

men's maintenance manual

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maintenance
manual

The choices that help you live better, longer

by the editors of

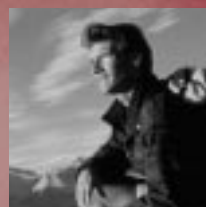
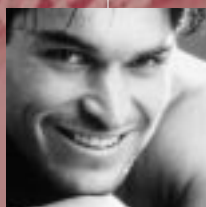
Men's Health

SAVANE



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national men's health week

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This information is designed to help you make informed decisions about your health. It is not a substitute for any treatment prescribed by your doctor. Before beginning any diet or exercise program, check with your family physician, who can help you design a program to meet your personal health needs. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, please seek competent medical care.

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We all face two challenges *when it comes to caring for our own health. For men, there's the macho ethic that tells us to suffer in silence, tune out pain, and consider our bodies nothing more than vehicles to get us from one place to another. That's one reason women visit family physicians about 150 percent as often as men and why their health problems are detected and treated long before we become aware of ours.*

Another challenge both men and women face *is trying to make sense of the tremendous amount of health information we get from friends and family, TV, radio, newspapers, and magazines. A valuable resource in sorting out the useful from the silly or even potentially harmful is your family doctor. Having a relationship with a personal physician ensures that you will get the health advice you need. But to get the most out of this relationship, it must be ongoing and long-term. You should see your doctor regularly, not just once in 10 years when you're too sick to lift your head.*

Second, you can start taking charge of your own life—*by watching what you eat, cutting down on stress, getting more exercise. To that end, we've compiled a man's guide to healthy living, providing you with the basics of staying young, active, and productive for the long haul.*

the ladder to leanness

When we were children, *we selected our food based on two criteria: what we could trade it for at school and what cool prizes were shown on the back of the box. Today, eating has become a lot more complicated. It seems as though a new danger is discovered every day: Sodium. Cholesterol. Fat. Meanwhile, we wonder if we're getting enough fiber, or vitamins, or carbohydrates, or whatever it is they're telling us to eat this year.*

To cut through the confusion, *here are some simple rules of eating right. This basic overview should clue you in to whether your diet is the kind that will keep your engine revved up—or lead you right to that great mechanic in the sky.*

CUT DOWN ON FAT

High-fat diets have been linked to a wide variety of diseases: heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes, to name a few. But many men are confused about dietary fat because it comes in three different forms.

Here's a quick breakdown on each type and its relative merits:

Saturated fat:	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bad
Polyunsaturated fat:	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bad
Monounsaturated fat:	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bad

Okay, if you want to get into the fine points, it's true that some of these fats do some good. (Monounsaturated fats, found in canola and olive oil, raise the good kind of cholesterol.) But as a simple overriding principle, you get more benefit from limiting fats of all kinds. Most dietitians recommend a diet that's no more than 30 percent fat. (Most American men eat about 40 percent of their total calories in fat.) Saturated fats—which come primarily from animal sources like beef, veal, egg yolks, and pork, and from dairy products like butter and cheese—are the worst type; try to get 10 percent or less of your total daily calories from them.

Besides the long-term health benefits you'll receive from lowering your fat intake, you'll also notice something visible starting to happen: You may begin losing weight. That's because the body burns fat more slowly than it does carbohydrates—the type of calories you get from grains, pasta, fruits, and vegetables. Cut down on the fat you put in your belly to cut down on the fat you put on it.

Here are some quick tips for cutting your fat intake:

- **Watch the add-on fat.** Pasta, bread, and vegetables are naturally low in fat, but not when they're drenched in butter or sour cream. Look for better toppings, such as salsa, lemon juice, or fat-free sour cream.
- **Cut down on meats, especially red meats.** Skinless chicken and fish are lower-fat alternatives.
- **Try switching from whole-milk dairy products to low-fat or nonfat versions.** If you drink whole milk now, switch to 2 percent, then gradually work your way down to nonfat skim milk.
- **Adopt healthier cooking methods.** Stir-frying with olive oil, steaming, baking, grilling, and microwaving are all better than frying, during which the food absorbs oil (liquid fat).
- **Read the label.** Look at the total number of calories in a serving of your favorite food. Look at the grams of fat. Multiply the grams of fat by nine calories—that's how much each gram contains. If your new number is more than 30 percent of the total calories, this is a food you want to cut down on.

MEET YOUR VITAMIN NEEDS

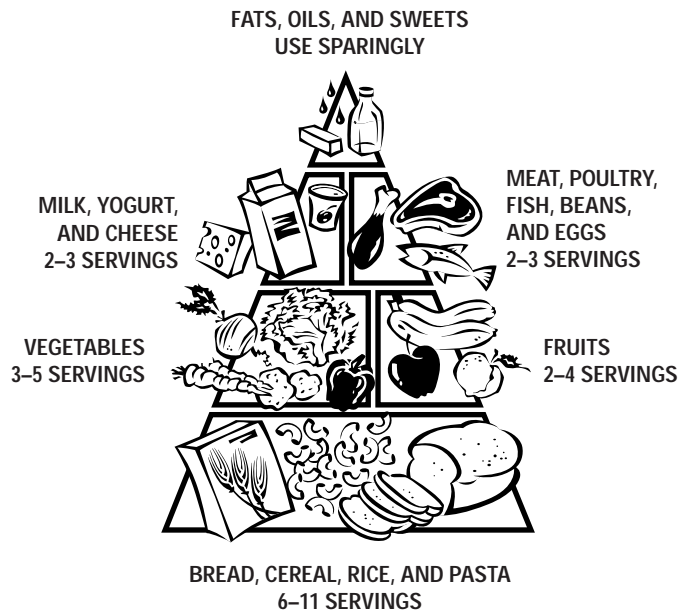
Look at the side panel of any cereal box and you'll see something called your Daily Value. It's the recommended amount of each nutrient you should eat to keep your body functioning in good health.

