

# COMPLETELY WELL

August 2017

## FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

- Immunizations, Cantaloupe 2
- Focus on Fiber 3
- Beat the Heat and Repeat 4
- Ask the Trainer: Strength Training and Weight Loss 5



Insurance Agency

## Importance of Personal Development

As children, we are often told “think about what you are about to do” or “think about what you’ve done.” As adults, we are still sometimes guilty of not thinking about our choices – before or after we make them. It’s understandable that our busy schedules move us from one activity to another with little time to breathe - let alone think. However, the regular practice of self-reflection is essential to understanding ourselves more clearly and changing our thinking and behaviors more easily.

How does taking time to self-reflect benefit you? First, it can help you identify the thoughts and beliefs you have about yourself. We all have them: beliefs about what we are good at, bad at, how we fit into our families and the workplace. It’s important, though, to see these beliefs as your perception, rather than absolute truth. Decide which beliefs help you and which do not. Think about what you can do to change the ones that may be getting in your way.

Another benefit of self-reflection is to take yourself off of “autopilot.” Whether it’s a daily fast food choice or the cigarette you have first thing in the morning, many behaviors are habits. Becoming aware of what we do can help us break the habits that are not helping us live a healthy life.

Finally, taking time to self-reflect can lead you to even greater ideas, choices, and goals. For example, if you begin making conscious, healthy choices about food, you are more likely to add exercise to your day. Noticing your successes – no matter how small – leads to further success.





## Immunization for Prevention

Though we often associate immunizations with children, there are immunizations that are especially recommended for adults. August is National Immunization Awareness Month, created to raise awareness about vaccines and their benefits. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has created a schedule for immunizations according to age, including an Adult Schedule for those 19 and older. These schedules, readily available from the CDC website or from your doctor's office, list the vaccines and specific ages that the dose should be given according to the recommendation.

### How do Vaccines Work?

Vaccines contain killed or weakened antigens (germs, viruses, or bacteria) of common diseases. They cause the body to create the antibodies needed to fight the antigens, but they are not strong enough for the body to respond with the disease symptoms, though occasionally mild symptoms may be present. Thus, the vaccine creates immunity without actually producing the illness.

*Find out what immunizations are recommended for you and when on page 3.*

2 COMPLETELY WELL AUGUST 2021

## Produce of the Month

### Cantaloupe

Cantaloupe is the ubiquitous fruit found alongside the standard restaurant breakfast. Often overlooked, cantaloupe is a great source of vitamin A and C and may help to reduce the risk of metabolic syndrome, a collection of risk factors that increase the risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

**The Basics:** Selecting a ripe cantaloupe begins by picking it up and feeling its weight. It should feel "heavy." The outside of the cantaloupe shouldn't be bruised. You can try tapping the melon, listening for a low or deep sound, indicating ripeness. You can also press on the softer end of the fruit, where the vine used to be. This spot should not be hard or overly soft, but should give slightly when you press it. You can always buy a cantaloupe that is not quite ripe and leave it on your kitchen counter for a couple of days to ripen. Ripe cantaloupes should be stored in the refrigerator for no more than 4 days. Before slicing, wash the outside of the melon so that your knife won't spread bacteria or dirt from the outside of the fruit to the fruit itself. Once washed, you may slice and enjoy. Cut fruit can be stored in the refrigerator up to 1 week.

**Try This:** Chunks of cantaloupe pair well with organic yogurt or low-sodium cottage cheese for a nutritious and protein-packed snack. You can also make a simple salad with cucumber, cantaloupe, and fresh mint to pair with pork and chicken dishes.

**The Facts:** One cup of cantaloupe has just a little more than 50 calories, is an excellent source of vitamin A and C, and is a very good source of potassium and fiber.

## Focus on Fiber

The benefits of fiber have been widely proclaimed and “added fiber” has been highlighted on many products. Despite this, most Americans are still not getting enough fiber. It is recommended that men consume 38 grams, and women consume 25 grams; however, most Americans only get about 15 grams of fiber per day. Fiber has many health advantages, and a diet based on vegetables, fruit, and whole grains will make it easy to get enough daily fiber.

