



Eat Away at Your Allergies This Spring

COUGHING, SNEEZING, WATERY EYES. Hay fever springs up due to pollen in the air. But if you're among the many people with seasonal allergies, studies show that what's on your plate can help ease symptoms. Load up on these foods to breathe easier this allergy season.

Broccoli. Each crunch of this cruciferous veggie delivers an anti-inflammatory compound called sulforaphane. In a recent study, a broccoli extract rich in sulforaphane reduced the reaction people with allergies had to harmful air particles.

Apples. The fruit famous for keeping you out of the doctor's office contains kelling, a compound that works to keep airways open. It's just one of a powerful group of nutrients called flavonoids. These antioxidants prevent your body from pumping out histamines—

pesky chemicals that cause your eyes, nose, and throat to swell when you catch a whiff of pollen.

Yogurt. Serve yourself a spoonful of probiotics. These good-for-you bacteria can alter the way your immune system responds to allergens, reducing your symptoms. Besides yogurt, kefir and aged cheese also contain live cultures. So do nondairy foods such as miso, sauerkraut, and kimchi.

Fish, nuts, and olive oil. Along with fruits, veggies, whole grains, and beans, these foods are staples of the Mediterranean diet. When women follow this eating plan during pregnancy, their children have fewer allergy and asthma symptoms years later. The vitamin C, vitamin D, and omega-3 fatty acids in the diet may fight inflammation and cell damage in the lungs.

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WHAT'S ON BERMUDIANS' PLATES? Too few fruits and veggies, it seems. Not even one in five adults eats the recommended five or more servings per day. For tips on eating better, visit the Bermuda Dietitians Association at www.eatwellbermuda.org and click on "Healthy Eating Guidelines."



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3 Steps to Beat Heart Disease and Stroke

EACH DAY, A HEALTHY HEART BEATS 100,000 TIMES AND PUMPS ABOUT 2,000 GALLONS OF BLOOD. To reduce your risk for heart attack and stroke, take these important steps.

- 1 Consider aspirin.** Taking a low dose of aspirin daily can help prevent heart attack and stroke if you're at high risk. Aspirin thins your blood to help prevent blood clots from forming in your arteries. When blood clots rupture, they can block blood flow to your heart (heart attack) or brain (stroke). Ask your doctor whether aspirin therapy is right for you.
- 2 Check your blood glucose.** Too much glucose (sugar) in your blood because of prediabetes or type 2 diabetes can lead to heart disease and other serious health problems. An Hb A1c blood test can tell you and your doctor if your diabetes management plan is working.
- 3 Quit it.** Smoking damages and thickens blood vessels, which can pave the way for clots. About 14% of adults in Bermuda smoke, but help is available. Visit Open Airways at www.openairways.com/smokingcessation.html or call 1-441-232-0264 for quit-smoking seminars in Bermuda.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO BE HEART SMART? Have your cholesterol and your blood pressure checked regularly. And follow your doctor's advice, which may include making lifestyle changes and/or taking medication.

health facts

Small Moves Have Big Benefits

Did you know that adults in Bermuda are inactive for more than five hours each day? If you don't have time for a long workout, don't sweat it. Instead, squeeze exercise into your life in small chunks to help your heart and keep your weight in check.

Try Micro Workouts

These mini workouts can get you started. Aim for 10 to 15 minutes of each activity two or three times daily:

- **Walk** on your lunch hour or before and after work.
- **Deskercise!** Keep hand weights at your desk and do biceps and triceps curls while you're on speakerphone.
- **Build core strength** by sitting on an exercise ball at your desk instead of on your chair.
- **Move while watching TV.** Jog in place, dance, or do crunches, squats, lunges, push-ups, or jumping jacks during commercial breaks.
- **Take the stairs** up and down several flights to get some exercise during the workday.
- **Visit the mall.** First, park far away. Then when you get inside, do a lap around the mall before entering a store.

Ease into It

Exercise doesn't have to be strenuous to be healthy. Still, to avoid injury, start slowly. Add activity in five-minute increments, especially if you haven't exercised lately.



Act **FAST** When a Stroke Strikes

THE CLOT-BUSTING DRUG TPA CAN REDUCE A STROKE'S AFTEREFFECTS. But tPA works only when begun within three hours after the most common kind of stroke, so experts agree that stroke patients should get to the hospital quickly.

Phone **911** or have someone call an ambulance

for you immediately, even if your symptoms disappear.

