

# HealthConnection

GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY

Issue 1 • New Year's Resolutions

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**THIS MONTH'S  
Featured Article**

**YOUR GUIDE TO  
QUIT SMOKING Q&A**

PG. 3



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## Senior Health Update

### Senior Skin: Treating Age Spots

Age spots, also called liver spots, are small dark areas on your skin. They're common in adults over age 50. They come in many sizes and appear in areas most exposed to the sun, such as your face, hands, shoulders and arms. Age spots can look like cancerous growths, but are harmless and don't need medical treatment.

Treatments are available to lighten or remove them to make them less noticeable. These include:

- Prescription bleaching creams (hydroquinone) used alone or with a mild steroid
- Laser and intense pulsed light therapy
- Freezing
- Dermabrasion
- Microdermabrasion and a chemical peel

Because age spot treatments are considered cosmetic, your insurance may not pay for them. And because the procedures can have side effects, discuss your options carefully with a dermatologist. Also, make sure your dermatologist is specially trained and experienced in the technique you're considering.

Source: Mayo Clinic

## Busting Health Myths

### Probiotics: What We Know

Talk about a hot topic. Probiotics are becoming increasingly popular. They're available to consumers in oral form, such as dietary supplements and yogurts, as well as in other products like suppositories and creams.

Probiotics are live microorganisms (for example, bacteria) that are either the same as or similar to microorganisms found naturally in our bodies and may be beneficial to health. The lower gastrointestinal tract, in particular, contains a complex and diverse community of bacteria. Even though we often think of bacteria as harmful "germs," many bacteria help the body work properly.

Researchers have studied probiotics to find out whether they might help prevent or treat a variety of health problems, including digestive disorders such as diarrhea associated with infections or antibiotics; allergic disorders such as eczema and hay fever; tooth decay; liver disease; and even the common cold. That work has shown that there is some evidence that probiotics may be helpful for acute

diarrhea, antibiotic-associated diarrhea and atopic eczema, a skin condition most commonly seen in infants. Unfortunately, along with the promise shown in this research, strong scientific evidence to support other uses of probiotics for most conditions is lacking.

Probiotic products may contain different types of probiotic bacteria that can have different effects in our bodies. Effects also may vary from one person to the next. Studies suggest that probiotics usually have few side effects, especially for otherwise healthy people. However, the data on safety, particularly long-term safety, are limited, and the risk of serious side effects may be greater in people who have underlying health conditions.

Considering a probiotic dietary supplement? Talk with your healthcare provider. Use care to not replace scientifically proven treatments with unproven products or practices.

Source: National Institutes of Health







*Top Tools to Help You Stop Smoking*

## Your Guide to Quit Smoking Q&A

The most important thing any smoker can do to improve his or her health is to quit smoking completely. That means not smoking at all, not even “once in a while” or “just when I’m out with my friends.” It may take a few tries, but you can stop using tobacco for good.

**Q. What are the health benefits of quitting smoking?**

**A.** Soon after you quit smoking, you will notice you have more energy and less stress. Your smoker’s cough will go away, although for some it may take weeks as your lungs clean themselves by bringing up mucus. Your eyes and throat won’t be irritated, and your senses of taste and smell will improve. Your risk of heart attack and stroke drop quickly. Over time, you’ll have fewer colds and respiratory infections, and your body will repair some of the damage caused by smoking. In the long run, you reduce your risk of lung cancer as well as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema, and is the third-leading cause of death in the U.S. You will also have fewer wrinkles and whiter teeth, and will no longer smell like tobacco. You’ll even save money – lots of it!

**Q. I’ve tried to quit smoking before and it didn’t work. What can I do differently to quit for good this time?**

**A.** Smoking is very addictive, and quitting “cold turkey” generally isn’t effective. The majority of smokers need help quitting, which means getting support from your friends and family, signing up for a program like the American Lung Association’s Freedom From Smoking campaign and taking a medication that can help you quit. Also, think about your previous quit attempts and use those to plan your next quit. If you keep trying and keep learning from your experiences, you will be able to quit for good!

**Q. Which medications can I take to help me quit smoking?**

**A.** There are seven clinically proven medications available that can help you break your nicotine addiction. There are over-the-counter medications, such as nicotine patches, lozenges and gum, as well as prescription nicotine replacement therapies, including a nicotine inhaler and nicotine nasal spray. There are also two non-nicotine prescription drugs that can help you quit: bupropion (Zyban®) and varenicline (Chantix®). Talk with your doctor about what would be best for you.

