



Have a nice year

With the New Year, come New Year's resolutions. Here are three choices for all of us:

Increase your patience level and control your nature of accent. This will make your life more and more comfortable. It is said that 'sometimes a handful of patience is worth more than a bucketful of brains'. Certainly, patience is a bitter plant, but it has sweet fruit. And try to remember, '90% of the friction of life is caused by the wrong tone of voice'.

Always look for the good in the other person, no one is perfect. If you yourself are OK — you will find every one more or less OK. Always remember, 'Heroes never complain'. So be nice to people on your way up, you will meet them on your way down. Over and above, 'listen to your critics good-naturedly, they will keep you focused and innovative'.

According to the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, regular physical activity reduces the risk of over 25 chronic conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis. So, increase physical activity from today and stay on healthy track.

Health resolution for 2010

STAR HEALTH DESK

People make new resolutions on the commencement of a New Year to lead a better life, to remain healthy and hearty throughout the year and after on. Some people pledge to shed extra pounds, give up their bad habits like quitting smoking, alcohol, excessive eating. Some people make healthy plans like dieting, exercise and regular check up to boost up their fitness. Whatever may be the plan, making resolutions for health certainly help people to stay healthier than people without any plan of resolutions. Here are some tips that can help making perfect resolutions for you and keep you in track of road to good health.

Eat well

The good list of food includes fibre from fruits and vegetables, raw nuts and whole grains. On the bad list, there are excess salt, refined grains, refined sugar and fatty foods. Reduce the amount of saturated fats (found in animal products such as meat and butter, and processed foods) and trans-fats (found in partially hydrogenated oils, vegetable shortening, some types of margarine and processed foods) in our diet.

Vegetables should be given priority to dishes to increase over-



all nutrient values and improve health. Unfortunately it is largely ignored. Get a notepad and write down what you eat for a week. Just knowing what you are eating on a day to day basis can inspire you to eat healthier.

Lose weight

Setting an ideal weight lose plan and stay stick to the plan are two most vital keys to shed extra pounds. Curb certain amount of calorie and fat set by a physician or nutritionist

to lose weight and burn calorie through regular exercise.

CDC recommends eating a light, healthy snack before heading to a party to help curb hunger before feasting and prevent overeating. Experts advised to consider low-fat dairy products over full-fat counterparts, such as cheeses and milk, when preparing meals.

Walk everyday

Walking should be given utmost priority in our resolution list. One

study reports that walking 30 minutes a day adds 1.3 years to a person's life. Brisk walking is most effective and it can decrease hypertension, lower bad cholesterol levels and help you lose weight. It keeps the muscles in good working order, stimulates the flow of blood and makes you feel better both physically and mentally. Try brisk walking at least three times a week for about 30 minutes. Get exercise during your regular daily activities

by walking at lunch, taking the stairs instead of the elevator and walking short distances instead of using your car.

Get enough sleep

Too much sleep can kill you. But too little sleep can kill you, too. Sleep deprivation has been linked to stress, depression, immune-system suppression and obesity. A British study found that people who slept seven hours each night lived longer, on average, than people who adjusted their schedules to either add or subtract hours from their nightly slumber. The prescribed amount of sleep required is seven hours. However, each person needs slightly different amount.

Increase health awareness

To achieve a happy and healthy life, knowing about many aspects of health can go a long way. Knowing about common health problems, their symptoms and prevention techniques, along with things like important vitamins and minerals, proper skin care and office ergonomics will prevent many diseases for the rest of your life.

Making proper health resolutions and stick to accomplish it will definitely help you to enjoy the New Year with a sound mind and sound body. Have a happy and healthy New Year.



Low blood sugar may impair diabetics' driving

Bouts of low blood sugar can lead to unsafe driving among people with diabetes, new research shows.

In 452 adult drivers with diabetes, 52 percent reported at least one driving mishap when their blood sugar was low, Dr. Daniel J. Cox, at University of Virginia Health Sciences Center in Charlottesville, and colleagues found.

Just as one would pull over to deal with a flat tire, Cox commented in an email, diabetics with low blood sugar "need to immediately stop driving, eat fast-acting sugar, and wait for blood sugar to rise," before driving on.

Cox's team tallied driving mishaps reported over 12 months by men and women who had type 1 or "insulin-dependent" diabetes for an average of 26 years.

