

Your Health



Managing Your Diabetes

More than 38 million Americans had diabetes in 2021.

That includes 352,000 children and adolescents; 1.7 million adults over the age of 20 with type 1 diabetes and using insulin; and 3.6 million adults over 20 that started using insulin within a year of diagnosis, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Diagnoses were higher for adults who hadn't finished high school and among those over 45 years old. If you were one of those diagnosed with diabetes, it's important to manage the disease well to prevent complications down the road. Keep reading for the latest in diabetes management.

NEW TYPE 1 TREATMENT

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disorder where the body's immune system attacks insulin-producing beta-cells. Genetics and environment play a role in Type 1 diabetes, but underlying factors in why the immune system goes on the offensive aren't known.

The American Diabetes Association says a recent discovery may bring researchers closer to finding an answer. Dr. Thomas Delong, a researcher at the University of Colorado at Denver, found that proteins called hybrid insulin peptides (HIPs) are found on the beta cells of people with type 1 diabetes. Those HIPs are recognized as foreign by immune cells. Dr. Delong now



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wants to find out whether HIPs can serve as a biomarker or be targeted to prevent or treat type 1 diabetes.

GLUCOSE MONITORING

Dr. Bing Wang recently published a study in which he identified a new molecule that could be useful in quantifying blood glucose in an accurate and stable manner. At this

time, monitoring glucose depends on an enzyme which can change over time, leaving room for inaccurate readings and causing frequent replacement or calibration. The new molecule uses a non-enzymatic approach that is more stable to monitor glucose levels in the blood.

The ADA says Dr. Wang is in the process of patenting his

invention and intends to continue research in ways to benefit people living with diabetes.

UPDATES TO STANDARDS OF CARE

The ADA also updated its standards of care for people with diabetes in 2024. Some of the changes include:

- Updated guidance for RSV

vaccines in adults over 60 with diabetes.

- New screening recommendations for heart failure in people with diabetes.

- A possible association between COVID-19 infections and new onset type 1 diabetes.

- An emphasis on continuous glucose monitors and automated insulin delivery systems.

Improving Respiratory Health

Even after the COVID-19 pandemic, respiratory illnesses continue to spread across the U.S. In early 2025, while COVID-19 infection rates remained fairly low, flu rates were very high and increasing and RSV risk was elevated throughout the U.S.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which monitors instances of respiratory illness, advises everyone to get vaccinated against common respiratory illnesses if they are able.

The American Lung Association also recommends these ways to keep your lungs healthy.

STOP SMOKING

Smoking cigarettes and regular exposure to secondhand smoke can narrow the air passages in the lungs, making breathing more difficult. The longer someone smokes, the more it can cause issues such as chronic inflammation or swelling in the lungs, and it puts the smoker at risk for lung cancer or COPD.

GET REGULAR EXERCISE

The heart and lungs work harder when you're physically active to get more oxygen to the muscles. Regular exercise



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makes your body more efficient at getting oxygen into the bloodstream and transporting it to the muscles, meaning you're less likely to get short of breath during exercise.

EAT AND DRINK WELL

Food is fuel to your body and your lungs play an important role in converting

food into energy. Eat a healthy mix of foods to get your body all the nourishment it needs. Drinking water helps thin the mucus lining of the airways and lungs, making it easier to breathe. Dehydration makes the mucus thick and sticky, which can slow breathing and make the body more susceptible to allergies and illnesses.

AVOID AIR POLLUTION

More than one in three Americans live in places that have unhealthy outdoor air, the American Lung Association says. Ozone and particle pollution are the most widespread pollutants. Indoors, household chemicals and mold can affect air quality and cause problems for the lungs. Avoid going outside

when air pollution is high and, inside, dust regularly, change air filters and keep your home smoke-free.

BREATHE DEEPLY

Practice regular breathing exercises to manage stress and anxiety levels and to improve lung strength and endurance. This can help improve muscle function.

Health Myths Debunked

We've all heard one or more of these health myths. Now let's bust a few.

