

November – December 2007

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

# A Healthy Tomorrow

Information for a Healthy Lifestyle Today

- 2 TIPS TO AVOID THE FLU
- 3 DIABETES AND HEART HEALTH
- 4 STRESS-FREE HOLIDAYS
- 4 POWER NAPPING
- 6 JOURNAL FOR HEALTH

## Special Holiday Section

See Pages 4 & 5  
for details.



Reserve a Free 2008 Health & Wellness Calendar. See page 7.



# Don't Let the Flu Bring Down Your Family



**P**icture it: You and your spouse are battling body aches and the sniffles. Your oldest child has an excruciating cough. Your little one is fighting a fever. Sound like a nightmare? It's more like a portrait of your family coping with its very own flu outbreak.

To help you and your loved ones dodge the flu, take the following steps:

- Consider a flu vaccine—especially if your family includes those who are at high risk for getting a serious case of the flu, such as:

- 1 People age 50 and older
- 2 Adults and children with chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, or asthma
- 3 Children age 6 to 59 months
- 4 Close contacts of children ages 0 to 59 months
- 5 Women who are pregnant or will be pregnant during the flu season, which is typically November through March
- 6 People who live with (or are in close contact with) these high-risk individuals

- Remember what doorknobs, phones, and other surfaces have in common: germs. Wash them frequently with a disinfectant.
- Remind family members to wash their hands often with soap and warm water for 15 seconds.
- Don't share drinking glasses or eating utensils with your loved ones.
- Get plenty of sleep, eat a healthy diet, and exercise so your immune system stays charged.

To make an appointment with a doctor, call **1-877-LLUMC-4U**. ●

## Fight Germs with FREE Antibacterial Gel

To receive a Pocket Pump Instant Hand Sanitizer, call **1-877-LLUMC-4U**. Supplies are limited, so call today!



## Stay Well with Furry Friends

Here's some good news for animal lovers. Your dog—or cat—may indeed be your best friend, judging by the results of one study. Compared to married couples without these pets, those who owned a dog or cat enjoyed lower resting heart rates and blood pressure readings when their furry friend was in the room. Plus, pet owners experienced a smaller rise in blood pressure while performing stressful mental exercises. And pet owners' blood pressure levels returned to normal more quickly than did those of people without pets.



## THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT

Take part in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout® by smoking less or quitting for the day on the third Thursday of November. There are many effective ways to quit for good. Call **1-877-LLUMC-4U** for help kicking the habit.



# Diabetes and Heart Health

## How They're Connected

**D**iabetes, or high blood sugar, carries a lot of “clout” in the body. It can influence a wide range of organs including your eyes, kidneys, and heart—not for the better, but for the worse. In fact, one of the key concerns for people with diabetes is keeping their blood sugar under control to reduce their risks for complications, such as heart disease.

### A Higher Risk for Heart Problems

People with diabetes are two to four times likelier than people without diabetes to have heart disease. In addition, people with diabetes have the same high risk for heart attack as people without diabetes who already have had a heart attack.

Why do people with diabetes have higher heart risks? One reason is that those with diabetes tend to be obese and have high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Another problem is that people with diabetes tend to have poor blood flow and blood clotting problems.

### Keeping It Under Control

If you have diabetes, you can take steps to protect your heart. Experts offer these recommendations:

- Eat a healthy diet.
- Exercise. Aim for 30 minutes of activity on most days of the week.



- Don't smoke. Smoking doubles the risk of heart disease—and stroke—for people with diabetes.
- Keep your blood sugar under control. You should get a hemoglobin A1C test at least twice a year. This test shows the average amount of blood sugar, or glucose, in your blood during the past two to three months. The recommended A1C goal is less than 7 percent.
- Control high blood pressure, and have it checked at every doctor's visit. Aim for less than 130/80 mm Hg.
- Lose weight if you are overweight.

- Ask your doctor if you should take a low-dose aspirin daily. Prescription medicines also are available, which may help reduce your heart risks. ●

### Free Diabetes Slide Guide

Call 1-877-LLUMC-4U today and receive your free diabetes slide guide from the Diabetes Treatment Center.