Eating a variety of foods is the best strategy for meeting your vitamin requirements. Consider that cantaloupe is a good source of vitamin A, spinach is a good source of folate, and peas are a good source of potassium. The U.S. Department of Agriculture created the Food Guide Pyramid (see page 6) to help make your dining decisions easier. The foods lowest on the pyramid are your best bets for healthy eating. But even those categories have options that are smarter choices than others in terms of fat and calories as well as fiber and other vital nutrients.

Here are some examples of what makes one serving:

- **Bread group:** 1 slice bread; 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta.
- **Vegetable group:** 1 cup raw leafy vegetables; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup other vegetables; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup juice.
- **Fruit group:** 1 apple, banana or orange; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fruit; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup juice.
- **Milk group:** 1 cup milk or yogurt; 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces natural cheese.
- **Meat group:** 2 to 3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards) cooked lean meat, fish, or poultry (note that $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked dried beans, 1 egg, or 2 tablespoons peanut butter is equivalent to 1 ounce meat).

While it's best to get your nutrients from foods, most men's diets don't cover the Daily Value for all vitamins. It's here that vitamin supplements can help make up the difference. A basic daily supplement should give you 100 percent of the recommended allowance for the following nutrients: beta-carotene (or vitamin A); the B vitamins; and vitamins C, D, E and K. In addition, it should also contain 100 percent of the recommended levels for potassium, magnesium, selenium, zinc, and chromium, all of which are needed for a man's good health.



GET MORE FIBER

In our grandparents' day, fiber was called roughage. Since it's hard to sell, say, breakfast cereal with big banners that say "high in roughage," today we use the more marketable, less graphic term fiber. There's soluble fiber (psyllium and oat bran) and insoluble fiber (fruit and vegetable *fiber* and wheat bran), each of which has various sources and a number of health benefits.

Yeah, we know: Say "fiber" and you think of some old guy on television talking about "regularity." So we've got a solution. Don't think about it. Instead, make a habit of following some of the suggestions we've listed here. They'll help you eat the fiber you need without making chow time a chore.

- **Play the Skins Game** As with many vegetables and fruits, the peel of the potato is a fiber gold mine. When you pop one into the microwave, think "jacket required."
- **Grasp at Strawberries** Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, and other fruits pack plenty of what you need. Keep them in the fridge and toss a handful on pancakes, waffles, French toast, yogurt, or ice cream.
- **Don't Drain Your Beans** To get the most fiber from canned beans, don't drain the broth the little buggers come swimming in. It has fiber. Another tip: When you crack open a can of soup, spill half a can of black, kidney, or great northern beans into the pot, too.
- **Turn Over a New Leaf** To firm up a salad's fiber foundation, toss out your usual leaf, and substitute spinach. It has up to three times more fiber than your typical iceberg lettuce.
- **Sauce Up Your Pasta Sauce** Keep a bag of mixed frozen vegetables in your freezer. When you heat up the sauce, simply dump in some of the vegetables and let them defrost.
- **Give Up Cereal Monogamy** To make your morning appointment with Tony the Tiger more productive, top a bowl of the sweet stuff with a scoop of a whole-grain cereal. Gradually reduce the amount of sweet cereal each day, and substitute more of the whole grain.
- **Brownnose** Next time you're lunching at your favorite Chinese restaurant, ask the waiter to substitute brown rice for white. Your fortune cookie's note should read: "You will increase your fiber by more than 200 percent."
- **Add Water** You should drink at least eight glasses of water a day when adding fiber to your diet.

DON'T DIET

Here's what happens when you go on a diet: Your body senses danger. Little primitive survival mechanisms, left over from the days when we scrounged for grubs on the high plains, start sending out messages that say, "Conserve fat. Burn fewer calories." Your metabolism slows down. Now, is this your dieting goal? Of course not.

How, then, do you lose weight? By eating more of the foods that keep your metabolism revving—the same carbohydrate-rich vegetables, fruits, grains, and legumes that will also deliver fiber and vitamins. And by supplementing your healthy eating with an exercise regimen. Trying to lose weight—and keep it off—without regular exercise is a no-win proposition.

10 stress busters

In an age of uncertainty, trust one certainty: *You can run but you can't hide from stress. Each day, in fact, is a sort of Darwinian stress test.*

Survive Day 14,600—that would be 40 years held hostage as a living organism—and you are entitled to repeat the drill on day 14,601. And on any given day, stress can arrive on an almost hourly basis.

Sure, the big stressors take their toll: *illness, job loss, divorce. Pretty much any experience that would make a good country song will be a source of stress. But while every man's life is stressed by big changes, it's stressed by little annoyances, too. And those are the ones you can take action against—the mundane slings and arrows that each day push us closer to the edge. Let's take a look at some of the typical stressors men face on a daily basis and see if we can't come up with some practical solutions to these many mini-dilemmas.*

BEAT WORRY TO THE PUNCH

You wake up in the morning and all the stress of the coming day hits you like a bucket of ice water: The annual budget report is due, you're having lunch with your boss, and you have to make a presentation to the board this afternoon!

Stop! That's the sound of worry, and worry is a chronic form of stress that will wear you down to a nub if you don't get it under control. When it becomes an endless loop, it can trigger what experts call "neural hijacking." Studies conducted at Pennsylvania State University found that the best way to break the cycle is to catch the fret as near to its beginning as possible. The minute a vision of doom and gloom arises, stop and challenge your concerns. Question their plausibility. Is there really a chance in hell the dreaded event will happen? What constructive steps can you take to make sure it doesn't? By becoming aware of it when it starts and applying a dose of healthy skepticism, you can nip worry in the bud.

MANAGE MORNING MAYHEM

Wake the kids. Wake the wife. Put the coffee on. Kiss peace and quiet good-bye. Hello, mayhem. Experts say that there's a key to managing the family rush hour: Expect your children to do the

unexpected and you'll never cry bloody murder when they spill the milk—because they *will* spill the milk. Practice something called “mindful parenting.” Before you go to bed, think through the variety of tasks that you and the kids will need to perform the next morning. Whenever you can, get things ready beforehand. Spend a few minutes making peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches (and going over the nightmare scenarios) the night before, and this will be one less thing you'll have to accomplish the next morning.

