



MONITORING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME

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Personal Monitors Make It Easy

Checking your blood pressure at home doesn't replace doctor visits. But it's helpful for your doctor to have information about both home and office measurements.

Blood-pressure monitors with an inflatable cuff that goes over the bicep tend to be more accurate than those that go over the wrist or finger. Before buying, measure around your upper arm and make sure that measurement is within the range of the cuff.

Blood pressure varies throughout the day. The best times to check are after you wake up or before bedtime. Caffeine, exercise, alcohol, stress and time of day can affect blood pressure. Try to measure at the same time every day.

To check your blood pressure, sit in a chair with feet flat on the ground and back

straight. Sit for about five minutes before measuring. Rest your arm on a table around the level of your heart. Follow all instructions. Stay still and don't talk. It can be helpful to repeat the reading one to two minutes later and use the average of the two readings.

One thing to change: Sometimes people check their blood pressure but don't keep a log. Record your blood pressure, date and time when you monitor and bring the log to your doctor appointments. It may also be helpful to bring your monitor to your next appointment to verify your technique and results with your doctor's measurement.

Source: Journal of the American Medical Association



March Is National Nutrition Month

Start Now and Create a Healthier Diet for Life

How much you eat is just as important as what you eat, according to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Start with small changes to your eating habits — one forkful at a time. Eating a variety of healthful foods helps reduce the risk of preventable, chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease.

Your healthy-eating plan should include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy, and lean proteins. Whether



you're cooking at home or dining out, put your best fork forward to help find your healthy eating style.

Source: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

About to Be a First-Time Parent?

Here's Help for Baby-Care Concerns

During your hospital stay, make sure to ask the nurses for help with basic baby care. Don't hesitate to ask the nurse to show you how to do something more than once. Before discharge, make sure you and your partner are comfortable with handling a newborn, changing diapers, bathing, dressing, swaddling, feeding and burping, cleaning the umbilical cord, caring for a healing circumcision, using a bulb syringe to clear nasal passages, taking a newborn's

temperature, and soothing your baby. If you are breastfeeding, ask for support from a lactation consultant.

Your baby's first doctor's visit is another good time to ask infant-care questions. Also ask about reasons to call the doctor and about what vaccines your baby needs and when.

Source: Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



Spring Allergy Update Are You Suffering from Rhinitis?

The word rhinitis means "inflammation of the nose." The nose produces mucus. This fluid is normally thin and clear. It helps to keep dust, debris and allergens out of the lungs. When the nose becomes irritated, it may produce more mucus, which becomes thick and pale yellow. Postnasal drip occurs when this mucus drains down the back of the throat.

Irritants or allergens may cause rhinitis. It is often a temporary condition that clears up on its own after a few days for many people. In others, especially those with allergies, rhinitis can be a chronic problem. It can last for weeks to months with allergen exposure.

Symptoms include:

- Itching in the nose and eyes
- Sneezing
- Stuffy nose
- Runny nose
- Postnasal drip

The first and best option for treatment is to avoid contact with allergens that cause you problems. When prevention is not enough, consider using over-the-counter or prescription medicines. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about what is best for you.

Source: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America



Rx Gourmet

Your Prescription for Healthy Eating
Heart Healthy, Diabetes Friendly — and Delicious!

Italian Turkey Meatballs *Serves 4*

Ingredients:

One package 93.7%-lean ground turkey (approx. 1.25 pounds)	1 teaspoon kosher salt (or 1/2 teaspoon table salt)
1/4 cup unseasoned panko breadcrumbs*	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese	1 25.5-ounce jar pasta sauce (We like Muir Glen Roasted Garlic, but any variety is fine.)
1/4 cup minced fresh parsley	1/4 cup minced fresh basil
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder	
1 egg, beaten	



In a large bowl, combine ground turkey, breadcrumbs, egg, parsley, garlic powder, salt and pepper, and grated Parmesan. Using clean hands, mix all ingredients until everything is combined. Form small meatballs, about 2 tablespoons each. Brown meatballs in a skillet sprayed with a small amount of canola-oil spray. The meatballs do not have to be cooked through. Browning on the outside is fine. Heat pasta sauce in a saucepan until just simmering. Drop meatballs in sauce and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until meatballs are no longer pink inside.

These are delicious served over pasta or in submarine rolls and garnished with basil and a little more Parmesan cheese. If watching calories, just serve with a garden salad.

* This recipe can be prepared gluten free by omitting the panko crumbs and adding a generous extra tablespoon of grated Parmesan cheese. Serve over gluten-free pasta. (Muir Glen sauce is gluten free.) Both versions refrigerate well for leftovers the next day.

Per Serving (1/5 total recipe with panko): 298 Calories; 11g Fat (34.9% calories from fat); 4g Saturated Fat; 27g Protein; 17g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 127mg Cholesterol; 895mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1/2 Grain (Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 0 Vegetable; 0 Fat.

Per Serving (1/5 total recipe without panko): 282 Calories; 11g Fat (37.1% calories from fat); 4g Saturated Fat; 27g Protein; 13g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 127mg Cholesterol; 867mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain (Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 0 Vegetable; 0 Fat.

Recipe is low fat, low calorie, diabetic friendly and can be prepared gluten free.

Recipe courtesy of LowFatLifestyle.com. Visit them for more free recipes and healthy-cooking tips.



Concerned About Your Child's Screen Time?

These Tips Can Help

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents prioritize creative, unplugged playtime for infants and toddlers. Some media can have educational value for children starting at around 18 months of age, but it's critically important that this be high-quality programming, such as the content offered by Sesame Workshop and PBS. Among the AAP recommendations:

- For children younger than 18 months, avoid use of screen media other than video-chatting. Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce digital media should choose high-quality programming and watch it with their children.
- For children ages 2 to 5 years, limit screen use to one hour per day of high-quality programs. Parents should watch with children to help them understand what they are seeing.
- For children ages 6 and older, place limits on the time spent using media, and the types of media, and make sure media does not take the place of adequate sleep and physical activity.
- Designate media-free times together, such as dinner or driving, as well as media-free locations at home, such as bedrooms.
- Have ongoing communication about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

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Your Kidneys

How to Keep Them Healthy

You can help protect your kidneys by preventing or managing health conditions that cause kidney damage, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. During your next medical visit, you may want to ask your doctor about your kidney health. Early kidney disease may not have any symptoms, so getting tested may be the only way to know your kidneys are healthy. See your doctor if you develop a urinary tract infection, which can cause kidney damage if left untreated.

Other health habits that can help keep your kidneys (and your whole body) in good shape include:

- Making healthy food choices.
- Making physical activity part of your day.
- Keeping your weight in a healthy range.
- Getting enough sleep.
- Stopping smoking if you smoke.
- Limiting alcohol intake.
- Exploring stress-reducing activities.
- Working with your doctor to manage diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease.

Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

DID YOU KNOW?



March Is Colorectal-Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the U.S. and the second leading cause of death from cancer, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It affects people in all racial and ethnic groups and is most often found in people ages 50 and older.

The good news? If everyone ages 50 and older were screened regularly, 6 out of 10 deaths from colorectal cancer could be prevented. Talk with your doctor about screening and take charge of your health.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services