Also be aware that women are more likely than men to report unusual stroke symptoms, such as sudden nausea or pain in the face, arm, or leg.

To move **FAST**, remember these tips:



is for **FACIAL WEAKNESS**. Your face feels numb or frozen, especially on one side.



is for **ARM WEAKNESS**, especially on one side.



is for **SPEECH PROBLEMS**. You can't speak or understand properly.



is for **TIME**. The faster you get treatment, the less damage to your brain.

Protecting the Skin You're In!

IN SUBTROPICAL REGIONS, SUCH AS BERMUDA, the amount of harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a major health concern. It's the leading cause of skin cancer, the rate of which is 12% higher in Bermuda than in the U.S. Fortunately, using the UV index (UVI) can help protect you.

HOW DOES THE UVI WORK?

A UVI reading is based on a scale that measures UV radiation from the sun. This radiation is a big factor in causing skin cancer, cataracts, and other illnesses. The values of the index range from zero to 11+. The higher the UVI number, the greater the potential for harm to the skin and eyes, and the less time it takes for damage to occur. The UVI readings inform the public of the UV radiation on a given day. Because UV levels rise and fall as the day progresses, the reading is based on a noontime prediction.

HOW CAN THE UVI BENEFIT YOU?

Knowing the daily UVI reading can help you decide how much sun protection to use while you're outdoors for extended periods of time.



The Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre has collaborated with the Bermuda Weather Service to operate Kipp & Zonen UV radiometer equipment, which is a highly valuable asset for Bermuda.

HOW ELSE CAN YOU STAY SAFE?

Along with knowing the UVI readings, follow these five basic steps for sun protection:

- **SLIP** on a long-sleeved shirt.
- **SLOP** on sunscreen.
- **SLAP** on a wide-brimmed hat.
- **SLIDE** on sunglasses.
- **SEEK** shade between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

health facts

Warding Off Cervical Cancer

The human papillomavirus (HPV) causes 70% of cervical cancers. Fortunately, the HPV vaccine can prevent many of them.

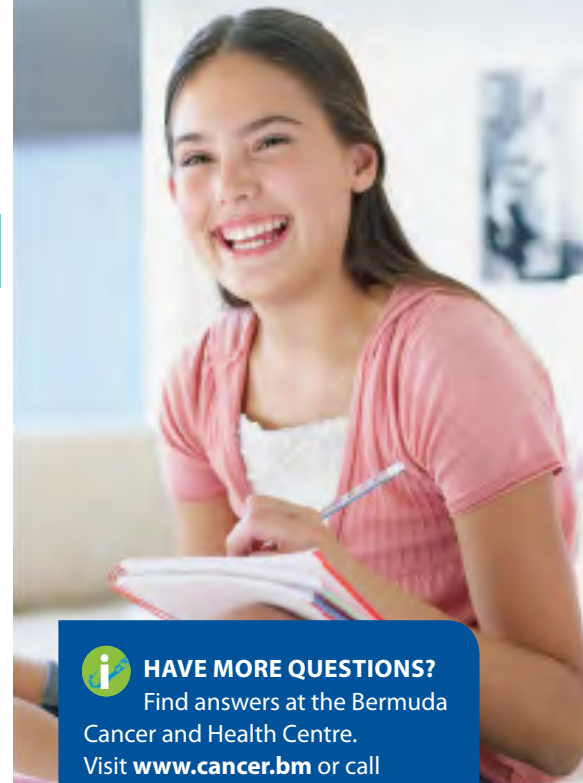
In a new study, researchers found that females who were not vaccinated for HPV were more likely to have abnormal Pap test results. Some types of abnormal cells may develop into cervical cancer. Vaccination reduced the risk for these abnormal cells by 46%.

Which Vaccines Are Available?

Most types of HPV don't cause symptoms and go away on their own. However, a handful of them can cause health problems. The two HPV vaccines available, Cervarix and Gardasil, protect against the two HPV types most likely to cause cervical cancer.

Who Needs the HPV Vaccine?

The Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre recommends that girls ages 11 to 12 have the vaccine. It can also be given at age 9 or 10 and as late as age 26. Talk with your child's doctor to learn if the HPV vaccine is a good choice.



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For more details call 295-5566, visit www.bfm.bm or email bfm@bfm.bm.



HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Find answers at the Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre. Visit www.cancer.bm or call 1-441-236-1001.

BF&M insurance matters

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