

Focus on Health

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Choosing the right hospital

When Judie Burrows, an adventurous, retired teacher, broke her hip during a bicycle accident, her family trusted the doctors and the hospital. They were not worried about a routine hip surgery.

"I didn't realize at the time that we should have worried, even though this was a routine procedure," said her son, Steve Burrows. "We thought all hospitals were basically the same."

Burrows, who produced the award-winning HBO documentary *Bleed Out* recounting his mother's story, points to an option like the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade as how his family might have compared hospital safety.

Five months later, with her first hip surgery failing, Judie Burrows fell and broke her hip again and spent eight days in the hospital in excruciating pain with no plan of care. She had a second hip surgery, despite the doctor knowing she was still on three different prescription blood thinners, and lost half the blood in her body.

After surgery, Judie Burrows slipped into a coma. For a day and a half, no one noticed.

"When my mother emerged from her coma after two weeks, her cognitive abilities were equal to that of an 8-year-old," Steve Burrows said. "She survived, but lost her fierce independence, her home and all her life savings, which were used to pay for the injuries she suffered."

One easy way to judge hospitals

"At first, I thought my family was just unlucky," Steve Burrows said. "However, after the release of our HBO documentary, *Bleed Out*, I received thousands of messages from people across the country who recounted their own stories of loss and suffering related to medical errors."

Research confirms the problem is significant. A study in *The BMJ* found upward of 250,000 people in the United States die of preventable medical errors each year, equal to more than 600 people per day.

To assist people like the Burrows family, nonprofit watchdog organization The Leapfrog Group grades hospitals with an A, B, C, D or F based on measures that protect patients from preventable errors, injuries and infections.

The grades look at up to 27 measures of hospital safety, like infection rates, surgical errors and standards for intensive care unit (ICU) physician staffing.

'Shopping' for care is crucial

"Health care is too important not to shop for it," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group.

Binder suggests a safety-first research strategy that begins with the Hospital Safety Grade, the only resource entirely devoted to errors, injuries and infections, followed by research from other sources into the quality of the surgery or treatment a patient needs.

The hospital grades are free to the public, updated twice a year, independently assessed, peer-reviewed and fully transparent. People can search for hospitals in any region of the United States.

Judie Burrows passed away after enduring more than a decade of health struggles following her first hip surgery. The hospital and doctors never claimed any responsibility for the emotional and financial costs.

"Do not be afraid to shop like your life depends on it," Steve Burrows said. "It does depend on it. My family found out the hard way."

Look up grades for your local hospitals at [HospitalSafetyGrade.org](https://www.hospital-safety-grade.org). (FAMILYFEATURES)

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Start with a step and walk your way to better health

One of the common complaints among people who want to be more active is that they can't seem to fit exercise in when work, school or family responsibilities get top billing.

A walk is not just good for your body, it's also good for your soul. Physical activity, like walking, is one of the best ways to reduce stress and boost your mood. However, reports show walking rates are declining steadily in the United States.

On average, 1 out of every 4 U.S. adults sits for longer than eight hours each day, per research from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, which can have negative consequences on physical and mental health. Regular exercise improves mood, boosts energy and can even help you sleep better. Staying active is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy.

Consider this advice from the American Heart Association, which has worked for decades to promote policies and strategies that make it easier for communities to get and stay active. One example is National Walking Day, established by the organization to encourage people to move more throughout the day so they can feel, think, sleep and live better.



Indeed, adding more movement can benefit your body and mind in numerous ways, such as:

Lowering disease risk. Getting the recommended amount of physical activity (at least 150 minutes of moderate, 75

minutes of vigorous or a combination of those activities per week) is linked to lower risk of diseases, stronger bones and muscles, improved mental health and cognitive function and lower risk of depression.

Increasing sunlight exposure.

Outdoor exercise is an easy way to get moving and take in the sunlight, which can improve mood, boost immunity and help you get some vitamin D. Spending time outdoors is a no-cost option and has been shown to reduce stress, promote a sense of belonging and improve mood.

Improving cognitive and mental function. Physical activity keeps your mind sharp now and later. Studies show higher fitness levels are linked to better attention, learning, working memory and problem solving. What's more, a study published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* shows people who get the recommended amount of physical activity are less likely to develop depression.

