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Many water-sports enthusiasts enjoy tubing behind boats in the summer, often with young or multiple riders. The ride is exciting—but risky. An estimated 65 Americans rush to the emergency room with tubing injuries each day over the summer. Read on for tubing safety tips.  
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**Managing Menopause**  
Not all women experience the change of life in the same way. Learn to spot the signs of its arrival and cope with the symptoms to help ease the transition.  
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Also in this issue
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Loma Linda University Health Events
Join Us for these Free Community Events

EVENTS

Orthopaedic Open House
June 2, 2013
11 am – 2:30 pm
Professional Plaza, Building B
25455 Barton Road, Suite 102B
Loma Linda, CA 92354

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital Foundation
Luke the Lion's Bday Bash
June 19th
2pm – 4pm
Loma Linda University Children's Hospital
11234 Anderson Street Loma Linda, CA 92354

For more information on these events call 1-877-LLUMC-4U or visit lomalindaevents.org for future events.

Last reviewed: June 2013

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The Walnut & Healthy Aging Study

How Can You Be a Part of the Study?

The Walnut & Healthy Aging Study

This study is being conducted by the Department of Nutrition at the School of Public Health at Loma Linda University. We were first to demonstrate that eating walnuts is good for heart health. Now we will attempt to determine if walnuts help in healthy aging as it relates to memory, cognition, eye health, nutritional status and overall well-being. Join us to discover if walnuts play a role in healthy aging.

How can I learn more about this study and enroll?

To enroll:
Phone: 1-877-558-6248 (1-877-LLUMC-4U)
Visit www.WAHAstudy.org

For additional questions:
Call 909-558-4300 ext 47170
Write us at WAHA@llu.edu

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Show Kids How to Make Healthy Menu Choices

The obesity rate among kids and teens has skyrocketed right alongside rates of eating out. And while fast food gets most of the blame, sit-down dining establishments shouldn't be overlooked. Both add extra calories and sugary beverages to kids' diets, a new study finds.

Calculating the Charges

The new research, published in the journal *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, gives parents some hard numbers to chew on. On a day that includes a fast-food meal, kids and teens consume between 125 and 310 extra calories. Full-service dining adds between 160 and 267, depending on the child’s age. Both also increase the grams of fat and ounces of sugary soda in kids’ diets.

A difference of 50 to 150 calories a day is all it takes for children to gain weight. That means meals outside the home can easily be reflected in youngsters’ waistlines.

Reducing the Damage

You don’t have to ban delis, diners, or drive-thrus. Smart choices can keep your family eating healthy at almost any establishment. Here’s how:

- Skip all-you-can-eat buffets. Everyone is more likely to overeat there.
- Take a family walk before or after a restaurant meal.
- Choose eateries with calorie counts on the menu, or scope out nutrition information online before you go. One study showed parents with this information ordered 100 fewer calories of fast food for their children.
- When you’re dining together, lead by example. Order a salad before your meal. Choose grilled rather than fried foods.
- Teach older kids and teens how to make better choices when you’re not around. For instance, before he hits the burger joint with friends, ask your son if he thinks milk or water might hydrate him for his next football practice better than soda.

For more information on healthy food choices, visit our health library at [lomalindahealth.org](http://lomalindahealth.org).

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Boost Your Activity to Lower Your Alzheimer’s Risk

Everyone would like to avoid Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia, but what can you do?

You can get moving, that’s what. More and more research points to the protective benefits of exercise in giving your brain a boost.

Doctors aren’t yet sure just how much exercise—or what kind—to prescribe. In most studies, though, the more active people were, the better they fared.

Exercisers Come Out Ahead

For a recent study, researchers outfitted more than 700 older adults with activity monitors. The study, which appeared in the journal *Neurology*, followed participants for four years. Researchers found that people who were the most consistently active every day had about half as much risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease as those with the least daily activity.

There were also signs that exercise could delay a decline in brain function that was already under way. Older women having trouble thinking and learning raised their scores on cognitive tests by strength-training twice a week for six months. Walking for more than two hours a week had a similar effect on participants with Alzheimer’s disease.

Activity Boosts Brain Cells

Exercise increases your brain’s plasticity, or the ability to form new connections between nerve cells, neurologists say. It also releases a chemical called brain-derived neurotrophic factor. This chemical helps new brain cells develop and thrive.

A good exercise goal is 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity and two days of strength-training each week. That’s what the government recommends for overall health.

These other strategies can do your brain good:

- Try activities that make you think. Square dancing and tennis are good options.
- Try something new. Experiment with new moves and routes.
- Stay moving and engaged all day. Even housecleaning and playing cards offer benefits.