The study participants were about 42 years old on average, and drove about 16,000 miles annually in and around central Virginia, Boston, Massachusetts, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Driving with low blood sugar did not appear to cause a large number of collisions in this study. Overall, 22 percent of the drivers reported some sort of collision during the year, but just 2.4 percent were said to be related to bouts of low blood sugar.

Nonetheless, about 35 percent of the time drivers said they had checked their blood sugar 30 minutes prior to having some sort of driving mishap. In 78 percent of these times, blood sugar readings were low-to-normal (less than 90 milligrams per deciliter of blood). In 48 percent of these times readings were even lower, less than 70 milligrams per deciliter.

Moreover, in addition to the half who reported at least one low-blood-sugar-related driving mishap, such as zoning out or becoming disoriented, being stopped by police, or having someone else take over driving, 32 percent reported 2 or more and 5 percent reported 6 or more such mishaps.

Therefore, Cox and colleagues suggest healthcare providers encourage those reporting such events strive for blood sugar levels greater than 90 milligrams per deciliter before beginning to drive.

Source: Diabetes Care, December 2009



Quit smoking in New Year

Smoking can be difficult to quit, but once you do, you will look better, smell better, feel better, be healthier and help people breathe better. You can take firm determination to quit smoking at the beginning of New Year for you, your family and your baby to get rid of active, second hand and third hand smoking hazards.

Chain up for cervical cancer awareness

ABU SIDDIQUI

Although cervical cancer is the leading cancer in women of Bangladesh, it is still a less spoken issue. The ironical thing about cervical cancer is that many women cannot access the free service to screen cervical cancer simply because of not knowing about the service. Many women detected at end stage of cervical cancer when apparently physicians have nothing to do. Unlike many cancers, we have vaccine and chap cancer test called VIA (Visual Inspection using Acetic Acid) to prevent and detect the disease at early stage. Still it remains one of the top ranked killers. There is an urgent need to promote these services throughout Bangladesh.

Cervical cancer is caused by genital infection with Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can be passed from one person to another during sex. Among 100 different strains of HPV, type 16 and 18 are responsible for about 70 percent of cervical cancer worldwide. HPV is so common that most women get it at some time in their lives. HPV usually causes no symptoms and go away in course of time. However, if it does not, there is a chance that, over time, it may cause cervical cancer.

According to World Health Organisation, 12,931 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year and 6,561 die of this disease. This number will be more than double by 2025. Unfortunately, no study has been done yet to determine the prevalence of HPV infection in the population of Bangladesh. To reduce the death toll, nationwide cervical cancer screening programme should get strengthened to reach the hard to reach women.

In order to screen more women in our resource-poor settings, the government of Bangladesh offers most cost

effective VIA test as free of cost in any government setting. It offers a real-time advantage over other screening methods with the distinct improvement of diagnosis at early stage to provide rapid treatment.

Another test called Pap test (or Pap smear) is also used to screen cervical cancer. It looks for pre-cancers cell changes on the cervix that might become cervical cancer, if it is not treated appropriately.

Women should start getting regular screening at the age 21 or within three years of the first time they have sex — which ever happens first. Cervical cancer is a preventable disease; unfortunately many women are still unaware about it. In order to raise cervical cancer awareness four key messages need to be developed for dissemination among the general population.

1. Cervical cancer is preventable
2. VIA test is easy and given free of cost
3. Screening saves lives
4. HPV vaccines are available for

prevention who can afford it

To achieve these goals, Bangladesh should designate January as "Cervical Cancer Awareness Month" along with the international communities. During the campaign Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Obstetrics and Gynecology Society, Cancer Society, popular women celebrities, Media, NGOs, Universities, Colleges, High Schools, Army, BRD, Girls Scout, Women's club, Rotary Club, Lions Club etc. can act as a chain to organise special programmes to raise much awareness about cervical cancer.

Women are generally considered as the heart of our family. Family falls apart when they get sick. To sustain tranquility and prosperity should not we strive to keep them happy and healthy?

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Children and TV: Limiting your child's screen time

Are you concerned about how much time your child spends watching TV or playing video games? Although some screen time can be educational, it is easy to go overboard.

