



A Newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Hospital Center

# update

VOL. 8, NO. 16

OCTOBER 28, 1985

**SPECIAL  
ISSUE**

**INVEST IN YOURSELF...  
BECAUSE YOUR HealthCounts TO US!**

Last week, the HealthEast Hospitals, in cooperation with the Wellness Center, launched a major program to help all of us adopt and maintain healthier lifestyles. We call it HealthCounts. And it's one of the best investments you'll ever make.

We in the HealthEast system are in the business of providing quality health care to our community. Yet many of us aren't doing as good a job when it comes to taking care of ourselves. That's where HealthCounts comes in. The HealthCounts programs are designed to help staff members adopt a number of healthy and safe behaviors that can contribute to the prevention of illness and injury.

HealthCounts focuses on six major health hazards: smoking; weight problems and high cholesterol; hypertension; back injuries; alcohol and drug abuse, and non-use of seatbelts. There are special programs for each of these areas, using support groups, seminars and individual counseling, to help you reach your healthy goals.

Participation in one or more HealthCounts programs is a valuable investment in yourself. But it also pays to participate because we're making a financial investment in your success! HealthCounts includes cash bonuses for smoking cessation, weight loss or cholesterol reduction. The chance to win valuable raffle prizes. Free taxi fare if you, or someone you know, is too drunk to drive. And, reduced prices on special Wellness entrees in the cafeteria. In more ways than one, it pays to adopt a healthier lifestyle through HealthCounts!

This special issue of **Update** is devoted entirely to the HealthCounts programs and the issues they address. We hope it will give you the information and inspiration you need to invest in yourself and your good health.

By assisting our staff in living healthier lifestyles, the HealthEast Hospitals hope to serve as positive role models in extending this important message to the entire community.

**Join us!**

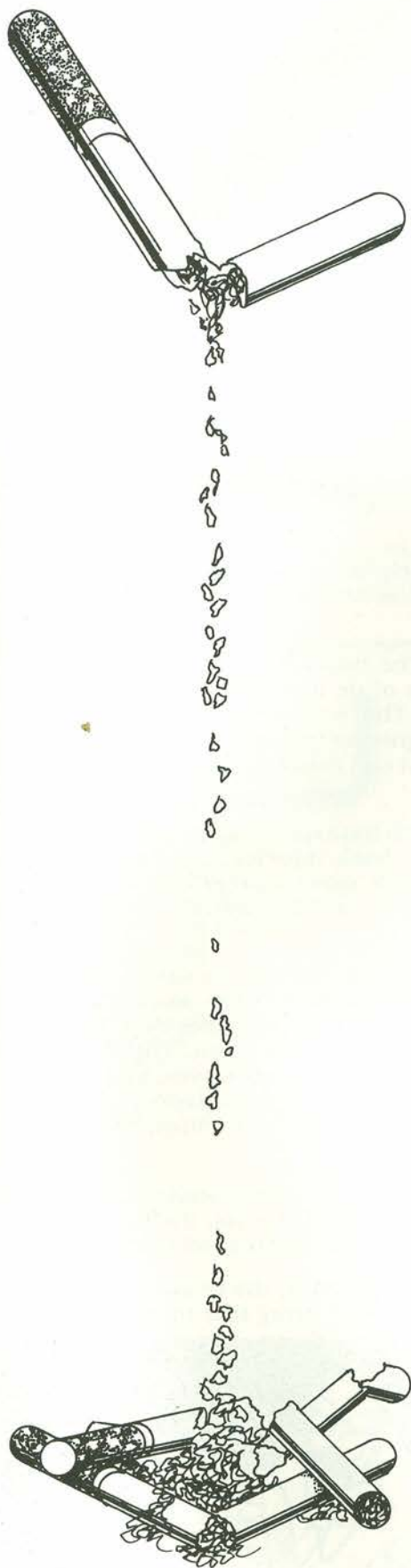




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# The HealthCounts SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM: WE'LL PAY YOU TO KICK THE HABIT!

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If you're a smoker, we suspect you already know you **should** quit, and why. Unfortunately, many smokers are afraid to try because they know how hard it can be. Especially if they've tried—and failed—in the past.

The HealthCounts Smoking Cessation Program can help. It uses a combination of individual counseling, courses, financial incentives and maintenance programs to help you kick the habit for good!

You'll start with an individual counseling interview to help determine why you smoke. We'll help you look at the history of your smoking behavior—when and why you started, how many cigarettes you smoke per day, what smoking patterns you've developed, and so on. We'll also discuss your past cessation efforts and why they failed, plus any health-related behaviors that may contribute to your smoking, such as stress, depression or nervousness.

During your interview, we'll also discuss the types of programs available to choose from as part of your smoking cessation plan. These include a free, eight-week behavior modification program, free hypnosis classes with a hypnotherapist, and other programs available

through the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association.