OUTSMART SNIDE COWORKERS

You get to the office and realize your workplace has become a battle zone. Having a young hotshot gunning for your job or trying to curry favor with the boss can put the *rat* in rat race. When workplace politics start getting nasty, try a little “office aikido.”

Aikido is a martial art in which you use the force of your opponent's attack against him. If someone's challenging you for your job, remember that you have more information than he does. Instead of being defensive or aggressive (“Your memo on the Richardson deal is completely shortsighted”), try slyly asking: “Have you considered the implications of your Richardson forecast on the new Kimpton deal?” (about which you know everything and that little upstart knows nothing). Without confrontation, you've put the guy in his place.

IMAGINE YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

You have two hours to finish a budget report. They don't call you the Joe Montana of the accounting department for nothing. But this is cutting it close. Performing under pressure requires a supreme belief in your ability to, well, perform under pressure. That's why guys like Montana and Michael Jordan always rise to the occasion. You can, too. For example, even now when Jordan is in a high-pressure situation, he mentally calls up images of past successes. Rather than cloud his mind with negative thoughts, he says to himself, “Okay, I've been here before,” then tries to relax enough to let something positive emerge.

MAKE CHUCK BERRY DO THE WORK

When deadlines get really onerous, turn on the stereo. A study reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* suggests that listening to music while working under stressful conditions may improve concentration and overall performance. In the study, psychologists tested the ability of 50 male surgeons to do math calculations with and without musical accompaniment. The doctors were faster and more accurate with the music on—and they performed even better when they selected the music themselves. Their pulse rates and blood pressure readings were also lower.

EAT THE CALMING FOODS

You've got an important business lunch—so important, in fact, that you've got butterflies the size of pterodactyls practicing maneuvers in your stomach. If you want to stay mentally sharp, try taming those butterflies by eating protein—but avoid carbohydrate-rich foods such as pasta, rice, and potatoes. Protein, sans carbohydrates, has been shown to stimulate brain power. So stick with the fish and broccoli, or the lean cut of beef and any other vegetable of your choosing. Also, politely refuse drinks with sugar (also a carbo), whether in iced tea or soda.

BE A COOL, CALM, COLLECTED COMMUTER

You're on the highway, headed home from a long day at work, and there's a tortoise driving the car in front of you. To get him to speed up, you tailgate. Bad move: You have to be ever ready, muscles tensed for the possible meeting of metal against metal. Will you arrive at your destination any faster? 'Fraid not. Instead, stay two seconds behind the car in front of you, and work off the tension by fidgeting.

Sitting in one position for too long can put a big strain on your muscles and skeleton. If you're caught in traffic, try rocking from buttock to buttock. Slide down in your seat and then back up. Take advantage of the cruise control to stretch first one leg, then the other. Do this seated Macarena every 15 minutes to take stress off your body and keep your blood moving.

END THE CHORE WARS

Arguing over chores is one of the most common sources of home stress. The problem is that what she expects from you and what you think is required are often two different things. For example, you finally take out the garbage, and she's still miffed. Why? Because to her, taking out the garbage also means replacing the plastic trash bag. You didn't replace the bag. To avoid conflicts, make sure you've got the answer to three critical questions before slipping on rubber gloves:

- 1. Who's supposed to do what around here?** Gather everyone into a room and make a list of all the chores. Pick your chores, or draw lots to see who is responsible for what.
- 2. Who gives orders to whom?** This is the power-and-control question, the one that especially trips up men. Chances are, around the house she's the boss. Get that out in the open and deal with it; maybe she doesn't like being the boss, and you can take the job.
- 3. How will you know if a job has been done satisfactorily?** When you all sit down to delegate responsibilities, outline exactly what each chore entails, even if it makes you appear a little obsessive. That way, you won't go through all the trouble of doing chores and still getting angry stares afterward.

WRESTLE WITH THE KIDS

You're tired from a long day at work, and you just want to be left alone. Well, you're cheating yourself. Children are the reward for this hard day. One survey of 300 couples found that men experienced greater distress when their wives were doing proportionately more child care. Why? Because the kids are the reward for going through the rest of our stressed-out lives. Men who didn't spend as much time with their children reported a variety of unhealthy physical symptoms.

STRESS-PROOF YOUR SEX LIFE

The workday is done. The chores are done. You're exhausted. And now—unbelievable as it may seem—she's standing there with nothing on but a Barry White CD. And all you can think is: Not another performance.

Stressed-out guys often shortchange themselves in the sex department. But this is the performance that can make the whole day worthwhile, if you play it right.

Here's how to rev up your sex drive when your stress levels are in overdrive. First, play hard to get—merely as a decoy to buy some time to marshal your formidable sexual forces. On the pretext of putting out the dog, go outside for five minutes. Breathe deeply. Take in oxygen. Relax. Tense your muscles. Loosen them. The object here is to let go of your mind by focusing on your body. Even better, invite your partner outside with you. You can call it stress reduction; she'll probably call it romance.

The Complete Anti-Surprise Survival Kit:

Anticipation may have driven Carly Simon mad, but it doesn't have to drive you to distraction. Keep these emergency essentials on hand at all times.

- Extension cord
- Batteries (various sizes)
- Fuses
- Flashlight/candles
- Matches (in a plastic bag)
- Nonelectric clock
- Nonelectric radio
- First-aid kit
- Extra toilet paper
- Extra condoms
- Name of a good lawyer
- Name of a good family physician
- Book listing phone numbers of 100 of your closest friends and business associates
- Valid passport
- Birth certificate
- Emergency numbers: 24-hour pharmacy, your doctor, police, fire department, and poison control center
- Take-out menus (one each: Chinese, Mexican, Italian)
- One starched white shirt
- One dark suit (that still fits)
- Fire extinguisher
- \$100 in cash in a safe hiding place
- Roll of color film
- Your computer files backed up on disks
- Extra set of keys to your house and car
- Parents' phone numbers and the keys to their house
- Wife's or girlfriend's parents' work and home numbers

get fit for life

These five words—*eat less fat, and exercise*—are the key to a lifetime of fitness. *But they're often misunderstood. To be most effective, the two must always be wed. Exercise without prudent eating won't bring results as quickly or dramatically; nor will a low-fat diet without regular workouts. Think of each as a separate blade on a pair of scissors. You'll trim body fat only if both are razor sharp. In a previous chapter, we discussed tips for eating less fat and fewer calories. Now let's talk about how you can start burning more off.*

