



Wellness Newsletter

Augusta Technical College

Let Sleep Work For You

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It's a basic necessity of life, as important to our health and well-being as air, food and water. When we sleep well, we wake up feeling refreshed, alert and ready to face daily challenges. When we don't, every part of our lives can suffer. Our jobs, relationships, productivity, health and safety (and that of those around us) are all put at risk. And lack of sleep due to sleep loss or sleep disorders is taking a serious toll.

The 2002 National Sleep Foundation (NSF) *Sleep in America* poll found that 74 percent of American adults are experiencing a sleeping problem a few nights a week or more, 39% get less than seven hours of sleep each week-night, and more than one in three (37%) are so sleepy during the day that it interferes with daily activities. In the past century, we have reduced our average time in sleep. Though our society has changed, our brains and bodies have not. Sleep deprivation is affecting us all and we are paying the price.

Sleep Quality and Quantity Count

Getting enough continuous quality sleep contributes to how we feel and perform the next day, but also has a huge impact on the overall quality of our lives. Getting enough sleep refers to the amount of sleep you need to not feel

sleepy the next day. If sleepiness interferes with or makes it difficult to do your daily activities, you probably need more sleep. Although sleep experts generally recommend an average of 7-9 hours per night, some people can get along with less while others need as much as ten hours to feel alert the next day. Sleep requirements vary over the life cycle. Newborns and infants need a lot of sleep and have several periods of sleep throughout a 24-hour time period. Naps are important to them as well as to toddlers who may nap up to the age of 5. As children enter adolescence, their sleep patterns shift to a later sleep-wake cycle, but they still need around 9 hours of sleep. Throughout adulthood, even as we get older, we need 7-9 hours of sleep. Sleep patterns may change, but the need for sleep remains the same.



<http://www.sleepfoundation.org>

National Health Observances

- *American Stroke Month*
- *Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month*
- *Better Sleep Month*
- *Clean Air Month*
- *Hepatitis Awareness Month*
- *Mental Health Month*
- *National Bike Month*
- *National High Blood Pressure Awareness Month*
- *National Women's Health Week (13-19)*
- *World No Tobacco Day (31)*

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Stroke Risk Factors

Some stroke risk factors are hereditary. Others are a function of natural processes. Still others result from a person's lifestyle. You can't change factors related to heredity or natural processes, but those resulting from lifestyle or environment can be modified with the help of a healthcare professional.

What risk factors for stroke can't be changed?

- **Age** — The chance of having a stroke more than doubles for each decade of life after age 55. While stroke is common among the elderly, a lot of people under 65 also have strokes.
- **Heredity (family history) and race** — Your stroke risk is greater if a parent, grandparent, sister or brother has had a stroke. African Americans have a much higher risk of death from a stroke than Caucasians do. This is partly because blacks have higher risks of high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.
- **Sex (gender)** — Stroke is more common in men than in women. In most age groups, more men than women will have a stroke in a given year. However, more than half of total stroke deaths occur in women. At all ages, more women than men die of stroke. Use of birth control pills and pregnancy pose special stroke risks for women.
- **Prior stroke, TIA or heart attack** — The risk of stroke for someone who has already had one is many times that of a person who has not. Transient ischemic attacks (TIAs) are "warning strokes" that produce stroke-like symptoms but no lasting damage. A person who's had one or more TIAs is almost 10 times more likely to have a stroke than someone of the same age and sex who hasn't. If you've had a heart attack, you're at higher risk of having a stroke, too.

What stroke risk factors can be changed, treated or controlled?

- **High blood pressure** — High blood pressure is the most important controllable risk factor for stroke. Many people believe the effective treatment of high blood pressure is a key reason for the accelerated decline in the death rates for stroke.
- **Cigarette smoking** — The nicotine and carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke damage the cardiovascular system in many ways. The use of oral contraceptives combined with cigarette smoking greatly increases stroke risk.
- **Diabetes mellitus** — Diabetes is an independent risk factor for stroke. Many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and are overweight.
- **Carotid or other artery disease** — The carotid arteries in

your neck supply blood to your brain. A carotid artery narrowed by fatty deposits from atherosclerosis (plaque buildups in artery walls) may become blocked by a blood clot. **Peripheral artery disease** is the narrowing of blood vessels carrying blood to leg and arm muscles. It's caused by fatty buildups of plaque in artery walls. People with peripheral artery disease have a higher risk of carotid artery disease, which raises their risk of stroke.