Living longer. Healthy life expectancy can be positively impacted by increasing activity. According to research published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, swapping just 30 minutes of sitting with low-intensity physical activity reduced risk of death by 17%.

Get moving to reduce your stress and step into better health. Learn more at heart.org/movemore. (FAMILYFEATURES)

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Sun Safety Word Search

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I N K C V L S U N G L A S S E S R A S D
M W H B N X P S E R U E X M U O W H U P
W T C V R A L F G L C M U H T C A P L N T
H H P D V E C N T M P L S E A D E W G T V
T G G A K L R R W G G A C O E F F T G V
S I N A V U A X W I R T G P G W S K N I
S L E H B V L U E H D C M A E I C R I N D
F N B N I X G F A R G E T E G L H E N D
P U U O E E D N L W F W B O L B D X R O
T S L D S D H F L T N V L R L A N L O O
L E N L U S F X E L R O C G I H N V M R
T I N W N T K F R O T X C I U M U O P S
S P U K B M L G B A W V E O I T M U M A
A K U F L P E B M P H P W V V N I E R A
W T L W O T V R U G D V N C P E N I D F
X F W H C X E N I K S S M R G G R T E U
I F N V K D O U S F A E N K X E P U A X
R A D I A T I O N W F E B A M U N B P S

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.

- CANCER
COVER UP
DERMATOLOGIST
HEAT
INDEX
INDOORS
- MELANOMA
MORNING
PROTECT
RADIATION
RASH
- REFLECT
SHADE
SKIN
SPOTS
SUNBLOCK
- SUNBURN
SUNGLASSES
SUNLIGHT
ULTRAVIOLET
UMBRELLA
WIDE-BRIMMED



Sleep apnea is more than a snore

Snoring throughout the night. Gasping for air suddenly while sleeping. Feeling tired after a night of rest. These aren't just signs of a poor night's sleep — they could be symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

Sleep apnea is a serious sleep disorder characterized by a repetitive collapse of the airway during sleep. Most people with sleep apnea don't even know they have it — in fact, 80% of people with sleep apnea in the United States are undiagnosed, according to research published in the "American Journal of Epidemiology."

Experts from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) recommend most adults get at least seven hours of sleep each night without waking frequently. If you have untreated sleep apnea, healthy, uninterrupted sleep can be hard to achieve. When the airway collapses or becomes blocked while you sleep, it causes you to wake briefly - maybe with a snore or gasp for air - to unblock the airway.

Untreated sleep apnea can contribute to long-term health problems, including hypertension (high blood pressure), heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and depression. Overall quality of life can also suffer. It can lead to a decline in mood, lower work productivity, difficulty concentrating and making decisions and an increased likelihood of getting into a traffic accident due to sleepiness.

The disorder may even affect your family and relationships; snoring or poor sleep due to sleep apnea can keep your family members up at night, affect your mood with others and impact your general decision-making. Consider this additional information about sleep apnea from Count on Sleep, a collaborative awareness program led by the AASM.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF OSA

- * Snoring or noisy breathing
- * Stopping breathing while asleep
- * Waking up gasping or choking
- * Restless sleep or waking up tired and groggy after a full night's sleep
- * Insomnia
- * Waking up frequently to use the bathroom
- * Having headaches in the morning
- * Feeling sleepy during the day
- * Having difficulty with memory or concentrating
- * Mood changes or irritability
- * Drowsy driving

RISK FACTORS FOR OSA

- * Overweight or obesity (BMI of more than 30)
- * High blood pressure
- * Neck size of more than 17 inches for men; 16 inches for women
- * Coronary artery disease (a type of heart disease) or heart attack
- * Atrial fibrillation or other heart rhythm problems
- * Congestive heart failure
- * Type 2 diabetes
- * Stroke
- * Daytime sleepiness

If you think you may have undiagnosed sleep apnea, talk to your doctor about your signs, symptoms, risk factors and concerns. If friends or family members exhibit these symptoms, urge them to talk to a doctor.

Your doctor may screen or test you for sleep apnea, which could include an at-home sleep test or sleep study at an accredited sleep center. If diagnosed, treatment options include continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy, oral appliance, surgery or lifestyle changes.

Learn more about how sleep apnea affects health at countonsleep.org. (FAMILY FEATURES)

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5 nutrition tips to power your next workout

Watching the Paris Summer Olympics may motivate many to slip into their sneakers and head outside for a run. A good run enhances strength, contributes to cardiovascular fitness, builds muscle endurance and is a great way to shed pounds. It's also a boost for your mental health.

