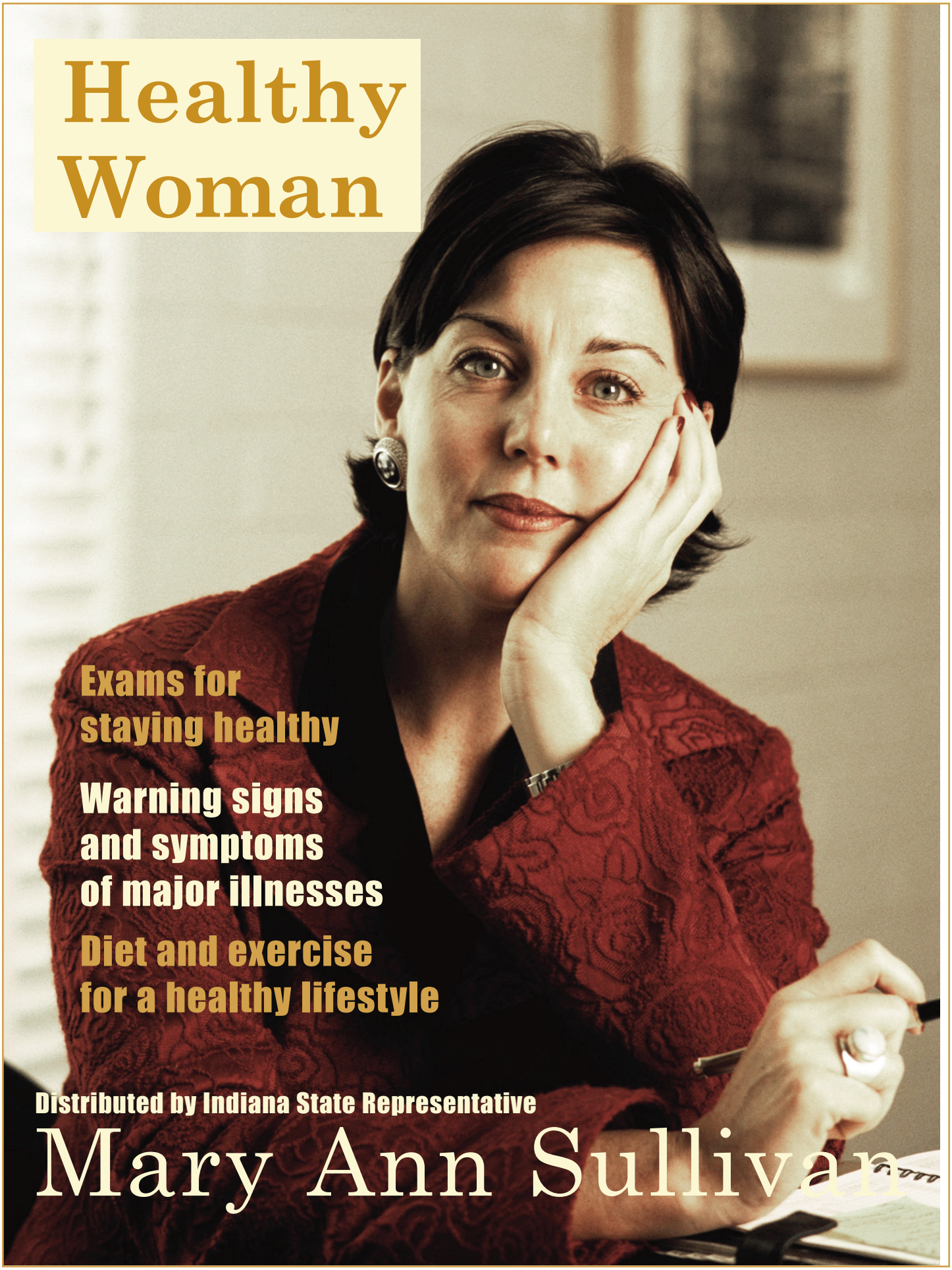
Healthy Woman



Exams for staying healthy

Warning signs and symptoms of major illnesses

Diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle

Distributed by Indiana State Representative

Mary Ann Sullivan

WRITTEN AND COMPILED
BY THE
INDIANA HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES'
DEMOCRATIC
PUBLICATIONS OFFICE

