



# Total Wellness<sup>®</sup> BECOMING A TOTAL PERSON<sup>®</sup>

Volume XX, Number 11

November 2012

## Get the Most Out of Your Doctor Visit

When visiting your doctor – whether you’re under the weather or getting a checkup – here are several steps to help you get the most out of your visit:

- ◆ Make a list of questions you have and take them with you to your appointment. Also, take along a list of any medications you’re taking – prescription and over-the-counter.
- ◆ Explain your condition or concerns clearly. Share all of your symptoms and any treatments you have tried.
- ◆ Ask a family member or friend to attend the appointment with you. Having someone there to help you remember questions and offer support can be useful.
- ◆ If you don’t understand a diagnosis or explanation, ask your doctor to explain it to you again or request handouts or a website that explains it further.
- ◆ If you question a diagnosis, disagree respectfully and seek a second opinion.
- ◆ Avoid feeling pressured into an immediate decision about your health. Weigh your options outside the doctor’s office.
- ◆ Learn about your condition by researching it online or at the library. If you have any questions, ask your doctor.

## Quit Your Smoking Habit

**M**illions of smokers will commit to quitting smoking for the Great American Smokeout this year and discover that they can do it for life. You can, too!

Quitting smoking isn’t easy. In fact, many smokers try two or more times before finally being able to quit. Quitting smoking is difficult because nicotine is an extremely addictive drug. But while quitting takes hard work and a lot of effort, knowing you need to quit means you’ve won half the battle.

### To prepare for your Quit Day:

- Set a specific date and mark it on your calendar.
- Tell friends and family about your Quit Day.
- Stock up on oral substitutes – sugarless gum or carrot sticks.
- Decide on a plan. Will you use nicotine replacement therapy? Will you attend a class? If so, sign up now.
- Practice saying, “No thank you, I don’t smoke.”
- Set up a support system – like a friend or a family member who has successfully quit. Ask your doctor for help.



### On your Quit Day:

- Don’t smoke. Get rid of all cigarettes, lighters, ashtrays, and any other items related to smoking.
- Keep active – try walking, exercising, or doing other activities or hobbies.
- Drink lots of water and juices.
- Avoid situations where the urge to smoke is strong.
- Change your regular routine. Learn new skills and behaviors.
- Avoid getting discouraged if a relapse happens. Most sources say that relapses often occur within the first three months after quitting. Take quitting one day at a time.

### The benefits of quitting smoking include:

- you’ll live longer and better
- you’ll lower your chance of having a heart attack, stroke, or cancer
- if you’re pregnant, you’ll improve your chances of having a healthy baby
- the people who live with you, especially your children, will be healthier
- you’ll have extra money to spend on things other than cigarettes.

For more information, visit the American Cancer Society at [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

## Looking Ahead: Diversify Yourself

**D**iversification (putting your financial “eggs” in several different baskets) is the backbone of any sound financial strategy. It’s a long-standing principle, as evidenced by an ancient proverb that says, “Divide your portion to seven, or even to eight, for you do not know what misfortune may occur on the earth.”

For most investors, diversification is strictly a financial term, applied only to an investment portfolio. But as you look toward the future, and particularly if you are approaching retirement, consider the advantages of expanding your options by diversifying your own skills, training, and talents.

A good friend of mine retired from a successful medical practice. After he retired, he went back to school — this time to a trade school to learn how to be a plumber. He didn’t work full time, but by doing odd jobs he truly enjoyed one or two days a week he was able to supplement his income. He also made his hobby/trade a ministry by helping widows and single moms without charge. They got a lot of fun out of telling their friends that their handyman was an M.D.

Another friend was a retired airline pilot who traded in his wings for a paintbrush and easel. A lifelong art lover, he began painting landscapes as a hobby long before he retired. When he discovered a thriving market for his talent, he launched his own business and became a much sought-after artist.

Do you have a skill or talent that could be marketed? If a backup career seems elusive at first, keep your eyes open for opportunities. I know one former executive who parlayed a fascination with woodworking into an incredibly lucrative business, in which he salvaged decrepit old wooden structures and transformed them into unique picture frames.