- **Atrial fibrillation** — This heart rhythm disorder raises the risk for stroke. The heart's upper chambers quiver instead of beating effectively, which can let the blood pool and clot. If a clot breaks off, enters the bloodstream and lodges in an artery leading to the brain, a stroke results.
- **Other heart disease** — People with coronary heart disease or heart failure have a higher risk of stroke than those with hearts that work normally. Dilated cardiomyopathy (an enlarged heart), heart valve disease and some types of congenital heart defects also raise the risk of stroke.
- **Sickle cell disease** (also called **sickle cell anemia**) — This is a genetic disorder that mainly affects African-American and Hispanic children. "Sickled" red blood cells are less able to carry oxygen to the body's tissues and organs. These cells also tend to stick to blood vessel walls, which can block arteries to the brain and cause a stroke.
- **High blood cholesterol** — People with high blood cholesterol have an increased risk for stroke. Also, it appears that low HDL ("good") cholesterol is a risk factor for stroke in men, but more data are needed to verify its effect in women.
- **Poor diet** — Diets high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol levels. Diets high in sodium (salt) can contribute to increased blood pressure. Diets with excess calories can contribute to obesity. Also, a diet containing five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day may reduce the risk of stroke.
- **Physical inactivity and obesity** — Being inactive, obese or both can increase your risk of high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. So go on a brisk walk, take the stairs, and do whatever you can to make your life more active. Try to get a total of at least 30 minutes of activity on most or all days.

For more stroke risk factors go to:

<http://www.strokeassociation.org/>

About Occupational Safety and Health Professional Day

In March 2006 the American Society of Safety Engineers' board approved the creation of Occupational Safety and Health Professional day to be held every year during North American Occupational Safety and Health Week (NAOSH) on that Wednesday. This year NAOSH Week runs from May 6-12.

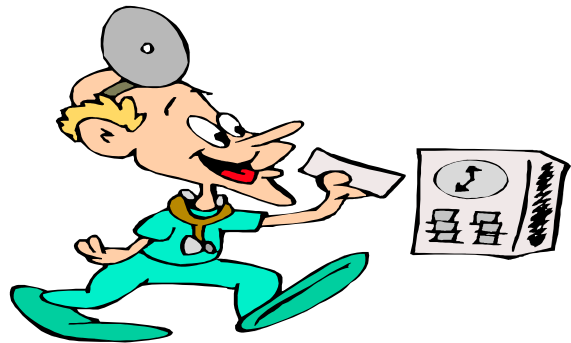
The purpose of this day is to recognize the ongoing efforts of occupational safety, health and environmental professionals to protect people, property and the environment. "They are the ones that make sure you go to and come home from work safely and without injury every day," ASSE 2005-06 President Jack H. Dobson Jr., CSP, said as the motion was passed unanimously.

National Occupational Safety and Health Professional Day also aims to further raise awareness and pride in the profession, a profession where one is qualified by education, training and experience who identifies hazards and develops appropriate controls for these hazards all aimed at preventing occupational injury, illness and property damage. The safety and health professional follows a Code of Professional Conduct and brings to bear technical knowledge, skill and expertise along with management abilities developed through years of continued education and practical experience. Currently there are about 100,000 occupational safety,

health and environmental practitioners in the U.S. today in what has become one of the most challenging and rewarding career fields.

"We take time this May 9th to say thanks to those invisible heroes, who every day work to make your workplace safer and healthier," Dobson said. "It doesn't happen often, but when a call is made to a family member that their loved one has been injured or killed on the job several lives change forever. Let's continue to work with occupational safety and health professionals to make sure you and your family never receives that call.

"If you know one, thank your occupational safety and health professional on this day," Dobson said. "It will mean more than you know."



<http://www.asse.org/naosh>

Healthy Recipe—Crispy Chicken BLT Salad

4 small boneless skinless chicken breast halves (1 lb.)
1 pouch SHAKE 'N BAKE Extra Crispy Seasoned Coating Mix
6 cups torn mixed red and green leaf lettuce
1 cup tomato wedges (about 1 medium)

4 slices bacon, cooked, crumbled
1/4 cup KRAFT Ranch Dressing
1/2 cup KRAFT Natural Three Cheese Crumbles

PREHEAT oven to 400°F. Coat chicken with coating mix as directed on package; place in shallow baking pan.

BAKE 20 minutes or until cooked through (170°F). Let stand 5 minutes; cut into slices.

TOSS lettuce with tomatoes, bacon, and dressing. Spoon evenly onto four plates; sprinkle with cheese. Top with chicken.

<http://www.kraftfoods.com>

May Is National Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month

Each year, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) declares May to be "National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month." It's a peak season for asthma and allergy sufferers, and a perfect time to educate your patients, family, friends, co-workers and others about these diseases. Each year, AAFA asks the President of the United States to officially designate May as National Asthma and Allergy Awareness month.

