by that you've always wanted to see. You don't have to go all out for a getaway, just as long as you get away.

The winter months can get very long in Buffalo, so you must find any way you can to get through it. These ideas will get you started and make the last stretch of winter a little more bearable. On the bright side, the snow has to melt eventually so sit tight, spring is coming.

March WNY Events

Shamrock Run: March 4th at 12:00 PM at Old First Ward Community Center in Buffalo, NY. For more information, please visit buffaloshamrockrun.com.

Olcott 49th Polar Bear Swim for Sight: March 4th from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at Krull Park in Olcott, NY. For more information, please visit olcottlions.org.

Hospice Spring Bouquet Sale: March 5th – March 10th at various locations throughout Buffalo, NY. For more information, please visit hospicebuffalo.com.

St. Patrick's Day Parade: March 18th at 2:00 PM on Delaware Avenue in Buffalo, NY. For more information, please visit buffalostpatricksdaysparade.com.

Good for the Neighborhood: March 28th at 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM at the Westminster Community Charter School in Buffalo, NY. For more information, please visit goodforthenighborhood.com.

Ongoing Events

The Ice on Canalside: At various times until March 18th at Canalside in downtown Buffalo, NY. For more information, please visit canalsidebuffalo.com

digiPlaySpace: All month long at various times at the Buffalo Museum of Science in Buffalo, NY. For more information, please visit sciencebuff.org.

Healthy Options Cooking Class: March 6th, 20th, and 27th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at D'Avolio Kitchen and Sun Cuisines in Williamsville, NY. For more information, please visit healthyoptionsbuffalo.com.

Recipe
Corner



Chocolate Protein Balls

Ingredients:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup natural peanut butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/4 cup chopped dark chocolate
- 2 tablespoons flax seeds
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 tablespoon chocolate-flavored protein powder

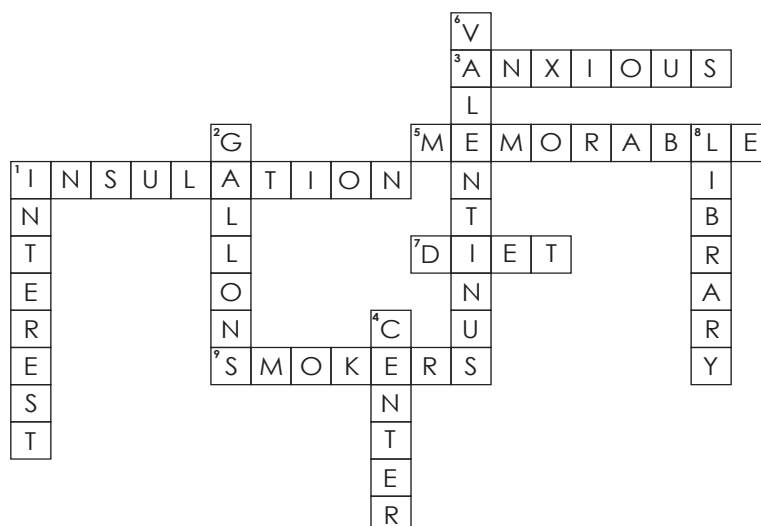


Directions

1) Stir oats, peanut butter, honey, chocolate, flax seeds, chia seeds, and protein powder together in a bowl until evenly mixed. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2) Scoop chilled mixture into balls. Keep cold until serving.