BASE TANS

You may have heard that getting a so-called base tan in a tanning bed will help prevent sunburn the next time you head to the beach. But according to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, that's like fighting fire with, well, fire. The skin darkening from a tanning bed only offers a sun protection factor (SPF) of 1-4, which is not enough to protect your skin from the sun. In fact, darker skin can be evidence of skin damage. Tanning can promote premature skin aging and increase your risk of skin cancer.

WET HAIR AND COLDS

Sometimes, you're just too tired to dry your hair after taking a nightly shower. And that's fine. Going to bed with wet hair may cause a wicked case of bed head, but it won't cause a cold. Mount Elizabeth Hospital says being cold or damp has nothing to do with catching a virus like the common cold. A wet pillow, however, is more likely to breed bacteria, so switch out pillowcases regularly if you're prone to acne.

THIN MEANS HEALTHY

Health is a complex issue with many facets, and body weight is just one of them. Dr.

Leonor Fernandez at Harvard Medical School says she's seen many people with a low body weight who aren't healthy.

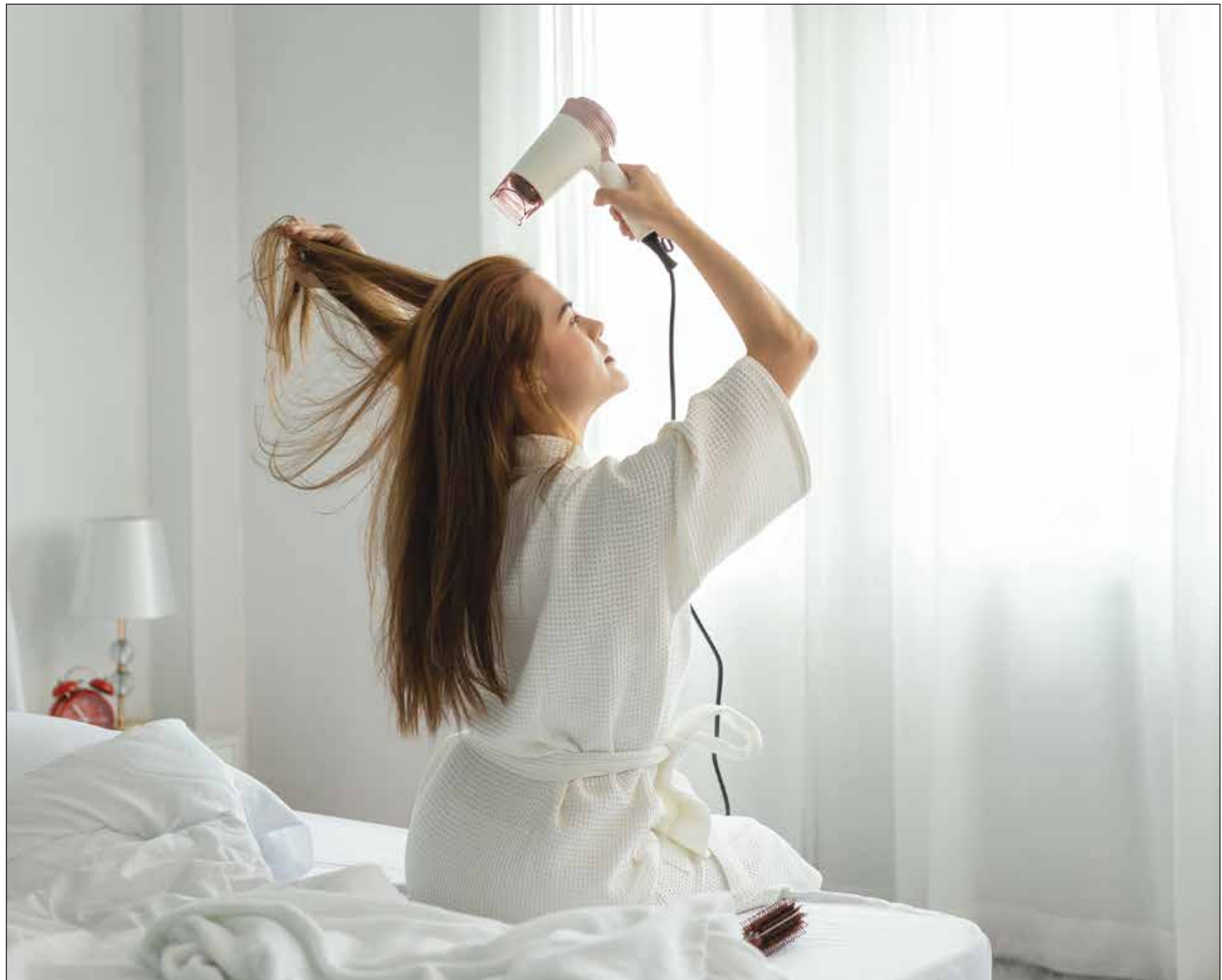
"It's a distortion to think that body mass index alone gives us a good indicator of our current health," she says.