## THE HEART-HEALTHY POWERS OF DARK CHOCOLATE

In a recent study, people with high blood pressure who ate 3 ounces of dark chocolate a day for 15 days experienced beneficial drops in blood pressure. They also saw their blood sugar levels improve. The magic ingredient: antioxidants called flavonols.

*Hypertension, Vol. 46, No. 2*



## BENEFITS OF NAPPING

The holidays certainly can be hectic! Stress levels tend to rise, and the amount of sleep we get often falls. That's on top of already low rates—as many as 70 million Americans may not get enough shut-eye. And, a chronic lack of sleep can affect work performance. It also can increase health risks, such as weight gain, diabetes, and high blood pressure. But taking a “power nap” can be just what you need to recharge during this busy time of year. Power naps are short bursts of daytime sleep lasting less than an hour. Research continues to show their benefits. Naps can improve alertness and brighten your mood, as well as increase productivity and performance.

Try these tips:

❶ **Limit the length.** Keep naps under 30 minutes for better short-term alertness and performance.



❷ **Select the right setting.** Find a restful place to close your eyes. Make sure the temperature isn't too hot or cold. Try to block out noise and light, if you can.

❸ **Time it right.** Avoid taking a nap too early or late in the day. Napping late may affect your sleep patterns and make it difficult to doze off at bedtime.

# Have Yourself a Stress-Free Holiday



**F**un, friends, family, food: Holidays are the best of times. But they're also stressful times, full of demands and deadlines.

What is stress? It's what you feel when you react to pressure. Under stress, you may feel anxious, overtired, or even angry. Too much stress can lead to illness, depression, and heart problems.

How can you ease your holiday stress? First, unpack your schedule. Another tried-and-true tip: exercise. Aerobic exercise, such as walking, improves mood and lowers blood pressure.

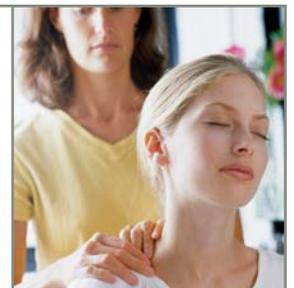
Recent research offers some other intriguing stress busters:

- **Enjoy music.** Any music will do, as long as you like it.
- **Write.** Studies show that writing about what stresses you can help improve your mood.
- **Get a massage.**

Finally, know that you're not alone. In fact, two-thirds of Americans say they plan to seek help to relieve stress. If feelings of anxiety persist, talk with your doctor. ●

### Win a FREE Massage

To receive your free informative brochure about the fitness and health services provided at Loma Linda University Drayson Center, call 1-877-LLUMC-4U. You will be automatically entered for a drawing to win a free massage.



# Avoid Holiday Overeating

Do the holidays put even your best healthy-eating habits to the test? You're not alone. Between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, many people add from 5 to 10 pounds. But with a little planning, you can enjoy the foods of the season without tipping the scales. Here's how:

- **Avoid hunger.** Don't skip meals in preparation for a holiday feast. Being famished often leads to overeating. Instead, eat a small, low-fat snack first.
- **Take small portions.** Denying yourself will only lead to frustration. Use a smaller plate—your servings will look bigger.
- **Focus on family and friends, not food.** It's hard to talk and eat at the same time.
- **Choose wisely.** Load up on vegetables and fruits. Limit butter and high-fat salad dressings and gravies.
- **Stick to your exercise routine.** Take walks after big holiday meals.
- **Delay dessert.** If you wait a while, your craving for sweets may quiet down.



- **Stand away from the food.** The closer you are, the more likely you are to nibble. ●

## FREE Pedometer

Take a walk after that big holiday meal—and don't forget to bring a pedometer! For a FREE pedometer, call 1-877-LLUMC-4U. Supplies are limited, so call today!