As you look toward the future, work with your financial advisor to ensure that your portfolio reflects a healthy mix of investment options. Also consider how diversification might be applied to your own skills, training, and talents. The years ahead are sure to be marked by change. And, the better equipped you are to adapt to changing times, the better off you will be.

*Larry Burkett (1939-2003), a well-known author, teacher, and radio personality, was co-founder of Crown Financial Ministries, whose daily radio broadcasts are heard on more than 1,000 stations in the U.S. Larry’s best-selling books include The Coming Economic Earthquake, What Ever Happened to the American Dream? and Victory Over Debt.*



## Prepare for Holiday Spending

During the holidays, many people splurge and then find themselves in a bind come the new year. **To avoid overspending this holiday season, remember these tips:**

- Create a budget and stick with it. Decide how much you will spend on each person and find gifts that fit into this price bracket.
- Limit your gift list. Suggest that your family members draw names if your family is large. Some families opt to get gifts only for the children.
- Search for bargains. Start shopping early for gifts and find items you need on sale or at discount stores.
- Make your own gifts. Many times a gift made personally by you would be more appreciated and cherished.
- Keep track of your gifts and spending so you don’t accidentally go over your budget.



## Having Fun on a Budget

With today’s busy lifestyles, finding time to spend with your family takes effort and commitment. **Here are ideas on how to spend more quality time with your family:**

- ◆ Spend time talking with your child. Talk about any topic of interest to both of you. Talk about your day’s events and the child’s feelings about them.
- ◆ Prepare a meal together as a family. Let each family member participate in some way.
- ◆ Plan a family game night. Game nights provide time to enjoy each other’s company and can be a learning experience too.
- ◆ Read to one another. Choose a book that everyone in the family would enjoy – such as an old classic like Tom Sawyer – and spend time several days a week reading it together. Visit your local library for a great selection of books to read.
- ◆ Attend local cultural events – like the theater, symphony, ballet, and art exhibits.
- ◆ Catch an afternoon movie matinee that is good for the whole family. Share a popcorn and sip on water.



## ULCERS

### Recognizing the Signs of an Ulcer

Ulcers are sores that can form on the lining of your digestive tract, which includes the esophagus, stomach, duodenum (the first part of the intestines), and intestines.

**The signs that you possibly may have an ulcer include:**

- Feel better when you eat or drink and then worse one or two hours later (duodenal ulcer)
- Feel worse when you eat or drink (gastric ulcer)
- Stomach pain that wakes you up at night
- Feel full fast
- Heavy feeling, bloating, burning or dull pain in your stomach
- Vomiting
- Unexpected weight loss.

**To help your ulcer heal:**

- Don't smoke.
- Avoid anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin and ibuprofen.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol (or have them only in small amounts and on a full stomach).
- Avoid spicy foods if they cause heartburn.

Source: [www.familydoctor.org](http://www.familydoctor.org)

## Improve Your Skin This Winter

Most people go to great lengths to winterize their house and car, yet they neglect the body's largest organ – their skin. **Here are several tips on nourishing your skin this winter:**

- ▲ Bathe or shower in lukewarm – no hot – water, and limit your showers to 5 to 10 minutes.
- ▲ Use a good moisturizer – daily. Apply it to your skin within 3 minutes of stepping out of the shower or bath.
- ▲ Consider using a humidifier to keep the humidity in your home higher.
- ▲ Reduce exposure to cigar and cigarette smoke, which can speed aging of the skin.
- ▲ Rub your skin daily with a scrub or washcloth to stimulate the skin and remove dead cells.



- ▲ Protect your lips. Look for a lip balm with an SPF of 15 to help prevent chapped lips.
- ▲ Dab petroleum jelly on problem areas to seal in moisture and heal very dry skin.

Source: American Academy of Dermatology, [www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org)

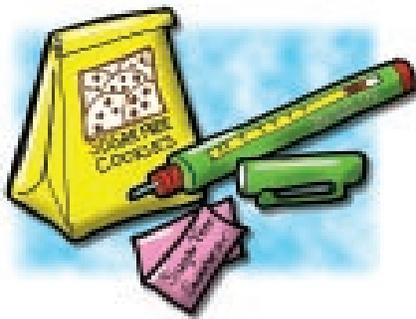
### Simple Ways to Ease Arthritis Pain

- Protect your joints by avoiding excess stress on them.
- Stay close to your recommended weight to relieve pressure on hips and knees.
- Exercise regularly to reduce pain, increase range of movement, reduce fatigue, and make you feel better.
- Take medications as your doctor prescribes.
- Eat healthy meals.

