

# OnTrack to Wellness

Brought to you by the NYC Transit HR Benefits Wellness Team

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The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter

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## Adult Picky Eaters

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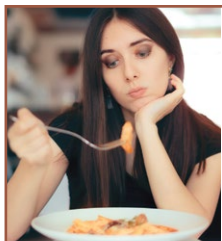


**Picky eating is usually associated with children**, but sticking with bland comfort foods can be part of adult eating habits, too. In fact, about 30% of adults identify as picky eaters. Why are some people more selective than others, and what potential solutions can help?

**Causes:** Picky eating is often established in childhood and can persist. It may stem from a negative food experience (such as choking or food poisoning) or inconsistent lessons about eating while growing up. Some adults may have sensory issues to certain smells, tastes or textures, so they dislike specific foods.

**Solutions:** While some adults are pleased with limited cuisine, others say that being picky makes it harder during business dinners, parties and travel. If you're looking to curb picky eating habits, here are some ideas:

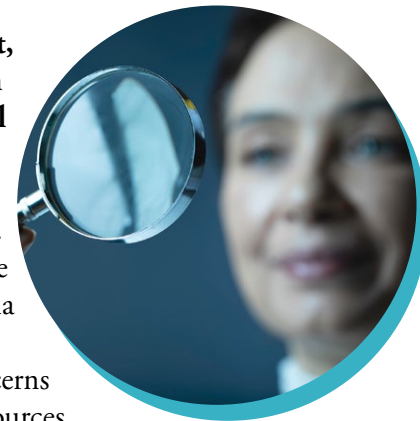
- 1. Learn to feel good about eating.** Sometimes picky eating in adults is accompanied by guilt, shame or fear. It's important to rediscover joy in food, starting with items you enjoy eating. Figure out why you like them (taste, color, texture, etc.) and expand from there.
- 2. Work with a dietitian or therapist** who can help with gradual exposure, which means introducing new foods slowly and in small amounts. This method reduces anxiety and encourages openness to new experiences.
- 3. Try again and again.** You may need to try food a dozen times before you like it. Choose flavors you already like and add them to the new food you want to try.



**Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) is an eating disorder** diagnosed when you are picky about or lack interest in food and have nutrient deficiencies. If you suspect ARFID, reach out to the National Eating Disorders Association for help at [nationaleatingdisorders.org](https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org).

## How to Spot Health Misinformation

**The internet provides a fast, convenient way to research reliable health and medical data.** Unfortunately, it is also packed with misleading and false claims. A majority of Americans use the internet and social media to find health and medical information — raising concerns about the quality of these sources.



**The U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy defines misinformation as any “information that is false, inaccurate or misleading, according to the best available evidence at the time.”** Many websites and social media have increased their scope of health content, too often posting data that only **resemble** trustworthy, legitimate sources. And following misleading or incorrect information about health and medical conditions can harm your health.

**Dr. Murthy has said that health misinformation is a serious threat to public health.** It leads to confusion, results in increased health problems and health care expense and slows patients' recovery to good health. Search for **health misinformation** at [hhs.gov](https://www.hhs.gov).

**Use these tips whenever you read health and medical content:**

1. Check the **CDC** ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) or your local public health department website to confirm the value of the claims made.
2. Reputable non-profits, such as the **American Heart Association** ([heart.org](https://www.heart.org)), the **American Cancer Society** ([cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org)) and **American Diabetes Association** ([diabetes.org](https://www.diabetes.org)), provide current, science-based information for specific diseases.
3. Ask your primary health care provider, nurse practitioner or nurse for confirmation or additional guidance.
4. Search the claim at the **National Library of Medicine** ([pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)) to learn if it is verified by credible health care sources.
5. Review the **About Us** page on each website for assurance it is a trustworthy source. Look for credentialed professionals, such as medical doctors and dietitians, who review the content.

These steps can help you to better understand, identify and curb misinformation, and help others do the same.