## Sweet Potato Custard

- 1 C cooked sweet potato
- ½ C 2 small, mashed bananas
- 1 C evaporated skim milk
- 2 T packed brown sugar
- 2 beaten egg yolks
- ½ t salt
- ¼ C raisins
- 1 T sugar
- 1 t ground cinnamon
- nonstick cooking spray as needed

1. In a medium bowl, stir together sweet potato and bananas.
2. Add milk, blending well.
3. Add brown sugar, egg yolks, and salt, mixing thoroughly.
4. Spray a 1-quart casserole with nonstick cooking spray. Transfer sweet potato mixture to casserole dish.
5. Combine raisins, sugar, and cinnamon; sprinkle over top of sweet potato mixture.
6. Bake in a preheated 325° Fahrenheit oven for 40–45 minutes or until a knife inserted near center comes out clean.

*Yield: 6 servings*

*Serving Size: ½ cup Each serving provides:  
Calories: 144, Total Fat: 2 g, Saturated Fat:  
<1 g, Cholesterol: 92 mg, Sodium: 235 mg*

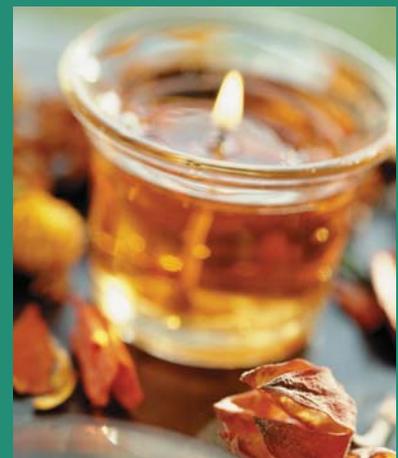
## Deck the Halls with Care

Winter holidays can bring good cheer—and unexpected asthma and allergy triggers. Decorations and ornaments that have been in storage may harbor mold or be coated with dust. To prevent this problem, thoroughly clean and dry all decorations, seal them in plastic bags, and store them in airtight containers.

Other yuletide triggers include:

- Smoke from fireplaces and wood stoves
- Scented candles, air fresheners, and potpourri
- Poinsettia plants, related to the rubber plant, which can affect those allergic to latex

Holidays often include out-of-town trips. Remember to bring your medications, a copy of your asthma action plan, and your doctor's phone number.



# Health and Well-Being at Middle Age

**M**iddle age is an exciting time for many. With children out on their own, you may have more time and freedom. But changes that occur during this stage can take a toll on your physical and emotional well-being. Follow these steps to stay in tip-top shape.

## Embrace the New You

Around menopause, many women get thicker around the middle and lose muscle and gain fat. Hair turns gray, wrinkles deepen, parts sag—and there's not much you can do about it. But

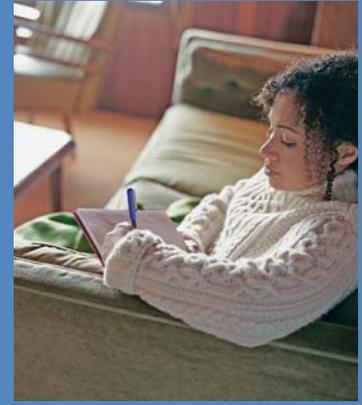
remember, maintaining a healthy self-image is important to your overall health and well-being. Eating right and exercising for at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week can help you maintain a body weight that's right for you—not the rail-thin model on the magazine cover. Talk with your doctor about a diet and exercise plan geared toward your health needs.

## Take Care of Yourself

Many middle-aged women find themselves caring for aging parents. This can cause fatigue and stress. What's more, the demands of caregiving cause many women to let their own health slide. Take charge now—before you feel overwhelmed—by investigating caregiver resources and support groups. And talk with a doctor if you feel sad, tired, or anxious for more than two weeks. You could be dealing with depression. ●

## Catch up on Health screenings

Middle age is a good time to catch up on all the important health screenings. If you need a women's doctor, or OB/GYN physician, call the obstetrics/gynecology office at Loma Linda University Health Care at 1-877-LLUMC-4U.



