



April 2019

Misconceptions about Staying Healthy



Don't be a fool this April! There are many common misconceptions on the topic of health. We're here to help you spot the myths!

- There are many myths about food that can impede our attempts at dieting.
- It's also important to know the realities surrounding fitness and exercise to improve health.

- There are many misconceptions about the way our bodies work in general that can easily be dispelled.
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Myths About Dieting

MYTH: All Carbs Are Bad For You

- Carbohydrates come in different forms: simple and complex.
- Simple carbs found in foods like cookies and candy lack vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Cutting back on these sweets, is a great way to eat healthier.
- Foods with complex carbs like whole-wheat bread, beans, and fruit, have lots of nutrients that are good for you.
- Cut back on simple carbs but keep complex carbs on the menu.

MYTH: "No-fat" or "Low-fat" Means No Weight Gain

- Many low-fat or no-fat foods have added sugar, starch, or salt to make up for the reduction in fat. These "wonder" foods often have just as many calories, or more, than the regular version.
- Check the nutrition label to see how many calories are in a serving. Be sure to check the serving size too.

MYTH: Never Skip Breakfast

- No scientific studies have shown that skipping the morning meal leads directly to weight gain.
- If you are not hungry first thing, listen to your body. When you are ready to eat, help yourself to a healthy option like oatmeal with fresh berries.

MYTH: Eating at Night Will Cause Weight Gain

- This is only true if you choose high-calorie treats or overeat.
- If you are hungry after dinner, limit yourself to healthy snacks such as low-fat yogurt or baby carrots.

MYTH: You Cannot Be Overweight and Healthy

- There are some people who are overweight with healthy blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.
- While you can be overweight and healthy, carrying extra weight will increase your risk for health problems down the line, but healthy eating and regular activity are good for you no matter what you weigh.

MYTH: Fasting Can Help You Lose Weight Quickly

- Fasting is not healthy if you go hungry all day and cap it off with a huge meal that replaces all the calories you skipped earlier.
- Compared to people who lose fat by eating fewer calories, people who fast lose more muscle than fat.
- Look at your daily diet for empty calories you can cut out, such as refined grains and sugary drinks. DO NOT cut out meals entirely, especially without a doctor's supervision.

MYTH: Slow Weight Loss is the Only Way

- While it is true that many people who lose a lot of weight in a short time gain it all back, this is not true for everyone. Some overweight people are more successful when they lose weight quickly, for instance, going from 300 to 250 pounds (135 to 112 kilograms) in less than a year.
- Slow weight loss might not be the only option for you. Just be careful to avoid fad diets that promise unrealistic results, they may not be safe. If you are interested in a diet that encourages faster weight loss, be sure to work with your health care provider to make sure you are getting all the nutrients you need.

SOURCE: <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000895.htm>



Myths About Fitness

MYTH: You Only Need to Work Out Once or Twice a Week.

- Once or twice a week won't cut it for sustained health benefits.
- For your workouts to produce real results, you should be exercising 3-5 times a week.
- A study in the American Heart Association's journal *Circulation* that found that the best results for heart health were gleaned when participants worked out 4-5 times a week.

MYTH: It's Best to Exercise in the Morning

- The best time for a workout is whatever time allows you to exercise most consistently.
- Ideally, you want to make physical fitness a daily habit, so if late-night trips to the gym are your thing, stick with it. If you prefer a morning run, do that instead.

MYTH: Weight Lifting Turns Fat into Muscle.

- You can't turn fat into muscle; they're two different tissues.
- Adipose (fatty) tissue is found under the skin, sandwiched between muscles, and around internal organs like the heart. Muscle tissue – which can be further broken down into three main types – is found throughout the body.
- Weight training helps build up the muscle tissue in and around any fat tissue. The best way to reduce fat tissue is to eat a healthy diet that incorporates vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats like those found in olive oil and fish.

MYTH: Exercise is the Best Way to Lose Weight.

- If you're looking to lose weight, don't assume that you can simply "work off" whatever you eat. Experts say slimming down almost always starts with significant changes to your eating habits.
- "In terms of weight loss, diet plays a much bigger role than exercise," says University of Texas exercise scientist Philip Stanforth.
- Still, being active regularly is an important part of any healthy lifestyle.