## Seeking to Control Diabetes and Reduce Health Risks

If you have diabetes, the most important job you have is controlling it. In fact, controlling diabetes can reduce your risk of eye disease; kidney failure; heart disease; nerve damage that causes loss of feeling in hands, feet, legs, or other parts of the body; and stroke.

The first step in controlling diabetes is to find out if you have it. According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes often goes undiagnosed because many of its symptoms seem harmless. Some symptoms of diabetes include: frequent urination, excessive thirst, hunger, unusual weight loss, increased fatigue, irritability, or blurry vision. If you have one of these symptoms, see your doctor.



**Once you're diagnosed with diabetes, here are tips from the National Diabetes Education Program on how to control the disease:**

- ◆ Find out what type of diabetes you have. Type 1 diabetes results from the body's inability to produce insulin. Type 2 diabetes results when the body

fails to properly use insulin.

- ◆ Seek help. Work with your doctor to make changes to help control your diabetes. Obtain the support from family, friends, and coworkers.
- ◆ Follow directions. Eat a healthy diet. Exercise most days of the week. Take your medicine at the same times each day. Obtain regular foot and eye exams. Work with your doctor to control your diabetes.
- ◆ Monitor your blood sugar level. Talk to your doctor about the best test to use. Keep a record of your test results and share it with your doctor.

To learn more information on diabetes, visit the American Diabetes Association at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

## Communicate from the Mind and Heart

By Paul J. Meyer



**C**ommunication is how humans keep in touch with each other in the business world and in their personal lives. People share information, express emotions, influence, persuade, encourage, and reach shared goals through communication. It is a mixture of words, gestures, body language, silence, facial expression, and tone of voice. Skillfully used, communication builds satisfying relationships in the business world, as well as in the home.

**To communicate with others, apply these tips:**

- ◆ Set understanding as your primary goal. Listen and speak with your heart as well as your mind.
- ◆ Involve yourself in the two-way process of communication; fill the roles of both listener *and* speaker.
- ◆ Be considerate. Treat people as if they are the most important individuals you will speak to on a given day. Strive to communicate without talking either up or down to others.
- ◆ Respect others' opinions. Grant others the right to be heard. Avoid judging others and acknowledge their feelings. Be slow to speak and quick to listen.
- ◆ Speak *with* others, not *at* them. Be yourself. Have a sincere, genuine attitude toward others.
- ◆ Ensure that your actions communicate the right message. A smile, frown, eye contact, fold of your arms, or the tapping of your fingers are nonverbal gestures that send distinct messages. Make your actions support your words.
- ◆ "Time" your communication. Observe others' movements, speech, and facial expressions to determine whether the timing is right to talk with them. Avoid being too pushy and remember that sometimes people need you to schedule another time to talk.
- ◆ Be approachable. Let family members, friends, or coworkers know that you are there for them if they need to talk. Maintain confidentiality.
- ◆ Be honest in your communications. When you gain the trust of others, you are more likely to gain the results you desire.

Enhance your communication with others by practicing these effective attitudes, skills, and habits.

*Paul J. Meyer is a successful entrepreneur and author of personal and professional improvement programs, courses, and books, including his latest book, Forgiveness... The Ultimate Miracle. For more information, visit his website at [www.pauljmeyer.com](http://www.pauljmeyer.com).*

## Get Your Priorities in Order

On May 11, 1996, Beck Weathers, a Dallas pathologist with a passion for high adventure, survived a tragic, terrifying day on Mt. Everest. Eight of his fellow climbers didn't survive. Weathers' much-publicized story of being separated from his party, wandering alone on the mountain, enduring temperatures of perhaps 50 below zero and 70-knot winds, and being left for dead is the stuff of bestselling novels and Hollywood mega-movies. But for this man, it was not fiction but harsh reality.