Source: American Lung Association

*To-Do List*

### Let’s Get Fit! Strengthen Your Heart in Just Minutes a Day

Heart disease is America’s number 1 killer. To improve overall heart health, the American Heart Association suggests:

- At least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity at least five days per week for a total of 150 minutes

OR

- At least 25 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity at least 3 days per week for a total of 75 minutes; or a combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity

AND

- Moderate- to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity at least 2 days per week for additional health benefits.

Aerobic exercises include walking, jogging, swimming, biking, climbing stairs and many sports. Strength and stretching exercises are best for overall stamina and flexibility.

The simplest positive change you can make to effectively improve your heart health is to start walking. It’s enjoyable, free and it can be social. If you don’t think you’ll make it for 30 minutes, set a reachable initial goal and increase your goals gradually. Some exercise is always better than none!

Source: American Heart Association



## Moms' Corner

### Navigating the Grocery Aisles: Save Money and Eat Well

When you plan ahead for your weekly grocery shopping, make sure you include enough foods from each food group. Pay special attention to serving a variety of fruits and veggies, for example. Creating a list in advance also helps you save money. If you plan your grocery list before you hit the store, you'll know what you have on hand and what you need. Also, shopping from a list helps you avoid expensive impulse purchases.

Compare the cost of convenience foods with the same foods made from scratch. Convenience foods are products such as packaged baked goods, frozen meals and vegetables with seasonings and sauces. Most of these cost more than similar foods prepared at home. Also, you can use less fat, salt and sugar in foods made at home.

Try store brands. They usually cost less than name brands, but they taste as good and generally have the same nutritional value.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion



## Kids' Health

### Oral Care Should Start Before Baby's First Tooth

Your child's oral care routine should begin way before your baby's first tooth appears. Getting into a routine of care for gums and teeth at the earliest of ages can promote a lifetime of good dental health.

- **Clean your baby's mouth starting a few days after birth.** Wipe your baby's gums with a clean wet washcloth or a clean gauze pad after each feeding.
- **Baby teeth are very important.** They help your baby chew, speak and smile. They also hold space in the jaws for the permanent teeth. When a baby tooth is lost too early, the permanent teeth can drift into the empty space and make it difficult for other adult teeth to find room when they come in.
- **Decay can occur with the first tooth.** When the first tooth appears, start brushing twice a day with a soft-bristled child's toothbrush. Decide, with the help of your child's dentist or physician, whether

or not to use fluoride toothpaste. If used before your child is about 3 years old, use an amount no more than a smear or the size of a grain of rice. At about age 3, you should start putting a pea-sized drop on your child's toothbrush.

- **Check your baby's teeth.** Healthy teeth should not have spots or stains. If you spot this, take your baby to a dentist.
- **Your child's first visit to the dentist.** Take your child to the dentist after the first tooth appears, but no later than his or her first birthday. Your dentist will check for decay and overall tooth and jaw development, discuss fluoride toothpaste with you and, if needed, teach you how to clean your child's teeth.

Sources: American Dental Association; National Institutes of Health National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

For additional articles on kids' health, visit [MyGNP.com](http://MyGNP.com).



*Your Healthy Pet*

## Does Your Dog or Cat Have Seasonal Allergies?

Seasonal allergies aren't just a problem for humans. Check for these signs in your pet:

- **Eye redness and discharge.** Allergens enter the eyes and cause conjunctivitis (inflammation of the tissue lining the eyelids) and scleritis (inflammation of the white of the eyes), which appears as eye discharge.
- **Ear discharge and ear scratching/head shaking.** The ear canal and the earflap accumulate allergens, becoming inflamed and causing discomfort. Pets having ear inflammation are more prone to infection with bacteria or yeast, which are often already present in the ear canal and are given a better chance to thrive in that moist, dark and warm environment.
- **Nasal discharge and sneezing.** Sneezing may be occasional or frequent, and nasal discharge can be thin, mucous-filled or even bloody depending on the severity of irritation.

- **Coughing, gagging and swallowing.** The same allergens that enter the nasal passages also end up in the mouth and windpipe. Additionally, the nose and mouth connect, so nasal discharge easily trickles down into the throat. Coughing, gagging and increased swallowing are common signs of respiratory allergens.
- **Licking, chewing, scratching and the development of hot spots.** So many bodily locations can be impacted by allergies, as the skin is the body's largest organ. Pets often self-manage the situation by licking, chewing and scratching. Affected sites include the feet, axilla (armpit), groin, flanks, sides and skin folds.

If you're concerned about your pet suffering from allergies, schedule an appointment for a physical examination with your veterinarian.