For additional copies,
call 1-800-382-9842

Table of Contents

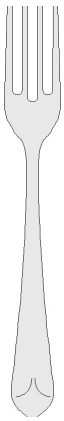
4 Healthy Eating
5 Regular Exercise
6 Stress Management
7 Depression
8 Staying Healthy
9 A Healthy Heart
10 Cervical Cancer
11 Breast Cancer
12 Osteoporosis
13 Healthy Pregnancy
14 Sexually Transmitted Diseases
15 Resources

The Basics of GOOD NUTRITION

Maintaining healthy eating habits is one of the most important things you can do for your health. A few simple changes can improve your diet. A good place to start is to learn the following basic steps to good nutrition:

- Eat a balanced diet with foods from all food groups.
- Vary the types of fruit, vegetables and whole grains you eat, and make sure these foods constitute the majority of your diet. A balanced diet will also include moderate amounts of calcium-rich foods and lean protein.
- Choose foods that are low in trans fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
- Limit the amount of calories in your diet that come from fat, salt and sugar.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, curb your consumption to one drink per day.

SERVING SIZE SAVVY

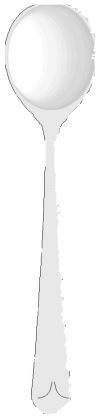


A 3-ounce serving of *MEAT, POULTRY OR FISH* is equal in size to a deck of playing cards

A serving of *PEANUT BUTTER* is 2 tablespoons, or the size of a golf ball

A serving of *FRESH FRUIT* is one medium piece, or the size of a baseball

A 1/2-cup serving of *CHOPPED VEGETABLES, COOKED PASTA, CEREAL, BEANS OR RICE* is equal in size to half a baseball or a rounded handful



Dining out?

The American Heart Association provides these seven tips for eating healthy, even when you're not cooking at home.

1. Ask for substitutions, such as steamed vegetables instead of french fries or Egg Beaters instead of eggs.

2. Choose fish, skinless poultry or lean meats like sirloin tips, tenderloin and Canadian bacon.

3. Select entrées that are listed on the menu as broiled, baked, grilled, steamed or poached, not fried.

4. Ask for baked, boiled or roasted potatoes instead of the fried varieties like hash browns and french fries.

5. Pick vegetable side dishes and ask that any sauces or butter be left off.

6. Ask for fat free or low-fat salad dressing, or a lemon to squeeze on your salad.

7. Order fresh fruit or fruit sorbet for dessert instead of cake, pie or ice cream.

Useful tip: To flavor your food, reach for herbs and spices rather than high-sodium table salt.

Why should I GET PHYSICAL?

Physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. The benefits of physical activity include:

- A reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, colon cancer and diabetes
- Healthy bones, muscles and joints
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Improved mood
- Weight control
- Protection against falling and bone fractures for older adults
- Help controlling arthritis pain

and ...

- ***More energy and better sleep!***

How much exercise DO I NEED?

To lower the risk of chronic disease...

30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (above usual activity) most days of the week.

To help manage body weight and prevent weight gain ...

60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity most days, while not exceeding the recommended number of calories you should consume.

To keep weight loss off ...

60-90 minutes of daily moderate-intensity physical activity, while not exceeding calories allowed.

Getting started ...

1 Create opportunities for activity, like parking farther away, taking the stairs or walking to a co-worker's office instead of using e-mail.

2 If you have children, set a positive example by making time to play with them outside.

3 Take fitness breaks during work. Walk or exercise at your desk instead of cigarette or coffee breaks.

4 Cleaning house may not be fun, but it does get you moving – as do yard work, gardening and walking the dog.

5 Make physical activity a regular part of your day, so it becomes a habit.

... Staying motivated

1 Choose fun activities and vary your activities to avoid boredom.

2 Don't let cold weather hamper your efforts. Find a workout video you enjoy, join a sports league, or complete active chores like window washing or reorganizing closets.

3 Exercise with a friend or family member. Women generally hate to disappoint others, so you're more likely to stick to the program.

4 If you can't set aside one block of time, do short activities during the day. Three 10-minute walks – one during lunch, one during your break and one after dinner – add up to 30 minutes each day!

Useful tip: Remember that just moving any part of your body – even for a short time – can make you healthier.

Defining and identifying STRESS

Stress can be anything that stimulates you and increases your level of alertness. Life without stimuli would be dull. On the other hand, too much stimulation can be unpleasant and tiring. Some of the most common causes of stress include:

- Traumatic accidents or emergency situations
- Serious illness or disease faced by yourself or a family member
- Daily life stressors, such as workplace and family responsibilities

Stress affects your HEALTH

When you experience high levels of stress, your body may exhibit the following symptoms:

Internal signs include depression, anxiety, loss of concentration, feeling overwhelmed, job dissatisfaction, low morale, a short temper and other mood changes.

