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All work and no play may make Jack a dull boy,

according to the movie *The Shining*. But dullness may be the least of his worries. All work and no play may also harm Jack's heart. And he's not the only one! Population studies continue to show a relationship between working long hours and heart disease, and new research adds fuel to the fire. Among people who had worked more than 45 hours per week for at least 10 years, heart disease risk rose in a consistent, predictable way: 1 percent for every additional hour worked. We're not suggesting that you throw caution to the wind, quit your job, and adopt the bonbon lifestyle at home. That will lead to other problems! To cut work hours, the trick is efficiency: Your goal is to get the same amount of work (or more) done in less time! Trying to grind out work for eight or more hours straight isn't the way to go, unless you want a fried brain. Some research suggests that you perform best when you focus for 90 minutes and then take a break, ideally for 15 minutes or more. Companies who've done their own, informal research have arrived at different "magic numbers." Experiment to find your own sweet spot—and figure out what time of day you're most productive. And prioritize your basic health habits: Eating well, staying active, and sleeping well all boost your brain power—not to mention your heart health.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors



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A “thank you” a day may keep marriage troubles away!

Keep the love alive, don't go to bed angry, compromise, communicate... There's no shortage of good ideas for a lasting marriage. And don't forget these two simple words: thank you. It's no surprise that being appreciated in a relationship feels good—but new research suggests that it may be the best predictor of the quality of a marriage. Gratitude doesn't eliminate stress and disagreements, but it acts as a buffer and a balm, helping to make those challenges manageable. Just like dancing the tango, it takes two to create a gratitude-filled marriage. Start with yourself: If your brain seems to contain a storehouse for complaints about your spouse, build a bigger storage area for kindness. Every day, write down one specific thing you appreciate, and share these treasures with your spouse regularly. Since gratitude reduces overall stress and improves heart health, it may lead to a stronger, longer marriage in more ways than one!

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COLD WEATHER EXERCISE TIPS

If winter is making you a bit stir crazy and you're yearning for warmer spring weather so that you can take your workout outdoors, well then, why wait? Go ahead and get outside! Just be sure follow these tips before you brave the cold. Proper dress and a dynamic warm-up are all you need.

1. **Cover well:** Fingers, toes, ears and face are all going to have limited blood flow while the body is trying to fuel the leg muscles during a brisk walk or run. Bottom line: If your extremities feel cold, you haven't covered enough.
2. **Layer your clothes:** If you get too warm, you can always remove clothing, but you can't add once you're out there! Extra tip: Bring a change of clothes if you will be driving to a park or trail away from home. You won't have to drive home in sweaty clothes as your body cools, and you'll have what you need in case an emergency situation leaves you stranded in your car.
3. **Consider traction devices:** If you make it a habit to walk or run on snowy or icy surfaces, you may want to invest in covers that slip over your sneakers or boots for added traction.
4. **Warm-up first:** Muscles are tighter when they're cold and may need a little extra work to loosen up. Static stretching (holding a certain position) is not the way to go. Instead, you want to do dynamic movements that target the muscles you are about to use during your workout. Try 30-40 seconds of each of the following 1-2 times before your next outdoor walk or run.

- Jumping jacks
- High knees or marching in place
- Butt kicks
- Leg swings
- Squats

Now get outside and get moving!

By: Ryan Sidak, B.S. Exercise Science





Healthy Recipe

DARK CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

If you like dark chocolate, then you're going to love these truffles, flavored with Earl Grey tea. These deliciously rich confections are a truly satisfying treat. And they're perfect for sharing with friends!

Yield: 22 Pieces

Ingredients:

- 6 tablespoons soy milk, unsweetened
- 2 Earl Grey tea bags
- 3.5 ounces of 72% dark chocolate
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 1½ tablespoons cocoa powder

Instructions:

1. In small saucepan, bring soy milk to a boil. Remove from heat and pour into a cup over Earl Grey tea bags, allowing the mixture to steep for 20 minutes. Squeeze the tea bags into the cup before adding to the chocolate in the next step.
2. Place chocolate, orange zest and infused soy milk in a double boiler, heating on a low flame. Stir until the chocolate is two-thirds melted. Remove the bowl from the pot and place on the counter to whisk the soy milk and chocolate until smooth.

3. After you have whisked together the chocolate and soy milk, place your bowl in the refrigerator to cool; once cooled, cover with plastic wrap and put back in the refrigerator to set for an hour.
4. To form the truffles, scoop out the mixture with a measuring teaspoon, leveled off. Then form into a ball, and place each formed truffle on a plate. Spread the cocoa powder onto another plate and roll each truffle in the powder.
5. Place finished truffles on a clean plate, cover, and refrigerate for at least one hour.

Enjoy this dark chocolate treat!

Note: Using tea as a flavoring agent instead of liquor is a calorie-free addition. Try experimenting with different brands of dark chocolate. Each chocolatier uses their own unique process for creating flavor. Just be sure to use at least 70% dark chocolate.

Nutrition Info Per Serving:

(1 truffle) 30 calories, 2 g total fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 1 g protein, 2 g total carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 1 g sugar, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium

Developed by Chef Michelle Bartoul-Mangan of Cleveland Clinic Wellness