

3RD QUARTER | 2023

Live Well, Work Well



Health Panel Lowers Breast Cancer Screening Age to 40

Presented by
Liberty ISD

In the News



Catch up on the latest developments of the most significant wellness-related news from the past three months.



Health Panel Lowers Breast Cancer Screening Age to 40

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) [recommends](#) that all women at average risk for breast cancer should start having regular mammograms at age 40—instead of waiting until 50. This recommendation comes as USPSTF members notice an increase in breast cancer diagnoses among younger women and high death rates among Black women.

This latest advice from the USPSTF, a group of independent disease prevention and medical experts, is somewhat of a reversal. In 2009, the health panel raised the age for starting routine mammograms from 40 to 50. At that time, health experts were concerned that earlier screening would do more harm than good. However, new research reveals that many younger women are getting breast cancer, causing the expanded recommendation.

Health experts stress that if all women follow the new recommendation of starting routine mammograms at the age of 40, it could save about 8,000 American lives each year. The new guidance applies to all women who are asymptomatic and at average risk for breast cancer, including those with dense breast tissue and a family history of breast cancer.

Contact your doctor if you have questions about mammograms or your health history.

WHO Warns Against Using Artificial Sweeteners for Weight Loss

On May 15, the World Health Organization (WHO) released a new [recommendation](#) to avoid using zero-calorie nonsugar sweeteners (NSS) for weight loss. Widely used NSS include acesulfame K, aspartame, advantame, cyclamates, neotame, saccharin, sucralose, stevia and stevia derivatives.

The WHO advised that artificial and natural sweeteners have not been shown to help with long-term weight loss in children or adults. In fact, their use may come with side effects, including an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases and Type 2 diabetes. The agency's only exception to the recommendation is for individuals with preexisting diabetes. None of the WHO's review studies included people with diabetes; therefore, the agency couldn't include these individuals in their assessment.

NSS are widely used in prepackaged foods and beverages, and many people often directly add it to their food and drinks. The WHO issued sugar intake guidelines in 2015, recommending that adults and children reduce their daily intake of free sugars to less than 10% of their total energy intake. Following this recommendation, interest in sugar alternatives exploded.

The 2020-2025 U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend that Americans age 2 and older limit their intake of added sugars to less than 10% of their daily calories. For someone consuming a 2,000-calorie diet, that amount equals about four tablespoons of sugars. Children younger than 2 shouldn't consume any added sugars in their diet. Eating and drinking too many added sugars contributes to various health problems like weight gain, obesity and heart disease.

Keep in mind that this new guidance does not address the safety of consumption; it only comments on the use of NSS for long-term weight loss. However, eliminating sweeteners is the healthiest option. The WHO recommends that people consider other ways to

reduce their sugar intake, such as consuming food with naturally occurring sugars (e.g., fruit) or unsweetened beverages. Similarly, the American Heart Association encourages focusing on whole foods, such as a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

Talk to your doctor if you have questions about your diet or risk of disease.





Got Back Pain? You're Not Alone; It's the Leading Cause of Disability

A new study published in [The Lancet Rheumatology](#) medical journal revealed that low back pain remains the leading cause of disability globally. In 2020, 619 million people worldwide suffered from low back pain. That figure is expected to jump to 843 million by 2050.

The study identified three risk factors accounting for almost 40% of cases: smoking, obesity and work-related ergonomics. Low back pain was higher among females than males in all age groups. The peak impacted age was 85 years, and researchers noticed that most countries lack specific recommendations on how to care for an older person with low back pain.

What Can You Do?

Researchers estimate that low back pain is the main cause of 264 million lost workdays for Americans. If not addressed, researchers noted that low back pain could also result in chronic health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, mental health conditions, invasive medical procedures and significant disability.

Consider these tips for managing back pain and incorporating healthy habits for your back into your everyday routine:

- **Maintain correct posture.** It's beneficial to maintain correct posture when performing physical activities. Such activities may include

playing sports or performing a job that requires repetitive motions, such as lifting, pushing or pulling. Jobs that include twisting or vibrating the spine can lead to injury and back pain. Also, avoid slouching if you sit a lot during the workday.

- **Stretch your muscles.** Stretching can be a great way to relieve back pain. It's also beneficial for preventing future issues.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** A healthy weight differs for everyone, so speak with a doctor to determine what that looks like for you. Being overweight can increase the strain on your lower back, especially as you get older.
- **Explore your options.** There is no one way to manage back pain. Everyone's back is different, as is the root of back pain. Your doctor may recommend options such as undergoing physical therapy, working with a chiropractor, receiving acupuncture or changing your diet.

Managing back pain is an individualized experience. There may be additional methods your doctor recommends for treating your back pain. Contact your doctor for further questions and information about managing back pain.

