

# Health Insights

October 2021

## The Importance of Preventative Care

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 7 out of 10 Americans die each year from chronic diseases, many of which are preventable. When preventative care is used it can catch illnesses and diseases early, helping individuals avoid or better control the health problem.

### What Is Preventative Care?

Preventative care is a type of health care with the purpose of shifting the focus of health care from treating sickness to maintaining wellness and good health. Preventative care occurs before you feel sick or notice any symptoms and is designed to prevent or delay the onset of illness and disease.

In its broadest definition, prevention includes a healthy lifestyle, exercise, diet, and other similar efforts. Preventative care in a medical setting includes a variety of health care services, such as a physical examination, screenings, laboratory tests, counseling, and immunizations.

### Why Use Preventative Care?

- Preventative care is important because it helps you stay healthy and access prompt treatment when necessary, and it can also help reduce your overall medical expenses. Many types of screenings and tests can catch a disease before it starts.
- Preventative care saves you money in two ways.

- First, preventative care helps lower the long-term cost of managing disease because it helps catch problems in the early stages when most diseases are more readily treatable. The cost of early treatment or diet or lifestyle changes is less than the cost of treating and managing a full-blown chronic disease or serious illness.
- Second, many preventative services are now covered in full by insurance due to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which means they are free for you if you have health insurance. The ACA requires certain preventative services to be covered with no cost-sharing—meaning for many preventative care services, you will not have to pay a deductible, copay, coinsurance, or other out-of-pocket expenses.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has provided lists of preventative services that must be covered by most health insurance plans. Lists are available for adults, women, and children, as covered services depend on age and gender.

For adults, services such as blood pressure and cholesterol checks and screenings for depression are covered. Women may have folic acid supplements and anemia screenings covered if they are pregnant. Children's covered preventative services include autism screenings for children at ages 18 and 24 months and alcohol and drug use assessments for adolescents.

When preventative care services are combined with a lifestyle that is focused on wellness, significant savings can be realized. Ultimately, preventative care provides the benefit of saving lives and improving the quality of your health for years to come.

# Mental Health Moment

## Preventing Heart Disease Could Keep More People Employed and Save Billions for the Economy

Coronary heart disease accounts for a third of all deaths in people over 35. People with coronary heart disease have more days of unplanned absence from work (absenteeism) and are less productive while at work (presenteeism) compared to the general population. Those with the disease are also more likely to retire early.

The researchers behind a recent study published in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology* estimate the economic impact of stopping future cases of coronary heart disease in Australia over the next 10 years (2020-2029). Preventing all future cases would save nearly \$15 billion (USD) in GDP due to reductions in coronary heart disease-related deaths and increased productivity. This is equivalent to almost \$51,000 (USD) for every case avoided.

Study author Ms. Feby Savira, a PhD student at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia stated, "Even preventing 10% of future coronary heart disease cases (equivalent to 2,860 new cases per year over 10 years) could result in \$1.5 billion (USD) in monetary gains from improved productivity alone." The study demonstrated a strong financial incentive for coronary heart disease prevention to help improve health and productivity among the working-age population.

Early retirement due to coronary heart disease accounted for most of the estimated loss in productivity (65.4%) followed by presenteeism (20.3%), absenteeism (8.4%), and premature death (5.9%). Men contributed 62% to the total loss of productivity due to coronary heart disease.

Ms. Savira said, "These findings demonstrate the profound impact of coronary heart disease on individuals, employers and society. Employers can establish healthy workplaces, by providing group exercise classes, and healthy food and beverage options. There is plenty each of us can do to protect our health and livelihood: it is estimated that 80% of cardiovascular disease could be stopped by eliminating bad habits such as poor-quality diet, physical inactivity, and smoking."

European Society of Cardiology. "Preventing heart disease could keep more people employed and save billions for the economy." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/09/200928191221.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/09/200928191221.htm) (accessed September 20, 2021).

## What Is Mindfulness-Based Meditation and Why Should I Try It?

The practice of mindfulness dates back thousands of years and has roots in both yoga and meditation. "The overarching goals of mindfulness are for the individual to learn to be present in the moment and to be able to quiet their mind. This can make a significant impact on an individual's stress level and overall wellbeing," explains Jodie Katz, M.D., Director, Center for Integrative Medicine, The Valley Hospital.