A recent study in *Neuroscience News* found aerobic exercise like running leads to an increase in levels of serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine — chemicals that regulate your mood. It also helps promote better sleep, relaxes stress hormones and increases brain function.

So, take this as your sign to get out there! But, in addition to the right footwear, a killer playlist and an interesting route for your workout, it's vital to focus on nutrition. Regardless of the distance or duration of your run, sports nutrition is an important key to your performance.

Most runners know they should get some carbs, protein, and stay hydrated. But how much, and when? Before, during or after your run? Dana Ryan, Ph.D., MA, MBA, director of Sports Performance, Nutrition and Education and Chair of the Fitness Advisory Board at Herbalife, offers these tips to get moving with good nutrition.

Start with the basics. Whether you're a distance runner or a new jogger working up to your first mile, a good basic diet is the building block for great performance. Fruits, veggies, lean protein, healthy fats and good carbohydrates are a must.

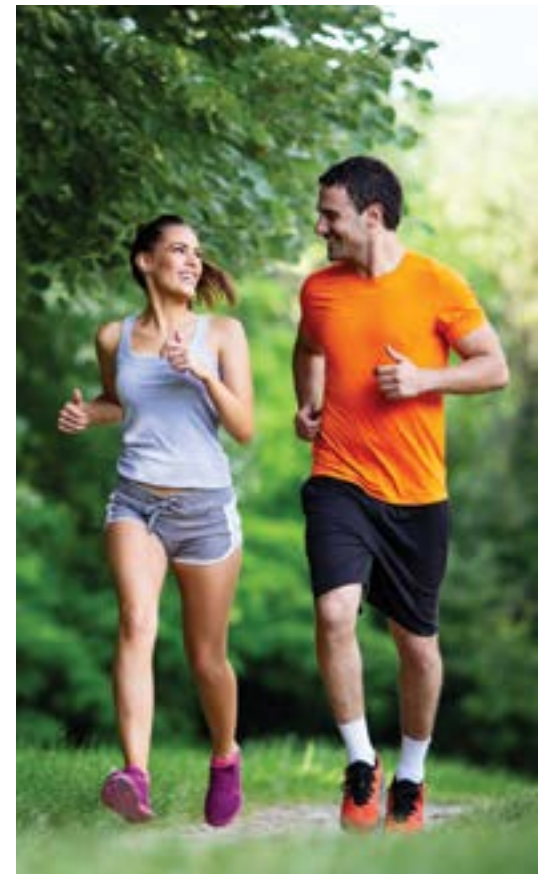
Pre-workout boost. As you near your run, you want to focus on liquids. One to two hours before your workout, drink a protein shake that includes carbohydrates. Protein helps your brain and body function and gives you an energy boost, and those carbs keep you going. Within 30 minutes of your run, a pre-workout drink that contains caffeine and nitric oxide precursors is a good option. The two things you want to avoid pre workout are fiber and fat as they are hard for the body to digest.

Hydrate! This is vital before, during and after your workout. Proper hydration is essential not only for general body functions, but also boosts performance and mitigates dehydration during running. Runners need to maintain body water balance, because water provides nourishment that the body needs for almost every single function. It also helps limit changes in body temperature. For hydration, water alone is great. Water with electrolytes kicks it up a notch.

Carb it up. For many dieters, carbs are taboo. But for runners, or people who do other high-intensity workouts, carbs are key to performance. If you've ever run out of steam or hit a wall during a workout, it could be because you're low on carbs. While running, it's crucial to replace what the body is losing, namely carbohydrates and electrolytes. One's body fatigues because of the depletion of carbohydrate reserves and dehydration due to loss of water and electrolytes in sweat, both of which hinder sports performance.

Finish with protein. Immediately following the completion of a run, make sure to get some protein in. Within 30 minutes of finishing your workout, consume 20 to 40 grams of high-quality protein, no matter how long the run was. And for those longer runs, add in some carbohydrates to be closer to a 3:1 carbohydrate-to-protein ratio. Why? Protein after a run helps your muscles repair and recover. The amino acids in protein help build lean muscle, which is exactly what you want.