Although Weathers survived this ordeal, he lost his right arm almost to the elbow. The fingers and most of the thumb of his left hand had to be removed, and surgeons constructed a new nose to replace the one lost to frostbite, but Weathers considers himself fortunate, certainly to be alive, but fortunate, too, to have been given the chance to see life in a new light and to get a new vision of what really matters.

As a man obsessed with reaching the summit of both his career and his mountain-climbing goals, Weathers admits that he had lost sight of what really mattered in life. His relationship with his wife was breaking down and he hardly knew his children. He was losing his family.

Since that tragic day on the mountain and his amazing survival, Weathers now has his priorities in order. He's found a peace that had once eluded him, and he feels that he traded his hands for his family and his future.

Who and what is most important to you? Create great days for yourself and those you love by valuing those things that have the most value.

*Julie Alexander is a professional speaker who works with organizations that want to boost morale and people who want great days on and off the job. She is the author of Great Days: 50 Ways to Add Energy, Enthusiasm, & Enjoyment to Your Life and Make Life Count! – 50 Ways to Great Days. For more information, visit [www.JulieAlexander.com](http://www.JulieAlexander.com).*



### InSync® Moment – Experience Your Senses

Our senses are the conduits of our reality. We rarely pay much attention to them. To heighten your awareness of how you experience the world, spend a day showcasing your senses as if you're using them for the first time. Look at a face. Listen to the wind. Touch skin. Smell rain. Taste fruit. Hmmm. What might you learn from taking a few moments to experience your senses?



© Susan Pilgrim, Ph.D., author of *Living InSync®*. Contact her at [pilgrim.s@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pilgrim.s@sbcglobal.net).

## Reduce the Risk of Poisoning at Home

- Keep household products and medicines out of reach and out of sight of children, preferably in a locked cabinet or closet.
- Store medicines and dietary supplements (especially iron pills) separately from other household products and keep these items in their original containers.
- Be sure that all products are properly labelled, and read the label before using.
- Always turn the light on when giving or taking medicine to be sure you have the right medicine and the correct measurement.
- Avoid taking medications in front of children since they often imitate.
- Refer to medicines by their proper names. They're not candy.
- Clean out your medicine cabinet periodically. Get rid of old medicines by flushing them down the drain or toilet, rinsing the container in water, and then discarding it.
- Use household products which are available in child resistant packaging.

## Boost Your Immunity

- ❖ Eat healthy meals.
- ❖ Get enough rest. Your body needs to be recharged each day for good health.
- ❖ Control stress. Being under stress can increase your risk of getting sick.
- ❖ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ❖ Always wash your hands after touching someone who has a cold, after touching an object they have touched, and after blowing your own nose.
- ❖ Keep your fingers away from your nose and eyes to avoid infecting yourself with cold virus.
- ❖ Place a second hand towel in the bathroom for healthy family members to use.
- ❖ Talk to your doctor about supplements that may boost your immunity.

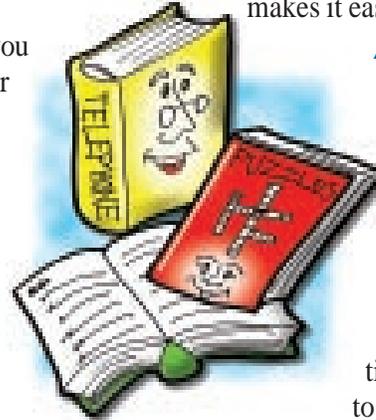
## Boost Your Memory Retention

If you're in your 40s or beyond, the idea of losing your memory to Alzheimer's disease can be frightening. You may wonder what you as an individual can do to prevent memory loss. **Here are few tips on how to help you retain your memory:**

- ▲ Pay attention to where you put items, like your glasses, keys, or wallet.
- ▲ Say out loud or to yourself when you put something away or take some action. For example, "I put my glasses on my bedside table" or "The blue notebook is in the desk drawer on the right."
- ▲ When you learn a new name, repeat it: "It's nice to meet you, Sam." "See you later, Betty."
- ▲ Write things down. Writing is a great memory tool. Notes and lists help you keep track of things, and the act of writing something down will help you

remember the information. Keep a note pad handy so you can easily write down where you parked your car or an appointment you need to make.