We've designed a program *that combines strength training (essential for keeping your bones and muscles healthy) with aerobic training (which burns off fat and keeps your cardiovascular system in working order). To make this plan work most effectively, you'll need to dedicate a minimum of 4½ hours a week to exercise. If this sounds like a lot, consider that it's just 2 percent of the total hours available to you during that time. Plus, those 270 minutes can be divided among just three workout sessions. It's a big commitment, but here's the good thing: It's a commitment you're making to yourself.*

AEROBIC TRAINING

This is any type of vigorous activity that significantly elevates your heart rate for 25 minutes or more. Some of the best heart-pumping, calorie-combusting aerobic sports are tennis, cycling, swimming, running, rowing, and cross-country skiing. We don't care which activity you choose; we do care, however, about how you go about doing it.

See, most people amble out in their running shoes or hop on a stationary bike and start exercising mindlessly, staying at the same pace and exertion level during the whole workout. That's not ideal. For one thing, it's boring. But it also may not be the most effective way to train. Instead, try a type of exercise called "interval training." (If you're out of shape or have health problems, check with your doctor before trying this.) Interval training requires you to vary the speed and intensity of your workout. For instance, a typical half-hour run might start with a slow five-minute warmup, then progress through a series of light sprints and slow jogs, before ending with a five-minute cool-down. These intervals, or bursts of speed, should be spontaneous rather than

structured: for example, a quarter-mile sprint followed by an eighth-of-a-mile jog; or a half-mile brisk run followed by a few minutes of fast walking. The idea is to have your heart rate go for a roller-coaster training ride. However, steady aerobic exercise to reach a “target heart rate” (75–80 percent of predicted maximum rate—take 220 and subtract your age) is also good for cardiovascular fitness and weight loss.

STRENGTH TRAINING

Each pound of muscle you put on requires your body to burn about 30 to 50 calories a day to maintain; muscle is more metabolically active than fat. So adding just five pounds of muscle means you'll be burning an extra 150 to 250 calories a day, just by being you—and that's in addition to all the calories you'll be burning off during exercise.

The exercises to build full-body fitness include: bench press, leg extension/leg curl, seated pulley row, leg press, shoulder press, lat pulldown, biceps curl, crunch, and triceps pushdown. If you don't have access to a gym, you can get the same full-body workout by doing the following 10 exercises with dumbbells: bench press, concentration curl, deadlift, seated triceps extension, standing upright row, pullover, shoulder press, wrist curl, side bend, and calf raise.

For each exercise, start with a moderate weight that'll cause a fair amount of muscle fatigue after 10 to 12 repetitions (one set). Do two sets of each exercise with a brief rest in between. As you get into the program and start building strength, work up to three sets of 10 to 12 repetitions. Consult with a trainer if you're unsure of proper technique.

PUTTING THE TWO TOGETHER

If you're short on time, you can combine the aerobic and strength workouts into three 90-minute sessions per week. Just schedule them so you can take a day off between workouts, so your muscles can fully recover. If you'd like to try the unabridged version, schedule your aerobic workouts for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and your strength training for Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Each of these sessions should last 30 to 60 minutes.

To protect yourself from injury, begin every workout with at least five minutes of gentle warm-up (for example, pedaling in an easy gear when cycling, or shadowboxing prior to weight lifting), and end with an equivalent amount of stretching. To prevent burnout, vary your routine as much as possible—dumbbells one day, Nautilus another; running during the week, basketball on weekends. And be more active in your everyday life—walk to the store, bicycle to work, use the stairs. Act like a kid: Kids never exercise; they're just naturally active.

beat disease

Know the Enemies *Freak accidents happen all the time. Without them, we wouldn't have docudramas or the Weekly World News. But while things like avalanches and terrorist hijackings really do occur, most men won't live to see their stories turned into a movie of the week. That's because their lives will be claimed by humdrum, everyday diseases—the same ones that killed your uncle or your grandfather or your sister-in-law's first husband.*

So if you want to know how to save your own life, *start with the basics. Before you take a course in counterterrorism or wilderness survival, take a minute to assess where the real dangers lie. Here is a list of the top seven man-killing diseases and what you can do to help avoid them.*

1. HEART DISEASE

Of all deaths in 1997, 62 percent were from heart disease. Yet in many cases those people could have saved their own lives with some minor lifestyle changes. In fact, by adjusting your own diet and health practices, you can cut your risk of heart disease by as much as 70 percent. These are the top preventive measures you can take:

● **Stop smoking.** And if you don't already smoke, don't start. Contrary to popular belief, smoking cigars is just as bad for you as smoking cigarettes. Many smoking-cessation products are now available without a prescription. However, talk to your family physician to find out which one is right for you.

● **Cut your cholesterol.** More important than your total cholesterol number is the ratio of total cholesterol to the “good” kind, HDL, which can help keep blood vessels clear. Your family physician can figure out the ratio; if it's 4.5 or less, you're in good shape. If it's higher, you'll want to get to work. Regular exercise and a low-fat, low-cholesterol, high-fiber diet should be part of your prescription.

● **Keep your blood pressure down.** For every point your diastolic pressure (the smaller number) drops, you may lower your heart attack risk by 2 to 3 percent. Such measures as losing weight, cutting down on booze, and lowering salt intake can all make a difference.

2. CANCER

When it comes to the big C, remember the big three: lung, prostate, and colon. Those three trouble spots are estimated to cause more than half of the male cancer deaths this year. But good lifestyle habits can help prevent many cancers and significantly reduce risk. The most important changes you can make:

● **Quit smoking.**

● **Limit alcohol consumption to no more than two drinks a day.**

● **Avoid overexposure to the sun.**

● **Reduce fat in your diet to less than 30 percent of total calories.**

● **Eat more fruits, vegetables, and fiber.**

3. STROKE

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and the biggest cause of serious disability in the United States. And men are up to 19 percent more likely than women to experience one.