Physical signs include upset stomach, faster heartbeat, tense muscles, change in appetite, frequent colds, sexual disorders, sleep disorders and illnesses such as back pains, headaches and skin eruptions.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

TECHNIQUES

Relax. *It's important to unwind to refresh your mind and energy levels. Some ways to relax include massage therapy, deep breathing, listening to soothing music or reading a book. Find what relaxes you and do it.*

Make time for yourself. *Think of this as an order from your doctor. Set aside 15 minutes each day to do something for yourself.*

Eat healthy and exercise. *Doing both of these will keep your body healthy and improve your mood.*

Talk to friends. *Friends can help you work through your stress and offer different points of view.*

Seek professional help if needed. *A therapist can help you work through stress and find better ways to deal with problems. There also are medications that can help ease symptoms of depression and anxiety, and help promote sleep.*

Compromise. *Sometimes it's not worth the stress to argue. Give in once in awhile.*

Write down your thoughts. *Keeping a journal can be a great way to get things off your chest and work through issues.*

Set limits. *There are only so many hours in the day. Set limits with yourself and others. Don't be afraid to say NO to requests for your time and energy.*

Don't deal with stress in unhealthy ways. *This includes drinking too much alcohol, using drugs, smoking or overeating.*

Useful tip: Get 7-9 hours of sleep every night, which will make you better at tackling problems.

What causes DEPRESSION?

Depression is a medical illness that involves the body, mood and thoughts. It affects the way you eat and sleep, the way you feel about yourself and the way you think about things.

It is different from feeling "blue" or down for a few hours or a couple days. It is not a condition that can be willed or wished away.

There is not one identifiable cause of depression. Some contributing factors may include:

- Stress
- Medical illness
- Family history – Depression can be inherited, but it can also occur in people with no family history.
- Changes in brain chemistry
- Hormonal changes

Seeking TREATMENT

Acquiring professional help for depression is important, because it speeds up recovery time. Also, try helping yourself by:

- Spending time or talking with people who make you feel better
- Setting small goals for yourself
- Writing down what you are grateful for and regularly adding to the list

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

Recognizing depression is the first step toward treating it. Nearly two-thirds of depressed people do not get treatment because their symptoms mimic physical illness or are blamed on personal weakness. If you have one or more of the symptoms below for more than two weeks or months at a time, talk to your doctor.

- *Feeling sad, anxious or "empty"*
- *Loss of interest in hobbies you once enjoyed*
- *Decreased energy levels*
- *Difficulty staying focused, remembering things and making decisions*
- *Sleeplessness or oversleeping*
- *Change in appetite causing you to eat too much or not enough*
- *Negative thoughts, such as thoughts of hurting yourself or suicide*
- *Easily annoyed, bothered or angered*
- *Constant physical symptoms that do not get better with treatment, such as headaches, an upset stomach or persistent pain*

If you are thinking about hurting or killing yourself, call 911, 1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-SUICIDE

Useful tip: Once identified, depression is almost always successfully treated. Talk to your doctor about your symptoms.

Exams for staying
HEALTHY

Staying healthy means taking care of yourself emotionally and physically. A balanced diet, lots of physical activity and a positive outlook on life all contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Another important step in staying healthy is to schedule regular checkups with your doctor. Experts agree the sooner illnesses and diseases are discovered, the greater the chance of successful treatment. The list to the right provides a guideline for scheduling checkups, but also consult your doctor to determine whether you have risk factors that require more frequent testing.

Schedule a checkup
REMINDER

It's easy to forget to schedule an appointment for a checkup, but now there is a convenient way to remind yourself.

A website created by the College of American Pathologists sends you a reminder by e-mail. Reminders can be scheduled for a number of tests, including cholesterol screening, mammograms and Pap tests, and colon cancer screenings.