After your initial counseling session, you'll be able to make a contract with yourself to quit smoking. The HealthCounts Smoking Cessation Program uses an honor system. With your permission, your name will be posted in your department and on the cafeteria bulletin board along with the names of other enrolled employees. These lists will function as both support mechanisms and reminders to stick to the honor system.

You'll be asked to check in with your counselor periodically to discuss your progress and/or problem areas. When you inform your counselor that you've remained smoke-free for six weeks, you will receive a cash incentive of \$100! The six-week period begins on the day you sign the self-contract. Individual and group maintenance sessions can be attended every few months thereafter to assist you in maintaining a smoke-free lifestyle.

Programs will be offered from October through May, during both day and evening hours. A complete schedule of dates, times and locations will be available when you register.

## THE RAFFLE:

### ANOTHER REWARD FOR NON-SMOKERS!

Two raffles, involving **thousands of dollars in prizes**, will be held to reward our non-smoking employees. The first will be held November 1, and the second on April 1. Any employee who has not smoked for at least six weeks before the raffle is eligible to win.

To enter, fill out the non-smokers' raffle coupon in your HealthCounts passbook and drop it in the designated entry box before the deadline.





## JUST ONE CIGARETTE...

Cigarette smoking is a major cause of emphysema, chronic bronchitis, heart disease and cancers of the lung, larynx, oral cavity, esophagus, bladder and pancreas. Obviously, the longer you smoke, the greater your risk of developing these conditions. But do you know how just **one** cigarette can hurt you?

Smoking one cigarette speeds up your heartbeat, increases your blood pressure, upsets the flow of blood and air in your lungs and causes the skin temperature in your fingers and toes to drop.

A few puffs slow down the cilia inside your bronchial tubes (cilia act like "brooms" to sweep out germs, mucus and dirt). One cigarette makes the cilia sluggish, possibly exposing your lungs to infection.

Inhaling hot cigarette smoke assaults the delicate tissues in your mouth, throat, breathing tubes and lungs. Your lungs also retain from seventy to ninety percent of the compounds you inhale. Among the most dangerous of these compounds are nicotine, tars and carbon monoxide.

Nicotine constricts your blood vessels, cutting down the flow of oxygen and blood through your body and making your heart pump harder. Tars damage lung tissues. When they cool inside your lungs, some form a brown, sticky mass that contains chemicals linked to cancer. Carbon monoxide prevents the correct amount of oxygen from reaching the tissues of all parts of your body. And, it stays in the bloodstream up to six hours *after* you stop smoking.

That's one cigarette. Multiply its effects by the number of years you've smoked and the number of cigarettes you smoke a day and you have thousands of reasons to quit!

## AND NOW, THE GOOD NEWS...

Maybe you'd like to quit smoking, but feel that the damage to your body has already been done. The fact is, quitting begins to pay off in health benefits almost immediately!

Within twelve hours after smoking your last cigarette, your body will begin to repair itself. Within a few days, your sense of smell will return and your digestive tract will return to normal. After sustained periods of not smoking, the cilia begin working again and help keep your lungs clean.

The craving for a cigarette actually goes away in a few seconds. These cravings will gradually decrease in frequency and eventually disappear.

The tingling sensation and light-headed feeling you may experience after quitting are actually **good** signs—they signal that circulation is improving and blood oxygen has increased! Likewise, if your smoker's cough seems to have increased, it means that your lungs are cleaning themselves. The increase in coughing is temporary; the cough should disappear completely within a short period of time.

After one year, there is an important drop in the risk of heart attacks among ex-smokers. After ten years, the death rate of ex-smokers from all causes is approximately as low as for people who **never** smoked!

## SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU KICK THE HABIT:

- Develop strong personal reasons, in addition to your health and obligations to others. For example, think of all the time you waste on cigarette breaks. Or all the money you've already spent on cigarettes.

- Set a target date for quitting—your birthday, your anniversary, holiday or vacation. Make the date sacred and don't change it!

- Ask a friend or spouse to quit with you. Make a bet with that person, set aside your cigarette money every day, and forfeit it if you smoke.

- Stop buying cigarettes by the carton. Wait until one pack is empty before buying another, and stop carrying cigarettes with you at home or at work. Make them hard to get to.

- Don't empty your ashtrays. This will remind you of how many cigarettes you've smoked that day.

- Visit your dentist and have your teeth cleaned. Brush your teeth and use mouthwash frequently to maintain a "clean-mouth" feeling.

- You don't have to gain weight if you quit smoking! If the urge to nibble hits you, keep several low-calorie snacks on hand, such as carrot sticks, celery, fruit, and sugarless gum or mints.

- If you're in a situation where you'll be tempted to smoke (such as a cocktail party), try to associate with the non-smokers.

- Don't think of **never** smoking again. Think of quitting in terms of one day at a time. Tell yourself you won't smoke **today**. Then, don't.

- Don't allow yourself to think that "just one" won't hurt. It will!



## HOW A NON-SMOKER CAN HELP

You don't smoke. You don't know what it's like to be addicted to cigarettes. But someone you care about is, and you want to help. What can you do?

