It is better to take many small steps in the right direction than to make a great leap forward only to stumble backward.
— Chinese Proverb

Small changes, big impact

Making easy changes to various areas of your life can have powerful, positive effects on your overall well-being.
Since the pleasure of most foods is in the first few bites, eat 1 thing on your plate at a time, at least at the start of the meal when you can concentrate and enjoy the full flavors.

— Mireille Guiliano

2 tricks to cut calories without trying

1. Use mustard on your sandwich instead of mayonnaise. A tablespoon of mayo can have 100 calories or more. Mustard has only a few.

2. Instead of 2 slices of thick pan pizza, opt for 2 slices of thin pizza. You can easily save more than 150 calories.

Go ahead, eat that cookie

Don’t deprive yourself of all guilty pleasures. If you tell yourself you can’t ever have a particular food again, you may want it even more, which could cause you to obsess about it, get cranky thinking about it or give in and binge on it. It’s OK to still have your favorite junk foods — in moderation and with planning.

Recipe switcheroo for a healthy you

Make simple substitutions for more nutrition.

• Unsweetened applesauce for oil or butter — Works well in any batter bread (such as banana or zucchini), muffins or cakes — even with pre-boxed mixes.

• Avocado purée for butter — Although they both contain fat, avocados sport the kind that’s good for you. The creaminess of avocado purée works well for fudge brownies.

• Evaporated skim milk for cream — Same consistency with a fraction of the fat.

• Mashed cauliflower for mashed potatoes — Cauliflower has fewer calories than potatoes, but once mashed, you can hardly tell the taste or texture difference.

• Banana purée for ice cream — Simply freeze the banana, then purée it. No need to add milk, cream or sugar.

• Puréed fruit for syrup — Purée fruit, warm it on the stovetop and add a smidge of honey. The fruity topping has less sugar than syrup and provides an extra dose of antioxidants and vitamins.

Broccoli Soup

• 2 Tbsp. olive oil • 1 shallot, chopped • 1 clove garlic, chopped • 1 head of broccoli, upper stems and florets, chopped • 4 cups no-salt-added broth • ½ tsp. salt • ½ tsp. dried thyme • ¼ cup shredded cheddar cheese

Add oil to soup pot on medium heat. Add shallot and garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add broccoli, broth, salt and thyme. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, or until broccoli is tender. Use immersion blender to purée in pot, or add to a blender and purée until smooth. Serve in soup bowls and garnish with cheddar cheese.

Serves 4. Per serving (about 1 cup): 103 calories, 3 g protein, 9 g fat (2 g saturated fat, 1 g polyunsaturated fat, 6 g monounsaturated fat), 3 g carbohydrate (0 g sugar, 1 g fiber), 346 mg sodium
GetMoving: Take a stand

As a society, we are pretty sedentary. In other words, we sit — a lot.

Thanks in part to jobs that have many of us glued to chairs 8 or more hours a day, we are inactive. Our tendency to sit carries over into our personal lives, too. Some health professionals speculate that our lack of having or wanting to stand has contributed to overall weight gain.

According to a study from the University of Missouri at Columbia, standing burns twice as many calories as sitting. Think about all the times that you sit when you could stand instead. Maybe it’s time to take a stand — for your health. Try standing while:

• Reading a newspaper, magazine or book.
• Attending a large meeting (stand at the side or back of the room so you don’t block anyone’s view of the presentation).
• Watching a kid’s sporting event.
• Waiting in a reception area for an appointment.
• Watching television.
• Folding laundry.
• Talking on the phone.

7 shopping secrets to finding the best athletic shoe

1. Try on shoes after a workout or run or at the end of the day when your feet will be at their largest.

2. When wearing the shoe, you should be able to wiggle all of your toes.

3. Wear the same type of sock you wear for that sport.

4. The shoes should feel comfortable when you try them on. You don’t need to break them in.

5. Walk or run a few steps in your shoes to be sure they are comfortable.

6. Your heel should not slip as you walk or run. It should be snug in your shoe.

7. If you participate in a sport 3 or more times a week, you need sport-specific shoes.

Source: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
When in doubt, choose change.
— Lily Leung

Wipe away risks for colds and flu
It’s cold and flu season. Change hand towels often or opt for paper towels, especially this time of year. Using a common towel can pass germs from 1 person to others. For more on cold and flu prevention, go to Jan.HopeHealth.com/flu.

Scratch out winter itch
Dry skin is a common skin problem, especially during the winter when humidity is usually low. Dubbed the winter itch, seasonal dry skin can occur at all ages and in people with or without other skin problems. If you suffer from skin that feels rough and looks dull and flaky, take a short shower (10 minutes or less) no more than once every 24 hours. The water temperature should be warm, not hot. Don’t scrub hard, and use soap only where it is necessary. Although longer showers can be relaxing, they will increase the loss of natural oils from the skin and worsen skin dryness. Also drink plenty of fluids to hydrate from the inside out.