To sign up for this service, visit:
www.myhealthtestreminder.com

Recommended screenings

for women at average risk for most diseases

General physical	annually
Blood pressure	every 1-2 years
Cholesterol	every 5 years after age 18
Blood sugar levels	every 3 years after age 45
Breast exams	monthly self exams annual physician exam
Mammogram	every 1-2 years after age 40
Pap test	every 1-3 years once you are sexually active or after age 18
Rectal exam	annually after age 50
Bone density	at least 1 exam after age 65
Eye exam	every 2-4 years after age 40
Hearing test	every 10 years after age 18
Skin exam	monthly mole self exam physician exam every 3 years after age 20
Dental exam	twice a year
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	both partners, before sexual relations

Useful tip: Some illnesses can be prevented. Make sure your immunizations are up to date.

Risks and prevention of
HEART DISEASE

Heart disease is the number one killer of women. Forty two percent of all deaths in Indiana are caused by heart disease, almost double the number caused by AIDS, cancer and all accidents combined.

A healthy heart can partially depend upon risk factors beyond your control, such as:

- **Age** – A woman's risk greatly increases after age 55.
- **Family history**
- **Race** – African-American women have the greatest risk of any gender or ethnic group.

Since you cannot change genetic risk factors, it is important to control lifestyle risk factors. Having more than one risk factor is especially serious, because risk factors tend to worsen each others' effects. To protect your heart, it is vital to make changes that address each risk factor you have. Talk to your doctor about ways you can prevent heart disease. Risk factors you can control include:

- **Smoking** – Within two years of quitting, your risk of heart disease is cut by one-third.
- **High blood pressure and high cholesterol**
- **Lack of physical activity**
- **Obesity** – particularly excess weight in the stomach area

Recognizing the symptoms of a HEART ATTACK

A study of 515 women who had a heart attack found 95% experienced symptoms before the attack. Many heart attack patients, especially women, wait 2 hours or more after their symptoms begin before they seek medical help. This delay is one of the reasons why women tend to experience worse outcomes than men after a heart attack.

Common symptoms of a "male model" heart attack are **chest pain, shortness of breath, sweating and pain in one or both arms**. Women, however, frequently do not experience severe chest pain, but describe pressure, tightness or an ache in their chest. Also, men are more likely to experience sweating while women commonly have shortness of breath.

There are a number of other symptoms women commonly experience during a heart attack, including:

Back, neck or jaw pain

Nausea or vomiting

Indigestion

Weakness or fatigue

Dizziness or lightheadedness

Useful tip: Moderate exercise 30 minutes a day most days lowers your risk of developing heart disease.

Cervical cancer and its
CAUSES

Cervical cancer begins in the cervix, the part of the uterus that opens to the vagina. The human papillomavirus, or HPV, causes almost all cases of cervical cancer. HPV is a common sexually transmitted virus that usually goes away by itself. Most people with HPV never know they have it.

There are two types of HPV:

- **Low-risk HPV** – May cause genital warts.
- **High-risk HPV** – May cause abnormal cells to form. If these abnormal cells are not found and treated, they may, in rare instances, become cancer. In most women, the cells return to normal after the body's immune system destroys the HPV infection.

GET REGULAR PAP TESTS!
IT'S IMPORTANT!

Every year, about 10,520 women in the United States get cervical cancer and about 3,900 women die from it.

Each death from cervical cancer is a tragedy – a tragedy made worse by the fact that most cases are preventable.

Before doctors started using the Pap test in the 1950s, cervical cancer was the leading cause of death from cancer in women. Today, in the United States, the Pap test saves the lives of 70% of the women who might have died from cervical cancer without the test.

A Pap test looks for abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix before they have the chance to become precancerous or cancerous. It is a simple test that is performed by your doctor as part of a pelvic exam. Detecting and treating abnormal cells can almost always prevent cervical cancer from developing.

How often do I need a Pap test?

Women should be screened for cervical cancer beginning **at age 21, or after having sexual intercourse**, whichever comes first. Women under 30 should get a Pap test every year.

Some women **30 and older** who have had 3 normal Pap tests in a row can reduce testing to every 2-3 years, however, they still need a pelvic exam annually. Talk to your doctor to decide the best plan for you.

According to the American Cancer Society, women age **70 and older** who have had 3 or more normal Pap tests in a row and no abnormal tests in the last 10 years may discontinue Pap testing.

Useful tip: Do not use tampons, have sexual intercourse or douche for 2 days before getting a Pap test.

