

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

## June is a Good Time to Focus on Men's Health

In June, we often turn our thoughts to vacation and summer activities—travel, fishing, boating and day-trips. We also celebrate Father's Day, which caps off Men's Health Week, June 10-16. On average, women continue to live five years longer than men, so focusing on men's health is important.

Overall, men are aging better—deaths caused by heart disease, cancer and stroke have gone down. But rates for Alzheimer's, suicide and unintentional injuries, such as drug overdoses, are on the rise.

Screenings are important when it comes to health. They can detect problems early when it's easier and less expensive to treat them. Women are more likely to get regular screenings and wellness exams than men. The hope is Men's Health Week will help raise awareness and inspire men to get screened.

Here are some basic steps men can take to improve their health.



- Get an annual wellness exam and follow your doctor's recommendations for screenings. Some common screenings for both men and women are cholesterol tests, blood pressure checks and colonoscopies. Men should also have a testicular exam and a prostate exam. Current and former smokers should have an abdominal aortic aneurysm screening.
- If you smoke, stop. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about available resources.
- If you aren't active now, start. Begin with light activity and work up to 30 minutes on most days of the week. Find what works best for you, like

walking, gardening, dancing, swimming or bicycling.

- Eat a healthy diet. Add fruits, vegetables, and whole grains every day. Also reduce your intake of red meats, processed foods, trans fats, sodium and sugar.
- Maintain a healthy weight. If you're overweight, a goal to lose 5 to 7 percent of your body weight is a great start.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. For men, that means no more than two drinks a day. A standard drink is a 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, a 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.
- Manage stress and depression. Find a healthy way to reduce stress like exercising or meditating. Travel, fishing, boating and day-trip adventures might help. Your doctor or counselor can help you manage depression, suicidal thoughts and prescription pain medication use.
- Get at least seven to nine hours of sleep. It's essential for physical and mental rejuvenation and healing.

**Resources:** [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov);  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

## Keep July 4th Celebrations Fun and Safe!

Fourth of July fireworks are about to light up the night sky. We sometimes forget—or don't know—the dangers that can occur when children have sparklers in their hands. Did you know that sparklers burn at temperatures of 2,000 degrees? That's hot enough to melt metal.

To prevent Independence Day fun from turning into a serious accident, keep these tips in mind:

- Check out local laws on fireworks before you buy or use them.
- Fireworks are not child's play. Don't let kids play with or ignite fireworks.



- Ask an adult to supervise all fireworks activity.
- Make sure no part of your body is over a device when lighting the fuse and back away as soon as the fuse begins to spark.
- Light one at a time.
- If a fireworks item fails to

ignite fully, leave it alone. Don't pick it up. Don't try to re-light it.

- Fireworks are not toys. Don't point or throw them at anyone.
- Make sure to have a source of water—a bucket or garden hose—nearby.
- Metal and glass containers make dangerous launch pads. They can explode and send shards flying.
- Sometimes sparks burn holes in clothing of people nearby. Make sure everyone keeps a safe distance away and never keep fireworks in your pockets.
- Be sure to water down the spent fireworks before cleanup to prevent accidental burns or a trash fire.

**Resource:** <https://www.cpsc.gov>

## Grilled Chicken Vegetable Kabobs

You'll need four skewers to try these kabobs at your next family barbecue.

### Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Ground black pepper to taste
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breast cut into 2-inch cubes
- 8 cherry tomatoes

- 12 whole bay leaves
- 1 medium onion cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 medium green bell pepper cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 cups cooked brown rice

### Directions

1. Whisk olive oil, lemon juice and ground black pepper; pour over chicken and marinate one hour in the refrigerator.
2. To make skewers, thread tomato, chicken, bay leaf, onion and bell pepper; repeat.



3. Grill over medium heat for 5 minutes on each side or until cooked through. Discard bay leaves before serving.
4. Serve each kabob over ½ cup of brown rice. Serves four.

Recipe courtesy of [EatFresh.org](https://www.eatfresh.org); for nutrition information click [here](#).

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