NHO



Learn more about the three upcoming national health observances (NHOs) in this section.



July: UV Safety Awareness Month

It's time to get outside and enjoy the sunshine during the summer months. But it's important to know that too much sun can negatively impact your body. Ultraviolet (UV) rays contain harmful radiation, and too much exposure can cause serious health issues, such as premature aging and skin cancer.

July is UV Safety Awareness Month. When the weather heats up, it's essential to be aware of the impacts of UV exposure and how to prevent them. To protect yourself, consider staying in the shade during the sun's peak hours, wearing protective clothing and using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.

To learn more about UV radiation, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

August: National Immunization Awareness Month

The Adult Vaccine Access Coalition reported that the United States spends \$26.5 billion annually treating four vaccine-preventable diseases in adults age 50 and older: influenza (flu), pneumococcal disease, pertussis (whooping cough) and shingles.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month. Vaccines help save countless lives each year, so this is a great time to learn more about the positive impact of vaccines and double-check that you're up to date on all recommended vaccines. Delaying critical vaccinations can lead to serious health risks, which is why there are recommended immunization schedules.

Contact a health care professional to ensure you are current on available vaccines.



September: National Food Safety Education Month

An estimated 1 in 6 Americans gets a foodborne illness every year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are ways to help keep you and others from getting sick from food, and they start with focusing on simple food poisoning prevention steps.

September is National Food Safety Education Month. This is a great time to focus on food illness prevention measures, such as avoiding cross-contamination of meats and vegetables. It's most important to keep these foods separate before cooking.

Check out [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information about how to protect yourself and your loved ones from food poisoning.

Looking Ahead...

October

Health Literacy
Month

November

American Diabetes
Month

December

National Safe Toys
and Gifts Month

Health and Wellness



Remain on top of the latest trends in health and wellness with the three articles in this section.



Warning Signs of Heat-related Illnesses

Summer heat can be more than uncomfortable; it can threaten your health, especially for older adults and children. Hot and humid weather can make it more challenging for your body to cool down, leading to heat-related illnesses. Three common types of such illnesses include heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

Heat cramps are often the first sign of heat illness. Symptoms can include painful muscle cramps, spasms in the legs and abdomen, and heavy sweating. If you're experiencing heat cramps, apply firm pressure on the cramping area and sip water. If nausea or prolonged symptoms last more than an hour, seek medical attention immediately.

Heat exhaustion is another common sign of heat illness. Symptoms can include heavy sweating, fatigue, clammy or pale skin, fast or weak pulse, muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, headache or fainting. If you or someone you know may be

experiencing heat exhaustion, it's crucial to move to a cooler environment, loosen clothing and apply cool, wet cloths. Seek medical attention immediately if vomiting or symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

Heatstroke is the most dangerous sign of heat-related illness. Symptoms may include headaches; confusion; nausea; dizziness; body temperature above 103 degrees Fahrenheit; hot or red, damp skin; and fainting or loss of consciousness. Do not consume fluids. Heatstroke is a severe medical emergency; therefore, if you or someone else may be in danger of this condition, call 911 or find transportation to a hospital immediately.

Don't let the summer heat get the best of you. Be on the lookout for these warning signs of heat-related illnesses. If left untreated, they can become life-threatening.



What's on the 2023 Dirty Dozen List?

Every year, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) releases a report ranking pesticide residue levels of fruits and vegetables based on samples taken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This report is designed to help consumers make healthy and informed choices and reduce their exposure to toxic pesticides. It includes a list of the most pesticide-tainted produce known as the Dirty Dozen. Here's the 2023 list:

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Kale, collards and mustard greens
4. Peaches
5. Pears
6. Nectarines
7. Apples
8. Grapes
9. Bell and hot peppers
10. Cherries
11. Blueberries
12. Green beans

In addition to the Dirty Dozen, the EWG publishes the [Clean Fifteen](#), highlighting the “cleanest” produce. Avocados and sweet corn continue to top the list.

What Does This Mean?

Most Americans aren't eating enough fruits and vegetables daily. In fact, the CDC reports that only 1 in 10 adults eat enough fruits and vegetables each day, so don't let the Dirty Dozen scare you away. Whether organic or not, all properly handled fresh produce is considered safe to eat. Do your best to get your daily dose of healthy fruits and vegetables while still being an informed shopper.

To attempt to remove pesticide residue from nonorganic fruits and vegetables, experts recommend rinsing, rubbing or scrubbing them. If you're still uneasy about pesticides, frozen or canned versions of your favorite produce can be a great alternative. After all, frozen fruits and vegetables are just as nutritious. Ultimately, finding what works best for your household and budget is essential.



