

A Touch of Vitality

Premiere Issue

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Safe Fun in the Sun

Nutrition Offers UV Shield

Sharron Leonard

Because sunlight activates the synthesis of vitamin D, a nutrient that works with vitamin A to build strong bones and good eyesight it is essential for health. Furthermore, bright light, specifically sunshine, can improve your mood and help ward off depression. But all things in moderation. Overexposure to UV rays can cause potentially extensive damage to the skin, an all-too-common occurrence. "Skin cancer is now considered epidemic throughout the nation", according to The Centers for Disease Control Prevention. "Over one million residents in the United States are expected to get skin cancer this year more people than the collective total of all who will get cancers of the breast, prostate, lung and colon. Exposure to

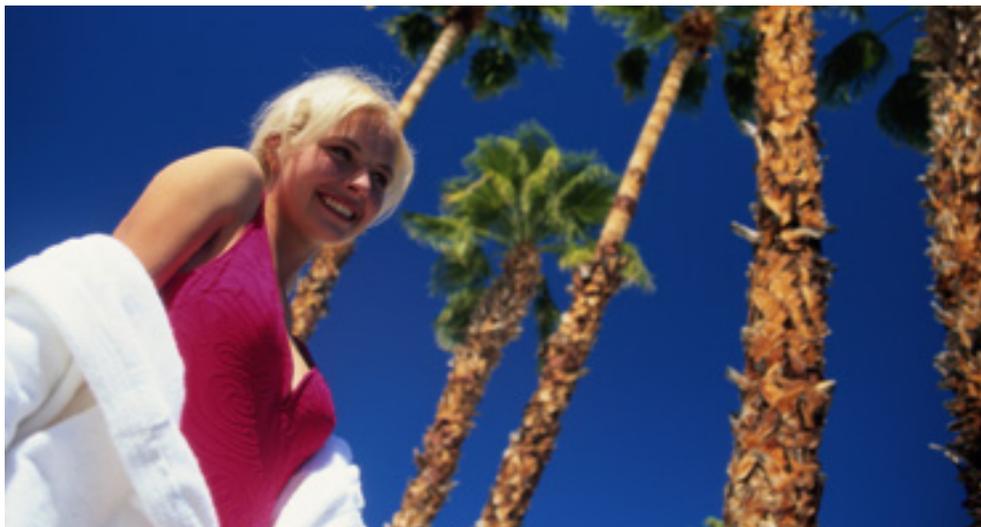
toxic molecules. These are known as free radicals and can lead to malignancies. Sunscreen, adequate coverage and sunglasses have long been recommended to avoid this damage, but diverse studies now suggest some promising supplemental strategies for UV protection from the inside out. Certain nutrients and a low-fat diet have shown specific anti-cancer properties.

Free Radical Control

Antioxidants have long been known to neutralize free radicals and render them inactive, protecting cellular structure. Powerful antioxidants include vitamin C (citrus fruits, strawberries, broccoli,

Healing is a matter of time, but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity.

-Hippocrates



UV rays cause oxidative damage and can actually change the skin's DNA.

ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight causes 90 percent of the skin cancer cases." And this overexposure may double the risk of melanoma, a type of skin cancer that causes more than 80 percent of skin cancer deaths.

UV rays cause oxidative damage and can actually change the skin's DNA cellular structure, creating highly unstable and

tomatoes), vitamin E (asparagus, raw nuts and seeds, spinach), beta-carotene (yellow and orange vegetables) as well as the minerals zinc (shell fish, legumes, whole-grain foods) and selenium (nuts, whole-wheat bread, oatmeal). A recent study published in the Journal of Investigative Dermatology demonstrates

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that lutein and zeaxanthin, plant pigments found in predominately green leafy vegetables, also have strong antioxidant properties that diminish the effects of UV irradiation by reducing the acute inflammatory responses. Lutein- and zeaxanthin-rich foods include green, leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, broccoli and turnips as well as corn and egg yolks.

As long ago as 1991, studies have shown green tea consumption and topical application afford protection against skin tumors. More recent research corroborates these results and points to the polyphenols in green tea, which contain antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. In addition, one major element in green tea, epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG), is thought to stop production of an enzyme required for cancer cell growth. Several cups of green tea might be a worthwhile addition to your daily routine.

Avoiding fatty foods may also provide benefit. A 1994 study suggests that a low-fat diet reduces the incidence of premalignant lesions called actinic keratosis. To maintain a low-fat diet, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends that you get most of your calories from organic, whole foods such as grains, fruits, and vegetables and to avoid foods high in saturated fats. For more information, visit the website www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/.

Know the Index

Even though it is helpful to counteract damage to your skin through nutrition, it remains vital to shield yourself from the sun's invisible UV rays and avoid them when they're at their most intense. The UV Index, a measurement of ultra-violet sun radiation, can assist in protecting you from potentially harmful exposure. This forecast of UV intensity ranges from a nighttime low of 0 to a very sunny 10-plus. It is greatest when the sun hits its apex (noon), then rapidly decreases as the sun moves across the afternoon sky. The higher the UV Index, the shorter the time for skin damage to occur. To determine the UV Index in your area, check your local newspaper, TV and radio news broadcasts, or you can visit

www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's website. This rating allows you to determine your geographic risk and, in turn, the level of adequate sun protection needed.