Fiber helps food move through the digestive tract. This has many benefits. You will feel full longer and absorb more nutrients from your food; the intact fiber helps to clean the colon, reducing the risk of polyps and colon cancer; fiber slows the absorption of sugar in the intestines, lowering blood glucose levels; and it helps to lower cholesterol. Finally, high fiber diets are associated with achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

There are two main types of fiber: soluble and insoluble. Both types of fiber are important for your health! Soluble fiber attracts water, taking on a gel-like consistency that slows down digestion. Soluble fiber is found in beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, and oats. Insoluble fiber is found in wheat, whole grains, and brown rice. Insoluble fiber helps to keep you regular by moving waste through the intestines and adding bulk. Most fruits and vegetables contain both soluble and insoluble fiber.

Rather than look for processed foods that have added fiber, choose whole foods: whole grains, a variety of vegetables, and fruits. Build each meal on this foundation, and you will not have to count grams of fiber. You will get what you need in a day! Be sure to drink plenty of water, especially if you are adjusting to this diet. Water is important to process the fiber and keep your system working well.



## Immunizations

*Continued from page 2.*

What’s included in the immunization schedule?

Vaccines are recommended to certain populations and certain age groups.

- In general, a yearly flu vaccine is recommended for everyone, especially for those who have underlying health concerns, work with or are around children or the elderly, or work in a healthcare setting.
- Tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccine should be given if it has not, and requires a booster every 10 years. Those who were born in 1957 or later who did not have measles, mumps, or rubella and did not receive the vaccine should be immunized.
- Adults age 60 and older are recommended to receive the herpes zoster vaccine.
- In addition, adults with certain chronic conditions (including heart, lung, or liver disease) may benefit from a pneumococcal vaccine, Hepatitis A or B vaccine, and meningococcal vaccine.

Talk with your doctor about which vaccines are recommended for you and your family. For more information, go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and search vaccinations.

# Beat the Heat and Repeat

By LeeAnn Wilcox

Summer is a time full of fun gatherings, outdoor activities, and sunshine, but summer also comes with increased temperatures, humidity, and inclement weather. Whether you're spending some quality relaxation time, exercising, or simply executing daily activities outdoors, there are some safety concerns to keep in mind.

**Protect Your Skin:** Wearing shorts and swimsuits can help beat the heat, but it puts you at risk for painful sunburns. To protect your skin, opt for lightweight clothing that covers your shoulders, head, and feet; find a sunscreen you trust with appropriate SPF and safe ingredients; and keep to the shade when the sun is most intense, generally between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

