

Aging: What's Normal, What's Not

A health newsletter dedicated to Sri Lankans around the world.

Is Your Sex Drive Typical?

What to Eat When You Have T1D

Alpha-Lipoic Acid: What You Should Know



Health & Views

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Headache and Dehydration

Dehydration can lead to headaches because it decreases the fluid surrounding your brain, which serves as a protective cushion. When you are not adequately hydrated, your brain can temporarily shrink due to fluid loss, resulting in painful headaches. If you feel a headache coming on and realize you haven't been drinking enough water, try drinking a glass or two of water before resorting to pain medication. Often, rehydrating can relieve the discomfort without the need for pharmaceuticals.

Dark Urine ©Photo Credit: Depositphotos.com.

One of the easiest ways to gauge your hydration level is to observe the colour of your urine. [Dark yellow or amber-coloured urine](#) often indicates that you're not drinking enough water. When you're well-hydrated, your urine should be pale yellow or almost clear.

Certain foods, supplements, and medications can also change urine color. However, if you consistently notice dark urine and other symptoms of dehydration, it's a sign that you need to drink more fluids.



Warning Signs of Type 2 Diabetes

In many cases, type 2 isn't discovered until it takes a serious toll on your health. Make sure you know the early red flags to watch for.

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Constipation ©.

When you don't drink enough water, your digestive system can suffer. Proper hydration is essential for healthy digestion and regular bowel movements. When your body lacks water, it absorbs more fluid from your stool, which can make it hard and difficult to pass. This can lead to constipation and discomfort. Increasing your water intake can help soften your stool and encourage normal bowel movements. Pairing adequate hydration with a diet rich in fiber will further support digestive health.

Could Your Back Pain Be Sciatica?

Shooting pain that moves down one leg may be due to a nerve problem. See the most common symptoms, and what you can do to help get relief.

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How to Get Back to Sleep

About 20% of people wake up in the wee hours, then struggle to get back to sleep. Try these tips to help you drift peacefully back to sleep.

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Avoid these foods if you have high blood pressure.

If you have hypertension, you already know how important it is to steer clear of foods that are harmful to your cardiovascular health. In the following article, we present 20 of the most illicit dishes for heart-conscious eaters.

Of course, this list is not exhaustive. If you have any questions about your diet or health, don't hesitate to contact your doctor, pharmacist, or nutritionist.

Canned soups

Many people love the convenience of ready-to-eat soups. But if you're watching your blood pressure, leave those cans on the shelf! They contain a significant amount of [sodium](#), which elevates blood pressure. For example, just half a cup of canned chicken noodle soup contains 890 mg of sodium.

Opt for low-sodium versions or, better yet, [make your soup](#) at home. Just remember to leave the salt shaker in the pantry!

Cheeses

Many cheeses are off-limits for hypertensive individuals due to their high levels of [sodium](#). Some blacklisted varieties include American cheese, Parmesan, and blue cheese, which all contain over 300 mg of sodium per ounce.

On the other hand, goat cheese, mozzarella, and brick cheese are delicious [low-salt](#) alternatives.

Bacon

Fatty, salty, and high in cholesterol, [bacon](#) is a definite no-no if you're watching your blood pressure.

Even if you don't have hypertension, you should limit your bacon consumption. Why? Studies have suggested that it can increase your risk of developing certain cancers.

Sugar-sweetened beverages

Not only do drinks with added sugar [contribute to weight gain](#), they also affect your blood pressure. According to one [study](#), individuals who drink significant quantities of sugar-sweetened beverages are at higher risk of developing hypertension.

Whether you're hypertensive or not, [water](#) is still your best choice for staying hydrated!

Energy drinks

While energy drinks are trendy among teens and young adults, [the media has recently exposed their nefarious side effects](#). In addition to [causing](#) headaches, anxiety, diarrhoea, and dizziness, [energy drinks have been shown](#) to raise blood pressure. These health risks have been linked, among others, to their [high concentrations of caffeine](#), which in some beverages even exceed the recommended daily dose.

What Are Genetic Breast Cancer Mutations?

Researchers have identified hundreds of genes linked to breast cancer, but some seem to play more of a role than others. Should you get screened?

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The Best Coffee You Can Drink

Coffee has lots of good-for-you antioxidants and micronutrients. But the way you drink it -- the temperature, plus whatever you add to it -- may torpedo those benefits.

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Fruits and vegetables



Nearly everything you can buy in the produce section of your grocery store is actual medicine to the body. Plant foods are rich in vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients, all good for the heart. For example, Asparagus, bell peppers, and bok choy are rich sources of B vitamins, especially vitamin B6, which helps lower homocysteine (an amino acid linked to heart disease) and C-reactive protein (a marker of inflammation). Carrots, tomatoes, oranges, and bananas are rich in carotenoids, including lycopene, an important antioxidant. It's no wonder that the Harvard Nurses' Health Study and Health Professionals Follow-Up Study found that people who ate eight or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day were 30 percent less likely to have a heart attack or stroke than people who consumed one and a half servings or fewer.

