



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

June 2021

FITNESS FOCUS

SUNSCREEN vs. SUNBLOCK PART ONE

Minimizing skin exposure to harmful UV rays produced by the sun is important when outdoors. Consider using sun protection in the following order -

- 1 - **Physical Shade** such as umbrellas, hats, clothing);
- 2 - **Topical Sunblock** containing titanium oxide / zinc oxide here is a list
- 3 - **Topical Sunscreen**

Sunblock before Sunscreen

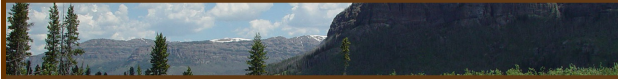
Our [July 2019 Newsletter](#) discussed the importance of sun protection and the difference between chemical-based sunscreens and mineral-based sunblocks to shield skin from the harmful effects of UV rays. An early study showing concern for the absorption of [sunscreens](#) chemicals was also described.

In January of 2020, the FDA stated in this summary article that "absorption does not equal risk" yet they are requesting "additional safety studies to fill in the current data gaps for these ingredients."

This approach is concerning. Unfortunately, the FDA is having to perform these studies AFTER these [sunscreens](#) have been on the market because [sunscreens](#) are not regulated as a drug yet now significant systemic absorption of the chemicals has been identified by researchers.

Some patient [safety groups](#) are recommending mineral [sunblocks](#) over chemical [sunscreens](#). More on this topic to come in the July 2021 newsletter. Stay tuned. (dwb)

HEALTH TIP



BRAIN HEALTH – EXERCISE, PUZZLES, AND MINDFULNESS

The familiar saying "use it or lose it" can be applied to our brains as well as our muscles. Like muscles, some researches have theorized that brain function worsens when not exercised and that intentional brain exercises may delay cognitive decline. The **PROTECT** study on brain aging, which studied over 2,000 participants who did word or number puzzles at least monthly, showed better performance across all the tested areas of cognitive function. Participants who did number puzzles did better in planning and organizing tasks while those who did word puzzles did better with reasoning tasks.

Critics of this theory point out that such studies do not show cause-and-effect. This means that doing puzzles may not be the reason cognitive function improved. For instance, it could be that people with higher levels of cognition enjoy solving puzzles more than people with decreased cognitive function. Critics also point out that such studies cannot show if there is a difference between those who have engaged in puzzles all of their lives compared to those who start later in life.

Regardless, one benefit of doing mind-challenging puzzles may be the mindfulness focus required to complete the task – a restorative practice which can shut-out the worries of everyday life and can restore mental peace in today's high-stress world. For a more expansive discussion on this topic, read the article [HERE](#) "[Can A Puzzle A Day Keep Dementia At Bay?](#)" by Betsy Mills, Ph.D.



DOCTOR'S NOTE

WEEKLY PUZZLES – A SIMPLE PEN & PAPER HEALTH ACTIVITY

By Dr. Tracy

Crosswords and word search games in your local newspaper are an easy and healthy activity you can do alone or with family and friends. We believe supporting our local paper's puzzle page is important because the weekly feature offers ...

- A positive individual and family activity that may add protective brain benefits.
- A consistent feature that everyone of all ages can look forward to each week.
- A commonly-shared source of news and entertainment.
- A wholesome way to take a break from the day and exercise the mind with no "explicit" cuts or R-rated content.

While scientists love to argue about everything - including whether or not engaging in crossword puzzles can slow cognitive decline - a famous study from 10 years ago called "The Bronx Aging Study" followed nearly 500 "cognitively intact" community residents with assessments every 1 to 1.5 years. The study authors state, "Our findings show that late-life crossword puzzle participation, independent of education, was associated with delayed onset of memory decline in persons who developed dementia."

The Bronx Aging Study conclusion will no doubt result in further studies of the benefits of crossword and word search puzzles. In the meantime, we hope you will find time to pick up a pen or pencil and do a puzzle or two each week.

The rewards are many!

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BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.