## Jot Down Worries in a Journal

Writing is more than a way to express yourself creatively. Recent research suggests it actually benefits your overall health. Simply putting your troubles into words can help you come to terms with distressing events.

### Physical Health Benefits

Research shows that airing strong feelings through writing results in fewer doctor visits. It also boosts blood levels of immune cells, which help your body fight disease. Research shows journal writing can help:

- Reduce pain and need for medications
- Ease depression
- Shorten the time it takes to find a new job or improve mood after losing a job

### Two Tips for Writing Right

Experts think that at least two factors predict whether journal writing will positively affect health:

- A sense of optimism. Using more positive words than negative words.
- Using writing to explore the causes for events or emotions.



# Upcoming Events

To receive more  
detailed information,  
call 1-877-LLUMC-4U.

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2007

## MEDICAL CENTER & CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

### Good 2 Grow:

#### Total Toddler Check-up

Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday, 8 a.m. to noon  
A "health journey" for children 0-5 years of age and parent/guardian.  
Call for details.

#### Child & Adolescent Asthma

One-on-one counseling session to educate and develop an asthma control plan.

#### Prenatal Class

Second Monday of each month  
5:30 to 7 p.m.  
English & Spanish classes  
Providing information for a safe and healthy pregnancy.

#### Pulmonary Rehab Program

For those with lung disease.  
Please call for more information.

#### Moms Joining Moms Support Group

Fridays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
5-week, free of charge group for new moms and their babies.

#### Autoimmune Support Group (Lupus, Fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Thyroid, etc.)

Third Thursday of each month  
Children—4 to 5 p.m.  
Adults—5 to 6 p.m.  
Self-Help Course—6 to 7:30 p.m.

#### Bike Presentation Ceremony

Sunday, November 11  
1 to 3 p.m.  
Bike donors from Stater Bros/  
KFROGGERS for Kids  
Radiothon will present first  
bikes to deserving children in  
the community.

#### Head & Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury Support Group

Fourth Monday of each month  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

#### Always in My Heart

Second Monday of each month  
7 to 8:30 p.m.  
A bereavement class for parents  
who have lost a baby.

#### Blood Drives

Mondays  
The Bloodmobile will be in  
the Medical Center parking lot  
every Monday.  
Sign up in the Children's Hospital.

#### Overeaters Anonymous

A 12-step program for those  
dealing with eating disorders.  
Call for dates and times.

## BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER

#### Chronic Pain Medication Dependency Program

For those who have become  
dependent on prescription drugs.

#### Child and Adolescent Outpatient Program

For children ages 8 to 18  
experiencing behavioral problems,  
family conflicts, and school-  
related difficulties.

## CANCER INSTITUTE

#### Focus on Healing: "The Lebed Method"

A therapeutic program for those  
with chronic illnesses  
Please call to register.



#### "New Dimensions" Women's Cancer Support Group

Second and fourth Tuesdays of  
the month, 6 to 8 p.m.

#### Cancer Resource Center

Monday through Thursday,  
8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
All materials free to community.

## CENTER FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

#### Weight Management Orientation

Tuesdays, November 6 and 27 and  
December 18  
3:30 p.m.  
Please call for details.

#### International Travel Clinic

Providing a full range of  
vaccinations necessary for travel  
as currently recommended by the  
Center for Disease Control.  
No appointment necessary.

#### Optifast

A 26-week, medically supervised  
program for those with 50 or  
more pounds to lose

## CENTER FOR JOINT REPLACEMENT

#### FREE Arthritis Seminar

Wednesdays, November 14 and  
December 4 and 12  
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
East Campus, Meridian Room  
Preregistration required.

## DIABETES PROGRAM

#### Winning with Diabetes

Morning and evening classes;  
Series of five sessions on types,  
causes, and self-management.  
Preregistration required.

#### Diabetes Support Group

First Tuesday of the month  
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

#### Christmas Cards

All of the designs are  
created by Children's  
Hospital patients. Each  
package includes 20  
cards, four  
designs and  
can be purchased for  
\$15. All proceeds go  
towards the Bring-A-  
Smile volunteer  
program, which funds books,  
games, toys, and many other  
activities for our pediatric patients.  
Call to order yours today.