You can cut your risk substantially by quitting smoking, keeping your blood pressure down, and exercising moderately. There's another special risk factor for stroke: atrial fibrillation, a heart-rhythm problem that reduces the heart's pumping ability. If you have it, you may experience a racing heart or palpitations (skipped beats). See your family physician if you think you're at risk. Medication may be prescribed to help control the problem.

4. LUNG DISEASE

Emphysema is one of the most preventable diseases known to man. It and other chronic lung-clogging diseases lead to slow, lingering, and expensive deaths for about 50,000 men a year. Yet we could avoid emphysema by taking one simple step: quitting smoking.

5. PNEUMONIA AND INFLUENZA

No, young men don't often die from the flu. But men over 65 do, quite often. So do men who have immune disorders, asthma, diabetes, or heart or lung disease. If you have one of these risk factors or if you're over 65—or, just as important, if you're in close contact with people over 65—you should get a flu vaccination every year.

6. HIV/AIDS

In 1997, about 20,000 deaths in the United States were due to AIDS. About 80 percent of AIDS cases in the U.S. are men. AIDS is the No. 1 cause of death among men ages 25–44.

You're an adult. You should know the risks. Your kids should know the risks, too. AIDS is, for the most part, a preventable disease. You can avoid it by practicing safer sex.

7. DIABETES

There are two major types of diabetes. Type I often develops in youth and is marked by the body's inability to produce insulin. Type II is more common, frequently coming on gradually in adulthood. With this type, the body either doesn't make enough insulin or doesn't use it properly.

It's estimated that 8 million Americans are walking around with early signs of the disease and don't know it. First, you should be familiar with the symptoms, which include frequent urination, unusual thirst or weight loss, extreme hunger or fatigue, or irritability. Symptoms may also include frequent or recurring infections, blurred vision, or numbness or tingling in hands or feet. If you have any of these problems, especially if you have a family history of diabetes, see your family physician. Keeping your weight down, lowering the fat content of your diet, and exercising regularly may help delay or prevent diabetes in adults.

TESTICULAR CANCER

Testicular cancer is the most common solid cancer in white males under the age of 35 and is highly treatable if caught early. Every man who has reached puberty should examine his own testicles at least once per month. The best time is when you're in the shower, since warm water relaxes the scrotum, and since you just happen to be naked at the time.

Here's the simple three-step process:

1. **Grasp each testicle between your thumb and first two fingers**, with your thumb behind the testicle.
2. **Gently run your fingers around the circumference** of each testicle, feeling for any lumps or hard places. The testicle should have the feel of a small hard-boiled egg without its shell.
3. **At the back of each testicle**, where your thumb is, you'll find a lump called the epididymis. It belongs there; the rest of the surface should be smooth and rubbery. If you find a lump of any type anywhere else, see your family doctor immediately. Also call your doctor if you feel any soreness or swelling.

PROSTATE CANCER

An estimated 180,400 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2000 and an estimated 31,900 will die from it. It is second only to lung cancer as the leading cause of death in American men.

You can cut your risk by:

1. **Watching what you eat.** The typical American diet, which is high in red meat and fat, may increase your risk of developing prostate cancer. However, a diet high in soy, fiber, and vitamins A and C (more typical in Asian countries) may help lower your risk.
2. **Working up a sweat.** Exercise has been studied as a way to reduce the risk of developing prostate cancer.
3. **Getting checked.** The risk of developing prostate cancer is higher in some men than others. If you're over 50 (or over 40 if you're African American) or have a father, a brother, or an uncle with prostate cancer, you should talk with your family physician about getting checked. Your doctor may perform a rectal exam and will decide if a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test is warranted. The first involves a rubber glove and an awkward moment, but it's critical for monitoring your prostate. The second is a blood test to check for levels of a prostate-cancer marker.

body warning signs

Men don't like going to doctors. *We get a little tightness in the chest, or something doesn't feel right in the belly, and we think, "Well, I'll just take it easy for the rest of the day and it'll go away. Besides, I don't have time to be poked and prodded by some doctor."*

So we ignore our symptoms *until, lo and behold, we still wind up being poked and prodded by doctors, except this time there's an oxygen mask over our face and an I.V. stuck in our arm and we're wondering if we shouldn't have cut Cousin Frankie with the bad haircut out of the will a little sooner.*

What we should do is manage our health *the way we manage our business: Take on the responsibilities that we're qualified to handle, and hire some part-time help when things get a little hairy. In this case, it means calling your family physician when something seems awry. Here are some symptoms that should alert a man that something's wrong—and that it's time to act.*

HEAD

Symptom: Headache that persists for more than 72 hours, prevents you from doing normal activities, or is accompanied by vision or coordination problems, difficulty talking or thinking clearly, arm and leg weakness, fever or vomiting.

Possible problems: High blood pressure, brain hemorrhage, stroke, tumor, meningitis.

CHEST

Symptoms: Sudden, severe pain that lasts more than a few minutes; pain that starts or gets worse with exertion or is accompanied by squeezing or uncomfortable pressure in the chest and dizziness, fainting, sweating, nausea, or shortness of breath; or pain that radiates to the jaw, neck, or arms.

Possible problems: Heart attack, angina, inflammation of the tissue sac surrounding the heart.

NECK

Symptom: Severe sore throat that gets progressively worse and makes breathing or swallowing difficult, especially if accompanied by swollen glands in the neck or a fever of 101°F or higher.

Possible problems: Infection from mononucleosis or strep throat.

ABDOMEN

Symptom: Pain that is sudden and severe, lasts more than four days, is only temporarily relieved by eating or standing up, or recurs with constipation or diarrhea and bloating.

Possible problems: Appendicitis, gallbladder problems, ulcers, food poisoning, irritable bowel syndrome.

BACK

Symptoms: Pain that lasts more than 72 hours, is severe enough to interfere with work, or radiates down the leg. Also any unexplained numbness or tingling accompanied by muscle weakness.

Possible problem: Herniated disk.

GENITALS

Symptom: Frequent urination or difficulty starting or stopping the flow of urine.

