



# Healthy Focus



## Eat Better, Eat Together Month

Does life have you and your family running around, too busy to share a meal together? All it takes is some creativity to balance your busy schedules, and what better time to get started than Eat Better, Eat Together Month!

By making family meals a part of your everyday routine, many benefits are set into motion. Your family will develop healthier eating habits, improved social skills and stronger communication. Use the following tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to revamp your time together:

- Choose a mealtime that works for all family members.
- Serve something quick and easy on busy days, leaving more time to talk.
- Leave cell phones in a different room.
- Ask a simple question to ease into conversation, such as "what did you do today?"

*Source: Washington State University Nutrition Program*



## What Does Your Smile Say About You?

Your smile is one of the first things others notice about you, so why wouldn't you want it to be the best it can be? By following a healthy dental routine and making smart food choices, you can improve your smile each day.

It shouldn't come as a surprise that brushing your teeth and gums with a toothbrush, is an integral part of any dental routine. To ensure your brush is doing its job correctly, select one whose size and shape fits your mouth properly and reaches all areas easily. Replace your toothbrush when the bristles fray, which is usually around three or four months.

Another essential part of your dental routine is flossing. The American Dental Association recommends flossing at least once a day as it removes plaque from areas your toothbrush can't reach. Not swayed? Left alone, plaque will eventually harden into calculus or tartar, which need professional cleaning to be removed.

Visit your dentist twice a year to improve your smile, check for cavities and oral diseases and a routine cleaning.

*Sources: Mouth Healthy, brought to you by the ADA*

## Did You Know?

By brushing your teeth for 2 minutes, twice a day, you will have brushed over 24 hours a year!



Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.

## + October: Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Cancer. The dreaded word that is heard all too often. This month, however, it is the time to focus on breast cancer. In 2015, 231,840 new cases of breast cancer in women were reported, approximately one third of all cancer cases for women.

### Are You at Risk?

Due to dramatic improvements in cancer research, treatment and early detections, today there is a 91% five-year relative survival rate for breast cancer. Women, and men alike, can detect breast cancer on their own by checking their breasts for bumps monthly. For even earlier detection, regular screening can detect breast cancer before cancer cells cause symptoms or are noticeably visible. By detecting it earlier, treatments are more likely to be successful as the cancer cells are typically confined to a specific area, such as a breast.

If your family has history with cancer, you may have a higher risk of developing it yourself and should talk to your doctor about getting checked frequently. Besides family history, age, race, and gender, other factors that contribute to developing cancer are smoking, drinking, dieting and other personal behaviors.

### Treatment

Many women with early-stage breast cancer can choose between breast-conserving surgery and mastectomy. Some have an initial gut preference to mastectomy as a way to “take it all out as quickly as possible” however, it should not be a rushed decision. Talk with your doctor about what is right for your lifestyle and health risks.

There are a few options for therapy following surgery. **Radiation therapy** helps prevent the cancer from returning by using high-energy rays to destroy the cancer cells. **Hormone therapy** also prevents the return of breast cancer but consists of taking drugs that either lower or stop the production of estrogen, which promotes the growth of cancer cells. Another form of treatment, **Chemotherapy** (Chemo), is a cancer-killing drug that can be injected or taken by mouth. Chemo is normally taken in cycles throughout several months, with each cycle followed by a recovery period.

*Source: American Cancer Society*

## Safety Corner: Domestic Violence

Did you know 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime. And, more than 60% of incidents happen at home, where no one else can see or hear the abuse.

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the threat or use of violence. Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone, yet the problem is often overlooked, excused, or denied. This is especially true when the abuse is psychological, rather than physical. Noticing and acknowledging the signs of an abusive relationship is the first step to ending it.



There are many signs of an abusive relationship. The most telling sign is fear of your partner. If you feel like you have to walk on eggshells around your partner—constantly watching what you say and do in order to avoid a blow-up—chances are your relationship is unhealthy. Here are a few questions to ask yourself. The more “yes” answers, the more likely it is that you’re in an abusive relationship.

*Your inner thoughts and feelings - do you:*

- Feel afraid of your partner much of the time?
- Avoid certain topics out of fear of angering your partner?
- Believe that you deserve to be hurt or mistreated?
- Wonder if you’re the one who is crazy?
- Feel emotionally numb or helpless?

*Your partner’s belittling behavior - does your partner:*

- Humiliate or yell at you?
- Criticize you and put you down?
- Treat you so badly that you’re embarrassed for your friends and family to see?
- Ignore or put down your opinions or accomplishments?
- Blame you for their own abusive behavior?

*Source: thehotline.org*