Breast cancer and its
RISK FACTORS

Doctors cannot explain why one woman develops breast cancer and another does not. Research has shown, however, that women with certain risk factors may be more likely to develop breast cancer. Those risk factors include:

- **Age** – Most cases of breast cancer occur in women over 60.
- **Personal history** – A woman with cancer in one breast has an increased risk of cancer in her other breast.
- **Family history**
- **Race** – Breast cancer is diagnosed more often in caucasian women than Latina, Asian or African-American women.
- **Being overweight or obese after menopause**
- **Consumption of alcohol**

Reducing your
CANCER RISK

While some risk factors for cancer are out of your control, such as family history and race, others can be avoided. To reduce your risk:

- Maintain a healthy diet and healthy body weight
- Limit alcoholic beverages and don't smoke cigarettes
- Always wear sunscreen

Early detection can save lives

Screening for breast cancer before there are symptoms is important. Numerous studies have shown that early detection saves lives and increases treatment options. Using all of the following screening options in conjunction with each other gives you the best chance for early detection.

Mammograms

The earliest sign of breast cancer is an abnormality that shows up on a mammogram (x-ray) before it can be felt.

Women 40 and older should have a mammogram every 1-2 years. Women younger than 40 should discuss their risk factors with their physician to determine whether they need a mammogram and, if so, how frequently to have one.

Clinical breast exam

During a clinical breast exam, your physician checks your breasts for abnormalities. Every woman 20 and older should have a clinical breast exam every year.

Self exam

It is important that all women perform monthly self exams of their breasts. Check for changes in size and shape, discharge from nipples, and any new or larger lumps in the breasts. Contact your physician if you notice any unusual changes.

Useful tip: Your doctor or local health department can tell you where to get no-cost or low-cost mammograms.

What is OSTEOPOROSIS?

Osteoporosis is a disease that causes a loss of bone mass and deterioration of bone tissue, leading to enhanced bone fragility and an increase in the risk of fracture. Since there are no symptoms, you might not know your bones are getting weaker until you break one.

Osteoporosis can happen to any of your bones, but is most common in the hip, wrist and spine.

Factors that increase YOUR RISK

As a woman, you are already four times more likely to develop osteoporosis than a man. Other factors increasing your risk include:

- A small, thin body (under 127 lbs.)
- Family history of the disease
- Being postmenopausal
- Having broken a bone after age 40
- Caucasian or Asian race, but African-American and Hispanic women are also at risk
- Diet low in calcium and vitamin D
- Diet high in caffeine, alcohol or protein
- Inactive lifestyle: Little or no exercise
- Smoking cigarettes
- Having an eating disorder that disrupts your menstrual period
- Taking thyroid or cortizone medication

Preventing weak bones

The best way to prevent weak bones is easy – start by building strong bones.

1. Get enough calcium

Having enough calcium in your diet is the best way to prevent osteoporosis. Add calcium to your diet through foods (like dairy products or broccoli) or daily vitamins.

2. Get enough vitamin D

Vitamin D is necessary for your body to absorb calcium. Get your vitamin D through foods (like fortified milk or egg yolks), vitamins or from sunlight (10-15 minutes in the sun three times a week).

3. Eat a healthy diet

4. Perform weight-bearing exercises

Walking, hiking, dancing, climbing stairs or any activities in which your body works against gravity help slow bone loss and improve muscle strength.

5. Limit alcohol and don't smoke

6. Get tested for osteoporosis

If you are age 65 or older, get a bone density test. If you are between ages 60 and 64, weigh less than 154 pounds and don't take estrogen, get a bone density test because you have a high risk for broken bones.

7. Talk to your doctor

Discuss taking medication to prevent or treat bone loss. Discuss ways to make your home safe to prevent accidents that could cause broken bones.

Useful tip: Although osteoporosis commonly affects women, one in four men over age 50 will suffer a fracture caused by the disease.

Signs you may be

PREGNANT

While a pregnancy test is the only way to be certain you are pregnant, you may experience some of the following signs in the weeks following conception:

- **Mood swings**
- **Missed menstrual period**
- **Breast tenderness**
- **Nausea or fatigue**
- **Digestive changes** such as bloating, constipation or increased appetite
- **Frequent urination**

Every woman and pregnancy is different, and the early signs may vary. Once you are pregnant, the most important thing to remember is a healthy mom leads to a healthy baby. Follow the dos and don'ts listed on this page to give your baby a healthy start in life.

Pregnancy Dos

1. DO see your doctor regularly.

2. DO eat a healthy diet. Load up on fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Talk to your doctor about taking prenatal vitamins.