The support of family and friends is an important factor in quitting cigarette smoking. Smokers who want to quit face a very difficult time. Family and friends need to recognize that giving up smoking is a long-term process that may have to be tried several times before the smoker succeeds. If the smoker in your life fails on the first try, he or she shouldn't be made to feel weak-willed. It's up to you to encourage that person to try again. After all, you want your friends and family to live long, healthy lives. And giving someone you love the encouragement and support to quit smoking is a great step in that direction!

## THE WEIGHT CONTROL AND CHOLESTEROL PROGRAM: REWARDS FOR REDUCTION

Americans are preoccupied with fat. Whether it's body fat or dietary fat, we're constantly being told to reduce, reduce, reduce.

Of course, all of us stand a better chance of achieving good health if we avoid obesity and high cholesterol through exercise and a sensible diet. But if you already have a weight and/or cholesterol problem, you'll need help to change the unhealthy behaviors that caused them.

Whether you want to merely reduce your cholesterol level or lose ten pounds or a hundred pounds, a good place to start is HealthCounts. We can help you lose weight or reduce your cholesterol **permanently** through behavior modification, nutrition education, exercise, financial incentives and maintenance programs.

When you register for the Weight and/or Cholesterol Control Program, an individual counseling interview will be scheduled. We'll review your cholesterol level if you desire, how long you've been overweight, your primary reasons for having a weight or cholesterol problem, specific eating patterns that may be causing problems and your desired weight loss goal. We'll talk about your previous weight loss and cholesterol reduction efforts, and the obstacles you've faced. We'll also discuss your weight fluctuation patterns and any health-related behaviors that contribute to your problems, such as stress, physical inactivity or lack of nutritional information.

During this initial interview, we'll review the programs available to assist you in your efforts. For example, the Wellness Center offers group and individual 12-week programs that combine behavior modification with exercise. Or, you can choose any other medically approved program offered in the community.

HealthCounts offers a Weight Loss Incentive Plan to provide added encouragement to meet your goal. After choosing the weight loss program you prefer, you and your counselor will set a realistic weight loss goal for a specified time period. Then, you will be weighed-in weekly by the Employee Health Office. At this time, you can discuss your

progress and the problem areas you may have encountered. When you have lost a minimum of five pounds, you'll receive a cash incentive of \$2.00 for every pound lost (including the five-pound minimum). Thereafter, checks will be issued monthly whenever you lose additional weight in blocks of five pounds or more. Weight loss is calculated from the lowest recorded weight.

The Cholesterol Incentive Program works in a similar way. After you join the program, you'll receive a cholesterol re-check every four to 12 months. When your cholesterol level has been lowered 30 points or more, you'll receive a cash incentive of \$30.00. A \$20.00 incentive will be paid if you lower your cholesterol 20-29 points. Incentives are based on the initial measured cholesterol level, with payments based on the lowest measured level.

Once you reach your weight loss or cholesterol reduction goal, individual or group maintenance programs will be available to help you stay there. You can also continue the weekly weigh-in sessions to help you keep track of your weight. In addition, you'll be asked to arrange a one-year follow-up visit with your counselor.

## THE RAFFLE SLIM DOWN AND WIN!

Two raffles, involving **THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN PRIZES**, will be held to reward HealthEast employees whose weight is within ten percent of their ideal body weight. The first raffle will be held on November 1, and the second on April 1. Any employee whose body weight is within the required range by the entry deadline is eligible to win.

To enter, simply fill out the raffle coupon in your HealthCounts passbook and turn it in at the Wellness Center or Employee Health Office.





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## SOME BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TECHNIQUES FOR SENSIBLE EATING AT HOME

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When you're at home, the temptation to eat seems to be lurking around every corner. Food commercials on television. Magazine ads for virtually every food product. A refrigerator stocked with this week's grocery list. Cupboards full of snacks for the kids.

You can't avoid these temptations altogether, but you can use behavior modification techniques to help control them. For example, keeping food stored where it can't be seen instead of on the kitchen counter. Letting your spouse or children prepare their own snacks. And, changing the way you serve your family's meals.

You **can** gain control of your own food intake during meals—even if you're the only family member who needs to do so. For instance, serve yourself using smaller utensils—plates, glasses, forks, spoons and cups. Use a salad plate instead of a dinner plate, a juice glass in place

of larger glasses, a teaspoon instead of a soup spoon, and a salad fork instead of a meal fork. Believe it or not, this will make the amount of food you have, seem like more. Consequently, you may feel like you have eaten more.

After you have served the first course of the meal, try to remove the leftovers from the table and back into the kitchen. By removing the supply of food from the table, you'll be less inclined to offer yourself seconds. If someone in the family wants a second helping, ask them to serve themselves. Your family will most likely be glad to change their habits in order to help you in your weight loss efforts.

