

# Newsflash

Issue 2019.02

## **Eat With Others When You Can**

Older adults who eat alone may be more likely to have a poorer diet, studies suggest. For instance, a Japanese study published in the journal of Age and Ageing found that men 65 or older who lived and ate alone were almost 2.5 times more likely to be depressed than those who ate with others. A University of Cambridge study found that those who regularly dine on their own eat significantly fewer vegetables. And several studies suggest that older adults who take their meals in the presence of others consume more than those who dine by themselves

So try to schedule at least one daily meal with someone else, or think about dining some of the time at a local community or senior center, these often offer group meals.

And when you are eating on your own, make it easier to make healthy choices. Have convenient foods such as hard-boiled eggs, yogurt, and low-sodium frozen dinners on hand. Make up sandwiches ahead of time and arrange them in the fridge. It serves as a cue for you that it's time to eat, even if you're not particularly hungry.



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## **Secrets to a Better Night's Sleep**

How do you get a good night's rest? A recent study of 8,900 people who reported having few sleep difficulties (or none) in the previous 30 days were posed this question. Here's what was found: Good sleepers are more likely to exercise during the day, go to bed and wake up at a set time, unwind for 30 minutes before going to sleep, and engage in sexual activity before bed.

To help you create a sleep environment that is truly conducive to good rest, here are some tips from sleep specialists.

### **GET THE RIGHT MATTRESS**

If you've slept on the same mattress for more than eight years and wake up stiff and sore, you should think about getting a new one. Worn out mattresses don't supply the same comfort and support as newer ones. And as we get older, our bodies become more sensitive to pressure points, so a cushiony mattress might provide a better night's sleep than a rock-hard bed.

### **DIM THE LIGHTS**

Watching television before climbing under the covers might seem like a great way to relax, but it can cue your brain to feel alert rather than drowsy. If you use an e-reader in bed, consider features and apps that display white text on a black background, which is less stimulating than the usual brightly lighted white background. To dim the glare of street lights or early-morning sun, use black-out curtains or wear eyeshades.

### **NEUTRALIZE NOISE**

White noise can improve sleep quality by reducing the time it takes to fall asleep and the number of times you're awakened while sleeping. In the study, 43 percent of the respondents who said they tried sound machines said they helped them sleep better. The machines – which can make you feel like you're in a forest or at the beach – worked almost as well as insomnia drugs for putting respondents to sleep.

In our test, all three of the units we looked at, made by Brookstone, Homedics, and Marpac, blocked out at least some unwanted sounds. You can also try turning on a fan or simply using earplugs.

### **ADOPT A ROUTINE**

Keep a consistent schedule of wake up time and bedtime, and don't vary them by more than an hour each day. Adjust the temperature in your bedroom to 68° F and 70° F, which is the ideal range for sleeping. Avoid exercising, eating a big meal, or drinking alcohol or caffeine within 3 to 4 hours of going to bed. And put your dog or cat in a separate sleeping spot and snuggle up with your significant other instead. You'll sleep better.



The following **New Drugs** were recently approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration and added to ProCare Rx's National formulary. Each drug will be reviewed at the next ProCare Rx's P&T Committee meeting.

Brand Name	Dose Form	FDA Approved Indication
Primatene Mist (epinephrine)	Inhalation Aerosol	Treatment for asthma
Tolsura (itraconazole)	Capsules	Treatment for blastomycosis
Truxima (rituximab-abbs)	Injection	Treatment for non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
Daurismo (glasdegib)	Tablets	Treatment for acute myeloid leukemia
Dextenza (dexamethasone)	Ophthalmic Insert	Treatment for postoperative ocular inflammation
Udenyca (pegfilgrastim-cbqv)	Injection	Treatment for cancer
Vitrakvi (larotrectinib)	Capsules and Oral Solution	Treatment for TRK fusion cancer
Xospata (gilteritinib)	Tablets	Treatment for acute myeloid leukemia
Yupelri (revefenacin)	Inhalation Solution	Treatment for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

### Opioids After Surgery? How to Stay Safe

Opioid drugs such as oxycodone (OxyContin and generic), oxycodone and acetaminophen (Percocet and generic), and hydrocodone and acetaminophen (Vicodin and generic) are often part of pain management after joint replacement. But they can have side effects, such as constipation, depression, and dizziness, and carry a risk of dependency. A 2016 study found that people who have knee surgery may be more likely to use opioids persistently than those who have other surgeries.

To ease pain the right way: Talk to your doctor about how long you should take opioids. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines, many people can transition to non-opioid pain drugs within three days after surgery. And ask about short-acting opioids. Extended-release versions stay in the body longer and hike overdose risks.

Get moving as soon as possible, and keep up with recommended exercises. This can help you recover more quickly.

Expect some discomfort. (But your pain should be controlled sufficiently so that you can do physical therapy.)

After you've stopped needing opioids to control pain, take the extras back to your pharmacy or to a designated drug drop-off location.

### Can Being Cold Make You Sick?

With apologies to the generations of mothers who tried to convince their children otherwise, the answer to the question above is no. Getting cold and damp does not have a noteworthy effect on whether or not you get sick.

So why do we tend to catch more colds and flu during the colder months? There are a couple of explanations.

One is that we spend more time indoors, closer to people who might be breathing germs on us. The other: Cold air tends to be drier, and lower humidity helps viruses survive in the air.

When you're sick, the microscopic droplets of moisture that you exhale contain virus particles. When the air is dry, the droplets evaporate, but the tiny virus particles remain suspended in the air longer and can be breathed in by someone else. And researchers have found that when the temperature inside your nose drops, it becomes more hospitable to cold viruses.

That said, staying warm and dry will make you more likely to go outside and get some physical activity. Even if a virus gives you a cold, moderate exercise will make you feel better and may hasten your recovery. The trick to being comfortable is to dress in base layers made from moisture-wicking material (such as merino wool, polyester, or silk), add a warm fleece or down layer, and top with a wind- and water-repellent jacket.