The process of knowing life experiences as it is and ourselves as we are, without relentless judgment, is a large component of the attitudinal foundation of mindfulness. According to an article in the *Harvard Business Review*, "Neuroscientists have also shown that practicing mindfulness affects brain areas related to perception, body awareness, pain tolerance, emotion regulation, introspection, complex thinking, and sense of self."

Another wonderful aspect of mindfulness is that it is flexible and can be personalized to fit into an individual's lifestyle. You can benefit from short meditations and you can meditate almost anywhere.

Here are some tips for beginning your mindfulness practice:

- Pay close attention to your breathing, especially when you're feeling intense emotions.
- Notice what you're sensing in each moment: the sights, sounds, and smells that ordinarily slip.
- Recognize that your thoughts and emotions are fleeting and do not define you, an insight that can free you from negative thought patterns.
- Tune into your body's physical sensations, from the water hitting your skin in the shower to the way your body rests in your office chair.

Mindfulness-based meditation can make a genuine impact on an individual's ability to manage their stress. This is a great practice for mitigating the impact of life's stressors.

Valley Health System. "What is mindfulness-based meditation and why should i try it?." ScienceDaily. [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/06/170619134340.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/06/170619134340.htm) (accessed September 19, 2021).



## Pumpkin Spice Energy Bites

### Ingredients:

- ¾ C old-fashioned oats
- 2 Tbsp hemp seeds
- 2 Tbsp chia seeds
- 2 Tbsp flax seeds
- ½ C walnut pieces
- ¼ C pumpkin seeds
- 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice blend
- ⅓ C dried cranberries (May substitute raisins for dried cranberries)
- 1 C canned or cooked pumpkin
- 10 small soft dates, pitted
- ⅓ C creamy natural peanut butter
- 1 tsp vanilla

### Topping:

- ⅓ C pumpkin seeds

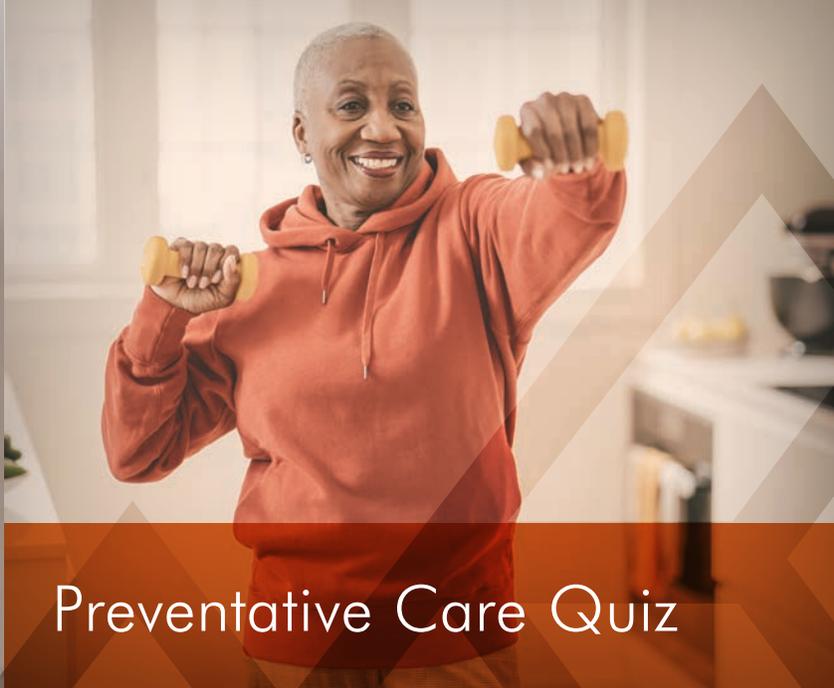
Place oats, hemp, chia, flax, walnuts, ¼ cup pumpkin seeds, pumpkin pie spice, and dried cranberries or raisins in container of food processor. Process for a few seconds, just until ingredients are finely ground.

Add pumpkin, dates, peanut butter, and vanilla and process for a few minutes until smooth, pausing to scrape down sides as needed. Texture should be smooth, finely ground, and sticky. Pour mixture into bowl, cover, and chill for about 1 hour.

Remove from refrigerator and form into small balls (makes 28 balls) with hands. Place ⅓ cup pumpkin seeds in small dish and roll each ball in pumpkin seeds to coat. Store in refrigerator in airtight container.