After the meal is another time when many overweight people consume extra calories. Some people "clean up" food scraps by eating them. To avoid this, always clear all remaining food directly into the wastecan or garbage disposal. If

you think it will help, you can also bring the wastecan into the dining room right after the meal is finished, or ask someone else to clean the plates for you. If you feel "guilty" throwing the food away, remember that the price you pay for overeating is much higher than the price of the food itself!

Another temptation to avoid when at home is eating food directly from containers. This can be extremely dangerous! For one thing, eating from containers allows you to eat large amounts without being aware of what you're eating. That's why **everything** you eat—including small snacks—should be removed from the container and served on a plate or in a bowl. By taking food from a container and eating it on a plate, you'll give yourself time to think about whether you can really "afford" the snack. If you do decide to eat, you'll have much more control over the portion size.

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## BUT HOW CAN I STAY ON MY DIET IN A RESTAURANT?

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Eating at home is hard enough. But what happens when you're in a restaurant, exposed to so many tempting foods while everyone around you seems to be eating everything in sight?

There are a number of ways to avoid overeating when you're dining out. First, keep the bread basket at the other side of the table from you. This means you'll have to reach across the table in order to serve yourself, and you won't be as tempted to nibble while waiting for your meal to arrive.

When you **do** order, try to get an a la carte meal, if possible. An entire meal may save you a little money, but you'll also be tempted to eat the extras. The savings in calories are well worth paying a little more for your meal! Also, you can have your spouse or a friend order for you. Tell them before you arrive what you intend to eat, or make your selection from the menu be-

fore the waiter or waitress returns. That way, you'll have to think a little more about what you should eat.

Another good idea is to order salad with no dressing, or ask to have the dressing served on the side, so you can control the amount you will eat. Some people even carry their own low-calorie salad dressing with them!

Drinks can be another diet disaster. Order club soda with a twist, or a tomato juice cocktail. If you want something with alcohol, white wine is lowest in calories. You might want to check the calorie values of mixed drinks and wines before you dine out, as there is great variation.

Instead of an appetizer, substitute celery, carrots, or similar low-calorie snacks. And, of course, watch those desserts! Have fresh fruit or gelatin instead.

You can even watch your calories

in fast food restaurants. In general, avoid the fried foods and order diet soda or iced tea. Many fast food restaurants now offer salad bars as an alternative to calorie-rich sandwiches. Remember: you can avoid temptation when eating out. Just remember these tips and you'll be able to enjoy the evening and stick to your diet!





## SOME TIPS FOR AVOIDING TOO MUCH FAT, SATURATED FAT AND CHOLESTEROL:

- Choose lean meat, fish, poultry, dry beans and peas as your protein sources
- Moderate your intake of eggs and organ meats
- Limit your intake of butter, cream, hydrogenated margarines, shortenings and coconut oil, and foods made with these products
- Trim excess fat from meats
- Broil, bake or boil instead of frying
- Read labels carefully before buying to determine both the amount and types of fat contained in foods

## DIETERS, BEWARE: "GET-THIN-QUICK" SCHEMES

It sounds too good to be true. And it is. Devices, diets and products that promise to melt off pounds in record time are dangerous to your health, encourage poor eating habits and just don't work at keeping weight off for good. To lose weight healthfully and effectively, you must eat a nutritionally balanced diet from the major food groups, burn more calories than you take in by increasing physical activity at a reasonable rate, and change poor eating habits and behaviors that contribute to overweight.

Still, you may be tempted to try a "get-thin-quick" scheme. Before you do, consider the facts:

**Reducing devices** such as rollers, belts, plastic sweat suits, body

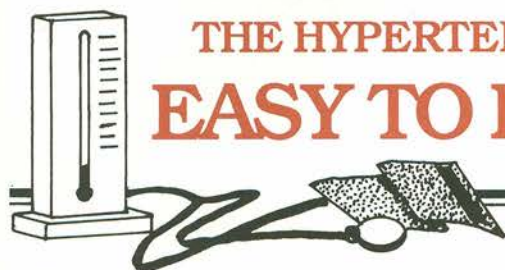
wraps, creams and steam baths don't work and can cause overheating or dehydration. You just can't "melt" fat away!

**Liquid protein and high protein/low carbohydrate diets** are not nutritionally balanced and can cause a number of side effects. These include tiredness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, abnormal heart beat, dehydration, possible kidney problems and calcium depletion.

**"Magic" and "two-food" diets** promise that certain foods in certain combinations will make you lose weight when eaten in the "right" amount at the "right" time each day. These diets reinforce poor eating habits and don't contribute to a lifetime plan for nutritionally balanced eating.

**Total or modified fasting** is dangerous. Going without food can cause such side effects as nausea, headaches, dizziness, weakness and depression. Long-term fasting can lead to serious kidney, heart and liver damage and loss of muscle tissue. Fasting also slows down the metabolism, causing you to lose weight more slowly.

**Over-the-counter drugs and products** are not recommended because they offer only temporary relief (most people use them for six weeks or less). In addition, the safety of some of these products is questionable. This category includes appetite suppressants, diuretics, local anesthetics and bulk-producing agents.