"What matters most, perhaps, is how much we move and how connected and engaged we are. Being sedentary is definitely a negative for our health, and being heavier is sometimes associated with being sedentary."

BURNING FAT

The Mayo Clinic says despite the latest fad diet, there's no food that can burn fat, make you lose weight more quickly or increase your metabolism enough to affect weight loss. Not even grapefruits, cayenne

pepper, cabbage or vinegar. Single-food diets are too restrictive and lack the nutrients your body needs. Any weight loss on these diets is the result of calorie restriction and will likely come back once you go off the diet.



What Is Pilates?

While it may seem like a new trend, pilates was actually developed in the early 20th century by German physical trainer Joseph Pilates.

He called his method controllogy, though it's more commonly known by his name.

Pilates uses a combination of repetitive exercises to spur muscle exertion. These exercises come from the five essentials: breath, cervical alignment, rib and scapular stabilization, pelvic mobility and utilization of the transversus abdominis, a major abdominal muscle.

HISTORY

As a child, Pilates had both asthma and rickets and he created his exercise routine from a desire to strengthen his body. As an orderly in World War I hospitals, Pilates began to therapeutically move non-ambulatory soldiers, and doctors noticed those soldiers recovered more quickly. He brought his method to the U.S. in 1923.

HOW TO DO PILATES

Pilates exercises are either done on a mat, using gravity to help stabilize the core, or on a specialized machine called a reformer. On the reformer, varying resistance



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to movement is provided via light springs and pulleys. In both methods, body weight is the main resistance used. Changes in body position can challenge participants as fitness levels increase. Participants are encouraged to focus on breathing and concentration during exercise.

DOES IT WORK?

There have been few studies on how or even whether pilates works, but an article in the journal *Muscle, Ligaments and Tendons* says there is “cautious support” for pilates’ ability to improve flexibility, abdominal and pelvic stability, and muscle activity.

Healthline reports pilates

practice can also have a positive effect on depression and back pain, improve posture and even prevent injuries. By focusing on breath, Healthline also says the routine can improve cardiorespiratory capacity.

FINDING A CLASS

You can choose a studio that focuses solely on pilates, or you

can find a class at a gym near you. You may also be able to practice at home just using a mat. Whichever option you choose, speak to a doctor before starting a new workout routine and stick with it. Try having a workout buddy to hold you accountable and help you stick to your practice and achieve your fitness goals.

How to Treat a Cold

The common cold is an upper respiratory infection caused by a virus that has symptoms such as a runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, cough, sneezing, headache or body aches, or low-grade fever.

Most people recover from a cold in a week or so, but symptoms may last longer in people who smoke.

PREVENTING A COLD

Prevention is the best cure for the common cold. The Mayo Clinic suggests frequently washing hands well, using soap and water and washing for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth with dirty hands.

Clean and disinfect surfaces you touch often, such as door-knobs, light switches, countertops and electronics. This is especially important if someone in the household is sick. Wash children's toys often as they are particularly apt to land in someone's mouth.

If you're sick, cover your cough and sneeze into a tissue. Throw away used tissues right away and wash your hands after. Don't share drinking glasses or silverware with



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anyone, even family members.

TREATMENT

There's no cure for the common cold, but you can treat the symptoms to make you feel better. Rest and give your body time to heal. Drink plenty of fluids and run a humidifier if needed to thin

the mucus and make it easier for you to breathe. Saline nasal rinses can also help.

Over-the-counter pain relievers can help, too. For adults, try taking acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Children or teenagers should not take aspirin. It's linked to Reye's syndrome. Instead, use child-strength, nonprescription

pain relievers. Follow label directions.