Possible problems: Benign prostate enlargement, prostate cancer.

Symptom: A testicle that's tender to the touch or feels harder than usual or uneven.

Possible problems: Infection or testicular cancer, a disease that is 95 percent curable if discovered early.

SKIN

Symptom: Any sore that doesn't heal, or a mole or birthmark that bleeds, develops irregular borders, or changes color, size, or texture.

Possible problem: Skin cancer.

regular maintenance

Although screening tests are important preventive measures, *the best way to prevent disease lies in changing your attitude before disease develops. The importance of this is evident from a growing number of studies linking the leading causes of death—such as heart disease, cancer, and stroke—to a handful of harmful behaviors such as smoking and poor diet. The good news is that what you do counts. The bad news is that what you do counts. You can't rely on your doctor to keep you well. He or she can only help you keep yourself well.*

Traditionally, we bought into the idea *of an annual physical exam in which our doctor ordered a battery of tests to check for any possible signs of disease. The problem with this approach is that it's like taking your car in when it's running perfectly and asking the mechanic to look for problems. Maybe he'll find something, and maybe he won't. In any case, you spend a lot of time and money, and you may or may not be better off.*

Maintenance Schedule:

●—Age 25 to 64

SCREENINGS

- Height and weight
- Blood pressure
- Fecal occult blood test and/or sigmoidoscopy
- Total blood cholesterol

COUNSELING

- Tobacco cessation
- Avoid alcohol/drug use while driving, swimming, boating
- Limit fat and cholesterol; maintain caloric balance; emphasize grains, fruits, and vegetables
- Regular physical activity
- Injury prevention (e.g., seat belts, safe storage/removal of firearms)
- Sexual behavior (STD prevention; condoms)
- Immunizations (tetanus-diphtheria)
- Prostate cancer (if over 50)

●—Age 65 and older

SCREENINGS

- Height and weight
- Blood pressure
- Fecal occult blood test and/or sigmoidoscopy
- Vision screening
- Hearing screening

COUNSELING

- Tobacco cessation
- Avoid alcohol/drug use while driving, swimming, boating
- Limit fat and cholesterol; maintain caloric balance; emphasize grains, fruits, and vegetables
- Regular physical activity
- Injury prevention (e.g., seat belts, safe storage/removal of firearms)
- Sexual behavior (STD prevention; condoms)
- Immunizations (tetanus-diphtheria, pneumococcal vaccine, flu shot)
- Prostate cancer

Nowadays, the thinking in medicine favors providing basic counseling and screening for everyone (a blood pressure check, for example) and tailoring the rest to the individual's family and personal history. A more sensible approach, putting more of the burden on you to know your history and other risk factors and to relay this information to your family doctor. It also means that you must be vigilant about your health and watch for warning signs of a problem. To put it in car talk: You need to be able to give the mechanic a general idea of where the problem is, so he doesn't waste his time exploring the emissions system when the trouble is the ignition.

The basic screenings and counseling everyone should adhere to are shown on the previous page. Some of these are recommended annually, but the majority are performed according to your history and risk factors. If you're concerned about your risk of contracting a particular disease, share this with your doctor. He or she can give you the latest information and suggest testing if it seems appropriate. For example, PSA (prostate-specific antigen) screening for prostate cancer is not recommended by most medical experts for routine use. However, if you are in a high-risk group (African-American men, for example) or feel strongly that you want to be tested, you should talk to your doctor about having it done.

sexual health for life

Men everywhere share one common goal—*namely, that if you play your cards right, you can live to a ripe old age and, more importantly, love to a ripe old age.*

The secret to a long, healthy sex life *is understanding that there are steps you can take in your daily existence that can keep you active and sexually fulfilled throughout your life.*

It's also important to know *the warning signs of danger along the way, when sexual problems may need the attention of a doctor.*

Most importantly, *don't feel embarrassed by sexual health issues. Think of it as you would your career. You're in charge. You make your own destiny.*

As your body ages, *one of the key changes that will occur is a drop in your testosterone, the male sex hormone. When you are young, you have a full tank at your command, but as you age, the hormone begins to drain off, much like the decline in estrogen women experience at menopause, only not so abruptly.*

Over time, your sex drive can decline *because your body isn't making as much testosterone as it used to.*

While scientists and researchers are working *on drugs that may someday help replace testosterone in men's bodies, the way that estrogen-replacement therapy helps women hitting menopause, there are things you can do to keep your sexual health supercharged.*

DON'T SMOKE

We've said it before, we'll say it again. Smoking may also ruin your sex life. A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that men who smoke are nearly twice as likely as nonsmokers to develop erectile difficulties.

CUT OUT THE FAT

We know. You love cheeseburgers. It's so hard to give them up. But what would you rather do, make love to a beautiful woman the way James Bond does (hey, with his lifestyle, he'd be dead by

now anyway), or sit down for another bad burger at the corner fast-food eatery? We like the first option ourselves.

Researchers at top universities have found that diets high in fat may lead to clogging the arteries that help men get erections. In fact, one study among 3,250 middle-aged men at the Cooper Institute found that men whose total blood cholesterol measured 240 (that's high) had a greater risk of erectile dysfunction than men whose total cholesterol reading was 180.

KEEP UP YOUR WORKOUTS

Staying in shape by exercising not only helps attract sexual partners at any age, but it can also help you when you and your mate get physical.

A study of sedentary middle-aged men (can you say "baby boomers"?) conducted at the University of California, San Diego proves that a little exercise can go a long way in the bedroom. The nine-month study put these couch potatoes on a sustained aerobic fitness program and measured their overall fitness compared to a second group of men, who underwent a moderate exercise program.

The results were as dramatic as a game-winning home run in the bottom of the ninth. The guys who underwent the sustained exercise program not only increased their overall fitness levels by 30 percent, but their frequency of intercourse increased by 30 percent, and their levels of sexual dissatisfaction noticeably decreased.

WATCH THE ALCOHOL

Many studies have shown that moderate drinking (a glass of red wine with dinner) may offer some benefits to your heart and health. Besides, it gives you a good reason to subscribe to that glossy wine magazine with the photos of exotic vineyards in France. Just make sure that your wine drinking or any alcohol consumption doesn't turn to excess—because your health, including your sexual health, is at risk.

