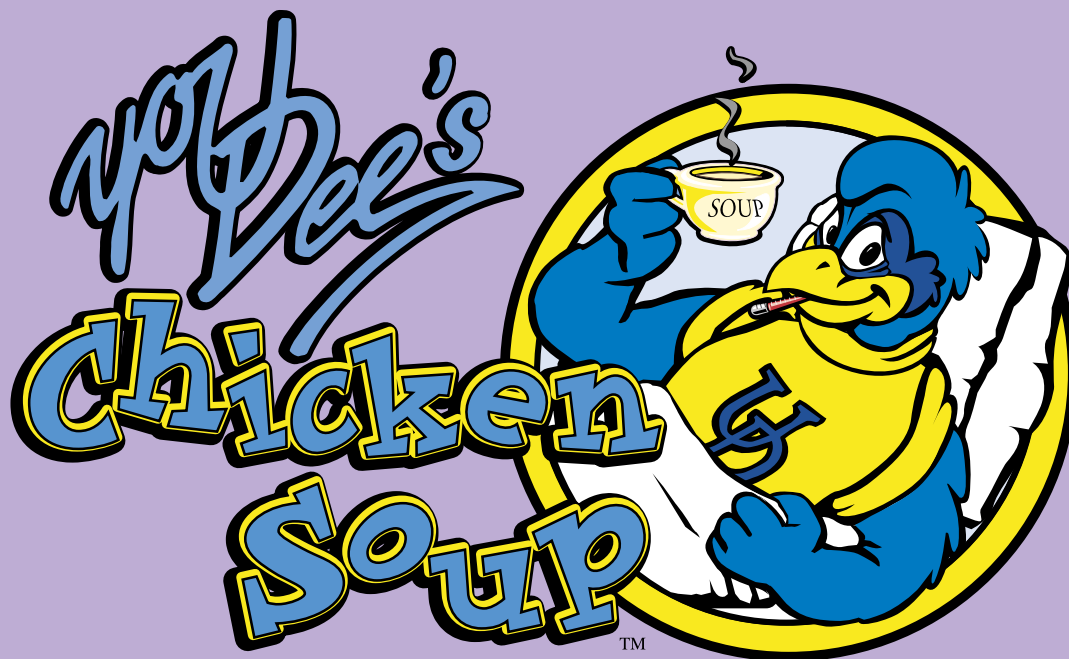


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Exercise good hydration

Summer will soon be upon us and a great deal of our activities will be outdoors. One of the most serious health concerns related to summer exercise is heat-related illness. Prevention is, of course, the best medicine. Most cases of heat-related illnesses are a direct consequence of dehydration. Proper hydration is extremely important when exercising in warm weather because our main cooling mechanism is sweating.

Many people think they should only drink when they are thirsty. This is not true because most people's thirst mechanism does not activate until they are 1–2% dehydrated. Waiting until you are this far dehydrated can be very dangerous since central nervous system changes begin at a 3–4% water deficit.

The best way to prevent dehydration is to drink water routinely throughout the day. When you are planning to exercise later in the day, you should superhydrate to prevent excessive water loss while exercising. A decrease of body weight greater than 1% with exercise is considered dehydrated. The following is an easy, reliable strategy to prehydrate by drinking cool, uncarbonated water:

- Two hours before exercising, drink 20 oz.
- A half-hour before exercising, drink 8–16 oz.
- Every fifteen minutes during exercise, drink 4–6 oz.
- In the first 1–2 hours after exercising if the activity was very strenuous or lasts longer than 40 minutes, you should drink another 32–48 oz.

Water is the best solution for hydration. Sports drinks can be used for some carbohydrate replacement during endurance events. Caffeinated or carbonated beverages should never be used for hydration. Have a safe and enjoyable summer.



The ABCs of Hepatitis: Know your risks



Hepatitis A is a viral infection that can cause severe liver damage. It is highly contagious and predominately transmitted person-to-person via a fecal-oral route. Infection is spread by:

- Contaminated water or food
- Infected food handlers
- A breakdown in usual sanitary conditions or after floods or natural disasters
- Ingestion of raw or undercooked shellfish from contaminated waters
- Travel to areas of the world with poor hygienic conditions
- Contact with institutionalized children and adults
- Contact with day-care centers where children have not been toilet trained
- Blood transfusions or sharing needles with infected people

Hepatitis A virus illness symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, fever, loss of appetite, abdominal pain, dark urine and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes). Infected persons may experience all or none of these symptoms. Typically, the older the infected person is, the more severe the symptoms. Young children may not even develop symptoms. Symptoms commonly last about 4 weeks, but occasionally continue, on and off, for up to 15 months. Hepatitis A vaccine is highly effective in preventing hepatitis A. The vaccine is given as two injections—an initial injection followed by a second injection six to twelve months later. This vaccine is available at the Student Health Service.

Another means of prevention is the administration of immune globulin pre- and post-exposure. Finally, the most important means of prevention is good hygiene and sanitation.



Hepatitis B is a major health problem in the United States. Hepatitis B is a serious, life-threatening viral infection that is 100 times more contagious and therefore easier to get than HIV.