PRACTICE NEWS

PLASTIC! PLASTIC! – WHAT TO DO WITH USED PILL BOTTLES

Plastics are everywhere these days and woven into everything we use – even into the prescription medication dispensing service offered by 307Health and pharmacies throughout the United States. The little, well-engineered, high-functioning, waterproof pill bottles with their secure child-proof caps or snap-on lids make for good one-time medication storage but have restricted use when empty. The bottles are not reusable for their original purpose as their plastic is porous which makes decontamination between uses unreliable. Consequently, these single-use containers serve their first-purpose and then usually go into a landfill where they perpetually exist - taking up space with no further usefulness and possibly contaminating the environment as their plastic chemical components degrade.

So, what can be done to reduce the plastic footprint caused by medication bottles? Here are some ideas gathered from the internet and local research.

REDUCE

- Reduce bottle use from 3 to 1 by requesting 90-day instead of 30-day refills.

REUSE

- [Article - 30 Genius Ways To Reuse & Re-purpose Empty Pill Bottles](#) [HERE](#)
- [Pinterest Collection – Re-purpose Prescription Bottles](#) [HERE](#)

RECYCLE

Powell Valley Recycling Center on Tower Road is now accepting both solid white and transparent blue medication bottles with a 1 or 2 on the bottom. The Recycling Center does not accept the translucent yellow or orange bottles. The Center asks that lids be removed and bottles be separated between transparent and solid colors. Labels do not have to be removed, but 307Health recommends members de-identify their bottles by removing or blacking any personal identifiers on the label. (krt)

MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS

SUMMER BRINGS “SPORTS PHYSICAL” SEASON

Planning ahead during the summer months for the annual sports physical is easy for 307Health members. This annual check-up is required of all school sports athletes by the Wyoming High School Athletics Association (WHSAA) and can be completed anytime after May 1 for the upcoming school year. The less hectic summer months are a great time to tend to this detail. A summer appointment allows families to take one thing off their busy Fall schedule. [The annual exam is included in 307Health membership.](#) Member families can call the office anytime to schedule their student's sports physical.

When an athlete comes to their sports physical appointment, it is most helpful for a parent to have completed and signed the WHSAA's "School Physical Examination Medical Record" form ahead of the appointment. This form can be found on the WHSAA website [HERE](#) for home printing and completion, or it can be picked-up at the 307Health front desk in advance of the scheduled appointment.

TEXTING YOUR DOCTOR – EASY ETIQUETTE TIPS

A popular and much-used feature of 307Health membership is the patient's option to text message their doctor. Here are some tips to help this relationship go smoothly on both sides of the text message.

- Reserve evening / night / weekend texts for urgent communications. It is helpful to know that 307Health doctors monitor their messages real-time – this means they are awakened by texts sent at 2 a.m.
- Text routine updates and requests between office hours of 8am-5pm Mon-Fri.
- For clear record-keeping, separate texts by person, e.g. one person = one text.
- Text from the number listed with the patient's medical record.

For a time-sensitive urgent need ... don't text. Call.

COVID-19 UPDATES & NEWS

PARK COUNTY VACCINE STATS*

as of June 7, 2021

- 11,258 = Pfizer / Moderna Dose 1
- 10,401 = Pfizer / Moderna Dose 2
- 256 = Jansen (J&J)

Vaccination Rate as a % of Park County Population

- All Persons = 32.11%
- Adults 18+ = 39.93%
- Adults 65+ = 59.58%

*Source: Wyoming Dept of Health

WIC BENEFITS INCREASED

Wyoming Department of Health
June 1, 2021 – Website News Release

Monthly benefits for the families participating in the Wyoming WIC Program, which is operated by the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH), will see a significant temporary boost over the next few months.

The Wyoming WIC Program is also known as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children Program. It's a joint federal and state government effort under the USDA that provides nutritious foods and education, breastfeeding support and healthcare referrals for income-eligible women who are pregnant or postpartum, infants and children up to age 5. All caregivers are welcome to receive help from the program including dads, foster parents, guardians, grandparents and step-parents.

Through September 30, the fruit and vegetable voucher included as one part of WIC benefits has been increased to \$35/month per participant from the standard \$9/month for children and \$11/month for women. The increase was included in the federal American Rescue Plan Act approved earlier this year.

Melissa Stehwen, WIC program manager with WDH, said, "Providing even more nutritious, delicious fruits and vegetables (fresh or frozen) during the peak growing season than we already offer can both promote healthier living and help to reduce food insecurity."

To learn more about this temporary benefit increase or WIC income qualifications, visit [HERE](#).