Non-prescription cough and cold medicines can help relieve the symptoms of a cold. Read and follow label directions and don't take two medicines with the same ingredient. Pay particular attention to antihistamines, decongestants and pain

relievers.

Warm liquids can help keep you hydrated and soothe a sore throat. Try chicken soup, hot tea, warm apple juice or other liquids. Honey may help relieve a cough in people over the age of 1. Other things that can soothe a scratchy throat include ice chips, hard candy or a saltwater gargle.

Treating an Athletic Injury

People notch more than 3.5 million sports injuries every year, Johns Hopkins Medicine says, and almost a third of childhood injuries are sports related.

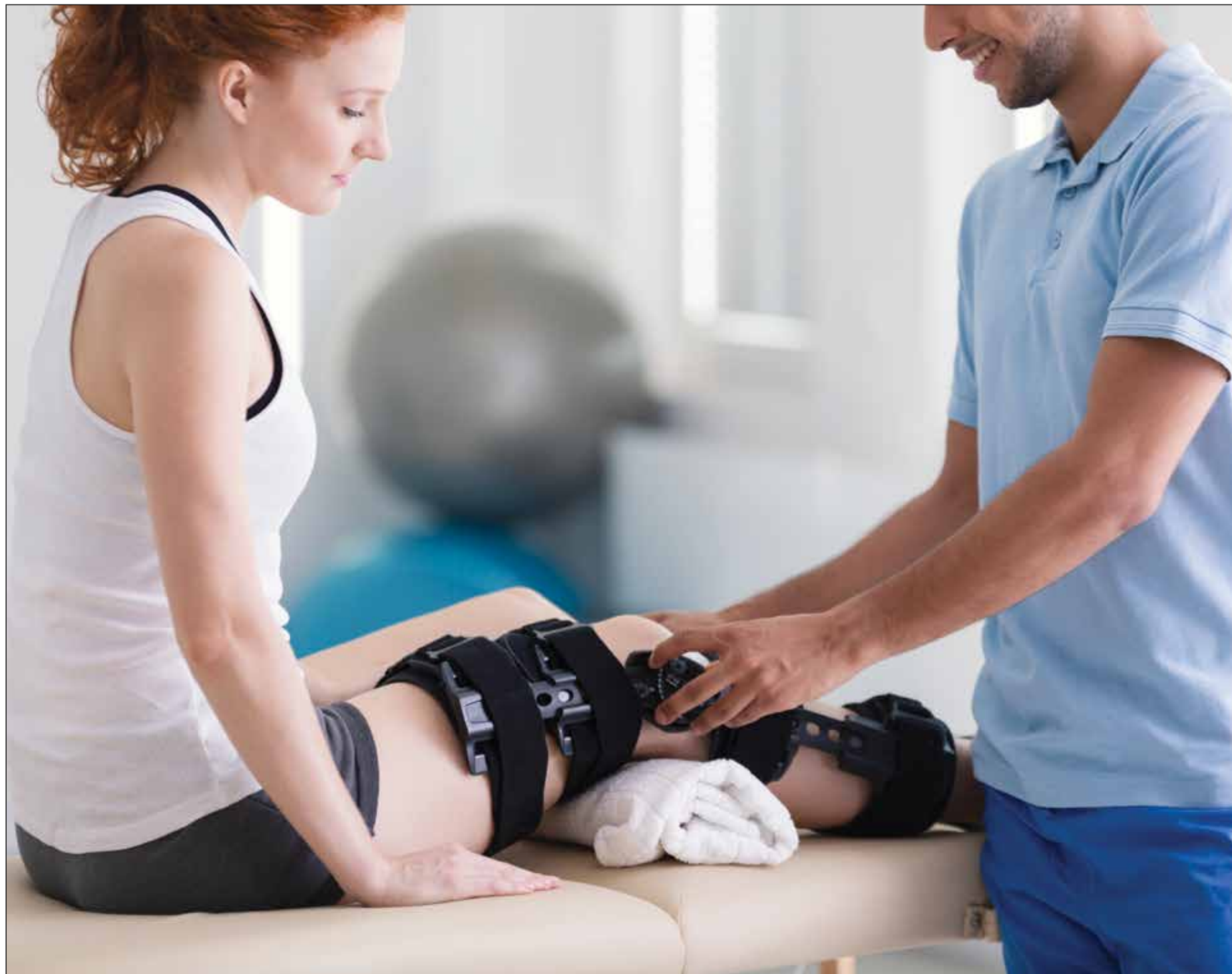
The leading cause of death from a sports-related injury is a brain injury, and sports contribute to about 21% of all traumatic brain injuries in children. The good news is deaths are rare and most sports injuries can be rehabilitated at home.