3. Do exercise. Regular, low-impact exercise is good for you and your baby.

4. DO get enough sleep. Try for 7-9 hours each night. To help you sleep, eat any large meals three hours before going to bed and avoid long naps during the day.

5. DO manage your health problems. Talk to your doctor about how your health problems (such as diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity) can affect you and your baby.

6. DO gain a healthy, not excessive, amount of weight. Ask your doctor what amount of weight gain is right for you.

7. DO avoid stress. Learn to say no to requests for your time and energy.

Pregnancy Don'ts

1. DO NOT smoke tobacco, consume alcohol or use illegal drugs.

2. DO NOT eat fish with lots of mercury. Ask your doctor what types of fish to avoid.

3. DO NOT use chemical products. Herbicides, pesticides, paint, stains and some cleaning solutions may harm your baby.

4. DO NOT have optional x-rays. Avoid radiation if other tests can be substituted.

5. DO NOT take very hot baths, hot tubs or saunas. High temperatures can harm the fetus.

6. DO NOT use scented feminine hygiene products. This includes scented bubble bath.

7. DO NOT clean or change a cat litter box.

Useful tip: When pregnant, call your doctor right away if you notice any bleeding or loss of fluid.

How do you GET AN STD?

You can get and pass STDs through vaginal, anal or oral sex. Sexually transmitted diseases can be passed from person to person even if there are no symptoms.

The United States has the highest rates of STDs in the industrialized world. In the United States alone, an estimated 15.3 million new cases of STDs are reported each year.

STDs and their SYMPTOMS

While there are many different sexually transmitted diseases, many of the symptoms of each variation are generally similar. In fact, one of the reasons why STDs are so prevalent is because many women have no symptoms at all when they are infected, so they unknowingly spread the disease.

If you think you may have an STD, contact your doctor for testing right away. Here are some of the common symptoms of STDs:

- Vaginal itching
- Abnormal vaginal discharge
- Bleeding between menstrual periods
- Pain or burning when urinating
- Discomfort during sex
- Fever, headache and muscle aches

How to Prevent STDs

Don't have sex.

The best way to prevent any sexually transmitted disease is to abstain from having vaginal, oral or anal sex.

Be faithful.

Limit your sexual activity to one partner who has been tested for STDs. Make sure the relationship is monogamous, meaning you only have sex with each other and no one else.

Always use condoms.

Protect yourself with a condom EVERY time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex. It is your body and you're the only one who can protect it, so insist on using condoms.

Know the facts about birth control.

Some methods of birth control, such as birth control pills, shots, implants or diaphragms, will not protect you from STDs. If you use one of these methods, also use a condom.

See your doctor.

Have routine pelvic exams and ask your doctor about STD tests that can be performed during your visit. Talk frankly with your doctor about any STDs you or your partner have or had. It may be embarassing, but the sooner an STD is discovered, the easier it is to treat.

For more information ...

HEALTHY EATING
. . . . . .www.nutrition.gov

REGULAR EXERCISE
. . . . . .www.healthierus.gov
. . . . . .American Council on Exercise, (800) 825-3636, www.acefitness.org

STRESS MANAGEMENT
. . . . . .National Mental Health Association, (800) 969-6642, www.nmha.org
. . . . . .National Institute of Mental Health, (800) 421-4211, www.nimh.nih.gov

DEPRESSION
. . . . . .www.healingwell.com/depression
. . . . . .www.depression-screening.org
. . . . . .National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, (800) 273-TALK

STAYING HEALTHY
. . . . . .National Women's Health Info Center, (800) 994-9662, www.womenshealth.gov

A HEALTHY HEART
. . . . . .www.hearthealthywomen.org
. . . . . .American Heart Association, (800) 242-8721, www.americanheart.org

CERVICAL CANCER
. . . . . .National Cervical Cancer Coalition, (800) 685-5531, www.nccc-online.org
. . . . . .Gynecologic Cancer Foundation, (800) 444-4441, www.thegcf.org

BREAST CANCER
. . . . . .Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, (800) 462-9273, www.komen.org
. . . . . .American Cancer Society, (800) 227-2345, www.cancer.org

OSTEOPOROSIS
. . . . . .National Osteoporosis Foundation, (877) 868-4520, www.nof.org

HEALTHY PREGNANCY
. . . . . .(800) 994-9662, www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES
. . . . . .National Center for STD Prevention, www.cdc.gov/std
. . . . . .Planned Parenthood, (800) 230-7526, www.plannedparenthood.org