No matter your fitness level, nutrition is an important part of getting the most out of your workout. Now, get out there and move! (BRANDPOINT)



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The difference between tiredness and fatigue

Have you ever felt like no amount of coffee or rest can shake off your lingering exhaustion? Do you wake up from a full night's sleep and still find yourself dragging? If so, you might be dealing with more than just tiredness; you could be experiencing fatigue.



Dr. Maggie Williams

Fatigue is not just a fleeting feeling of sleepiness — it's a deep-seated exhaustion that can impact your daily life and point to more serious health conditions. However, these feelings are often dismissed as simply needing more sleep or seen as a normal part of a busy lifestyle. According to recent research by MD Live, many aren't aware of what fatigue is despite experiencing symptoms and 35% rarely think about the reasons behind their tiredness.

"While we often use words like 'tired' and 'exhausted' interchangeably, there are distinct and clinical differences between tiredness and fatigue," explains Dr. Maggie Williams, medical director for MD Live Primary Care. "Occasional tiredness can often be managed with better sleep habits or lifestyle changes, but fatigue is a persistent exhaustion that could signal underlying health issues that should be discussed with a doctor."

Dr. Williams shares telltale ways to determine whether you may be experiencing simple tiredness or if your symptoms might point to something more serious.

SCRUTINIZE YOUR SLEEP

First, look at your sleep patterns. Tiredness generally improves with a good night's sleep or a short nap, whereas fatigue persists even after adequate rest. Try keeping a sleep diary for a week, noting when you go to bed, when you wake up, and how you feel upon waking and throughout the day. If you consistently wake up feeling unrefreshed or have difficulty staying asleep, it might indicate something more serious. Pay attention to other signs like frequent waking during the night or difficulty falling asleep despite feeling tired.

TRACK YOUR TIREDNESS

Consider how long and how often you feel exhausted. Tiredness is typically temporary and linked to specific activities or lack of sleep, such as staying up late to finish a project or getting a poor night's



sleep. Fatigue is long-lasting and occurs frequently, often without a clear cause. Ask yourself whether exhaustion is a constant presence in your life, lingering for weeks or months. If symptoms persist and you cannot pinpoint a specific reason, it's more likely to be fatigue.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR OTHER SYMPTOMS

Fatigue often accompanies broader and more severe symptoms, such as muscle weakness, joint pain, headaches, and a lack of motivation. Mentally, fatigue can lead to prolonged mood swings, depression, anxiety, and severe cognitive impairment, making it difficult to concentrate or remember things. Keep track of any additional symptoms you experience, noting their severity and duration.

GAUGE THE IMPACT ON DAILY LIFE

Reflect on how your tiredness affects your daily activities. Tiredness might cause a temporary decrease in productivity and social interactions. Fatigue has a significant and prolonged impact on your ability to perform daily tasks, work, and maintain social relationships. For example, you may find it increasingly difficult to keep up with work responsibilities, household chores, or social commitments. Evaluate how often you find yourself canceling plans, avoiding activities, or struggling to keep up with everyday demands.

REVAMP YOUR REST ROUTINE

To assess whether you may be dealing with fatigue, address sleep-related issues, including irregular sleep schedules, screen time before bed, and an uncomfortable

sleep environment. Establish a regular and consistent sleep routine, even on the weekends. Avoid alcohol consumption, limit exposure to screens at least an hour before bedtime and create a comfortable sleep environment by ensuring your bedroom is dark, quiet and cool. If these changes don't help, it could point to fatigue — persistent problems despite good sleep hygiene warrant further investigation.

THE CHRONIC CONDITION CONNECTION

Fatigue is often linked to chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, depression and thyroid disorders. These illnesses significantly impact the body's ability to maintain energy levels, resulting in persistent exhaustion that can negatively affect quality of life. According to the survey, one-third of respondents with chronic diseases experienced extreme tiredness but didn't recognize it was a symptom before their diagnosis. Identifying and managing these conditions properly can help alleviate some of the overwhelming feelings of exhaustion.

WHEN TO CONSULT A DOCTOR

While you might be inclined to dismiss or brush off tiredness as not a priority, persistent problems are not something you have to live with. If sleep-related issues or extreme tiredness begin to affect your everyday life, you should schedule a visit with your primary doctor. Remember, understanding and addressing the root causes of your tiredness can pave the way for improved well-being and a more energetic life. (BRANDPOINT)

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