- ▲ Create an image in your mind. A mental picture of a name or location makes it easier to recall.



- ▲ Establish cues so you don't have to commit everything to memory. Keep a calendar in your purse or on the wall and make notes of events and special dates you want to remember. Set the oven timer for when you have to leave or start another ac-

tivity.

- ▲ Slow down and do one thing at a time, giving each activity your full attention. If possible, limit or reduce noise, distractions, and interruptions.
- ▲ Enhance your mind by doing crossword puzzles or word finds. Read nonfiction books about new skills or activities you can enjoy.

## Prevent Food Poisoning Pains

Did you know that 55 percent of food poisoning cases are caused by improper cooking and storage of foods and 24 percent by poor hygiene (such as not washing your hands before handling the food)? Therefore, it's very important to take care when preparing food to make sure that you prevent food poisoning and the discomforts that could accompany it.

**Here are some tips on how to avoid food poisoning when preparing meals for your family:**

- ◆ Buy all meats, seafood, and dairy products from reputable suppliers.
- ◆ When returning from the grocery store, put chilled foods in the refrigerator or freezer as quickly as possible.
- ◆ Never leave prepared foods (such as cheese or cooked meat) at room temperature for more than two hours before serving.
- ◆ Avoid preparing food if you're sick. Have someone else do it.
- ◆ Defrost meat, poultry, or fish in the refrigerator or the microwave – never on a countertop.
- ◆ Always wash your hands before, during, and after food preparation.

## Make the Mind-Body Connection

Did you know that you can use your thoughts to positively influence some of your body's physical responses and decrease stress as well? For example, if you recall a time when you were happy, grateful, or calm, your body and mind tend to relax when you think of these times.



Studies have shown that relaxing exercises can decrease anxiety, lessen pain, enhance sleep, decrease the use of medication for postsurgical pain, decrease side effects of medical procedures, reduce recovery time and shorten hospital stays, strengthen the immune system and enhance the ability to heal, and increase sense of control and well-being.

There are several types of relaxation exercises. **Some include:** • yoga • relaxation breathing • massage • Tai Chi • meditation • visualization • biofeedback.

**Here are some tips:** • Set aside time in your daily schedule to relax and reenergize your mind and body. • Choose a relaxation technique that is good for you. Select one that meets your specific needs, preferences, and fitness level.

## If the Flu Catches Up to You...

Unfortunately, not everyone will be able to avoid the flu this season. If you fall victim to the flu, here are general steps to help you feel better and get well:

- ◆ Get plenty of rest.
- ◆ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ◆ Avoid alcohol and tobacco.
- ◆ Consider taking over-the-counter medications to relieve the symptoms of the flu. Note: Never give aspirin to children or teenagers.
- ◆ Stay home and avoid contact with other people to avoid spreading your illness.
- ◆ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze to avoid spreading your germs.

If you're at high risk for complications from the flu – people 65 years old or older, people with chronic health conditions, pregnant women, or children – you should contact your doctor as soon as flu symptoms begin.

If you or a loved one experiences complications such as high or prolonged fever, trouble breathing, bluish skin color, fainting, change in mental status, pain in the chest, severe or persistent vomiting, or no improvement, seek medical attention immediately.

## Prevent Knee Injuries

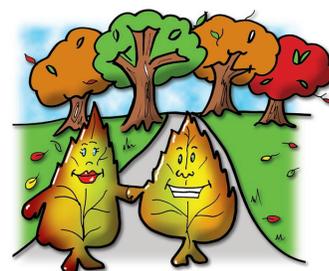
A recent study at the University of Michigan concluded that female athletes are eight times more likely to have knee injuries compared to men. When I first read this I was a bit shocked, but then it made sense because most women that I train have stronger quadriceps than hamstrings. The quadriceps muscle helps you straighten and extend your leg, and the hamstring helps you to bend your knee. If there is a muscular imbalance then it can cause stress to the knees which can cause injury.

The knee joint is made up of bone, ligaments, cartilage and fluids. Muscles and tendons help the knee joint move. A common injury is to the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). ACL and other knee injuries are common sports injuries that typically occur due to stress, overuse, or overcompensation. Quick twisting movements can trigger this injury as well as weak hamstrings.

