



your HEALTH *your* WELFARE

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 170 HEALTH & WELFARE

330 Southwest Cutoff
Worcester, MA 01604
Tel: 508-791-3416
Fax: 508-792-0936

UNION TRUSTEES



Shannon R. George, Co-Chairman



Ed Adley



Sean Foley

EMPLOYER TRUSTEES



Charles H. Aubuchon, Co-Chairman



Paul E. Dauphinais



Ronald Bevens

EDITOR

Vanessa M. Williamson, M.A.



NOVEMBER 1, 2017- NOVEMBER 30 2017

OPEN ENROLLMENT!

If you wish to change your health plan and/or add your spouse and/or dependents up to the age of 26 please contact the Fund office for an enrollment and change form.

You must complete the form and return it with a Certified Marriage Certificate or Certified Birth Certificate for each person you are adding to your plan.

This information must be received by the Fund on or before November 30, 2017. All changes become effective January 1, 2018.

NOTICE OF OPEN ENROLLMENT

OPEN ENROLLMENT
BEGINS NOVEMBER 1,
2017 AND ENDS
NOVEMBER 30, 2017.
THIS IS THE TIME OF
THE YEAR THAT YOU
MAY CHOOSE A NEW
HEALTH PLAN. BLUE
CROSS BLUE SHIELD
OF MA OR FALLON
HEALTH.

OPEN ENROLLMENT
ALLOWS YOU TO
CHANGE YOUR PLAN,
ADD YOUR
SPOUSE/AND OR ADD
YOUR DEPENDANTS UP
TO AGE 26, WHO ARE
NOT CURRENTLY ON
YOUR PLAN.

Now is the time if
you need to make
a change or an
update to your
information!

New Study Finds Lack of Sleep in Children is Linked to an Increased Risk of Developing Type 2 Diabetes



Children who sleep on average one hour less at night have higher risk factors for developing Type 2 diabetes, according to a new study published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Researchers observed self-reported sleep times, then took body measurements and blood samples in over 4,500 children aged 9 and 10. Children who slept on average one hour longer per night had a lower body mass index, lower insulin resistance, and lower fasting glucose than children who slept an hour less.

Is reversing diabetes possible?

New Studies Show Impact of Exercise on Type 2 Diabetes

While the study did not follow the participants long enough to see if they actually developed diabetes, the markers that are considered type 2 diabetes risk factors in adults were there.

The researchers suggest that increasing sleep duration by even half an hour could be associated with a lower body mass index and a reduction in insulin resistance. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommended 11 to 14 hours of sleep a night for children ages 1 to 2 and 10 to 13 hours of sleep for ages 3 through 5. In school-aged children, the groups, recommended 9 to 12 hours of sleep a night for children up to 12 and 8 to 10 hours of sleep for teenagers.

Dr. Edith Bracho-Sanchez, a pediatric specialist, told ABC News that she often tells her patients that sleep is just as important for health as eating healthy or getting enough exercise. Inadequate sleep for children is linked to lower academic performance, irritability and behavior problems, difficulty concentrating, and now even an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, according to Bracho-Sanchez.

Bracho-Sanchez adds that her number one tip for parents looking to increase the amount of sleep their child gets each night is to remove all electronics for the child's bedroom before they go to sleep, especially their phone.

For women:

Take this risk to heart.

Heart disease is the NO. 1 killer of women, causing 1 in 3 deaths each year. That's approximately one woman every minute. The majority of women between the ages of 40 and 60 have at least one risk factor for the disease.

Be aware if you have these symptoms, especially if they last more than five minutes, call 9-1-1.

- Unshakable fatigue and sleeplessness.
- Shortness of breath (very common in women)
- Nausea
- Uncomfortable chest pressure (instead of chest pain, which is a more typical symptom for men, although it may still occur in women)
- Pain that spreads to the shoulders, neck or arms.

Risk Factors are as follows:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Obesity/being overweight
- Smoking
- Physical inactivity
- Heredity
- Age
- Stress
- Excessive alcohol consumption (For women, that means more than one drink a day.)



A silent heart attack = a heart attack that has either no symptoms, minimal symptoms or unrecognized symptoms like:

- Feeling of a strained muscle in the chest or upper back
- Discomfort in the jaw, upper back or arms
- Prolonged and excessive fatigue that is unexplained.

Change your future:

- Ask your doctor to see whether you're at high, intermediate or low risk for heart disease.
- Set goals and work with your doctor to reach them.
- Don't smoke.
- Get your numbers under control (blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and body mass index).
- Know your family history, get up and move, eat healthy.

When it comes to Fat, Don't Cut Back on this One!