For more information on the Loma Linda University Memory and Aging Center, please contact our Department of Neurology at 1-877-LLUMC-4U.

Last reviewed: June 2013
Understanding Your Blood Pressure Medications

Every beat of your heart sends life-sustaining blood pumping through your body. But if that blood pushes against the walls of your arteries with too much force, you have a condition called high blood pressure, or hypertension. This puts stress on your heart and hardens your artery walls. As a result, you’re four times more likely to die from a stroke and three times as likely to die from heart disease.

One Problem, Many Options
If you have high blood pressure, your doctor will likely prescribe one or more of the following drugs:

- **Alpha-blockers** calm nerve impulses to relax your blood vessels.
- **Beta-blockers** slow your heart down, decreasing its workload. They’re often prescribed after a heart attack to prevent another one.
- **Diuretics** help your body flush out salt and water to decrease the volume of your blood.
- **Vasodilators, ACE inhibitors, angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs), and calcium channel blockers** relax and open your blood vessels.

Take as Directed
These medications only reduce blood pressure if you take them regularly. So one thing you should never do is stop taking medicine without asking. Your blood pressure may be rising even if you’re feeling fine. And even if your blood pressure is just a little high, it still leaves you at greater risk for heart attacks and other life-threatening problems.

Blood pressure medications are very safe. However, you may experience side effects, such as weakness, chest pain, nausea, and headache. If so, talk with your doctor. He or she may adjust your dosage or suggest a different medication.

How much do you know about blood pressure? Take this [quiz](http://www.regardinghealth.com/LLU/RHO/2013/06/Article.aspx?bm...) to find out!

*Last reviewed: June 2013*
Water-Tubing Injuries on the Rise

Nearly 70,000 tubers rode into U.S. hospitals between 1991 and 2009, according to a national injury-monitoring database. During that time, the annual number of cases increased from 2,068 to 7,216, with 83 percent occurring during the summer months.

About one-fourth of these riders suffered sprains and strains. Others sustained bruises, scrapes, rope burns, cuts, fractures, or brain injuries. Researchers published their report in the *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*.

Kids, Adults Hurt in Different Ways

Children and teens accounted for 40 percent of the injuries. While adults were most often hurt when they hit the water, young riders were more likely to collide with another person.

The types of injuries also differed by age. Adults suffered more strains, sprains, and knee injuries. Kids, on the other hand, more often had head injuries. The results suggest kids may cram too many riders on a tube, while grown-ups injure joints and limbs while falling off the float.

Smart Steps Can Prevent Tubing Trauma

You can reduce injury risk without deflating your family’s fun. Here’s how:

- Don’t overload the tube. Many are designed to hold just a single rider. Allow only the number designated on the package to board, even if they’re children.
- Make sure everyone wears a lifejacket. And avoid so-called kite tubes. They fly up to 25 feet above the surface and pose a greater risk for injury and death. Sales have been banned, but some models may still be in use.

Click here to learn more summer safety tips from Safe Kids Inland Empire.

Last reviewed: June 2013
Managing Menopause

Menopause—when a woman’s menstrual periods stop—normally takes place between ages 40 and 60. Although many women have little trouble with “the change,” others suffer greatly for years.

Knowing the issues menopause can raise and what you can do about them may help you through this transition.

Signs

Women going through menopause can experience a variety of signs:

- Changes in the length and frequency of menstrual periods in the months or years before they stop
- Hot flashes that cause a rapid rise in body temperature, excessive sweating, and rapid heartbeats
- Vaginal dryness that can make sexual intercourse painful
- Frequent urinary tract and bladder infections
- Night sweats
- Trouble sleeping
- Emotional effects such as chronic anxiety, mood swings, and depression

Medical Treatment

Medical responses to menopause include the use of prescription oral estrogen or estrogen and progestin hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Although this treatment may ease side effects, it carries significant health risks. Prescription estrogen creams or antidepressants are also options. Your doctor can help you understand the risks and benefits of these options and whether they’re right for you.

Some women try alternative remedies, such as eating more soy foods or taking herbal supplements. Doing so can involve risk if the substances interact with medications you take.

Self-Care

These tips can help you control some bothersome signs of menopause:

- **Hot flashes**—Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and spicy foods. Dress in layers you can shed when a hot flash hits. Lose weight. Take slow, deep breaths.
- **Vaginal dryness**—Use a personal lubricant.
- **Sleeping problems**—Avoid eating large amounts of food, smoking tobacco, or working out right before you go to bed. Be physically active every day. Avoid drinking caffeine after noon. Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- **Mood swings**—Seek balance in your life among work, family, and your own needs.
Treat anxiety and depression if they affect your ability to function.

Visit lomalindawomenshealth.org to learn more about health screenings specifically for women.

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