It's important to train properly to prevent any type of knee injury from occurring. Always warm up and cool down, and remember to work up to your training program slowly. Listen to your body. I recommend performing jump squats (unless of course you already have stressed knees), hamstring curls, dead lifts, and donkey kicks. These exercises will all concentrate on the hamstrings (back of the leg) so that the opposing muscles will work together in a balanced fashion eliminating negative knee stress.

Stretching is critical to prevent from injury as well. Flexible muscles help support and protect joints. If you play a seasonal sport, make sure to train for that sport year round even if it's at a lower intensity during the "off-season." This will assist to maintain coordination, strength, and flexibility and you will be less likely to become injured during the competitive season.

Prevention from injury is the goal. It's a lot easier to exercise properly to improve your risk of injury than to have to deal with surgery and recovery due to neglect and being lazy. I encourage you to take the minimal time required to take care of your knees daily.



Wendie Pettis is a nationally renowned fitness expert, mother, speaker, author of *Every Woman's Guide to Personal Power*, and creator of the *Visibly Fit™* exercise program. Her many *Visibly Fit™* instructional DVDs teach wellness maximization through the balance of mind, body, and spirit as well how to use your body as your gym! As a personal trainer and wellness coach, Wendie offers seminars to corporate groups and individuals. To learn more about Wendie or to schedule group or individual training/coaching visit – [www.wendiepett.com](http://www.wendiepett.com).



## Balsamic Marinade

- 3 cups chicken stock (fat-free/low salt)
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 2 cups balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp. water
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. cracked black pepper
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh basil
- 1/2 Tbsp. chopped fresh oregano
- 1/2 Tbsp. chopped chives
- 1 Tbsp. Pickapeppa sauce (or hot pepper sauce of your choice)
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- juice of 1 lime
- 1 serrano or jalapeno pepper, seeded and diced
- 2 tsp. creole seasoning

Heat chicken stock, oil and vinegar. In a separate bowl, blend together the cornstarch and water. Add to the stock mixture. Gently boil for 1 minute to thicken.

Remove from heat and cool. Add remaining ingredients and refrigerate.

Use for marinating meats and vegetables. Marinating time can vary from 15 minutes to overnight.

*Makes 50 servings, 2 Tbsp. each.*

*Each serving contains: 21 calories, 0 g. protein, 2 g. fat, 0 mg. cholesterol, 1 g. carbohydrates, 43 mg. sodium. Calories from fat: 85 percent*

Pamela Smith is a Registered Dietitian and nationally known radio and TV host. For more information, call 1-800-896-4010 or visit her website at [www.pamsmith.com](http://www.pamsmith.com). Her book, *The Energy Edge*, gives power points to have energy for life!



## Cooking Tips for the Holidays

**T**hanksgiving dinner is traditionally a time when families gather together to reflect on what they're thankful for and partake of a bountiful meal. However, it can wreak havoc on healthy eating if you're not careful. **Consider these light cooking suggestions for the holidays and all the other days of your year:**

- Use skim milk, nonfat plain yogurt, skim-milk cheese, low-fat or nonfat cottage cheese, and light cream cheese in place of higher fat dairy choices.
- Buy lean cuts of meat and trim well, before and after cooking – and cook in a way that diminishes fat, such as grilling or broiling on a rack.
- Remove skin from poultry before cooking; you will cut the fat by 50 percent!
- Use cooking sprays and nonstick skillets that enable you to brown meats without grease. Sauté ingredients in stocks and broths.
- Baste with tomato or lemon juice, white wine Worcestershire sauce, or stock instead of butter.
- Purchase and use monounsaturated oils such as canola or olive oil for salads or cooking.
- Use avocados and olives sparingly.



They're concentrated sources of fat.

- Use legumes (dried beans and peas) as a main dish or a meat substitute.
- Use two egg whites or egg substitute in place of whole eggs.
- Refrigerate soup stocks, meat drippings, and sauces, and remove the hardened surface layer of fat before reheating.
- Use puréed cooked vegetables, such as carrots, potatoes, or peppers, to thicken soups and stews instead of creams or egg yolks.
- Replace one-quarter to one-half of the ground meat or poultry in a casserole or meat sauce with cooked brown rice, couscous, or cooked beans.