Feeling the pressure

Being just 10 pounds overweight increases the force on your knees by 30 to 60 pounds with each step.

The added load can increase the stress on knees and break down cartilage, which can lead to conditions such as osteoarthritis. Overweight women have nearly 4 times the risk of knee osteoarthritis as normal-weight women; for overweight men, the risk is 5 times greater.

Knees are not the only joints affected by extra weight. Being overweight has also been associated with hand osteoarthritis.

Just think of the alternative: If gaining weight increases the force on joints, think about how good it would feel to lose weight and ease the pressure. The lighter load might make it easier to get active without the aches and pains.

Start with small changes:
• Reduce fried foods.
• Replace soft drinks with water.
• Eliminate seconds at meals.
• Serve smaller portions.
• Walk in place while watching television.

Source: The Johns Hopkins Arthritis Center

Re-adjust the temperature on your productivity

If your office is feeling too hot or too cold, here are some tips to stay comfortable and productive throughout your day:

• Have a thermostat chat: If some co-workers prefer the office steaming while you and others like a cooler work space, discuss a compromise on temperature with your colleagues, rather than secretly changing the thermostat back and forth.

• Dress in layers: To prepare for fluctuating office temperatures, layer clothing. Then, you can remove or add clothing so you’re comfortable and able to do your best work.

• Find a time and space that works: If a particular time of day or space in the office is too warm or too cold for you to work productively, find an alternative. Talk to your manager about coming in earlier or moving to a different area for part of the day.

Source: The Johns Hopkins Arthritis Center
If we don't change, we don't grow.
If we don't grow, we aren't really living.
— Gail Sheehy

Young and stressed
Kids and adolescents grapple with stress just as much as grown-ups. The adults in their lives can help. One strategy: Think out loud with a child about how you have coped with similar situations in the past or how you might cope with the situation if you haven’t faced a similar stressor. For more ways to help children deal with stress, go to Jan.HopeHealth.com/stress.

Source: Vanderbilt University

See page 8 —

Stock Your Tool Box:
See how you can link to Cool Tools & Resources to learn more about the topics in this issue!

Before you reach the boiling point
If you struggle with anger, learn to deal with your feelings before they turn to rage. Consider relaxation.

• Breathe deeply, from your diaphragm, not from your chest. Picture your breath coming up from your gut.
• Slowly repeat a calm word or phrase, such as relax, take it easy or let it go. Repeat it to yourself while breathing deeply.
• Visualize a relaxing experience from either your memory or your imagination.
• Stretching your muscles in a yoga-like movement may make you feel much calmer.

Practice these techniques daily, and learn how to use them automatically when you’re in a tense situation. A few other things to consider: Refrain from consuming alcohol as it can fuel anger. Also, be sure to mention any anger issues to your health care provider, who may be able to provide help.

Source: American Psychological Association

The Whole You: Emotional/Mental Health

If only there were more hours in the day
Contrary to most people’s wishes, there are only 24 hours in a day. To get more things done without losing your mind and still have time to relax:

• Plan and prioritize. At the beginning of every day (or the night before), identify the 3 or 4 most important things you have to do in the coming day. Then, tackle those to-dos first. If you don’t get anything else done besides those tasks, you’ve still had a productive day.
• Chip away at the big rocks (your large projects). Set aside time every day or week to work on those projects so they become smaller and smaller.
• Say no to new commitments and interruptions. Now you can focus on current commitments and have the time to work on them.
• Throw away trash. Regularly go through your commitments and get rid of anything that doesn’t help you advance your goals or sinks your time or energy.
Putting your house on the line

If you need money to make home improvements or pay bills and are considering refinancing your home, a second mortgage or a home-equity loan, weigh options carefully. If you can’t make the required payments, you could lose your home as well as the equity you’ve accrued. For more information on second mortgages or home-equity loans, go to Jan.HopeHealth.com/home.

See page 8 — Stock Your Tool Box: See how you can link to Cool Tools & Resources to learn more about the topics in this issue!

It’s never too early to get ready for year’s end holiday shopping

You might still need to pack away this past holiday season’s decorations and write thank-you notes for gifts, but now is a perfect time to start getting ready for next December’s holiday spending. Putting aside just $10 weekly will be $500 by December.

Fiscal Fitness:

6 tips for trimming the grocery bill

1. Create a weekly menu, make a list of ingredients and stick to both. Avoid the temptation to throw extras into the cart.
2. Shop alone. Shopping with others — be it your partner or children — can increase your bill as they add items they want.
3. Look through grocery store ads. Circle items that are good deals so you’ll remember to pick them up on shopping day. Use coupons, or sign up for grocery store customer rewards programs.
4. Don’t try to be brand loyal. Buy what’s on sale.
5. When buying large bags of apples, oranges, potatoes or onions, check the produce carefully to make sure nothing is bruised or spoiled.
6. Look high and low. The most expensive items are usually displayed on the shelves that are at eye level.