MYTH: Sports Drinks are the Best way to Re-Hydrate

- Most sports drinks are just sugar and water.
- Experts recommend refueling with plain old water and a high-protein snack, since studies suggest protein helps recondition muscles after a workout.

MYTH: Running a Marathon is the Ideal Way to Get Fit.

- You can get many of the benefits of long-distance running without ever passing the five-mile mark.
- Running fast and hard for just 5-10 minutes a day can provide some of the same health outcomes as running for hours. People who run for less than an hour per week – as long as they get in those few minutes each day – see similar benefits in terms of heart health compared to those who run more than 3 hours per week.
- Years of recent research suggest that short bursts of intense exercise can provide some of the same health benefits as long, endurance-style workouts – and they also tend to be more fun.

SOURCE: <https://www.iflscience.com/health-and-medicine/fitness-myths-that-are-doing-more-harm-than-good/>



Myths About Your Body

MYTH: Your Blood Turns Blue When it's Out of Oxygen

- Your blood is never blue: It turns dark red when it's not carrying oxygen.
- Blood only looks blue because you are seeing it through several layers of tissue, which filters the color.

MYTH: Humans Have Five Senses.

- Sight, smell, taste, hearing, and touch are just the beginning.
- Don't forget about balance, temperature, and time, as well as proprioception – the body awareness that helps us not walk into things all the time – and nociception, our sense of pain.
- The body has many ways to sense the world around us, don't fret if you are lacking in a certain area!

MYTH: You Must Wait an Hour after Eating to Swim

- The theory behind this seems to be that digesting food will draw blood to your stomach, meaning that less blood is available for your muscles, making them more likely to cramp.
- But there's no evidence to support this claim.
- In fact, many sources say there are no documented cases of anyone ever drowning because they've had a cramp related to swimming with a full stomach.
- Cramps do happen frequently when swimming, but they aren't caused by what's in your stomach. If you do get one, the best policy is to float for a minute and let

it pass.

MYTH: You Lose 90% of your Body Heat Through Your Head

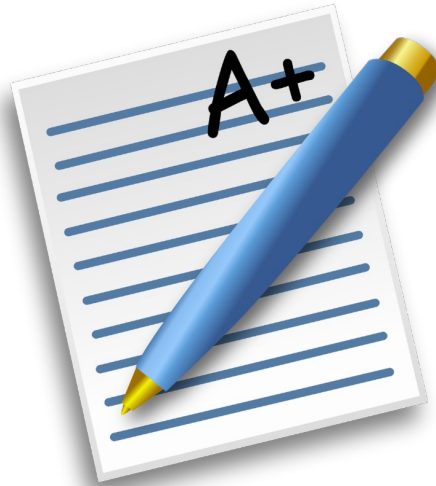
- You lose body heat through anything that's uncovered, and your head is more likely to be exposed than other areas of your body.
- If you don't have a hat on, you lose heat through your head, just as you would lose heat through your legs if you were wearing shorts.

MYTH: Cracking Your Knuckles Will Give you Arthritis

- There's no known ill effect from cracking your knuckles.
- Cracking your knuckles may annoy the people around you, but even people who have done it frequently for many years are not more likely to develop arthritis than those who don't.

SOURCE: <https://www.businessinsider.com/worst-science-health-body-myths-2016-8#myth-taking-your-vitamins-will-keep-you-healthy-24>

Let's Stay Smart and Healthy!



Looking to learn more about healthy living?
We can hold a Healthy Lifestyles Workshop at your location!



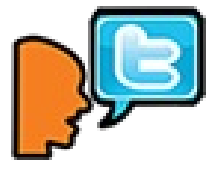
Don't see what you're looking for? We'll make it for you!
 E-mail NJSAP@ArcNJ.org or call 732-749-8514 to schedule a
 training at your location!



The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey

The Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) is a program of The Arc of New Jersey and receives funding through a grant awarded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey.

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Promoting Advocacy and Independence for People
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