Children and TV — the effects

The American Academy of Paediatrics recommends limiting a child's use of TV, movies, video and computer games to no more than one or two hours a day. Too much screen time has been linked to:

- **Obesity.** Children who watch more than two hours of TV a day are more likely to be overweight.
- **Irregular sleep.** The more TV children watch, the more likely they are to resist going to bed and to have trouble falling asleep.
- **Behavioural problems.** Children who watch excessive amounts of TV are more likely to bully, have attention problems, and show signs of depression or anxiety than children who don't.
- **Impaired academic performance.** Elementary students who have TVs in their bedrooms tend to perform worse on tests than those who don't.
- **Less time for play.** Excessive screen

time leaves less time for active, creative play.

How to limit screen time

Your child's total daily screen time may be greater than you realise. Start monitoring it. In the meantime, you can take simple steps to reduce the amount of time your child spends watching TV, movies and videos or playing video or computer games:

- **Eliminate background TV.** If the TV is turned on — even if it is just in the background — it is likely to draw your child's attention. If you are not actively watching a show, turn off the TV.
- **Keep TVs and computers out of the bedroom.** Children who have TVs in their bedrooms watch more TV and videos than children who don't. Monitor your child's screen time.
- **Don't eat in front of the TV.** Allowing your child to eat or snack in front of the TV increases his or her screen time. The habit also encourages mindless munching, which can lead to weight gain.
- **Suggest other activities.** Rather than relying on screen time for entertainment, help your child find other things to do. Consider classic activities,

such as reading, playing a sport or trying a new board game.

• **Set a good example.** Be a good role model. Limit your own screen time.

Become an active participant

When your child has screen time, make it as engaging as possible:

- **Plan what your child watches.** Instead of flipping through channels, seek quality videos or use a programme guide to select appropriate shows. When the programme ends, turn off the TV.
 - **Watch with your child.** Whenever possible, watch programmes together — and talk about what you see.
 - **Choose video games that encourage physical activity.** Better yet, make the games a family experience.
- It may be difficult to start limiting your child's screen time, especially if your child already has a TV in his or her bedroom or your family eats dinner in front of the TV. But by creating new household rules and steadily making small changes in your child's routine, you can make a difference.

Source: MayoClinic.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Air pollution may lessen asthma inhaler benefits

Air pollution, which tends to inflame the airways in people with asthma, might also reduce the effectiveness of the rescue inhalers they count on for quick relief of their asthma symptoms, study findings hint.

Dr. Fernando Holguin, at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and colleagues studied 85 asthmatic children, ages 7 to 12, to determine whether outdoor air pollution had any impact on how well their rescue inhalers worked.

The children all lived in Mexico City, where traffic-related air pollution is usually very high. Fifty-three of the children had mild intermittent asthma, 20 had mild persistent asthma, and 12 had moderate persistent asthma.

As they report in the journal *Chest*, Holguin and his team found that higher levels of certain air pollutants, specifically nitrogen dioxide and ozone, made the rescue inhalers less effective — not because the devices didn't function properly, but because the children did not seem to respond as well to the medication.

For example, an increase of 10 parts-per-billion in nitrogen dioxide levels in the air seemed to decrease rescue inhaler efficacy by about 15 percent.

Among the 25 children in the study who regularly used inhaled corticosteroids to help control persistent asthma, the rescue inhalers provided more effective quick relief.

These findings are consistent with other studies and "may explain why asthmatics are more symptomatic in relation to air pollution," Holguin said.

Source: *Chest*, December 2009

Blood in the urine? Check with a microscope

When a dipstick test suggests there's blood in the urine, the next step should be to examine a sample of the urine under a microscope to make sure the dipstick result is accurate, according to medical guidelines — but often the patient is sent directly to see a specialist, or for further testing.

Dipstick tests, in which a narrow strip of plastic is dipped into a urine sample, are very common. Parts of the strip are covered with small squares that turn various colors based on features of the urine, including levels of acidity, proteins, sugar (glucose), and the presence of blood, to name just a few.

The American Urological Association advises that when a dipstick test finds blood in the urine, but the patient is feeling well and has no other symptoms, the result needs to be confirmed microscopically before the patient undergoes any further exams, because the dipstick test is not a hundred percent reliable.

The take-home message, Jones said, is that invasive tests and x-rays or other imaging studies should not be done until the dipstick test results have been confirmed under a microscope.

Source: *Journal of Urology*, February 2009