The virus is passed either directly from those who are already infected or indirectly from their bodily fluids. Hepatitis B is a sturdy virus that can live for more than a week in dried blood or bodily fluids on clothing and other surfaces. The most common ways of getting the disease are:

- through the skin by cuts, scrapes, needle sticks or needle sharing
- through the eyes or mouth by exposure to blood or other bodily fluids
- through sexual contact
- contact between an infected mother and her newborn child during birth and early infancy

Because Hepatitis B can be easily spread, there are a number of ways a person could be exposed in a school environment: Physical education classes, athletic activities, anywhere that students could get injured and bleed, all represent potential risk. According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adolescence and young adulthood are periods of highest hepatitis B risk.

The symptoms of hepatitis B include jaun-

Cont'd on back

IS YOUR cycle IN sync?

As the name implies, your period comes periodically. For many women, there is a pattern and a 'norm'. However, menstrual cycles can vary and still be just fine.

Cycle length—varies from woman to woman. There is considerable variation and each individual woman may not always cycle like clockwork. The average length of a cycle is 28 days, but it is perfectly normal to have cycles that last from 21 to 35 days.

Blood flow/duration—Most women lose no more than three ounces of blood over three to seven days, with the majority of the loss over the first three days. Typically, a woman will saturate a pad or tampon in a couple of hours. Use of more than one per hour should be brought to the attention of a clinician. Such things as a miscarriage, hormonal imbalance, uterine fibroids, or a bleeding disorder can cause a heavier flow.

Blood color/texture—When the flow is heavier, the color will be bright red. If allowed to pool in the vagina for a few minutes, the blood may clot. When a woman lies down and then gets up, there may be more blood noted; however, the actual flow may still be constant. As the flow decreases and the blood remains in the vagina longer, the color may appear brownish-red. Our bodies actually start to break down the blood, giving it this color.

Mid-cycle spotting—A normal occurrence that happens between your periods is what is called ovulation. During the whole menstrual cycle your body is preparing an egg to be released from one of the ovaries. This release of the egg is called ovulation and occurs in between your menses times. When the egg is released, it may be accompanied by at most 2–3 days of spotting, along with a sticky often clear discharge, bloating, and some lower abdominal discomfort (often on the side where the egg is released).

If you are on a hormonal contraception, such as oral contraceptives, Depo Provera™, or Norplant™, you may spot unrelated to ovulation. Also, sometimes sexually transmitted diseases may cause spotting, and it is usually not associated with a 'pattern'.

Missed periods—There are various reasons for skipping a period, including stress, pregnancy, excessive exercise, weight loss or gain, lack of enough body fat, thyroid or hormonal imbalances, taking certain prescription medicines, a condition called polycystic ovarian disease, and even hormonal contraception such as oral contraceptive pills and Depo Provera, for example.

To help you and your clinician determine if your cycles are out of the normal range and to identify an underlying problem, keep track of your cycles. Record not only when, but how much, you bleed and any other associated symptoms such as cramping.

Latex allergy: Is kiwi the culprit?

Do your hands break out when you wear rubber gloves? Are you allergic to bananas, avocados, kiwi fruit, melon, tomatoes, or celery? Have you ever experienced tingling or swelling of the lips after blowing up balloons? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, you may have an allergy to latex.

Latex is derived from the sap of rubber trees. Rubber and latex products are everywhere in our environment, from pencil erasers to condoms to computer mouse pads. Symptoms of latex allergy range from mild (redness, irritation, small cracks in the skin) to moderate (blisters and crusts) to severe (hives, fainting, and shock). Repeated exposure to latex may cause an increased allergic response. Certain fruits, like those mentioned above, show cross-reactivity perhaps because of a resemblance to a latex protein component.

Your doctor can help you diagnose a latex allergy. Many medical and surgical instruments contain latex so it is important you tell any health care provider that you have an allergy to latex.



Remember: May 6–12 is Food Allergy Awareness Week.
See www.foodallergy.org

Hepatitis, cont'd from front

dice, fatigue, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, intermittent nausea and vomiting. However, some people do not experience these symptoms and are not diagnosed.

Currently, there is no cure for hepatitis B. The best way to protect yourself from contracting the virus is to get vaccinated. The hepatitis B vaccine stimulates your body's immune system to get ready to fight off the virus, so that even if you're exposed to the virus, you will be protected. To be fully vaccinated, you need to receive three injections over a 6-month period. This vaccine is also available at the Student Health Service. Safe sexual practices and not using IV drugs are also important ways to prevent exposure to hepatitis B.



Hepatitis C is a lesser-known form of hepatitis that is on the increase in the United States. This is also a viral disease of the liver. Those at risk for hepatitis C are:

- Persons who received blood from a donor who later tested positive for hepatitis C
- People who have ever injected illegal drugs, even if you experimented only a few times
- Anyone who received a blood transfusion or solid organ transplant prior to July, 1992
- Anyone who received a blood product for clotting problems produced before 1987
- Anyone who has ever been on long-term kidney dialysis
- Anyone who has had evidence of liver disease

Remember: May is Hepatitis Awareness Month.
See www.hepfi.org

If any of these risk factors apply, you should contact your medical care provider for a blood test to determine whether or not you have hepatitis C.

Vaccination for hepatitis A and B is the best form of prevention for these potentially fatal diseases. Maintaining good health and hygiene, avoiding high-risk behavior (drug use, unprotected sex, etc.), and not sharing utensils, glassware, drinks and cigarettes also go a long way in preventing contraction of hepatitis as well as other communicable diseases.

For more information on hepatitis, or to schedule appointments for vaccinations, contact the Student Health Service at 831-2226.