Regardless of your sun-screening defenses, always be vigilant about checking your skin for possible signs of melanoma. "When melanoma is detected in its early stage, surgical removal cures the disease in most cases," according to the American Academy of Dermatology. "If the disease has spread to lymph nodes, the 5-year survival rate is 30-40 percent. If the disease has spread to distant organs, the 5-year survival rate is 12 percent."

Melanoma appears as a pre-existing mole that changes, or as a new mole on previously unaffected/clear skin. Performing skin self-exams every few

months and knowing the characteristics to look for in any mole identified will enhance early detection and reduce risk. For more information on early detection, visit www.skincancer.org.

And don't forget common sense practices:

--Avoid long-term sun exposure and wear a hat, sunglasses, and protective clothing.

--Apply sunscreen with SPF of 30 or above.

--Avoid artificial tanning devices.

--And be aware of sun exposure year-round.

With a few protective measures, you can continue to enjoy fun in the sun safely. Don't forget your hat!



A colorful diet can help provide sun protection from the inside out.

De-stressing the Commute

Turning Road Rage into Road Sage

The average American commuter spends an hour a day driving to and from work. During this stressful, stop-and-go time, it's likely that blood pressure increases, adrenaline begins pumping, and muscles constrict and tighten. By the time you get home, you're wiped out and grumpy, and you have less to offer to those you come home to. If this sounds familiar, recognize that you have the power to reduce commuter stress. Here are a few tips to make your commuter time contribute to -- rather than detract from -- your life.

- Employ adjustable back cushions, pillows, wedges, and lumbar supports for a more comfortable commute. For more information, check out www.relaxtheback.com.

- To successfully sidestep the late-afternoon slump often caused by the stress hormone cortisol, keep some healthy snacks within arms reach. Celery, string cheese, water, and nuts -- especially almonds -- are good options for the drive home.

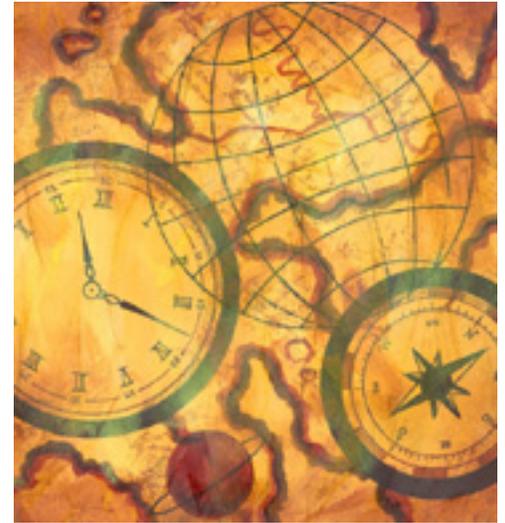
- Borrow books-on-tape/CD from the library. Consider purely entertaining novels to ease the intensity of your drive.

- Learn a foreign language. Libraries also loan out these types of tapes and CD, too.

- Use your commute as an opportunity for spiritual or emotional growth. When stressing about a traffic jam, remind yourself that it's completely out of your control. Remember, attitude is everything.

- Practice breathing. When stress occurs, breathing becomes shallow and constricted. Taking full, deep breaths gives the body more oxygen, helping to regulate physical and mental function. Exhaling fully releases tension and built up toxins.

For more ideas on achieving calm in a busy world, consider reading *Serenity to Go: Calming Techniques for Your Hectic Life* (New Harbinger Publications, 2001) by Mina Hamilton.



Creativity goes a long way on your commute.

Somatic Semantics

What Exactly is CAM?

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) refers to healing modalities that don't fall into conventional Western medical philosophy, including bodywork, acupuncture, herbology, homeopathy and mind/body techniques. CAM is becoming a more familiar term as approximately 125 million Americans suffering from chronic illness -- arthritis, back pain, hypertension, and depression -- look for solutions that conventional medicine can't provide.

"Complementary" modalities are used together with conventional medicine, such as utilizing aromatherapy to lessen a patient's discomfort following surgery. "Alternative" modalities are used in place of conventional medicine, such as

using herbs to treat stomach upset rather than taking pharmaceuticals. And the merging of alternative and conventional medicine is referred to as "integrative medicine," connoting the idea of combining the best of both healing philosophies.

CAM is continually gaining the respect of the Western medical system, as indicated by the nearly 100 medical schools now offering courses in alternative therapies. The University of Arizona is an exceptional model of such a school, offering the nation's only postgraduate, two-year Program in Integrative Medicine (PIM). Founded in 1994, PIM is designed to teach small groups of physicians how to integrate holistic modalities into their practices.

These doctors are committed to a fundamental redesign of medical education including such principles as:

--Appropriate use of conventional and alternative methods to facilitate the body's innate healing response;

--Consideration of all factors that influence health, including mind, spirit, and community;

--A philosophy that neither rejects conventional medicine nor accepts alternative medicine uncritically.

For more information and research about CAM, visit the nonprofit Alternative Medicine Foundation's website, www.amfoundation.org.

*Happiness
comes of the
capacity to feel
deeply, to enjoy
simply, to think
freely, to risk
life, to be
needed.*

-Storm Jameson

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