### BLACK-EYED PEA AND CORN SALAD

**Makes 8 servings,  
1/2 cup serving**

- 16 oz. (or 2 cups frozen) black-eyed peas
- 1/4 cup chicken stock (fat-free/low salt)
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 2 plum tomatoes, diced
- 3/4 red onion, minced
- 1 serrano pepper, minced
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- juice of 1 lime



- 1/4 cup Balsamic Marinade (see sidebar)
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 2 tsp. hot pepper sauce
- 1 tsp. creole seasoning

Follow package instructions to cook black-eyed peas in 1/4 cup chicken stock; cool. Combine all ingredients. Allow to marinate at least one hour.

*Each serving contains: 85 calories, 4 g. protein, 1 g. fat, 0 mg. cholesterol, 15 g. carbohydrates, 170 mg. sodium. Calories from fat: 10 percent*

*From Pamela Smith's Eat Well, Live Well. Visit [www.pamsmith.com](http://www.pamsmith.com) for more information.*

This newsletter is published monthly by Rutherford Communications, P.O. Box 8853, Waco, Texas 76710, 1-800-815-2323, [www.rutherfordcommunications.com](http://www.rutherfordcommunications.com). Copyright © 2012 Rutherford Communications. All rights reserved. Material may not be reproduced in whole or part in any form without the written permission of the publisher. Subscription price (12 issues), \$25 per year in U.S.

Publisher: Ronnie Marroquin

Managing Editor: Kimberly Denman

Illustrations by RMS Graphics

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This newsletter is not intended to provide medical advice on personal wellness matters, which should be obtained directly from your physician.

ISSN 1072-4788

## mental

### Minimize Your Stress During the Holidays

The holidays can be highly stressful for some people. **Here are several ways you can ease the stresses of the holidays:**

- Budget your time as well as your money. Avoid last-minute shopping and preparations.
- Plan ahead by making a “To-Do” list and prioritizing what needs to be done.
- Be realistic with your plans. Realize that you don’t have to attend every social event that comes along. When planning your time, choose quality over quantity.
- Delegate when possible. Share the shopping, cooking, cleaning, and other duties with your family members.
- Take care of yourself. Continue to exercise, eat right, and get plenty of rest.
- Maintain a positive attitude. Try not to worry about things that are out of your control.
- Treat yourself to a massage or other relaxing activity you enjoy. Take a friend along with you.

### Block the Blues This Holiday

**W**inter and the holidays can be a sad, lonely, and unsettling time for some people. This condition has come to be known as the wintertime blues.

The wintertime blues can affect men and women, young and old. Factors that typically contribute to wintertime blues include increased stress and fatigue, unrealistic expectations, financial stress, over-commercialization, and the inability to be with one’s family or friends. In addition to these factors, dealing with the demands of shopping, parties, family obligations and house guests can contribute to feelings of being overwhelmed.

The symptoms of the wintertime blues often include: • headaches • inability to sleep or sleeping too much • excessive drinking • agitation or anxiety • changes in appetite causing weight loss or gain • excessive or inappropriate feelings of guilt • diminished ability to think clearly • lack of concentration • decreased interest in activities – such as food, work, friends, hobbies, or enter-

tainment – that usually bring pleasure.

**To overcome the wintertime blues, consider some of these tips:**

- Set realistic goals and expectations for the holidays. Mend broken relationships to relieve stress.
- Avoid scheduling more activities than you can handle.
- Allow others to share the responsibilities for holiday tasks.
- Get plenty of rest, eat right, and exercise.
- Avoid comparing today with the good old days of the past. Enjoy the present.
- If you’ve recently experienced a tragedy, death, or romantic breakup, tell people your needs.
- Do something nice for someone else. Try volunteering to help others in need.
- Limit drinking. Excessive alcohol increases feelings of depression.
- Spend time with supportive and caring people.
- Enjoy free holiday activities, such as looking at holiday lights, going window shopping without buying anything, and gazing out the window at the snowflakes or raindrops.

