

# TAsk the **Doctor**

#### "Help me quit smoking!"

I'm determined to give up smoking. What can give me the winning edge?

Avoid secondhand smoke as much as possible. Our research suggests that exposure to secondhand smoke delivers just enough nicotine to the brain to prompt a 23% increase in a smoker's craving. In our study, 24 young adult smokers and nonsmokers were exposed to secondhand smoke, then underwent brain scans. The smoke had much the same impact on the brain as did actually smoking!

-Arthur Brody, M.D., department of psychiatry and biobehavioral Sciences, UCLA

#### "Which exercise is best for diabetes?"

I have Type 2 diabetes and I'm trying to exercise. What is the best type of exercise to do?

Our new nine-month study found it's best to increase physical activity and lift some weights. We had 262 adults with Type 2 diabetes do aerobic exercise, resistance training using weights, a combination of both or no exercise at all. All of the exercisers had trimmed their waists, but only those in the combo group lost weight and had better control of their blood-glucose levels. Plus, they were able to lower their use of medications.

Timothy S. Church, M.D., M.P.H., Ph.D., Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Louisiana State University System, Baton Rouge

# Natural Health

# Make aches and pains disappear!

It's summer, and that means you're more likely than ever to engage in a bit more physical activity—whether going for bike rides, romping with the kids or simply pulling weeds—that can make muscles sore or aggravate already aching joints. Don't worry! These study-proven steps can get you pain-free fast!

pain with a cherry juice

Cherries are packed with anthocyanins—natural painkillers that are twice as powerful as NSAIDs like aspirin or ibuprofen, say Michigan State University researchers. The study-proven strategy: Sip 6 oz. of cherry juice, eat 20 dried cherries or enjoy 1 cup of the fresh fruit daily.

Kick-start recovery with **Epsom salt** 

Adding 2 cups of Epsom salt to a hot bath and soaking in it for 15 to 20 minutes is 25% more effective than over-the-counter painkillers! Plus, it speeds healing and soothes spasms. Epsom salt is packed with magnesium, a mineral that revs healing. "And soaking improves blood flow to injured tissues and flushes out pain-triggering compounds," explains Arnold Fox, M.D., coauthor of Alternative Cures That Really Work.

Fast-track healing with daily stretches

> New research shows that people who stretch four times a day heal almost twice as quickly as those who don't. "Moving your

muscles flushes out the buildup of waste products that slow recovery and trigger pain," says Gary Null, Ph.D., author of Get Healthy Now.

TO DO: For 48 hours after an injury, apply ice three times daily.

Then switch to slow, gentle stretching-you should feel a pulling sensation, not pain-for one minute, at least four times daily.

Improve blood flow with MSM cream

Massaging this natural sulfur compound into achy areas speeds up healing, helps Folks with muscle shut down muscle injuries heal 32% faster if they get lots of rest. Aim for eight hours of shuteye nightly until spasms and reduces pain as much as 52%. The reason: MSM (methylsulfothe pain fades. nylmethane) boosts

Stretching slowly and gently helps your body heal almost twice as fast!

the flow of nutrient-rich blood to injured tissues. Look for the cream in your health-food store and gently massage into sore spots twice daily.

#### Try the video-game cure!

Playing a fun video game can dampen your pain in as little as 15 minutes, say researchers at the University of Southern California. While these games are distracting—a real boon when you're sore-virtual reality also changes how your brain responds to incoming signals, upping your pain tolerance so aches go unnoticed.

-Brenda Kearns

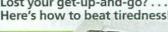
## FEEL BETTER FAST

# Exhausted? Lost your get-up-and-go?... Here's how to beat tiredness!

## 12 oz. of cold water!

It'll increase your energy in less than one minute, promises Jacob Teitelbaum. M.D., author of From Fatigued to Fantastic!

"When you're dehydrated, your blood thickens, and the nutrients it carries don't reach organs the way they should, making you sluggish."





Skip the cup o' joe; it'll cause a crash within an hour or two. Instead, let a small square of dark chocolate melt on your tongue, says Dr. Teitelbaum. It stimulates pleasure receptors in the brain and is full of antioxidants. both of which increase energy.



Rub your ears! Using your thumb and your forefinger, pinch the outside of each ear, starting at the top and working your way down your earlobe, says Dr. Teitelbaum. Repeat two or three times. "This stimulates energy receptors in the body, helping you feel more awake."



#### Take a brisk walk!

Just 10 minutes can significantly increase blood flow and brain activity, upping your energy levels all day long, even if you have a chronic health problem like fibromyalgia, studies suggest.