Don't feel bad. It's not just *guys* whose sex life suffers from too much drinking; women can feel it as well. Studies have shown that women with even low blood alcohol levels (0.04) have decreased levels of sexual arousal. A friendly drink may be a great aphrodisiac, but heavy on the sauce eventually leads to a bad hangover and little else.

The Potency Prescription:

Erectile dysfunction—the inability to achieve or maintain an erection—is the scourge of male sexuality. But it's treatable. Which is why if you're experiencing bouts of impotency you need to get over it and see a family doctor. He or she can help. Really.

Many cases of chronic erectile dysfunction are physical in nature, like a testicular injury or poor penile blood flow. Diabetes and alcoholism also contribute to impotency. And a number of prescription drugs, especially those used to treat high blood pressure, can influence the ability to gain an erection.

But it doesn't have to be this way. In the last few years, the medical community has made astounding improvements in the treatment of erectile dysfunction. Here's what to do if your erections no longer measure up.

See a pro. Look, impotency is embarrassing. But just think about how much embarrassment you went through trying to get sex in your teens and twenties. Talking to your family doctor is nothing compared to that time you stood outside a woman's window with a banjo and a box of chocolates, right?

Bring your medicine. Since a variety of drugs can impact potency, first rule out your prescriptions as a cause of your problem. If they may be, ask about alternative medications with lower incidences of side effects.

Consider your options. New treatments for erectile dysfunction are being discovered every year.

The options now include:

- **Vacuum pumps,** which are used to draw blood into the penis. A rubber ring is then placed around the base of the penis to keep the blood from flowing back out.
- **Self-injection therapy.** Here you use a small, nearly pain-free needle to inject a drug directly into your penis, producing a firm erection that lasts 15 to 30 minutes.
- **Inter-urethral suppositories.** You insert a tiny pill into your urethra, which delivers the drug directly to your penis and produces an erection.
- **Oral medication.** A new medicine enables you to get an erection about one hour after taking it. However, it will not work unless you are sexually aroused.

great looks at any age

Every guy wants to look a little sharper *than he really is*. Okay, maybe Mel Gibson doesn't have this problem, but most of us mortals would like to change ourselves for the better. A little taller. A little younger (or older). A little more hair on top, maybe. Looks aren't just a matter of vanity; in an increasingly competitive job market, looking in top form gives you that slight, but maybe crucial, edge. And when it comes to attracting a partner, well, let's just say our buddy Mel doesn't have any problems—and it's not because of his remarkable acting range, either.

Now, you can hide a lot *with good posture and a baggy sweater*. But when it comes to your face and your hair, there's no hiding the truth. How you take care of yourself will be right there, written all over your face, for the world to see. That's why we've compiled this list of health tips that will do more than just make you feel good—they'll make you look good, too.

SAVE YOUR FACE

When it comes to their skin, men have an advantage over women. A man's skin is thicker, so it's less likely to wrinkle. But we're hardly immune. For the better part of three decades, our skin seems ageless. Then, slowly but surely—more slowly in some men than in others—tiny changes occur. The skin begins to lose its immunity to outside irritants. Sweat glands shrink, oil glands become less active, and we lose the benefit of their moisturizing capabilities. Wrinkles begin to form. They start where the skin is thinnest—around the eyes. Later, deeper wrinkles appear on the forehead and cheeks.

The degree to which you wrinkle is partly a matter of genetics. But only a small part of it is inevitable. A large part of it depends on how you take care of yourself, and how well you protect your skin.

To look far younger than your peers, try these easy techniques:

- **Be religious about sunblock.** Most of the wrinkling you'll see in years to come isn't natural; it's actually a process called photoaging—damage caused by too much exposure to the sun. Over the years, sun damage causes the skin to become blotchy and leathery. And you don't have to be a sunworshipper for your skin to suffer the photoaging effects of the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Photoaging occurs even when you're walking around doing your normal activities. The answer isn't to become a shut-in, though. Evidence suggests that if you start protecting your skin daily with a broad-spectrum sunscreen, skin that is already damaged may begin to repair itself. To set this process in motion, wear a sunscreen any time you're outdoors. One with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 is best for sports like sailing or skiing. An SPF of 15 means you're getting 1/15 of the sun exposure you would get if unprotected.

- **Think zinc.** When you're on a fishing trip or doing anything else that keeps you in intense sunlight for several hours, keep your nose and cheeks covered with zinc oxide cream, which will block nearly all the sun's rays. Also remember bald spots and the tops of your ears.
- **Cover up.** Wear a baseball cap, a fishing hat, or, if you're at a more dressy occasion, a classic straw hat. Shielding your face from the sun will help make sunblock even more effective.
- **Stop it with the stogies.** Next to the sun, nothing will make you look old before your time more quickly than smoking. Nicotine decreases blood flow to the skin by constricting vessels, and it inhibits the flow of nutrients to the cells of the skin. Any experienced doctor will tell you he can spot a smoker at 10 yards by his "smoker's face"—heavy wrinkles around the eyes and mouth, poor skin tone, and gray pallor. Many family physicians say they can see skin damage from smoking in men younger than 30.
- **Throw yourself on the balm.** A lip balm with an SPF of at least 15 will not only keep your lips from looking dry and chapped, it may also naturally protect you from lip cancer—a condition common in men but seldom seen in women (lipstick, naturally). If you still experience chapped lips, try switching toothpastes. Pastes that contain tartar-control products and dyes are the most common irritants. Switching to a baking-soda formulation may solve the problem.

SAVE YOUR HAIR

If baldness runs in your family, it's probably an inevitable part of your future. By age 50, half of all men go markedly bald. But even if hair loss is unavoidable, it's also postponable. Many doctors believe that certain lifestyle factors can accelerate hair loss. Your diet, your job, even your choice of leisure activity may influence how quickly—and at what age—you lose your cowlick.