What You Should Know About Ozempic

Ozempic is an injectable prescription medication to help adults with Type 2 diabetes manage their blood sugar. Although it's not approved as a weight-loss drug, people without Type 2 diabetes have begun using Ozempic off-label for this purpose. While some health care providers may be prescribing Ozempic for patients whose goal is to lose weight, the drug's manufacturer does not promote, suggest or encourage off-label use of this medication. As Ozempic gains traction on social media platforms as a way to lose weight, you may have questions about this medication and how it's being used for weight loss.

Ozempic Overview

Approved by the FDA, Ozempic is a prescription medication for treating Type 2 diabetes in adults. It comes as a prefilled pen injector. The dosage depends on an individual's health history, goals and lifestyle. A doctor prescribes the drug's dosage and explains injection timing, instructions and expectations. The FDA approved Ozempic's active ingredient, semaglutide, in 2017. Ozempic also helps adults with Type 2 diabetes and known heart disease lower their risk for cardiovascular events, such as stroke or heart attack.

In general, the side effects of Ozempic are gastrointestinal. The most common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain and constipation. Although rare, more severe complications may include thyroid tumors, pancreatitis, changes in vision, kidney problems and serious allergic reactions. These could lead to major health complications and, in some cases, death.

Ozempic for Weight Loss

Although it's not officially considered a weight-loss drug, researchers suggest that people who take Ozempic may lose modest amounts of weight while on the medication. Semaglutide impacts weight in the following ways:

- It affects the hunger centers in the brain, thus reducing or curbing hunger, appetite and cravings.
- It slows the rate of stomach emptying, which prolongs fullness and satiety after eating.

Semaglutide is approved by the FDA at higher doses for treating individuals living with obesity and other weight-related medical problems under the brand name Wegovy. However, Wegovy should only be used as a weight-loss tool under medical supervision and by individuals dealing with "severe" obesity. Although Ozempic and Wegovy have the same active ingredient, they have different brand names and dosage schedules.

Ozempic's weight-loss effects have increasingly been touted by celebrities and on social media platforms. Taking the drug for the goal of losing weight is considered off-label use, so talk with your doctor if you have questions or concerns about Ozempic.

Recipes



Try out these two healthy recipes from the USDA's MyPlate Kitchen website.

Grilled Fish Tacos With Peach Salsa

Makes: 4 servings



Salsa Ingredients

15.25 oz.-can peach halves
(drained, rinsed and chopped)
½ red bell pepper (finely chopped)
¼ red onion (finely chopped)
1 whole jalapeno pepper
(rinsed, seeded and finely chopped)
1 Tbsp. fresh cilantro (finely chopped)
2 tsp. lemon juice

Fish Ingredients

4 tilapia fillets (about 1 pound)
1 Tbsp. chili powder
¼ tsp. low-sodium adobo seasoning
1 package low-sodium sazón seasoning
8- or 6-in. flour tortillas (warmed)

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Calories: 330
Total fat: 5 g
Saturated fat: 2 g
Cholesterol: 55 mg
Sodium: 380 mg
Carbohydrate: 44 g
Dietary fiber: 3 g
Total sugars: 18 g
Added sugars included: 11 g
Protein: 27 g
Vitamin D: 3 mcg
Calcium: 104 mg
Iron: 3 mg
Potassium: 590 mg

Directions

- 1 Combine the salsa ingredients in a medium bowl; stir together the chopped peaches, bell pepper, onions, jalapenos, cilantro and lemon juice. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
- 2 Heat the grill or grill pan over medium-high heat. Pat the fish dry with paper towels and transfer them to a plate.
- 3 In a small bowl, stir together the chili powder, low-sodium adobo seasoning and sazón seasoning packet.
- 4 Rub the fish with the spice mixture to coat it completely.
- 5 Place the fish on hot, greased grill grates.
- 6 Cook, flipping once until fish is opaque and flakes easily with a fork (145 F), about 8 minutes.
- 7 Thinly slice fish.
- 8 To serve, fill each tortilla with half a fish fillet and about ⅓ cup of salsa.

Berries With Banana Cream

Makes: 4 servings



Ingredients

⅓ cup low-fat plain yogurt
½ ripe banana
½ oz. fruit juice (e.g., orange)
2 cups sliced strawberries
1 tsp. honey
1 dash cinnamon

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Calories: 60
Total fat: 1 g
Saturated fat: 0 g
Cholesterol: 1 mg
Sodium: 15 mg
Carbohydrate: 13 g
Dietary fiber: 2 g
Total sugars: 9 g
Added sugars included: 1 g
Protein: 2 g
Vitamin D: 0 mcg
Calcium: 52 mg
Iron: 0 mg
Potassium: 236 mg

Directions

- 1 | Combine the yogurt, banana and juice and mash with a fork until most chunks are gone.
- 2 | Wash and slice the strawberries.
- 3 | Top the berries with the yogurt-banana mixture.
- 4 | Top with honey and cinnamon.