OMEGA-3

Also called the good fat it's a helpful and important form of fat, one that your body needs but can't make. It may help lower the risk of heart disease, depression, dementia and arthritis. Omega-3 reduces risks for heart disease by lowering risk of arrhythmia, an abnormal heart rhythm, which can lead to sudden cardiac death. It lowers triglyceride levels which are a type of fat in your blood, and it also slightly lowers blood pressure. Omega-3 slows the growth rate of plaque that clogs blood vessels. Omega-3 also prevents inflammation of the blood vessels and formation of blood clots.

Sources of Omega-3 are:

PLANTS

Broccoli
Edamame
Flaxseed
Flaxseed oil
Walnuts



FATTY FISH

Albacore Tuna	Herring	Salmon
Anchovies	Lake Trout	Sardines
Bluefish	Mackerel	Sturgeon

Supplements like fish oil have no proven benefit to improve cardiovascular health.





FRUIT & VEGGIES MORE MATTERS

Most people know that eating fruits and vegetables is important for good health, but most of us still aren't getting enough.

Eating a healthy diet with plenty of vegetables and fruits can help you:

- Lower your risk for heart disease and some types of cancer
- Maintain or reach a healthy weight
- Keep your body strong and active

Here are some ideas to help you and your family fit more fruit and vegetables into your day:

- Keep a bowl of fruit handy where the whole family can see it.
- Cut up fruits and veggies ahead of time so they're ready for quick, healthy snacks.
- Challenge your family to try a new veggie or fruit every week.

Remember, eating more fruits and veggies can be fun and it's worth it!

Get the Most Out of Exercise

It's a fact: exercise is good for you. It can help maintain weight, increase strength, and improve cardiovascular health. But recent research has shown even more specific health and fitness results.

Did you know that....

Exercise has been linked to lower risk of mortality. In one study, older men exercised 30 minutes, regardless of intensity, six days per week saw a 40% lower risk of mortality.

Exercise is associated with lower risk of stroke. One study reported that eight flights of stairs per day is associated with a 33% lower risk of stroke and early mortality.

Fitbit users who participate in in-app challenges average 2,000 more steps per day than those who do not. This is about an extra mile of walking per day.



So, keep using your Fitbit to be the healthiest you!

LET'S KEEP YOUR RECORD STRAIGHT.....



**Any changes in status
need record updating
as soon as possible!**

This includes: marriage, a new baby, dependent social security numbers, change of beneficiary, new email, addresses and/or phone numbers, divorce, or updating/changing your primary care provider with Blue Cross or Fallon to name a few.

**When you keep
up-to-date,
your service is not
interrupted!!**

September is: National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

One in three children in the United States are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems that were once seen only in adults, like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

The good news? Childhood obesity can be prevented. Communities, health professionals, and families can work together to create opportunities for kids to eat healthier and get more active.

Make a difference for kids; spread the word about strategies for preventing childhood obesity and encourage communities, organizations, families, and individuals to get involved.

How can National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month make a difference?

We can all use this month to raise awareness about the obesity epidemic and show people how they can take steps toward a solution.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage families to make small changes, like keeping fresh fruit within reach or going on a family walk after dinner.
- Motivate teachers and administrators to make schools healthier. Help them provide healthy food options and daily physical activities for students.
- Ask doctors and nurses to be leaders in their communities by supporting programs to prevent childhood obesity.

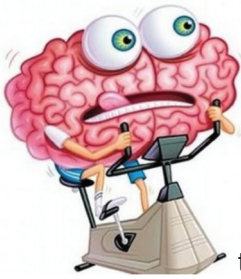
How can I help?

- Get active outside: Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride, or play basketball at the park.
- Limit screen time: Keep screen time (time spent on the computer, watching TV, or playing video games) to 2 hours or less a day.
- Make healthy meals: Buy and serve more vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain foods.

Taking small steps as a family can help your child stay at a healthy weight.



7 Myths About the Aging Brain



When it comes to what happens to the brain as it ages don't believe everything you hear. There are many myths about the ability of older people to keep their memory and concentration in tip-top shape.

There is no evidence that brain games live up to their promise of better mental acuity. That's the finding in a new report by the Global Council on Brain Health (GCBH), an independent collaborative of scientists, health professionals, scholars and policy experts.