Break up with soda

An astounding 184,000 adult deaths worldwide each year are linked to the consumption of sugary drinks, according to research conducted at Tufts University and published in the journal *Circulation*. This includes 133,000 deaths from diabetes and 45,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease. Harvard researchers, who have been studying more than 40,000 physicians and 88,000 nurses for more than two decades, found that women who consumed more than two servings of a sugary beverage a day were 40 per cent more likely to develop heart disease than women who drank fewer. Men who drank the most sodas were 20 per cent more likely to have a heart attack than those who consumed the least.

What Are the Different Types of Breast Cancer?



Frying Eggs

It likely isn't astounding to find frying on a list of the unhealthiest [ways to cook eggs](#). After all, frying, by definition, involves cooking something at a high heat in some fat -- usually oil or butter. And while fried eggs are undeniably delicious (and really, is there such a thing as an unappetising fried food?), it certainly isn't the best way to maximise an egg's nutritional value. For instance, one study published in the [International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition](#) found that while eggs offer an excellent source of vitamin A, high-heat cooking reduces the amount of the vitamin found in eggs by up to 20%. And with frying, we also have to consider the health consequences of the type of oil or fat used. Studies, like one published in the journal [Food Chemistry](#), have found that certain edible oils (including extra virgin olive oil, sunflower, and linseed oils) release toxic substances known as aldehydes when exposed to heat for a prolonged period of time.



Soft-cooking©

Soft-boiling isn't the only kind of soft-cooking method that can be applied to eggs, and it's easy to see why those methods might be more appealing to some than so-called "hard-cooking" methods. Not only does exposure to high heat destroy certain nutrients in eggs, but it can also zap the dish of moisture and leave the end product unpleasantly dry. But there is ample reason to be cautious when shooting for the fine line of safely-cooked and nutritious, yet adequately moist eggs. The key to maintaining the healthiness of your soft-cooked eggs, at least according to the [US Department of Agriculture](#), is to use only pasteurized eggs. The department officially recommends that all eggs, as well as dishes containing eggs, be thoroughly cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit to avoid consuming salmonella bacteria. This allows pasteurized eggs to be safely and healthily consumed raw or undercooked in a variety of dishes.



Conventional farming commonly uses pesticides to protect crops from insects and diseases. However, these chemical residues can remain on the surface of fruits and vegetables, even after washing with water alone. You can create a natural produce wash to help remove pesticides and bacteria for a cheap and effective solution. Vinegar, mainly white vinegar, is a mild acid with antimicrobial properties, which helps break down and remove pesticide residues more effectively than water alone.

Read More:

<https://www.thedailymeal.com/1408928/methods-using-distilled-white-vinegar/>

Fluff up your rice with white vinegar



Want to take your rice cooking skills to the next level? There's nothing like a bowl of perfectly fluffy rice, and vinegar can help you get there. All you have to do is add about a tablespoon of white vinegar per cup to the cooking water before adding rice.

Read More: <https://www.thedailymeal.com/1408928/methods-using-distilled-white-vinegar/>



International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Christmas and end of 2024 celebrations at VACD Sri Lanka.

Our VACD Centers in Bandarawela, Badulla and Ambagasdowa celebrated some significant days as seen in the photographs below

VACD Badulla: (Sponsored by the Fendler

VACD Bandarawela



The Badulla event was organised and sponsored by the Lions Club of Uva Wellassa and the Leo Club of Sri Lanka Technological Campus. The Lions and Leos Clubs have been supporters of our Badulla center for many years.

Australian Dollar Donations via Direct Bank Transfers:

Name of Account: Volunteers to Assist Children with Disabilities Limited

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Liverpool & Castlereagh Streets Branch, Cnr of Liverpool & Castlereagh Streets, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia

Account No: 1130 2156 **BSB:** 062-016 **BIC/SWIFT Code:** CTBAU2S

Sri Lanka Rupee Donations via Direct Bank Transfers:

Name of Account: Volunteers to Assist Children with Disabilities Private Limited

Bank: Seylan Bank, 240, Badulla Road, Bandarawela, Sri Lanka

Account Number: 046035439722001



Worst Habits for Your Heart

Exercising is great. But if you sit down the rest of the day, that could be a problem. See what else could spell trouble for your ticker.

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Signs of Inflammatory Bowel Disease

IBD refers to chronic conditions that cause inflammation in some part of the intestines. But it can also cause symptoms outside the digestive tract.

[Read More](#)

Please spread awareness about these important health issues.

