



The Secret to Staying Well

Press the button in an elevator. Hold on to the stair rail. Grab a door handle.

And some nasty germs have probably joined you on your journey.

In a recent study, researchers found 549 kinds of bacteria in a typical office, most of which came from the mouth, nose, or intestinal cavities of another person. Touch your mouth or your eye with bacteria on your hands, and you could be calling in sick with a cold, the flu, or worse.

But there's a secret to avoid getting sick. And it's not a pill, fad diet, or

bleach-cleaning frenzy. One of the best ways to prevent bacteria from making you sick is washing your hands the right way. It's one of the most important things you can do to help stop the spread of infection and stay healthy. Here's how to wash your hands:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together to make a lather, and scrub them well. Be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

Watch how to wash your hands www.cdc.gov/cdctv/handstogether

3. Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel, or air dry them. If soap and running water are not available, use hand sanitizer.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Healthy Workplace Project.

Enjoy the Goodness of Grapefruit

When was the last time you had a glass of grapefruit juice or a slice of the sweet and sour fruit? If it's been a while, now is a good time to give it a try. Grapefruit contains zero fat, sodium, cholesterol, and no added sugar. But it does deliver a tasty punch of health benefits.

In a recent study, researchers placed obese adults on a healthy diet. Before each meal, one group ate half a grapefruit or drank a glass of grapefruit juice. At the end of the 14-week study, the grapefruit group lost about 15 pounds per person. A control group followed the same diet, but drank water before each meal. The water group also lost an average of 15 pounds per person. But the grapefruit group also

had better cholesterol levels, appetite control, and overall nutrition.

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Low-Intensity Exercise Lowers Blood Pressure

An estimated 25 percent of adults in the United States have high blood pressure. This condition increases the risk for heart disease, stroke, and other serious health problems. And heart disease claims the lives of 17.3 million people in the world every year.

If your blood pressure is higher than 120/80, you should take action. And if it is 140/90 or higher, your doctor may recommend medication and weight loss. One effective way to lower your blood pressure is low-intensity exercise. Just taking a short walk a few times a week could make a difference.

In a recent study, researchers found that as little as 20 minutes of low-intensity exercise three to five times a week helped lower blood pressure. And the results started to show up almost immediately.



You can lower your blood pressure by doing low-intensity exercise most days of the week with activities such as:

- ✓ Light walking
- ✓ Stretching or
- ✓ Gardening
- ✓ Vacuuming
- ✓ Mopping
- ✓ Washing the car

Exercise is an effective way to lower your blood pressure. It's also a good way to prevent high blood pressure, before it becomes a problem. And it doesn't take a lot of work. When you make the effort to move a little more, your heart will be healthier. Just remember to be active daily when possible.

Journal of Sports Medicine.

National Institutes of Health.



Even One Soda a Day Raises Diabetes Risk

Pop open a can or twist the cap on a soft drink. The fizzy sound can trigger a gulping reflex for some people. The average American drinks 44 gallons of soda a year. That's the same as drinking about 470 cans of soda and tossing back 41 pounds of sugar. And it's one reason why health experts believe one in three people could have type 2 diabetes by 2050. Just one

can of soda a day may increase the risk for this disease that can lead to poor circulation, kidney problems, blindness, and early death.

Researchers recently studied soda consumption habits of more than 28,000 people. They found that drinking one can of sugar-sweetened soda a day raised the risk for type 2 diabetes by 22 percent. And there was no significant increase in diabetes risk for those who only drank pure or diluted fruit juice.

But don't bank on switching to diet soda as the answer. A separate study that followed 66,118 people for 14

years also found a link between type 2 diabetes and diet soda.

Maybe it's time to rethink your drink. Drink more water. Add a lemon or lime for flavor. Or replace soda with 100-percent fruit juice. Anything you can do to reduce your risk of developing diabetes is worth the effort.

*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.
Journal of Diabetologia.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

Healthy alternatives to soda
<http://tinyurl.com/csrxva3>

The Goodness of Grapefruit

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The goodness of grapefruit is found in its rich source of vitamins and nutrients. Vitamin C in grapefruit helps prevent cancer and heart disease. It's also a good source of vitamin A that strengthens your immune system and keeps your eyes healthy. Grapefruit contains potassium that helps lower your risk for high blood pressure and stroke. And fiber in grapefruit helps with digestion, aids in weight loss, and controls blood sugar levels.

Eat a grapefruit for breakfast, or use it to make a fruit smoothie. Add grapefruit to salad. Try broiled grapefruit for dessert. However you enjoy it, grapefruit tastes great, and it's healthy.

If you take any prescription medications, check with your doctor before drinking grapefruit juice. Grapefruit juice can interfere with some medications and be dangerous.

*Nutrition & Metabolism.
U.S. Department of Agriculture.
Florida Department of Citrus.*

Try these grapefruit recipes
<http://tinyurl.com/cn4wwsc>

Think You're Safe Texting While Walking?

Pennsylvania resident Cathy Cruz Marrero was walking through a local mall and texting on her smartphone. She was so focused on the phone that she didn't see what was coming. She walked right into a fountain and fell headfirst into the water.

Most states now have laws that prohibit texting while driving. And it makes sense. Research shows you're 23 times more likely to get in an accident while texting than keeping your thumbs wrapped around the steering wheel. But the problem doesn't stop there.

"Texting while walking is dangerous too," says Marrero. "I could have been walking into a bus, a car, a ditch, anything. Texting and walking, take it from me, is dangerous. It really is."

Almost one in three pedestrians is distracted by a mobile device while crossing busy roads, according to a recent study. Researchers tracked more than 1,000 pedestrians crossing busy streets. They found that people who were texting while walking took longer to cross the street, and were more likely to ignore traffic signals, jaywalk, or fail to look both ways before crossing. More than 1,150 people a year are hospitalized for injuries caused by texting while walking, according

to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Doctors have treated texters for facial fractures, eye injuries, blunt head trauma, nasal fractures, sprained ankles, and foot injuries.



Texting while walking may seem harmless enough. But if you're staring down at your phone with your thumbs moving rapidly across the keypad, you're not paying attention to what's in front of you. It could be a water fountain or worse.

*British Medical Journal
Consumer Product Safety Commission*

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

Q: How can I tell if I have strep throat?

A: Go to www.wellsource.info/wn/ask-strep-throat.pdf to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: evan@wellsource.com, subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.