TREATMENT

Never try to play or work through an injury. If a movement or activity causes pain, stop right away. Symptoms of a serious injury include severe pain, swelling or bruising; pain and swelling that don't go away after a few days; being unable to bear weight on the area; and any obvious deformity. These injuries should be seen by a doctor right away.

For other injuries, follow the RICE method to relieve pain and inflammation. That means:

- **Rest.** Limit activities that involve using the injured area for a day or so. Try to avoid putting weight on or using the injured joint or limb.
- **Ice.** Apply an ice pack to the injured area for 20 minutes at a time, four to eight times per day. Don't keep ice on it for



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more than 20 minutes to avoid cold injury. After 72 hours, you can alternate with heat to relieve muscle tension and promote relaxation.

- **Compression.** Keep pressure on the injured area to reduce swelling.

- **Elevation.** If possible, keep

the injured area elevated on a pillow, above the level of the heart. This will help decrease swelling.

After the injury has healed, consider a rehabilitation program. A physical therapist or physiatrist can help form a plan to rebuild strength and

range of motion. This may help you reduce the chance of reinjury.

RETURNING TO PLAY

Most sports injuries respond well to treatment and rehabilitation. If pain persists, however, ask your doctor for a

referral to a sports medicine specialist. Once the area heals and is pain-free, continue some type of regular exercise. Choose an activity appropriate for your fitness level and gradually increase the intensity using the proper equipment and technique.

Common Vitamin Deficiencies

Most nutrients your body needs for good health come from a properly balanced diet, but many people have some vitamin and mineral deficiencies owing to a Western diet full of processed foods.

Here are some of the more common nutrient deficiencies.

IRON

Iron is a component of red blood cells and helps transport oxygen. Two types of dietary iron are heme iron, found in foods such as red meat, and non-heme iron, which can be found in plants as well as meat. Iron deficiencies are one of the most common nutrient deficiencies, affecting more than 25% of people, Healthline says. The most common consequence of iron deficiency is anemia, in which the number of red blood cells drops. Symptoms of anemia include tiredness, weakness, a weakened immune system and impaired brain function.

Sources of dietary iron include red meat, organ meats, shellfish and canned sardines, beans, seeds and dark, leafy greens.

VITAMIN D

Vitamin D functions like a



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steroid hormone, traveling through the bloodstream and telling cells to turn genes on or off. It is produced from cholesterol in your skin upon exposure to sunlight. In the U.S., about 42% of people may be deficient, Healthline says. A vitamin D deficiency may cause muscle weakness, bone loss and increased risk of fractures.

Sources of vitamin D include cod liver oil, fatty fish and egg yolks.

CALCIUM

Calcium is an essential mineral that is important for bone growth and maintenance. It also serves as a signaling molecule, helping the heart, muscles and nerves function properly. Fewer than 15% of teenage girls, fewer than 10% of women over 50 and fewer than 22% of teenage boys and men over 50 met the recommended calcium intake. The symptoms of calcium deficiency are softer and more

fragile bones.

Sources of calcium include boned fish, dairy products and dark green vegetables.

MAGNESIUM

Magnesium is a mineral that is essential for healthy bones and teeth. It's involved in more than 300 enzyme reactions in the body. Healthline says close to 70% of the U.S. population under 71 and about 80% of people over 71 consume less than the

required amount of magnesium. Low magnesium is associated with type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, heart disease and osteoporosis. Symptoms of severe magnesium deficiency include abnormal heart rhythm, muscle cramps, restless leg syndrome, fatigue and migraines.

Sources of magnesium include whole grains, nuts, dark chocolate and dark green vegetables.