February 2018 Crossword Puzzle

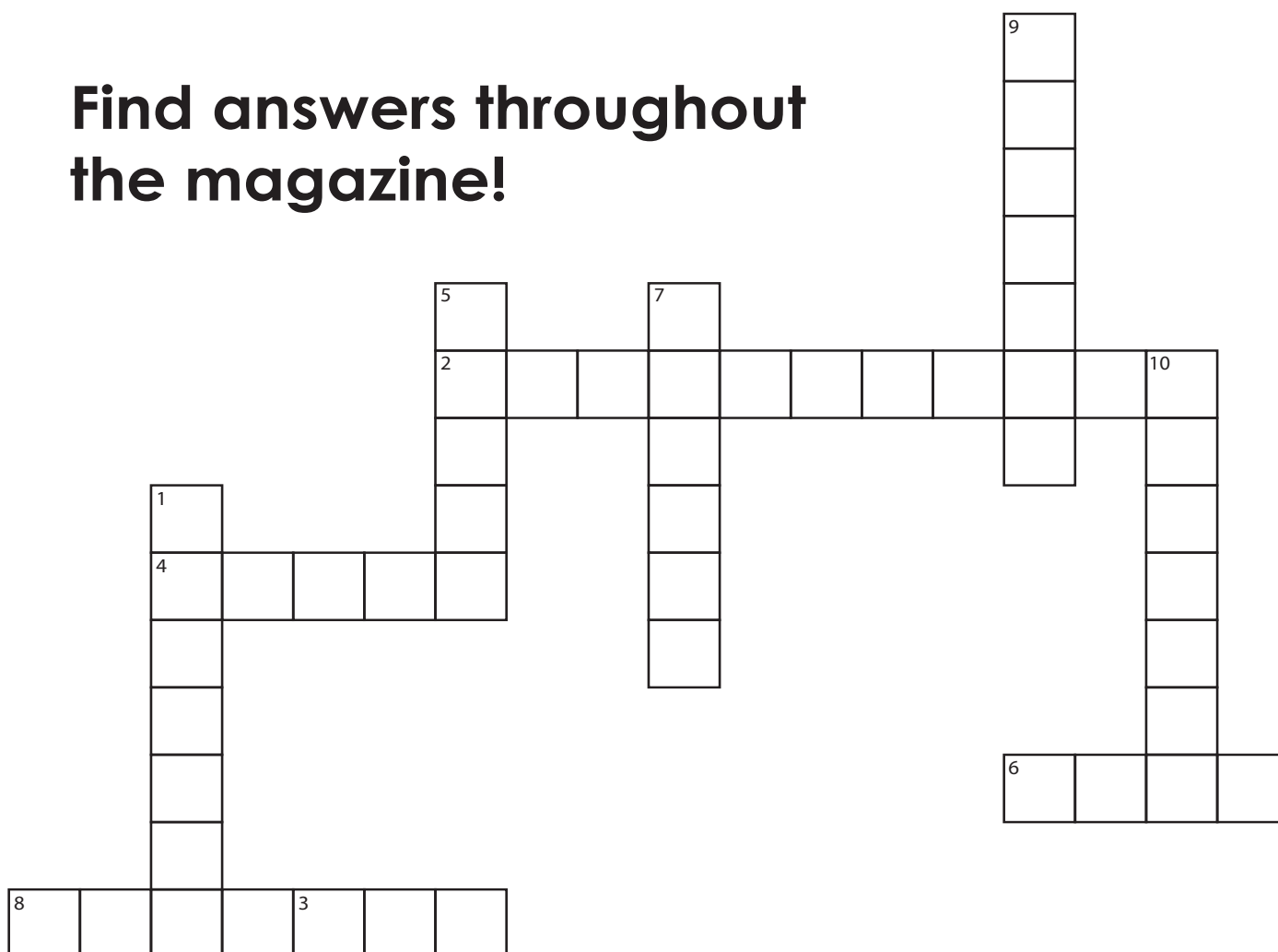


How did you do?
Check your
answers here!

March 2018

Crossword Puzzle

Find answers throughout the magazine!



Across

- 2) It is smarter to get taxes done professionally when you have _____, such as stocks or children.
 4) Break cabin fever by developing a new _____.
 6) 98.5% of Americans brush off the idea of _____.
 8) One type of sleep apnea is _____ sleep apnea.

Down

- 1) One food to avoid eating at night is _____.
 3) Practicing relaxing bedtime _____ can pave way for better sleep.
 5) Use a sleep _____ to notice sleep matters & make conscious behavioral changes.
 7) Risk factors of sleep apnea include excess _____.
 9) Incorporate a _____ into your child's bedtime.
 10) A common sign of sleep apnea is _____.

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