INFORMATION FOR KEEPING HEALTH



## The Trouble With Binge-Watching

Missed the last Walking Dead? Just binge-watch it after work.



to sleep problems

watching keeps your focused on what you

an hour before bed.

dead the next day.

#### **COMMENTS?**

Send comments to the editor:

evan.jensen@ wellsource.com

## What Your Waist Size Says About Your Health

Pick up a tape measure to find out

What's your waist size? If you were going to tailor a suit or dress, you'd need to know to get the right fit.

But it's also a measure that can tell you a lot about your health.

Your waist size is normal if it's 35 inches or less for women or 40 inches or less for men, according to the National Institutes of Health.

If your waist size is bigger than this, you're at risk for health problems like diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. A bigger belly means you're storing fat, a risk factor for chronic disease.

How to measure your waist size:

1. Wrap a tape measure around your waist. (Note: The tape measure should be just above your hip bone near your belly button.)

#### **VIDEO**

Women

35" or less

Why waist size matters tinyurl.com/ y9gv7q3j



- **3.** Pull the tape measure snug.
- 4. Record your waist size.

If your waist size is larger than normal, set a goal to improve it. Be active 30 to 60 minutes a day. Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds, and less junk food.2

40" or less

Set a small goal, like losing one pound a week, until your waist size is in the normal range. 

## What Happens If You're Always Stressed Out?

5 health risks linked to chronic stress

Are you stressed out? Work, relationships, money problems, family matters, and major life events can be stressful. It happens. A little stress is a normal part of life.

But what if you're always feeling stressed out? Researchers at Northwestern University wanted to find out.3

They looked at 80 studies on stress and health problems. They found that people living with chronic stress also have higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol throughout the day.

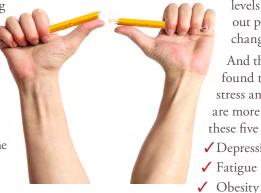
Cortisol helps your body turn food into energy. It helps your body respond to stress. And it helps control blood pressure.

But instead of normal ups and downs in cortisol

levels, the most stressed out people don't see a change. Levels stay high.

> And that's a problem. Researchers found that people with chronic stress and elevated cortisol levels are more likely to suffer from these five health problems:

- ✓ Depression ✓ Cancer
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Autoimmune disorders







### RECIPE

### Cashew Nut Cream

Looking for a sweet treat that's easy to make, has just 161 calories per serving, and only requires three ingredients? Give this Cashew Nut Cream recipe a try:<sup>5</sup>

#### Ingredients

1 C cashews, raw 4 canned pear halves, drained

½ tsp vanilla extract

#### **Directions**

- 1. Place all ingredients in a food processor.
- 2. Puree several minutes. Use spatula to make sure all ingredients are pureed, smooth and creamy.
- 3. Serve and enjoy, or store in refrigerator. Makes 6 servings.





## Fiber-Rich Foods Help Lower Cholesterol

Healthy diet can reduce the need for medication

What's your cholesterol level? If you don't know, or haven't checked it in a while, schedule a simple blood test with your doctor.

A normal total cholesterol level is less than 200 mg/dL. If it's higher than that, it raises the risk for a heart attack or stroke.

And about half of all adults in the U.S. have high cholesterol. Left unchecked, cholesterol, can slowly block blood vessels and arteries without any symptoms.

Food vs. medicine to control cholesterol

Statin drugs are widely used to control cholesterol. But new research suggests a fiber-rich diet can also be a good way to control cholesterol.

Data from the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association shows lifestyle medicine and nutrition can help control cholesterol.

In a University of Toronto study, researchers compared the results of a fiber-rich diet to statin drugs to control cholesterol.<sup>4</sup> After a month, researchers found that eating foods high in fiber helped lowered cholesterol just as well as taking medication.

What foods are high in fiber? In the study,

people ate oats, barley, psyllium, okra, and eggplant. Other foods high in fiber include avocados, pears, squash, berries, legumes, nuts, and seeds.

Add these foods to your diet to control cholesterol, improve your health, and



### What Happens If You're Always Stressed Out? (continued from page 1)

Manage stress in healthy ways If you are stressed out, take action to manage stress in healthy ways. Get regular exercise and 7-8 hours of sleep. Practice relaxing with yoga,



#### References

- 1. Exelmans, L., et al. (2017). Binge viewing, sleep, and the role of pre-sleep arousal. *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, 13:08. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.5664/jcsm.6704.
- 2. Tufts University. (2017). Eating to beat belly fat. *Health & Nutrition Letter*, 34:11. Accessed on Aug. 11, 2017 from: http://tinyurl.com/ya7qpext.
- 3. Adam, E., et al. (2017). Diurnal cortisol slopes and mental and physical health outcomes: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 83:25-41. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2017.05.018
- 4. Jenkins, D., et al. (2005). Direct comparison of a dietary portfolio of cholesterol-lowering foods with a statin in hypercholesterolemic participants. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 81(2):380-387. Accessed on Aug. 11, 2017, from: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/ydad5hlw">http://tinyurl.com/ydad5hlw</a>.
- 5. Radd, S. (2016). Cashew nut cream. *Food as medicine: Cooking for your best health* (p. 244). Warburton, Australia: Signs Publishing Company.



# Take the September Health Challenge!

Sit Less, Move More: Stand up, stretch, and move more this month.

## Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This Dr. Joe Raphael answers the question: What's the benefit of a morning routine?

