Top Fitness Trends

Name your fitness goals — weight loss, more muscle, heart health or stronger joints — and you’ll find emerging exercise trends to help you succeed.

In the American College of Sports Medicine’s 2012 Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends, 2,600 health and fitness professionals ranked the 20 most popular fitness pursuits from 37 potential options. Here are some of the leading practices:

• **Strength training** remains a central emphasis at gyms. It’s vital to maintaining health and mobility for everyone.

• **Fitness programs for older adults** are increasing as many boomers enter retirement, gain time for fitness activities and favor targeted exercise for age-related health conditions.

• **Fitness programs for children** meet a rapidly growing need to counter the overweight youth epidemic.

• **Core training** strengthens the mid-body muscles and is essential for aiding spinal health.

• **Group personal training** has emerged as a more affordable option than individual sessions.

• **Yoga, spinning, dance workouts and interval training** are popular group workouts.

• **Functional fitness** exercise is designed to strengthen and prepare the body for doing everyday activities with ease and to avoid injury (e.g., Pilates, yoga and tai chi).

Another indicator: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that jobs for educated and certified fitness workers will grow faster than other occupations.

Breast Cancer — Can You Lower Your Risk?

Most women want to know how they can lower their odds for getting breast cancer. Here are several lifestyle changes you can make:

1. Stay physically active. Studies continue to show that regular moderate-to-intense exercise, such as walking for at least three hours a week, has been linked to a significantly lower risk of breast cancer.

2. Maintain a healthy weight. A new study shows combining weight loss and regular exercise will drive down hormones that raise risk. Even a 5% weight loss helps, particularly in obese postmenopausal women.

3. Reduce estrogen exposure. One way is to avoid long-term use of postmenopausal hormone replacement therapy, particularly any combination of estrogen-plus-progestin forms. If you do need hormones to help relieve menopausal symptoms, use the lowest dose for the shortest duration. Review your options carefully with your provider.

4. Avoid or limit alcohol. A 20-year study of more than 100,000 women found that even light drinking (three to six drinks a week of beer, wine or spirits) increased risk slightly. Research is continuing to further clarify the relationship between alcohol consumption and breast cancer risk.

What to Do to Fight the Flu

**Your first line of defense is get a flu vaccine.** The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated every year to prevent getting the flu.

Vaccination is especially important for those at high risk for developing serious complications from the flu, such as pneumonia. Most at risk are people who have certain medical conditions, including asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease; pregnant women; people 50 years and older; health care workers; and others living with or working for people who are especially at risk for infection. Get vaccinated as soon as the vaccine becomes available in your community. Flu season can begin as early as October. Allow about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection. (continued on the other side)

Add some healthful color to your plate. Turn the page to learn about Squash Delights.
Diet Detective Says:  
By Charles Stuart Platkin, PhD, MPH  

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Losing weight almost always comes down to the dozens of daily micro choices we make. Eat an apple or a slice of apple pie? Bike or drive to work? List your most common decisions about food and physical activity. Here's why: When you need to make one of these micro choices, it's usually based on memory. When you make a memory-based choice, you don't think too much because you're relying on information you already have. There's little thought involved.

Solution: Think about your choices throughout the day so the healthier decision becomes part of your memory. When that happens, healthy choices may become automatic.

Fight the Flu ... (continued)
The best ways to avoid spreading germs include:
1. **Covering** your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
2. **Washing** your hands often with soap and water.
3. **Avoiding** touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
4. **Avoiding** close contact with sick people.

**FLU FACTS:**
- The U.S. distributed 132.8 million flu vaccine doses during 2011-2012; between 146 and 149 million doses are projected for this season.
- Antiviral drugs prescribed by your provider can reduce the length and severity of flu. They’re most effective when used within the first two days of flu symptoms.
- Flu viruses change constantly, so it’s always possible for new flu viruses to appear each year.

Breast Cancer ... (continued)

**Talk to your provider about breast cancer screening.** This will include learning about other lifestyle factors you may need to change, as well as professional breast exams and mammograms. Remember, early detection of tumors can reduce the severity of illness and tissue damage and may save your life.

**Not sure how to cook squash?** Cooking it whole is a great option:
- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- Pierce rind of squash with fork.
- Bake for 45 minutes.
- Test for doneness by piercing with a fork, which should easily pierce the peel and flesh.
- Scrape out seeds.
- Cut or mash and top with olive oil, Italian herbs and Parmesan cheese. *Note:* Use oil and cheese sparingly.

If your recipe requires cubes, use a vegetable peeler to remove the skin before cutting the squash. *Tip:* Try softening it for 3 minutes in the microwave before cutting.

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**Stop emails from draining your productivity.**

When you get an email, take one of these actions: Delete it without reading it. Archive it. Or read, respond and then delete immediately. Review emails in batches during a set time each day, instead of reacting to messages as they arrive. Avoid reading messages on the fly, when you don’t have time to process them and are likely to leave them sitting in your inbox.

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Next Month: Going Tobacco-Free