



## Enjoy the Health Benefits of Oats

The storybook character Goldilocks gets a bad rap for breaking chairs and taking a nap where she doesn't belong. But when it comes to eating porridge, maybe she sampled all three bowls because she knew it was healthy.

If you're looking for a way to improve your diet and your health, eat more oatmeal. Skip the instant oatmeal made with added sugar and refined grains. Instead, cook up a bowl of steel-cut oats, top it off with some nuts and berries, and enjoy.

Whole grain oats are a rich source of fiber that helps improve digestion, and prevent diabetes and heart disease. In a recent study, researchers found that people who

ate whole grain oatmeal regularly during an eight-year period lowered their risk for type 2 diabetes by 31 percent. And that's an important finding when an estimated 26 million people in the United States have type 2 diabetes.

Fiber in oatmeal also helps reduce hunger, aids in weight management, and lowers cholesterol and blood pressure. Oatmeal is high in manganese which supports bone and skin health and helps control blood sugar. It's also a healthy source of B vitamins linked to improved brain health and energy levels.

If you want to improve your health, eat more steel-cut oats or whole grain cereal made with oats. That's pretty much what was in the bowl that Goldilocks devoured, and she had enough energy to escape a family of hungry bears.

*Diabetes Care.*

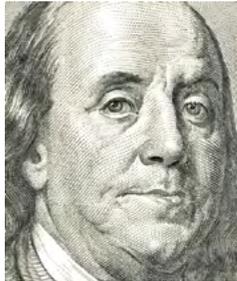
*American Diabetes Association.*

*U.S. Whole Grains Council.*

How to cook steel-cut oats  
[tinyurl.com/obg2vcz](http://tinyurl.com/obg2vcz)

## An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure

When Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was in its infancy, a major threat to the health and livelihood of its citizens was a fire. Without preventive measures in place, a house fire could be devastating in more ways than one.



In response to this problem, founding father Benjamin Franklin created one of the first U.S. insurance groups. That's when he made the famous statement, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." And he's still right nearly 300 years later.

Chronic diseases, which account for 75 percent of healthcare expenses in the United States, are largely caused by lifestyle choices. For example:

Most strokes are linked to high blood pressure and inactivity. The Framingham Heart Study showed that two-thirds of early strokes could be prevented if people would get more exercise.

About 70 to 80 percent

of all heart attacks are caused by inactivity, poor diet, smoking, and high blood pressure.

An estimated 70 to 90 percent of all type 2 diabetes is caused by obesity, inactivity, poor diet, and smoking.

At least two-thirds of all cancers are preventable by making healthy choices, according to the American Cancer Society. These healthy behaviors include:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
  - Avoiding tobacco
  - Eating healthy foods
  - Getting regular exercise
  - Limiting or avoid alcohol
  - Getting regular preventive exams
- Make the effort to live a healthy life, and you'll be living proof that it's the best way to prevent disease.

*Journal of the American Medical Association.*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

Top 5 preventable causes of death  
[tinyurl.com/pjkpy5j](http://tinyurl.com/pjkpy5j)

## Limiting Alcohol Improves Immune System



A cold beer or glass of wine may be part of your routine at the end of the day. But drinking more than that may be harmful to your health. (For pregnant women, zero drinks per day is the only safe amount for fetal health.) Alcohol increases your risk for accidents, liver disease, and some forms of cancer.

Recent studies also suggests that too much alcohol may weaken your immune system. One or two drinks per day may not put you at risk for infection; however, three or more drinks or enough alcohol for you to be intoxicated can.

*Continued on page 2*



## Lose Weight to Lower Blood Pressure

More than 70 million Americans have high blood pressure, or hypertension. Foods high in sodium, like French fries and packaged meals, are part of the problem. Lack of exercise and obesity is too. It's a condition that can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and other chronic illnesses.

However, it's highly preventable. You can lower your blood pressure or reduce your risk by losing just a few pounds. Here's how you can tip the scale in the right direction:

✓ **Keep a food journal for a week** to track your calorie intake. Find

out how many calories you need to eat per day to lose weight with help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (<http://tinyurl.com/86q9wd3>), and adjust your diet.

✓ **Consider following the DASH Eating Plan**, created by the National Institutes of Health to help people reduce high blood pressure (<http://tinyurl.com/dc87g>).

✓ **Look for ways to cut calories and eat healthier.** Try snacking on an apple instead of a candy bar. Drink water instead of high-calorie drinks. Cutting your calories by 500 a day could

result in about 1-2 pounds of weight loss per week.

Improving your diet will help you lower your blood pressure, lose weight, and feel better. Maintaining a healthy weight will also help prevent developing hypertension.

If you don't know your blood pressure, check with your doctor. Aim for a healthy blood pressure reading of less than 120/80 for best health.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Institutes of Health.*

## Lather Up to Protect Your Skin from the Sun

In the popular Disney movie *Frozen*, the goofy snowman named "Olaf" foolhardily daydreams about spending time in hot weather. "A drink in my hand...My snow up against the burning sand...Prob'ly getting gorgeously tanned...In summer!" he sings.



protection from the sun by 150 minutes. Sunscreens with a higher SPF provide you with extended protection.

You may not be a snowman wishing for a summer retreat, but if you spend time in the sun without sunscreen, you've got just as big of a problem. Exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays can damage your skin and increase your risk for cancer. Fortunately, simply wearing the right sunscreen can protect you from the sun's harmful rays.

### Use sunscreen with an SPF rating of 15 or higher

The American Melanoma Foundation recommends using a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. SPF stands for "Sun Protection Factor." Here's how it works: If you sunburn in 10 minutes, using a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 increases your

### How much is enough?

For the average adult, lathering on two tablespoons of sunscreen is adequate to protect you from the sun. If you plan to be in the water, use a waterproof sunscreen. (You'll need to reapply every 40 to 80 minutes for maximum protection.) And even if you're not in the water, you should reapply sunscreen every several hours to prevent skin damage and sunburn.

In *Frozen*, a magic princess gives "Olaf" a permanent snow cloud and some shade that follows him around in summer. But you're not going to find that at the store. So make sure you buy some sunscreen, and use it when you're outdoors this summer.

Get the facts about sunscreen [tinyurl.com/5s7notu](http://tinyurl.com/5s7notu)

*Harvard School of Public Health. American Cancer Society. American Melanoma Foundation.*

### Limit Alcohol (continued from page 1)

Drinking less alcohol – or no alcohol – means your immune system will have the best chance at fighting against the flu, colds, and other infections.

#### If you choose to drink, follow these guidelines:

- No more than 1 drink per day for women.
- No more than 2 drinks per day for men under age 65.
- No more than 1 drink daily for people age 65 and older.

A standard drink is defined as one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits.

*National Institutes of Health. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Clinical and Vaccine Immunology.*

## ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

**Q:** How can I be sure my heart is healthy?

**A:** Go to [www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-healthy-heart.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-healthy-heart.pdf) to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: [evan@wellsourc.com](mailto:evan@wellsourc.com), subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

**Health Challenge:** "Get Adequate Vitamin D" available at: [www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-get-vitamin-d.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-get-vitamin-d.pdf)

Get a daily dose of vitamin D.