## THE HYPERTENSION SCREENING AND TREATMENT PROGRAM: EASY TO DETECT. EASY TO CONTROL

You'd think that your body would always warn you when something is wrong. Not so with hypertension (high blood pressure). Like millions of others, you may have it and not feel a thing. No warning signals. No headaches. No sickness, dizziness or nervousness. But that doesn't mean it isn't there.

Hypertension quietly contributes to the development of serious health problems, like heart disease and stroke. It's estimated that roughly ten percent of the population has uncontrolled high blood pressure. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Hypertension is easy to detect. All it takes is a blood pressure check. And, if you are one of the estimated fifty million Americans with the condition, it's also easy to control.

Because detection and control of hypertension result in a measurable decrease in heart disease and stroke, HealthCounts provides blood pressure screening for all employees. For those found to have hypertension, a series of programs is available to help monitor and control it.


The Employee Health Offices at both HealthEast Hospitals will

schedule blood pressure screening for all employees. Those with elevated levels can then participate in counseling, monitoring and follow-up programs.

The counseling program begins with a review of your diet, physical activity, sources of stress, salt intake, and any family history of hypertension, heart disease or stroke. After this review, we'll determine which health behaviors should be changed, modified or adapted to reduce your blood pressure.

A variety of individual and group counseling, exercise, nutrition, weight reduction, smoking cessa-



tion and stress reduction programs are available. We will also offer you monthly and bi-monthly blood pressure screening so you can monitor your success in controlling this potential threat to your health. And, all employees with high blood pressure will be encouraged to visit their doctor on a regular basis to receive the treatment they need. 



## WHO IS AT RISK?

Hypertension usually begins from ages 30 to 50. Although anyone, young or old, can develop the condition, it is most likely to occur among the following groups:

- **Men** develop high blood pressure more often than women, and in a more severe form.
- **Women** may develop the condition during **pregnancy** or while taking **birth control pills**.
- **Blacks**, especially Black men, are twice as prone to hypertension as whites, and get it more severely.
- **Short, heavy people** or those who are overweight are more prone to high blood pressure.
- **Pre-Hypertensives** (people whose blood pressure varies from normal to high) will develop the condition in three out of four cases.
- **Relatives** of people with hypertension are also more at risk.

## SOME LIFESTYLE CHANGES THAT MAY HELP LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

Because there is no cure for most high blood pressure, there is no one treatment that can solve the problem once and for all. Your doctor will help you work out the best way to control your blood pressure, which may include the following lifestyle changes.

**Lose weight.** High blood pressure is much more common in overweight people. As a person gains weight, blood pressure tends to rise. When a person loses weight, blood pressure often goes down. In addition, controlling your weight has many other health benefits.

**Use alcohol in moderation.** One alcoholic drink probably has little effect on blood pressure, but more than that can be dangerous.

**Reduce fat in your diet.** Even if you are of normal weight, high levels of dietary fat may cause blood pressure to be higher.


**Reduce salt in your diet.** Sodium, a chemical in salt, may affect blood pressure. While scientists don't know for sure **how** sodium affects high blood pressure, they do know it contributes to the disease in many people.

**Quit smoking.** Nicotine can

raise blood pressure. Cigarettes have also been shown to be the most significant risk factor toward heart disease and stroke in hypertension patients.

**Get more exercise.** In addition to its many other benefits, a regular exercise program has been shown to reduce blood pressure in many people.

**Learn to control stress.** Although hypertension is not directly related to stress, control methods may be effective for some people.

Of course, lifestyle changes are never easy. Smoking cessation and weight loss may be two of the most difficult goals a person can set. But any of these changes may result in the most worth-while achievement of all—the chance to add years to your life. 


## WHERE'S THE SALT?

Most of us eat far too much salt to provide our bodies with the small amount of sodium they need (two grams daily, equivalent to one teaspoon of salt, is considered reasonable). The obvious solution is to remove the salt shaker from your table and avoid salting foods while cooking. But we also get sodium from other sources.

Sodium occurs naturally in some foods, and is included in the preparation of many other foods and products. So where's the salt? When in doubt, check the label, but you're likely to find it in:

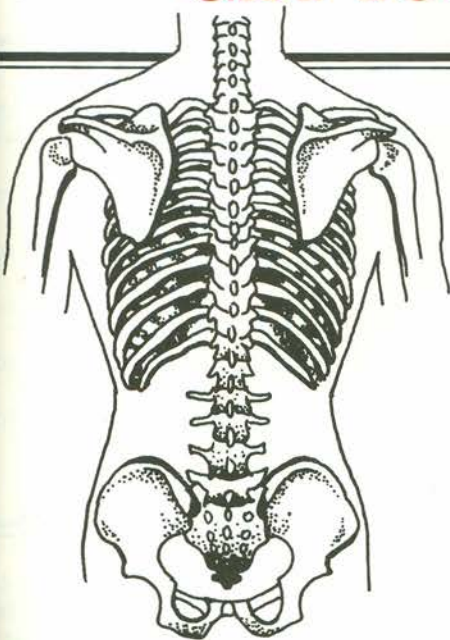
- Snack foods
- Pickles, sauerkraut and olives
- Canned vegetables and sauces
- Smoked meats, sausage, ham, bacon, hot dogs, luncheon meats and canned or processed fish
- Bouillon cubes, canned and dried soups
- Commercial salad dressing, dressing mixes and condiments