# Strength Training for Beginners

Whether you are 19 or 90, run marathons or struggle to climb stairs, strength training can benefit you.

To boost your muscle mass and improve overall health, lifting weights can help you get there. Strength training, also known as resistance or weight training, can:

- Strengthen muscles, bones and joints.
- Help keep metabolism in a healthy state so you burn more calories even at rest.
- Fight the loss of muscle mass and mobility.
- Improve your mental well-being.

**When starting a strength training routine**, you can use free weights and/or your body weight with certain exercises to provide resistance. Some gyms offer introductory training sessions at little or no cost, or they have trainers available to provide one-on-one coaching.

**Most gyms have a combination of resistance machines and free weights**, such as dumbbells and barbells. And you can also build a comprehensive weight training workout at home with basic equipment.

**Online program:** The American Council on Exercise's **Kick Start Workout** is a 12-week online program. Search for **kick start workout** at [acefitness.org](https://www.acefitness.org).

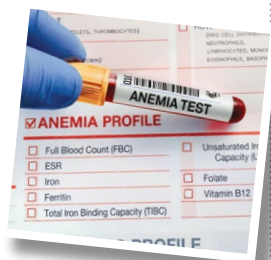


## Basics for beginners:

1. Start with light weights, gradually increasing weight.
2. Rest for a minute between sets.
3. Limit your workout time to 30 minutes, later advancing to 45 minutes.
4. Gently stretch your muscles after your workout.
5. Rest a day or two between workouts.

**Note:** If you have ongoing health or medical issues (including joint, lung or kidney dysfunction or an elevated risk of heart attack), check with your health care provider before starting a strength training routine.

## Q: What is anemia?



**A:** Anemia is a condition that results in an insufficient number of red blood cells. The red blood cells contain hemoglobin, a protein that transports oxygen to all of your organs and tissues. Anemia leads to a deficiency in oxygen delivery to every part of the body.

**Anemia symptoms:** Common symptoms of anemia include fatigue, weakness and shortness of breath. Pale skin or cold hands and feet may result. Headache, dizziness, an irregular heartbeat or chest pain can also occur with anemia.

**When to seek medical care:** Contact your health care provider if you have any of the symptoms. Low blood hemoglobin levels or decreased red blood cell counts need to be evaluated by your health care provider. If a problem is confirmed, further testing can distinguish the type of anemia. Iron deficiency, low vitamin B<sub>12</sub> or folate levels, inflammation, sickle cell disease and thalassemia are common causes. The treatment varies depending on the specific kind of anemia identified. — Elizabeth Smoots, MD

National Fire Prevention Week is October 8 to 14.



## Surprising Fire Starters



**Did you know that dust bunnies (those annoying balls of dust that gather in the corners of rooms) can start a fire?**

That's right, they can ignite if they catch a spark from an electrical socket or floor heaters. Here are some other surprising fire starters:  
**Dryer lint:** Make sure you clean out lint every time you unload the dryer. And clean the dryer exhaust vent regularly.

**Laptops:** Laptops can overheat, especially when left on a bed, sofa or other soft flammable surface. Use a desk instead (it's better for you ergonomically, too).

**Flour and powdered foods:** The dust from these foods can ignite if exposed to an open flame.

**Loose-fitting electrical plugs:** Replace your electrical outlet if plugs keep falling out; the missed connection can ignite a spark that could start a fire.

**Nine-volt batteries:** Don't store these in your junk drawer, especially near other metal objects, such as paper clips. The battery terminals can short out and cause a fire.



**October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.** One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime, according to the Susan G. Komen breast cancer organization. That's why it's crucial for women to learn about early breast cancer detection, access to care and improved treatments. It's also a great time to learn about breast cancer risks you can't change — such as family history and being female — and those you can potentially modify with regular exercise and healthy diet. If you or someone you care about is overdue for a mammogram, be proactive and get it scheduled.



The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Health Care Visits: Ask Questions**, is at [personalbest.com/extras/23V10tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/23V10tools).

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