To make your locks last longer:

- **Eat a little leaner.** After reviewing 30 years of hair-loss and heart-disease data collected from more than 2,000 American men, researchers from Boston University and the University of Texas at Houston found that those with the least hair also had the highest risk of dying from heart disease.

Another study, of 872 Italian factory workers, found that those who were balding had higher cholesterol levels than did the men who didn't show signs of hair loss. Researchers believe that by damaging blood vessels, the same high-fat diet that leads to heart disease may also lead to premature baldness.

- **Take Yul Brynner's advice.** Namely, don't smoke. By the time smokers turn 40, many sport the lousy comb-overs of much older men. Smoking may play the same role in hair loss as it does in heart disease, by damaging the linings of blood vessels, which can short-circuit hair growth. And while these findings are based on cigarette smokers, it's a good bet stogies won't do a hairline much good either.
- **Tell your boss to get in someone else's hair.** Toward the end of the 1961 baseball season, when Roger Maris was feeling the strain of chasing Babe Ruth's 60-home-run mark, the Yankee slugger's hair began falling out in clumps. Diagnosis: telogen effluvium—sudden hair loss brought on by traumatic stress. Divorce, job loss, history-making athletic accomplishments, and other big changes in your life can expose some big patches of scalp. So can chronic, everyday stressors—missed deadlines, angry bosses. And if hair loss is in your genes, stress can increase the production of androgens, the male sex hormones destined to kill your follicles.
- **Wear a hat when you ski.** A sunburned scalp is the price of going hatless—a painful discovery a lot of us make around age 30, when our hair starts to thin on top. But that bad burn can do more than just make combing painful; it may make an increasingly wispy pate become even more sparse. Sunburn irritates your skin, which responds by creating a natural inflammatory compound called superoxide. Unfortunately, superoxide is also the messenger that tells your hair follicles to move from a growth phase to a shedding phase.
- **Don't go flaky on us.** Skin disorders like psoriasis (which cause red, scaly patches on your scalp) and seborrheic dermatitis (an inflammation of the scalp that involves the oil glands) can flare up from time to time, leaving the scalp bumpy, flaky, and itchy. If either condition strikes you, motor down to your family doctor immediately. These conditions cause inflammation, which—like sunburn—floods your scalp with superoxide, causing follicles to eject hair prematurely.
- **Pass on the quick-fix diet.** Fad diets and products that claim to help you get slim fast have an undeniable appeal. But the physical stress of a strict diet may cause you to shed hair. Never go on a diet that may cause you to lose more than a couple of pounds per week, or you may have to buy a hat along with those size-32 pants.

health hotlines

AGING

National Institute on Aging National Institutes of Health

Bethesda, MD 20892

(800) 222-2225

Website: www.nih.gov/nia

Call or write to receive a list of free publications.

ALLERGY

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

611 East Well Street

Milwaukee, WI 53202-3889

(800) 822-2762

Website: www.aaaai.org

Please send SASE to receive printed material.

CANCER

American Cancer Society

1599 Clifton Road, NE

Atlanta, GA 30329

(800) ACS-2345

Website: www.cancer.org

Cancer Information Service

National Cancer Institute

NIH Building 31, Rm. 10A24

Bethesda, MD 20892

(800) 4-CANCER

Website: rex.nci.nih.gov

American Institute for Cancer Research

1759 R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(800) 843-8114
Website: www.aicr.org

“The American Institute for Cancer Research is the leading national charity in the field of diet, nutrition, and cancer prevention.”

DIABETES

American Diabetes Association

1660 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 342-2383
Website: www.diabetes.org

The mission of the ADA is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

DIET & NUTRITION

American Dietetic Association

216 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
(800) 366-1655 (for referral to a registered dietitian or access to prerecorded messages)
Hotline hours: 9am to 4pm (CST)
Website: www.eatright.org

DIGESTIVE DISORDERS

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

31 Center Drive, MSC 2500
Bethesda, MD 20892-2560
Website: www.niddk.nih.gov

EXERCISE & FITNESS

American Council on Fitness

5820 Oberlin Drive, Suite 102
San Diego, CA 92121-3787
Website: www.acefitness.org
Opportunity to become ACE certified.

American Running Association

4405 East West Highway, Suite 405
Bethesda, MD 20814
(800) 776-ARFA
Website: www.arfa.org

President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

200 Independence Avenue, SW
Humphrey Building, Room 738H
Washington, DC 20201
(202) 690-9000
Website: www.indiana.edu/~preschal

HEALTHY LIVING

American Academy of Family Physicians

11400 Tomahawk Creek Parkway
Leawood, KS 66211-2672
(913) 906-6000
Website: www.aafp.org

HEART DISEASE & STROKE

American Heart Association

7272 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, TX 75231
(800) 242-8721
Website: www.americanheart.org

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke National Institutes of Health

P.O. Box 5801
Bethesda, MD 20824
(301) 496-5751
Website: www.ninds.nih.gov

IMPOTENCE

American Foundation for Urologic Disease

1128 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(800) 242-2383
Website: www.afud.org

LUNG DISEASE

American Lung Association

1740 Broadway
New York, NY 10019-4374
(800) LUNGUSA
Website: www.lungusa.org
Provides information on asthma, emphysema, and other breathing problems.

MENTAL HEALTH

National Mental Health Association

1021 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2971
Website: www.nmha.org
Dedicated to improving the mental health of all individuals.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

American Physical Therapy Association

1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 684-2782
Website: www.apta.org

PROSTATE CANCER/PROSTATE DISEASE

American Cancer Society

(800) ACS-2345

Cancer Information Service

National Cancer Institute

(800) 4-CANCER

American Foundation for Urologic Disease

1128 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(800) 242-2383
Website: www.afud.org

SKIN CANCER

American Cancer Society

(800) ACS-2345
Website: www.cancer.org

Cancer Information Service

National Cancer Institute

(800) 4-CANCER
Website: rex.nci.nih.gov

SPORTS MEDICINE

American College of Sports Medicine National Center (ACSM)

401 West Michigan Street
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1440
(317) 637-9200
Website: www.acsm.org

STRESS

American Institute of Stress

124 Park Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10703
(914) 963-1200
Website: www.stress.org