- Dairy products, especially cheese
- Fast foods
- Baking powder and soda
- Non-prescription drugs, especially antacids
- The seasoning Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)
- Some low-calorie sugar substitutes (sodium saccharin)

Many commercial foods are available in low-salt and no-salt-added forms, so be sure to check your grocer's shelves. In addition, you can season foods with lemon, onion and garlic powders, herbs and spices to reduce the amount of sodium in your family's meals. 



# THE BACK SCHOOL: GET YOUR BACK, BACK IN SHAPE!



## SOME BACK FACTS

The back is supported by your spinal column, which is made up of 26 bony vertebrae stacked one upon the other. The vertebrae are separated by soft discs made of cartilage, which act as shock absorbers and allow the vertebrae to move.

What most people don't realize is that the back is supported by the abdominal muscles, with help from the muscles and ligaments that run along the spinal column.

Because we stand upright, most of our body weight falls on the vertebrae of the lower back, making it prone to injury. Abdominal muscles and back muscles that have become weakened from lack of exercise and poor posture can therefore rob the spinal column of the support it needs.

The best way to insure a healthy back is to keep all your body's muscles strong, become aware of your posture and use care in lifting. In addition, learning to reduce stress, losing weight and adopting a sensible diet and exercise program can relieve back pain and help prevent injury.

Back injury is a common on-the-job hazard for health care professionals. Nurses, therapists and escorts who must routinely lift patients are especially vulnerable to back strain, lower back injury and related problems.

That's why HealthCounts includes The Back School. It's a special program of screening, education and treatment available to all employees through the hospitals' Physical Therapy Department.

All new employees will now be given information on the prevention of back injury as part of their orientation program. In addition, high-risk departments will be offered educational sessions and screenings for the types of injuries to which they may be prone.

HealthEast employees with past or present histories of back problems are also encouraged to attend the education program and receive a screening. The screening pro-

gram will evaluate your strength, flexibility and posture to determine if you are vulnerable to back strain or injury. If such a determination is made, you'll be encouraged to make an appointment with Physical Therapy for treatments.

If you need treatment, a four-session program will be arranged for you over a two-week period. It includes personal instruction designed to help you remedy the problem, and an individual exercise routine.

It's been estimated that eight out of ten Americans will have a back injury at some time during their lives. Yet prevention can be as simple as learning proper lifting, eliminating excess body weight, strengthening back muscles and adopting good posture habits. So get your back, back in shape. Or, keep it that way. We can help you through HealthCounts and The Back School.

## ARE YOU SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR BACK PROBLEMS? CHECK THAT POSTURE!

Poor posture is often the cause of back pain. To check your posture for potential problems, stand sideways in front of a full-length mirror and look for the most common trouble spots: head thrusting forward; rounded shoulders; prominent abdomen, and protruding buttocks. If you see one or more of these signs in your mirror, you should begin to teach yourself good posture. Here's a posture-improving routine you can try:

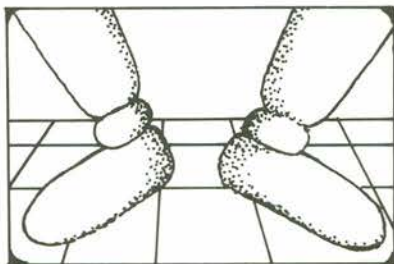
- Stand as straight as you can and place your hands on the front of your pelvis.
- Contract the muscles in your buttocks until you can feel your pelvis tilting forward and pressing into your hands.
- Lift up your head as far as possible, keeping your chin tucked in.
- Hold this position for sixty seconds. Repeat six times daily.

The way you sit and the position you sleep in can also strain your back. When sitting, look for a firm, supportive chair and position the small of your back against the chair's back. The chair should be low enough to allow you to place both feet flat on the ground without straining. Remember, too, not to slump your shoulders!

When sleeping, your spine rests more comfortably if you lie on your side with one or both knees drawn up, or on your back. A good, firm mattress is also crucial to insure that your spine is well supported.

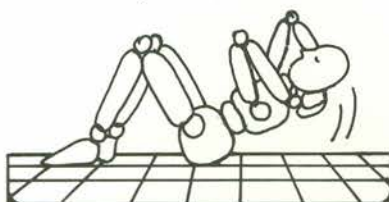


## TIPS FOR LIFTING WITHOUT BACK STRAIN



- Get a firm footing. Keep your feet apart for a stable base and point toes out.

- Bend your knees. Don't bend at the waist or do more work than you have to.