Here are some of the myths the GCBH examined and why there're wrong:

- 1 Older people can't learn new things. Not so.** Trying new activities can actually stimulate cognitive skills. Seeking out new social connections that involve learning names and information about the people you meet and taking up a new musical instrument are just a few examples of activities that can boost your brain health.
- 2 You're stuck with the brain you were born with.** Also, not true. Brains are made up of cells called neurons. While it's true that most of the neurons are created before birth, studies have shown that new neurons can be created in the area of the brain that deals with learning and memory.
- 3 Experts don't have a clue about how the brain works.** Actually, scientists are learning more about the brain every day. Granted, it is a complicated organ. But new treatments for neurological conditions are coming to light, and researchers expect exciting breakthroughs down the road.
- 4 It's inevitable that older people will get dementia as they age.** Not true. Dementia can be caused by Alzheimer's disease or age-related events, such as a stroke. But getting older doesn't automatically mean you will get dementia. And it doesn't mean you are developing dementia if you can't remember the name of an old acquaintance you run into at the grocery store.
- 5 Learning a new language is for the young.** It is usually easier for children to pick up a new language as sentence structure tends to be less complex for them, and they tend to be less self-conscious when trying something new. But adults can also learn a new language. In some countries, such as Sweden, it's common for retired people to take classes for a third language.
- 6 Older people are doomed to forget things.** Being forgetful about details such as names and facts happens to everyone, no matter his or her age. Poor memory can often be attributed to lack of attention. Some helpful tips on remembering include writing things down (such as shopping lists) and taking note of visual details associated with your surroundings.
- 7 Just take memory training and you'll be fine.** Not exactly. While it's a good idea to look for ways to fine tune your memory, if you don't practice those skills and keep challenging your brain all that hard work will be wasted. It's the ultimate "use it or lose it" advice.



The idea that you can be overweight or obese yet healthy, if factors such as your blood sugar, blood pressure or cholesterol levels are normal, is a myth, according to a new study, and messaging around this should be changed. Carrying those extra pounds can increase risk of coronary heart disease by up to 28% even if your other results appear normal, further disproving the notion that people can be "fat but fit".

"We conclude that there is no such thing as being healthy obese," said Camille Lassale, an epidemiologist from Imperial College London's School of Public Health. "You are at an increased risk of heart disease". Previous studies have found that some obese or overweight people lack the health issues that often come with this added weight, such as high blood pressure or signs of fat in the blood that could clog arteries, classing them as "metabolically healthy." But more recent studies have gone against this belief showing that people with excess weight still have a greater chance of developing heart disease than those with a normal weight.

Lassale's team conducted the largest study to date investigating the impact on heart health when people are overweight or obese, as well as they are "metabolically unhealthy," such as having elevated blood pressure, blood sugar, triglycerides, and waist size or having reduced levels of HDL cholesterol, the "good" form, which the body needs. These factors combine to caused metabolic syndrome, which increases the risk of various heart-related conditions including heart disease and stroke.

The team used data from 7,600 adults who experienced coronary heart disease, and categorized them by their body mass index as well as by their metabolic health, such as high blood sugar levels. People were sampled from more than half a million people. People within the samples were separated into two groups, healthy and unhealthy, based on whether they had three or more of the markers for being "metabolically unhealthy," followed by separation by BMI to class them as normal weight, overweight or obese. Those in the metabolically unhealthy group were at greater risk for coronary heart disease. But the researchers then looked at the "metabolically healthy" group and found that they had a greater risk of heart disease than normal weight people. "Even if you are classified as metabolically healthy, (excess weight) was associated with an increased risk of heart disease," Lassale said, "it's another brick in the wall of evidence that being healthy overweight is not true."

"This study provides robust evidence that there is no such thing as 'healthy obesity,'" said Metin Avkiran associate medical director at the British Heart foundation. "the take-home message here is that maintaining a healthy body is a key step towards maintaining a healthy heart." The result of the study supports the ever-pressing need for governments, local authorities, public health bodies and individuals to seriously address the issues leading to our current levels of overweight and obesity.

Prevent Fires Before They Start

Use this handy fire prevention checklist to search for fire hazards in your home. Correct any hazards you find.



1 Smoking

- Try to quit.
- If you must smoke, then smoke outside.
- Make sure it is out all the way every time, use deep ashtrays.
- Keep all lighters and matches in locked or high cabinets away from children.

2 Cooking Safety

- Stand by your pan! Don't leave food grease or oils cooking on the stovetop unattended. Put a lid on a grease fire to smother it, then turn off the heat. Never move a hot pan.
- Keep the stovetop and oven clean to avoid grease fires.
- Remove paper towel, potholder, plastic bags, newspapers and other flammable materials from around the stove.
- Keep pot handles inward to prevent accidental spills of hot contents.
- Unplug appliances when not in use.
- Enforce a 3 feet kid zone around the stove. Keep children away while cooking to prevent burns.
- For fires inside a microwave or oven keep door closed.