Tax preparation: DIY or hire a professional?

Do it yourself when you:
• Can spend the time needed to tally income and deductions and complete necessary forms.
• Understand the calculations required to figure your taxes.
• View taxes as an interesting annual challenge.
• Want to spend tax preparation fees on other things.
• Are organized and keep good financial records.
• Have previous tax returns to use as templates.

Consider hiring a tax pro when you:
• Don’t have the time and expertise to complete required forms.
• Have a complex financial situation (e.g., capital gains, business income or itemized deductions).
• Experience a major life change with tax implications (e.g., marriage, divorce, parenthood or retirement).
• Relocate to a new state and must file 2 state income tax returns.
• Have a new source of income (e.g., interest from a trust account).
• View taxes as a burdensome chore.

With or without a tax preparer, taxpayers are responsible for the accuracy of their tax return. Review it carefully before signing. Free tax preparation services are available through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Free File programs. For more information, go to Jan.HopeHealth.com/tax.

Learn more about Fiscal Fitness: at Jan.HopeHealth.com
Keep your car ready for emergencies

A vehicle’s winter emergency kit should include:

- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Food and water
- Flares
- A tire pump
- A compass
- Maps
- A flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Plastic bags (for sanitation)
- A first-aid kit
- A bag of sand or cat litter (for traction)

January Crossword Puzzle

Find out how well you know the topics covered in this issue of the newsletter.

Across
2. Buy sport-specific shoes if you participate in a sport at least this many times weekly (number spelled out)
3. Doing this burns twice as many calories as sitting.
6. Try mashing this, which has fewer calories, instead of mashed potatoes.
8. You can substitute this for butter in many recipes.
9. To deal with anger, try breathing deeply from this.
11. When wearing shoes, you should be able to do this with your toes.
12. A gland located down low in the front part of your neck.

Down
1. Being 10 pounds overweight can increase the force on these by 30 to 60 pounds.
4. Longer showers can increase the loss of this (2 words, no hyphen, no space)
5. Which condiment has fewer calories — mayonnaise or mustard?
7. An item to have in your vehicle’s winter emergency kit.
10. The most expensive items displayed at a grocery store are usually at this level.

Wired or weary? Could it be your thyroid?

January is Thyroid Awareness Month. The thyroid is a gland located down low in the front of your neck. Although it’s relatively small, it influences every cell, tissue and organ in your body.

Think of the thyroid as an engine or processor. When all is working well, you run smoothly. However, that’s not always the case. An estimated 20 million Americans have thyroid disease, yet 6 in 10 of them are unaware they have a problem. Women are 5 to 8 times more likely than men to have thyroid problems.

When your thyroid is overactive (hyperthyroidism):

- You feel jittery and anxious.
- You can’t sleep.
- Your heart races and skips.
- You get headaches.
- You lose weight without trying.

When your thyroid is underactive (hypothyroidism):

- You are tired and sluggish.
- You might feel depressed.
- You want to sleep all the time.
- You gain weight without trying.
- You get constipated.
- Your skin and hair feel coarse and dry.

You can find out if you have thyroid disease through a simple blood test from your health care provider.

For more on thyroid health, go to Jan.HopeHealth.com/thyroid.

Learn more about HealthyConnections: at Jan.HopeHealth.com
New year, new habits
The start of a new year is a popular time to set health and wellness goals.

If you’ve never been one for New Year’s Resolutions, think of January as an opportunity to introduce little tweaks rather than major changes. Here are some ideas. Give each a try for at least a week to see if it works for you.

Jan. 1 – 7: Add 3 minutes of stretching to your morning or evening routine. Focus on your legs, arms and back for 1 minute each. The best time to stretch is after your muscles are warm.

Jan. 8 – 14: Cut back on the amount of cereal in your bowl to make room for cut-up bananas, peaches or strawberries. You still eat a full bowl, but with fewer calories and more nutrition.

Jan. 15 – 21: Ramp up the way you walk. Swing your arms more, engage your abdominal muscles and glutes or quicken your pace — even if you’re just walking down the hall.

Jan. 22 – 31: Make out a weekly menu — for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Pack your meal plan full of nutritious foods and stick to it.

Your Source for Cool Tools & Resources

Check out Jan.HopeHealth.com for a ton of useful well-being information. In addition to the links in the newsletter, here’s what else you can find online:

A print-and-post calendar of daily doable resolutions. Try changes for a day to see if they are something that you want to make permanent.

A print-and-post list of simple cooking substitutions to make recipes more nutritious.

A crossword puzzle to test how well you know the topics covered in this issue of the newsletter.

Go to Jan.HopeHealth.com to find these resources.

“One kind word can warm 3 winter months.”
— Japanese Proverb

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just 1 more time.”
— Thomas A. Edison

“Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.”
— Jim Ryan

“The color of springtime is in the flowers; the color of winter is in the imagination.”
— Terri Guillemets