Our theme, "**for life without limits**," is a constant reminder that, today, nothing stands in the way to having a full and active life -- with proper diagnosis, prevention and treatment, there are no limits to what people with asthma and allergies can do. And, this theme is a promise to future generations that we will continue to search for cures to eliminate asthma and allergies and burden they currently cause millions of Americans.

<http://www.revolutionhealth.com>

Food Intolerance Versus Food Allergy

Many people believe they're allergic to certain foods. But true food allergies are uncommon. Only about 1 percent of adults and 5 percent of children have true food allergies - an adverse reaction to foods that is triggered by the immune system. Far more people have a food intolerance, an unpleasant reaction to food that doesn't involve the immune system.

In a true **food allergy**, your immune system mistakenly identifies a specific food or a component of a food as a harmful substance. This causes certain cells to make antibodies to fight the culprit food or food component (the allergen). The next time you eat even the smallest amount of that food the antibodies sense it and signal your immune system to release histamine and other chemicals into your bloodstream.

Signs and symptoms of a food allergy usually develop within an hour after eating the offending food and may include:

- Hives, itching or eczema
- Swelling of the lips, face, tongue and throat, or other parts of the body
- Wheezing, nasal congestion or trouble breathing
- Abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting

Other reactions to food don't involve your immune system or, for this reason, the release of histamine. These reactions aren't true food allergies. Instead, they may be **food intolerances**. Because food intolerances may cause many of the same signs and symptoms as food allergies do - such as nausea, vomiting, cramping and diarrhea - people often confuse the two.

It's important to distinguish a food intolerance from a food allergy. If you have an intolerance, you usually can eat small amounts of problem foods without a reaction. By contrast, if you have a true food allergy, even a tiny amount of the food may trigger a serious allergic reaction.

If you have a reaction to a particular food, tell your doctor about it. Tests can help determine whether you have a true food allergy.



<http://www.revolutionhealth.com>

Why Go Organic?

1. Organic food delivers more nutrition. Studies have repeatedly found increased levels of some nutrients in various organic foods. "That means more nutritional quality per calorie and food serving," explains Dr. Charles Benbrook, chief scientist at the Organic Center for Education and Promotion in Greenfield, Massachusetts. Findings from the University of California at Davis (UCD) suggest that organic foods have much higher antioxidant levels -- for example, organic strawberries, marionberries (blackberry type) and corn had significantly more flavonoids (19, 50 and 58.5 percent respectively) than conventionally grown varieties, as well as higher levels of vitamin C. Meanwhile, a USDA study comparing lycopene content in 13 brands of catsup found organic brands generally packed 57 percent more than national brands and 55 percent more than store brands. "By buying and consuming organic foods fairly consistently, consumers can easily double their daily intake of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants," says Benbrook.

2. Eating organic dramatically reduces pesticide exposure. If you're consuming the USDA recommended "five-a-day" servings of fruit and vegetables, you're probably taking in six or more helpings of pesticide residue daily, says Benbrook. Various pesticides have been linked with adverse effects on fertility and fetal development and with increased cancer risk. According to Benbrook, more than 90 percent of conventionally grown produce contains pesticide residue, compared with 20 percent of organically produced fruits and vegetables, and these have much lower concentrations. (Pesticide residue on organic produce comes from soil that previously supported conventional farming and pesticide drift from neighboring farms.)

3. Eating organic can decrease your intake of food additives such as MSG (monosodium glutamate), artificial sweeteners and food coloring agents. Various additives and dyes have been linked to food allergies, hyperactivity, neurological disease and cancer.

4. You won't find any growth hormones or antibiotics in meat or dairy. Growth hormones, which are injected in cows to increase lean muscle mass and milk production, have been linked to early puberty development and a higher risk of cancer.

5. Organic food doesn't contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The jury is still out on the health effects of eating transgenic food, such as wheat that's had a fish gene spliced into it. You can steer clear of "Frankenfoods" by choosing organic and avoid playing the guess-what-you're-really-eating game altogether.

6. Organic food tastes better, fresher longer. "Organic produce tends to taste better, most likely because of higher antioxidant levels, which help it store longer too," says Alyson Mitchell, PhD, the nutritional scientist at UCD who led the antioxidant studies. Also, many organic farmers are small, local food producers, so food can get to market much more quickly -- sometimes even the same day it was picked. And because it tastes better and fresher, Benbrook believes it can encourage people to reach the daily recommendation of five to 10 servings more easily.

Organic by the numbers

In food industry surveys of U.S. consumers taken in 2004,

* 66% say they use organic products at least occasionally.

* 27% ate more organic food than they did the previous year.

* 70% worry about the health risks of pesticides, hormones, antibiotics and other chemicals in food.

* 32% say organic food tastes better.

* 54% think organic food is better for their health.

* 58% think organic food is better for the environment

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