December is Acid Reflux Awareness Month

What is Acid Reflux?

Reflux occurs when partly digested food and acid travel from your stomach up into your esophagus, causing the telltale burning sensation in your chest. It can be so intense that it resembles a heart attack—hence the name heartburn. Some people experience pain as food is being swallowed, the result of stomach acids pushing up while the food is trying to move down.

If this condition becomes chronic, occurring at least twice a week for longer than two weeks, it’s called gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). As many as one in four Americans suffers from these symptoms. Untreated, GERD can cause still more problems, such as a chronic cough, sore throat, hoarseness and chest pain. Severe acid reflux can injure the esophagus, causing ulcers and strictures, a condition that develops when scar tissue narrows the esophagus to the point that getting food down is difficult, and can even cause esophageal cancer.

What you can do to avoid acid reflux:
- Avoid high acid foods
- Downsize your meals
- Get up and get exercising
- Sleep with your head elevated
- If you are lactose intolerant, find lactose free alternatives

If you have frequent heartburn, please see your doctor.

Source: Prevention Magazine

Wellness Tips

Wellness means overall wellbeing. It incorporates the mental, emotional, physical, occupational, intellectual and spiritual aspects of a person’s life. Each aspect of wellness can affect overall quality of life, so it is important to consider all aspects of health.

1. Help Others — people who consistently help others experience less depression, greater calm and fewer pains.
2. Take Care of Your Spirit — people who have strong spiritual lives may be healthier and live longer. Spirituality seems to cut the stress that can contribute to disease.
3. Stay Positive — positive emotions can boost your ability to bounce back from stress.
4. Get Physically Active — exercise can help relieve insomnia and reduce depression.
5. Get Enough Rest — not enough sleep increases risks of weight gain, accidents, reduced memory and heart problems.
6. Eat Well — eating healthy food and regular meals can increase your energy, lower the risk of certain diseases and influence your mood.
7. Deal Better with Hard Times — people who can tackle problems or get support in a tough situation tend to feel less depressed.
8. Have a Support System — have someone to talk to, someone to share your good, your bad, your hopes and your dreams with.

Stop by the Health Department and visit our resource library—we have a wide range of useful information.

Wishing You Happy Holidays!
**Shrimp Scampi**

**Ingredients**
- 1-1/2 pound jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic, fresh, not from a jar
- 1/4 cup dry white vermouth
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 teaspoon fresh chopped thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon grated lemon zest

**Directions**
Dry shrimp with a paper towel. Excess moisture will make a watery, bland dish. Heat a large skillet over a medium-high flame. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper. Add the butter to the skillet. When foaming subsides, raise the heat to high, put shrimp quickly into the pan at once (make sure all shrimp are lying flat against the pan). Cook the shrimp, without moving them for 1 minute. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute (do not burn the garlic). Quickly flip each shrimp over and cook for 2 minutes more. Transfer the shrimp to a bowl. Return the pan to the heat and pour in the vermouth and lemon juice. Boil the liquid until slightly thickened, about 30 seconds. Scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Stir the zest and parsley into the sauce. Pour the sauce over the shrimp, taste and season with salt and pepper. Toss to combine.

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**Powerhouse Chef Recipe Corner**

**“Old Age Illnesses” . . .**
Such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer are occurring at much younger ages now due to high stress levels, poor nutrition and environmental toxins. Take control of your health by actively managing your diet, exercise daily and find some good stress relieving techniques.

**Avoid Fried Foods**
Unless stated otherwise, assume that almost all fried foods are processed hydrogenated fats (trans fats), due to the stability and long shelf life of the oil. Studies show consumption of trans fats are correlated with atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease so it is best to minimize fried foods in a healthy diet.

**Breathe Deep**
Deep belly breathing increases lung capacity, increases oxygenation throughout the body, strengthens your immune system and helps relieve stress. Try counting to 8 as you breathe in deeply, hold for a count of 8, and exhale for a count of 8. Do this 4 to 8 times to realize deep breathing benefits.

**Stay Stronger Longer**
Strength training helps prevent age related muscle wasting and increases metabolism since muscle tissue burns more calories per hour than fat tissue. Consider adding weight and core strength training routines 1-3 times a week to maintain your muscle strength.

**Make it Sugar . . .**
Contrary to what the corn industry wants you to believe, **high fructose corn syrup is not the same as sugar**. It is highly processed and absorbed quickly into the blood stream, triggering negative reactions with hunger hormones and insulin. It stimulates sweet cravings, hunger pangs, insulin response and subsequent weight gain. Avoid high fructose corn syrup and corn syrup for healthy living.

**Protect Your Prostate**
Diets that are high in fat, meat and refined carbs have been linked to prostate cancer, so add brussels sprouts, broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables, which contain cancer-fighting compounds called glucosinolates. Cut the sprouts in half, toss them with olive oil, pressed garlic, sea salt and freshly ground pepper, and carameliz"