3 Electrical Safety

- Check for cords pinched behind furniture like couches or bureaus. The wires can heat up and cause a fire.
- Overloaded outlets can cause a fire in the wall, electric cord and/or the appliance. Be sure to only plug one appliance cord into one electrical outlet.
- Use power strips. They will automatically shutoff if overworked or sudden power surge. They should only be used with a few low current devices such as electronics.
- Replace cords that are frayed or damaged. Do not run cords underneath rugs or thru doors as they may overheat due to worn insulation.

4 Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- To double your chances of survival from a fire in your home, have working smoke alarms and a practiced home escape.
- Install a smoke and carbon monoxide alarm on every level of your home and outside every bedroom.
- Test your alarms monthly.
- Replace batteries twice a year.
- Never disable your alarms.



5 Have two ways out

- Practice your home escape plan with the whole family twice a year.
- Plan two ways out of each room. The easier way out is probably the door and the second way out might be a window. If the window is over one story do not jump, instead yell for help and wave something out the window so that the fire department can see and hear you when they arrive.
- Have a meeting place outside where everyone will meet.

6 Only you can prevent a fire in your home

- Please make sure the fire department can see your house number from the street. Numbers need to be at least 4 inches in height and facing the street.
- Please clear 4 feet around your fire hydrants from snow, vegetation or any other obstructions. The life and property you save by doing this may be yours.
- The emergency vehicles need at least 8.5 feet of roadway to pass your streets safely. Please adhere to the parking bans and make sure they have space the space they need to safely respond to an emergency.
- In case of an emergency dial 911.

TOO MUCH SODIUM

Too much salt can cause high blood pressure and lead to heart disease and stroke. The recommended intake of sodium per day is 2,300 mg, however the average amount of sodium consumed per person per day is 3,400 mg.

More than 40 percent of daily sodium intake comes from the following types of foods:

- Packaged foods
- Processed foods
- Restaurant foods
- Breads and rolls
- Cold cuts and cured meats such as deli or packaged ham or turkey
- Pizza
- Fresh and processed poultry
- Soups
- Sandwiches such as cheeseburgers
- Cheese
- Pasta dishes (not including macaroni and cheese)
- Meat-mixed dishes such as meat loaf with tomato sauce
- Snacks such as chips, pretzels and popcorn

How to change:

- Cook at home. Use fresh ingredients.
- Read food labels carefully. Check the amount of sodium per serving!
- Compare similar foods and choose the one with lesser sodium.
- Choose foods that are lower in salt.
- Raise your voice. Tell restaurants and food industry leaders that you want lower-sodium foods.
- Substitute salt with herbs, vinegar or citrus flavors.
- Keep in mind that non-salty foods like bagels and cookies have sodium too.



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Safety Tips For Fall



Adults

- 1) Service your furnace: before the cold winter weather sets in, be sure to call your heating company to service your furnace.
- 2) Use fireplaces safely: keep that fire in its proper place by using a fireplace screen to keep sparks from flying out of the fireplace. Never leave a burning fire unattended, and make sure the fire in the fireplace is completely out before going to bed.
- 3) Use caution with space heaters: a space heater can be an effective way to warm up a chilly room, but it's essential that you read the instructions on the unit before you use it. Always allow at least three feet of empty area around space heaters.
- 4) Change smoke alarm batteries: change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors when you turn back your clocks for Daylight Savings Time. Check and replace any home fire extinguishers that have expired.
- 5) Be aware of poor visibility: falling leaves, can obscure your vision as can rain and fog. Shorter days make it more difficult to see children playing or people walking and riding bicycles. Use your dimmed headlights in bad weather with decreased visibility.

Children

- 1) Chose a backpack for your child carefully. Don't overstuff a backpack, it should weigh no more than 10 to 20 percent of your child's body weight.
- 2) When walking to school, walk on the sidewalk if one is available. When on a street with no sidewalk, walk facing the traffic.
- 3) Go to the bus stop with your child to teach them the proper way to get on and off the bus. Make sure your children stand six feet away from the curb. If your child and you need to cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the side of the road until you are 10 feet ahead of the bus. You should always be able to see the bus driver, and the bus driver should always be able to see you.

Halloween

- 1) All costumes, and accessories should be fire-resistant.
- 2) If children are allowed out after dark, fasten reflective tape to their costumes and bags to make sure they are visible.
- 3) When buying Halloween makeup, make sure it is nontoxic and always test it in a small area first.
- 4) Instruct children to travel only in familiar, well-lit areas and avoid trick or treating alone. Tell your children not to eat any treats until they return home. Teach your children never to enter a stranger's home.