#### Come join our Volunteer Information and Orientation

to learn about all the  
opportunities available at LLU  
Medical Center and Children's  
Hospital. Volunteering is a  
meaningful way to contribute to  
your community.  
Call to register.

If you do not see a class or event  
you are looking for, call  
1-877-LLUMC-4U for more  
information.

## Get a jump-start on 2008!

Call today and reserve your free copy of the 2008  
Health & Wellness Calendar. Filled with important  
dates and events, it is a must-have for the coming year.  
Call 1-877-LLUMC-4U.

# You Can Reduce Your Risk for Cancer

What are you doing to avoid cancer? The answer lies in your daily habits. As many as 50 to 75 percent of cancer deaths in the United States are caused by the choices people make—including smoking, physical inactivity, and unhealthy eating choices.

To help people understand the power they have to prevent cancer, the American Cancer Society (ACS) has launched a new campaign called the “Great American Health Challenge.”

## Steps to Prevent Cancer

The ACS’s Great American Health Challenge encourages people to take the following steps to reduce their cancer risk:

■ **Check:** Your risk of cancer often depends on your family history of the disease and your age. Fortunately, screening tests can detect cancer—often in its earliest, most treatable stages. Talk with your doctor about your specific cancer risk. She can tell you which screening tests you should have.

■ **Move:** Obesity and physical inactivity raise risk for many major cancers, including colon and breast cancer. To avoid these cancer risk factors, engage in

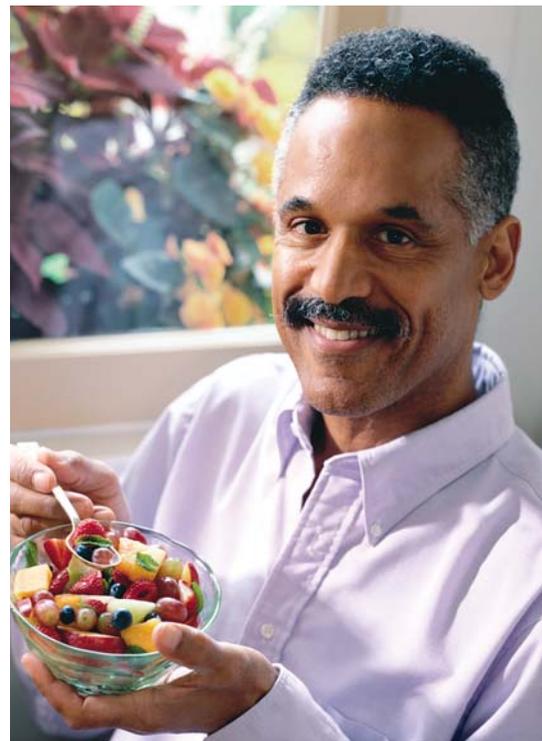
moderate-intensity physical activity all or most days of the week—preferably for 30 minutes each time.

■ **Nourish:** People who eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables lower their risk of several cancers, including colon, lung, and stomach cancer. You can, too. Eat 10 servings, or five cups, of fruits and vegetables every day.

■ **Quit:** Smoking contributes to about 30 percent of all U.S. cancer deaths. Avoiding tobacco is the single most important thing you can do to reduce your cancer risk.

## Take the Challenge

Take the first step: Complete the Great American Health Check at [www.cancer.org/greatamericans](http://www.cancer.org/greatamericans). This online tool will assess your cancer risk and will provide you with a prevention action plan that you can share with your doctor. ●



Need more information on how to stay cancer-free? The Cancer Resource Center at Loma Linda University Cancer Institute provides vital information for you and your family. For more information, please call 1-877-LLUMC-4U.

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER  
11234 Anderson Street  
Loma Linda, CA 92354-2804

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Ruthita J. Fike  
CEO/Administrator

Jemelle Ambrose  
Editor-in-Chief

Tammy Veach  
Executive Director  
Marketing

Shelly Moore  
Managing Editor



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