Source: PetMD

*Health Q&A*

## What is Drug Compounding?

**Q: What is the difference between a regular prescription drug and a compounded drug?**

**A:** Sometimes, the health needs of a patient cannot be met by an FDA-approved or commercially available medication. Drug compounding is the practice in which a licensed pharmacist, a licensed physician or, in the case of an outsourcing facility, a person under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist combines, mixes or alters the ingredients of a drug to create a medication tailored to the needs of an individual patient. The end result is medicines compounded for the patient where the exact strength and dosage form (e.g., cream, pill or liquid) required by the patient are also customized.

An example when a compounded drug is needed is when a patient has an allergy and needs a medication without a certain dye. Another would be if a patient (say a child) cannot swallow a pill and the drug needed by the patient needs to be in a liquid form that is not otherwise available.

Compounded drugs are not FDA-approved. State boards of pharmacy have primary responsibility for the oversight of state-licensed pharmacies that compound drugs, but the FDA retains some authority over their operations. Registered outsourcing facilities are regulated by the FDA, must comply with the FDA's Current Good Manufacturing Practice requirements and are required to be inspected by the FDA.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Do you have more questions?  
Our website has the answers.

Visit [MyGNP.com](https://www.mygnp.com)  
for more information.





*Eat Smart*

# Healthy Snacking 101

Every now and then, we all want have to have “a little something” between meals, right? Snacks don’t have to be bad for you. Here are a few tips for healthy snacking:

- **Stay away from “empty calories.”** These are foods and drinks with a lot of calories but not many nutrients; for example, chips, cookies, sodas and alcohol. Most packaged snacks have a Nutrition Facts label. Try to choose snacks with 5% Daily Value or less in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol

and sodium. Also look for snacks with 20% or more of the Daily Value for potassium, fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium and iron.

- **Eat more fruit.** Put fruit instead of candy in the bowl on your coffee table. Buy and try a new fruit for you (plantain, star fruit or papaya?).
- **Portion control.** If you want some chips or nuts, don’t eat from the bag. Count out a serving and put the bag away.

- **Plan for the urge to snack.** When you’re out and need a snack, don’t be tempted by a candy bar. Instead, take along some fruit or raw vegetables in a plastic bag when you’re away from home.
- **Snack with less fat.** Try a container of low-fat or fat-free yogurt. Drink fat-free or low-fat chocolate milk (blend it with a banana — potassium! — or strawberries and some ice for a smoothie).

Source: National Institutes of Health





### *Living with Diabetes*

## Your Diabetes Educator: Your Partner in Good Health

If you have diabetes, you know how challenging it can be to manage your disease. Healthy eating, physical activity, monitoring your condition, taking medication correctly and reducing your risk for complications are probably all part of your daily routine. At times, all of this might seem overwhelming.

As a member of your healthcare team, a diabetes educator makes managing your diabetes easier. This person works with you to develop a plan to stay healthy and gives you the tools and ongoing support to make that plan a regular part of your life.

Diabetes education is a recognized part of your diabetes care and is covered by Medicare and most health insurance plans when it is offered through an accredited diabetes education program that has met vigorous criteria set by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Two organizations, the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) and the American Diabetes Association (ADA), accredit diabetes education programs.

Founded in 1973, the AADE is a multidisciplinary professional membership organization dedicated to improving

diabetes care through innovative education, management and support. With more than 14,000 professional members, including nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, exercise specialists and others, the AADE has a vast network of practitioners working with people who have, are affected by or are at risk for diabetes. For more info, visit [www.diabeteseducator.org](http://www.diabeteseducator.org).

Diabetes may not yet have a cure, but you can control it and live well. Ask your doctor, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant about working with a diabetes educator to learn how to better manage your disease.

Source: American Association of Diabetes Educators

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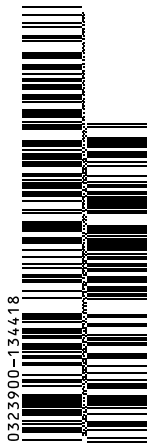
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## Enjoy the Holidays in Good Health!

Surviving the holidays with your health and wallet intact is always a challenge. Colds, flus, big festive meals and one too many visits from the in-laws can leave you feeling run down and stressed out. Luckily, your local *Good Neighbor Pharmacy* has everything you need to fight off winter woes and feel great all season long!



*Good Neighbor Pharmacy* features affordable, high-quality products with many of the same ingredients found in the top name brands.

All items may not be available in every *Good Neighbor Pharmacy* location.