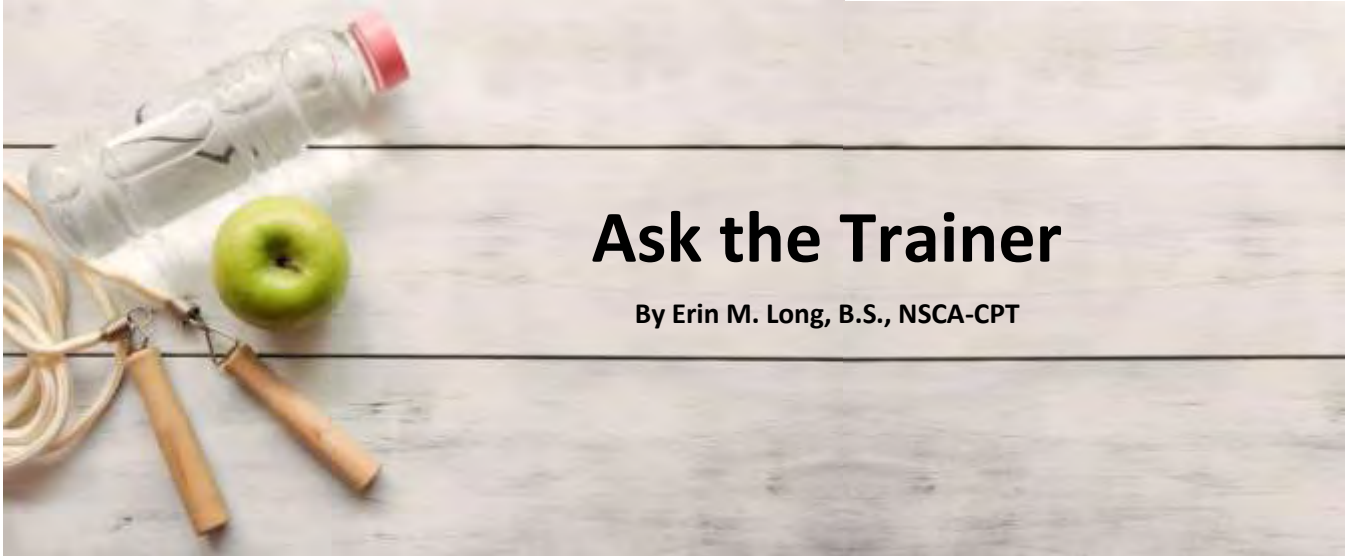
**Drink Plenty of H<sub>2</sub>O:** When you're outside during the day, you may experience more perspiration. If you're swimming or around water, it may be difficult to truly assess how much you've perspired. Make sure to keep hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day to replace the water you've lost through sweating and avoid heat-related ailments. Remember, beverages that contain caffeine, alcohol, or added sugars can actually dehydrate our bodies.

**Take Breaks:** It's important to take breaks when outside in the sun and heat. Seek out shade regularly, and be aware of your body and its needs throughout your activity time. Eat water-dense meals filled with fruits and veggies and pay attention if you need to slow down or take a break. Keep some cool cloths on hand for a quick aid. Heat-related ailments can develop quickly. Staying hydrated, cooling down, and taking breaks can help prevent many heat-related emergencies.

**Be Aware:** Check the weather forecast before planning to spend the day outdoors and create a backup plan if necessary, know where emergency personnel or services are located, have a plan for an emergency, and keep to a buddy system when in crowds.

Summer can be a fun season with exciting memories made. Keep those memories positive; don't let safety take a backseat.





# Ask the Trainer

By Erin M. Long, B.S., NSCA-CPT

**Q:** Hi Erin! I have been trying to lose weight the last 6 months and have done pretty well. I've lost about 20 of the 40 pounds I want to lose. The first four months I watched what I ate and did cardio. The last two months I've started to incorporate strength training. When I first started lifting I continued to lose some weight but recently I've started to gain a few pounds back. I haven't noticed clothes fitting tighter. Actually, they feel even looser. My question is why have I gained weight instead of losing it?

-Sonja T.

**A:** Hi Sonja! I must start by congratulating you on all your hard work these last few months on your weight loss journey. You have done amazing! As for your question, there are so many misconceptions when it comes to losing weight and strength training. Your situation is very common. Many people can actually put a little weight on while strength training instead of losing it. I tell my clients regularly: it's not just about the number on the scale, it's about how you are feeling and how your clothes are fitting. You may not be losing weight at the moment but you are getting smaller in size. You must also know that muscle takes up much less space than fat. If you looked at 5lbs of fat and 5lbs of muscle, the fat would take up almost 3 times the amount of space as the muscle. As women, we get so obsessed with the number on the scale, and it can be discouraging, but look at all your other wonderful accomplishments you've made these last few months. You need to focus on those. Wouldn't you rather weigh 5lbs more but be down 2 sizes?

If you continue not losing weight, here are a few things to consider. The first would be to make sure you are eating enough calories and what those calories consist of. Are you getting enough protein and eating enough fat? The cleaner you eat the better, so make sure you are sticking with a healthy eating plan. Another area to look at is making sure you are drinking enough water. Water is so important for weight-loss. I recommend trying to drink 80 ounces or more of pure water each day.

I hope this helps to answer your question. Good luck in your weight-loss journey. You are doing an amazing job, so keep it up!

Take Care,

Erin M Long

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