- Tighten your stomach muscles. The abdominal muscles support your spine when you lift, offsetting the force from the load.

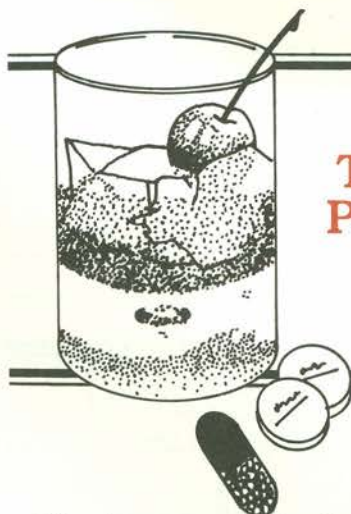


- Lift with your legs. Let your leg muscles do the work of lifting, not your weaker back muscles.

- Keep the load close. Don't hold the load away from your body. The closer it is to your spine, the less force it exerts on your back.



- Keep your back upright. Whether lifting or putting down the load, don't add the weight of your body to it. Avoid twisting, which can also cause injury.



## THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

Why do some people abuse drugs or alcohol? At first, many young people begin experimenting with these substances out of curiosity, peer pressure, rebellion or to escape emotional problems. Later, some continue to use these substances either occasionally ("social" drinkers, "recreational" drug users), or as a regular part of their daily lives. Unfortunately, many of these people develop a physical and/or psychological dependence on alcohol or drugs.

The health risks of alcohol and drug abuse are only part of the problem. Often, emotional instability, family problems, financial distress and poor job performance are as devastating as the physical effects of addiction.

We are committed to assisting our employees who need help through the Employee Assistance Program. The program, instituted earlier this year, is co-sponsored by HealthEast, The Allentown Hospital and the Lehigh Valley Hospital Center. It is available through the Counseling Center.

If you need help, call the Counseling Center at 433-8550. At that time, a private appointment will be scheduled. After counseling, which includes five free sessions, we will refer you to a program or private agency of your choice through which you will receive professional assistance. A portion of this therapy will be covered by your hospital medical insurance benefits. Of course, complete confidentiality is assured.

## AN ADDED INCENTIVE NOT TO DRINK AND DRIVE

The HealthEast Hospitals want to help reduce the number of drunk-driving incidents in our community. So we're offering our employees free taxi rides as an added incentive not to drink and drive.

Whenever you are too drunk to drive home, we'll pay your cab fare. This incentive extends to your friends, or anyone that you see who is too drunk to drive.

Your HealthCounts passbook includes special coupons for free taxi service. Be sure to carry them with you whenever you're planning an evening out. All you have to do is call Quick Service Taxi at 434-8132. A cab ride home will be provided. One of the coupons from your passbook will be accepted as full payment as long as you're in a 20-mile radius of Allentown.



## THE WARNING SIGNALS OF ALCOHOLISM

Alcohol is the nation's number one drug problem. One out of ten people who drink become alcoholic. Since this illness develops in stages, it gives off warning signals. Knowing them can therefore aid in prevention or treatment.

### STAGE ONE

Blackouts. Gulping drinks. Pre-party drinking. Sneaking drinks. Hiding or "stockpiling" liquor.

### STAGE TWO

Denial. Variation of drinking behavior (going to different bars or liquor stores, using different types of liquor). Feelings of guilt, fear, remorse, self-pity, insecurity. Aggressiveness. Worsening blackouts. Attempts to disguise problem (refusal of drinks in public, cessation of drinking for brief periods).

### STAGE THREE

Daytime drinking. Malnutrition. Isolation from others. Accidents. Problems on the job. Insomnia. Muddled thinking. Fearfulness. Painful teeth and gums. Shaking. Convulsions. Hallucinations. Suicidal tendencies.

## WARNING SIGNS OF DRUG ABUSE

Restlessness. Excessive reflex action. Pinpoint or dilated pupils. Drowsiness. Talkativeness. Irrational behavior. Needlemarks. Possession of needles, syringes or other "drug paraphernalia."

## DO YOU KNOW HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOU?

While there is no rule to tell you how much alcohol is "safe," the following facts can assist you in the sensible use of alcohol:

- It's not what you drink that affects you, but how much alcohol is contained in that drink. A can of beer, a glass of wine, and 1½ ounces of 100-proof vodka or whiskey have the same alcohol content.
- Every ½-ounce of alcohol requires one hour for the body to process.
- The alcohol level in your body can be controlled. Eat high protein food, such as cheese, meat or eggs. Make a drink last an hour. Mix drinks with fruit juice or water. Avoid carbonated mixers which speed up the absorption of alcohol into the blood stream.
- Alcohol is a depressant and should not be combined with other depressants, such as barbiturates, tranquilizers, muscle relaxants, antihistamines and motion sickness pills. Consult your physician about drinking if you are taking any kind of medicine.
- The only cure for overuse of alcohol is time. Cold showers, black coffee and fresh air will only increase wakefulness and will not eliminate the effects of alcohol.
- The effects of alcohol on the body include dulled taste and smell, reduction to pain sensitivity, diminished reaction time, loss of visual sensitivity to brightness and color, and impaired motor coordination.