Makes 28 servings (28 balls). Per serving: 84 calories, 4 g total fat (0 g trans-fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 9 g carbohydrates, 3 g protein, 2 g dietary fiber, 16 mg sodium, 3 g sugar, 0 g added sugar.

Palmer, Sharon. "Pumpkin Spice Energy Bites." American Institute for Cancer Research, 4 Nov. 2020, [www.aicr.org/cancer-prevention/recipes/pumpkin-spice-energy-bites/](http://www.aicr.org/cancer-prevention/recipes/pumpkin-spice-energy-bites/).



## Preventative Care Quiz

### The Importance of Preventative Care

1. Preventative care is a type of health care with the \_\_\_\_\_ of shifting the focus of health care from treating sickness to maintaining \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ health.
2. What are the two ways preventative care could save you money?
  - a. Lower costs and yearly check-ins
  - b. Covered in full by insurance and knowing your health
  - c. Lower Costs and covered in full by insurance

### Preventing Heart Disease Could Keep More People Employed and Save Billions For the Economy

3. What percentage of deaths does coronary heart disease account for in people over 35?
  - a. Half of all deaths
  - b. A third of all deaths
  - c. A quarter of all deaths
4. What are some things employers can establish in workplaces to help decrease coronary heart disease?
  - a. Provide group exercise classes and healthy food and beverage options
  - b. Wellness program
  - c. Health insurance education.

### What is mindfulness-based meditation and why should I try it?

5. Select all that apply: What brain functions are related to mindfulness?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Introspection	<input type="checkbox"/> Body awareness
<input type="checkbox"/> Perception	<input type="checkbox"/> Complex thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> Pain tolerance
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional regulation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sense of self	<input type="checkbox"/> Time management

See page 5 for quiz answers

# Healthy Habits Calendar

## October 2021 - Preventative Care

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <b>Welcome to October.</b> Download this month's challenge.	2
3 <b>Stretch Sunday:</b> Enjoy a 10 min yoga flow.	4	5 <b>Tip Tuesday:</b> Follow the DASH diet to help prevent T2D and hypertension.	6	7 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> How many minutes did you walk or do an alternative activity?	8	9 <b>Social Saturday:</b> Explore the changing season with friends or family.
10	11 <b>Motivation Monday:</b> If you don't have a primary care provider, find one in your network.	12	13 <b>Workout Wednesday:</b> Participate in a fitness class.	14	15 <b>Foodie Friday:</b> Try out recipes using in-season fruits and vegetables.	16
17	18 <b>Movement Monday:</b> Spend 10 mins outside during your lunch break.	19	20 <b>Workout Wednesday:</b> What preventative care have you done so far this year?	21 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> What have you learned about your body this week?	22	23 <b>Service Saturday:</b> Make a fall inspired treat for a friend or family member.
24 <b>Self-care Sunday:</b> Write down 5 things you are grateful for.	25	26 <b>Thirsty Tuesday</b> Drink 72 oz of water today.	27	28 <b>Challenge Check-in:</b> Use your senses to explore your surroundings while on a walk.	29	30 <b>Fitness Friday:</b> Work out to music that motivates you.
31 <b>Savvy Sunday:</b> Share your knowledge with someone.						

## Challenge:

# Walking for a Healthier, Longer Life



Only a few lifestyle choices have as large an impact on your health as physical activity. People who are physically active for about 7 hours a week have a 40 percent lower risk of dying early than those who are active for less than 30 minutes a week.

Physical activity such as walking can reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and even some cancers. Walk regularly to live longer and add more life to your years.

### Weekly Challenge:

Try to accumulate 150 minutes of brisk walking or a similar form of cardiovascular exercise.

Each day you exercise, record the number of minutes under the day of the week. If you are not currently physically active, start slowly and increase your activity over time.

### Record the Number of Minutes You Exercise in Each Day

	Minutes of Activity
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

**Source:** CDC Physical Activity and Health – The Benefits of Physical Activity.

### Answers to Quiz:

Q1: Purpose | Wellness | Good

Q2: c. Lower Costs and covered in full by insurance

Q3: b. A third of all deaths

Q4: a. Provide group exercise classes and healthy food and beverage options

Q5: Perception | Emotional regulation | Introspection | Complex thinking | Sense of self | Body awareness | Pain tolerance