### THE EMPLOYEE SEATBELT UTILIZATION PROGRAM:

## BUCKLING UP SAVES LIVES!

Many of us see the results of trauma on a daily basis. And one of the leading causes are automobile accidents. Each year, 46,000 Americans die and two million are injured in motor vehicles. Automobile accidents are among the leading causes of death for people between the ages of one and 38. Yet fifty percent of these deaths and sixty-five percent of these injuries can be prevented by wearing seatbelts!

That's why we're taking a leadership role in the prevention of these tragedies by encouraging our employees to wear their seatbelts. During the past year, both HealthEast Hospitals launched successful seatbelt utilization programs.

The first was launched at the Hospital Center last fall. Using random traffic surveys, safety educa-

tion programs and gift incentives, the Hospital Center raised employee seatbelt utilization from twenty-seven percent to ninety-three percent over an eight-month period. As a result, a number of staff members who were involved in serious accidents during the year avoided the serious injuries which would have resulted had they not been wearing their seatbelts.

The Allentown Hospital launched their campaign, "The Hug of Life," this past spring. With a goal of ninety-percent usage, they are already at a forty-five percent utilization rate.

By making employee seatbelt utilization part of the HealthCounts program, we're also making a commitment to continue the programs that were so successful at both HealthEast Hospitals!



## THE SAFEST PLACE TO BE IN AN ACCIDENT? THE CAR SEAT



If you have ever looked at the “remains” of cars that have been in accidents, you’ll find that one piece usually stays reasonably intact: the car seats. The fact is, most car seats manage to survive crashes because they’re anchored to the car’s frame and are spaced several

feet from the dashboard. So it stands to reason that, if more passengers were anchored to the frame like car seats, more passengers would survive!

If you use your seatbelt, you remain in the seat and in the car. And in an accident, that’s the safest place to be. In a crash, the force of impact can hurl you through the windshield, out the door or out the window. Passengers launched from cars in a collision are **twenty-five times** more likely to die.

What about fires or submersion under water? These accidents occur only one-half of one percent of the time. And if you are involved in this type of accident, it’s still better to remain in place. Wearing your seatbelt reduces your likelihood of being knocked unconscious, since the belt prevents your head and face from striking the wheel rim, windshield, interior post or dashboard. And, conscious, you will be much more able to free yourself from the vehicle!

## FIVE WAYS SEATBELTS HELP DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS:

- The “ride down” benefit—the belt begins to stop the wearer as the car is stopping.
- The belt keeps the head and face from striking objects in the car’s interior.
- The belt spreads the stopping force widely across the strong parts of the body.
- Seatbelts prevent occupants from colliding with one another.
- Seatbelts help the driver to maintain vehicle control, decreasing the possibility of an additional collision.

## HOW THE “NEW” SEATBELTS WORK

Some people say they don’t like to wear seatbelts because they’re “too confining.” The fact is, seatbelts are designed to allow you to comfortably reach necessary driving controls without unnecessary restriction. And if you’re driving a car manufactured after 1974, chances are your car’s belt system is designed to work **only** in a collision.

Shoulder belt retraction models offer almost unlimited freedom of movement. If your car has one of these systems, you may even have wondered how they can give so much freedom and still provide adequate restraint in a crash.

The latest belt systems are designed to lock only when the car slows down too quickly. The seatbelt apparatus contains a tiny pendulum attached to a lever, or locking mechanism. Upon sudden deceleration, the pendulum swings forward, which activates the locking device to keep passengers from being thrown into the dashboard.

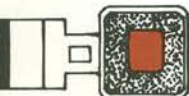
## HOW TO JOIN HealthCounts

If you already registered for one or more HealthCounts programs during kick-off week, we congratulate you on taking the first step toward meeting your healthy goals!

If not, we encourage you to make your commitment soon. To sign up for any of the programs described in this special issue, complete the appropriate registration coupon in your HealthCounts passbook and submit it to the **Employee Health Office** or the **Wellness Center**. Or, call Employee Health at 776-8869, or the Wellness Center at 821-2150.

For alcohol and/or drug abuse assistance, call the Counseling Center in confidence at 433-8550.

Get it together—



Buckle up!



# ONE, SIMPLE PASSBOOK. ONE TREMENDOUS INVESTMENT!

Your personalized HealthCounts passbook plays an important role in making an investment in yourself and your good health.

The passbook contains registration coupons for each of the HealthCounts programs. These can be completed and returned to Employee Health or the Wellness Center.

Plus, your passbook includes coupons for reduced prices on Wellness meals and free taxi rides if you, or someone you know, is too drunk to drive. And, you'll use the passbook to record your progress toward winning cash bonuses if you quit smoking, lose weight or lower your cholesterol.

Your HealthCounts passbook. Use it to say "yes" to a healthier lifestyle!



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