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HEALTH IDEAS FOR MEN

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Beach Body, Safe Skin

— Courtney Blatchford

You know how when you go to the beach, and your girl asks you to rub sunscreen all over her back? Is she flirting? Maybe. But at the end of the day, she's cool, and you look like you've been roasting on a grill. Think all that red skin makes you look sexy? I think you look like a steamed crab, and crabs aren't sexy.

Here's something else I know, and you should, too. Each time you burn, your chances of getting skin cancer go up.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer among men, and it's not just old men —

even a strong guy like you can get it. Sad but true: men are more likely than women to die from skin cancer or to need surgery to cut it off. That's because you aren't very careful about your skin, and sometimes you ignore cancer's early warning signs.

And it's not just burning. You know that "healthy tan" people talk about? There's no such thing. Tanning is what your skin does when it's damaged by the sun. The deeper the tan, the more damage.

So keep reading and I'll tell you everything I know about protecting your sexy skin. After all, you can be hot without getting burned.

Are You At Risk?

Anyone can get skin cancer — the more you're out in the sun, the greater your risk. Construction workers, lifeguards, and guys who play sports — my kind of men — are at greater risk. Also, having light-colored skin means you have to be especially careful. But I'll say it again: even if your skin is darker, the more you're out in the sun, the greater your risk.

Look For Early Warning Signs

Watch your skin for any unusual changes. If you have a mole that changes shape or color, a scaly patch, or a sore that doesn't heal, see your doctor. I know you don't like to make a

fuss about your health, but most skin cancers can be cured if you catch them early. So don't wait to see if the problem will go away by itself.

Find Out More

The Department of Health has free information for you on preventing skin cancer. Call the Learn To Live Line, 410-222-7979, or log onto our Web site to order your free Safe-In-The-Sun Kit. Click on Learn To Live, then Sun Safety. Do it for me, okay?

Don't Get 'Skinned'

Here are some easy things I do to protect my skin. They'll work for you, too.

- Spend less time in the sun from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., when the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays are the strongest and you burn faster. I know that's most of the day, but at least try to find some shade and take plenty of breaks. And if you have to be out in the sun, you can do some of these other things.
- Wear really sharp-looking sunglasses with 100 percent UVA and UVB protection. If you have prescription glasses, you can get them with UV protective coatings.
- Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Put it on again if you go swimming or if you're sweating a lot. I know you hate sticky, greasy lotions, so you can use nongreasy formulas, light sprays and sunscreen sticks.
- Cover up. Get a cool-looking, wide-brimmed hat, a colorful long-sleeved shirt, and other protective clothing.
- Protect yourself year-round. You still need to use sunscreen in the winter on any exposed skin, particularly your face. Wear sunglasses and be careful if you are skiing or around snow. Snow reflects sunlight, which can give you a bad burn.





Your "Personal Best" Body

Whether you go to the gym every day or haven't run a mile since high school, you probably want to be in better shape. The difference between saying it and doing it usually comes down to a lack of time, lack of motivation, or not knowing how to get started.

The good news is it doesn't take hours in the gym every day to get the body you want. Here are some classic exercises that pretty much guarantee you results if you stick with them.

BEST NO-WEIGHT EXERCISE

The Pushup

Pushups are great at every fitness level. You can start with just a few, then increase the number at a steady, even pace that builds muscle. Do them every night before bedtime or whenever you have a chance. Soon, you'll see results in your chest, shoulders and triceps.

BEST STRENGTH EXERCISE

The Squat

This power move gives you major muscles. You don't need a gym, but you do need a good weight set. Focus on squatting deeper, rather than heavier weights. Use light weights to start and learn to descend until your thighs are parallel to the floor. This deeper squat is better for your knees and builds up leg muscles and performance power.

BEST EXERCISE FOR OVERALL FITNESS

Basketball

Basketball gives you the chance to run, sprint, jump, slide, stop and then start all over again. It requires power and endurance. Find a group of guys to play with, or practice at a nearby park.

BEST EXERCISE FOR HEALTH AND LONG LIFE

Circuit Weight Training

The beauty of circuit weight training — moving from one exercise to the next with little rest in between — is that you can change your routine for different goals. Going faster with lighter weights

can improve heart health and endurance, while going slower with heavier weights can build strength, muscle size and a faster metabolism.

You can turn any workout into a circuit: Do all your exercises one after the other, with 15- to 30-second rests in between. Repeat the circuit three times.

BEST EXERCISE THAT ALSO TAKES YOU PLACES

Mountain Biking

Mountain biking takes a huge amount of energy and muscle. For example, a 180-pound guy mountain biking for an hour burns 700 calories. That's like burning off a cheeseburger and fries.

What if you don't have a mountain nearby? Hit the flat road. Riding a mountain bike takes about a third more effort than riding a road bike. The fatter tires and heavier bike make it harder to pedal and builds strength. Bike with a friend or bike to work — the payoff is big in fitness and endurance. Remember to wear a helmet so you don't crack your noggin!

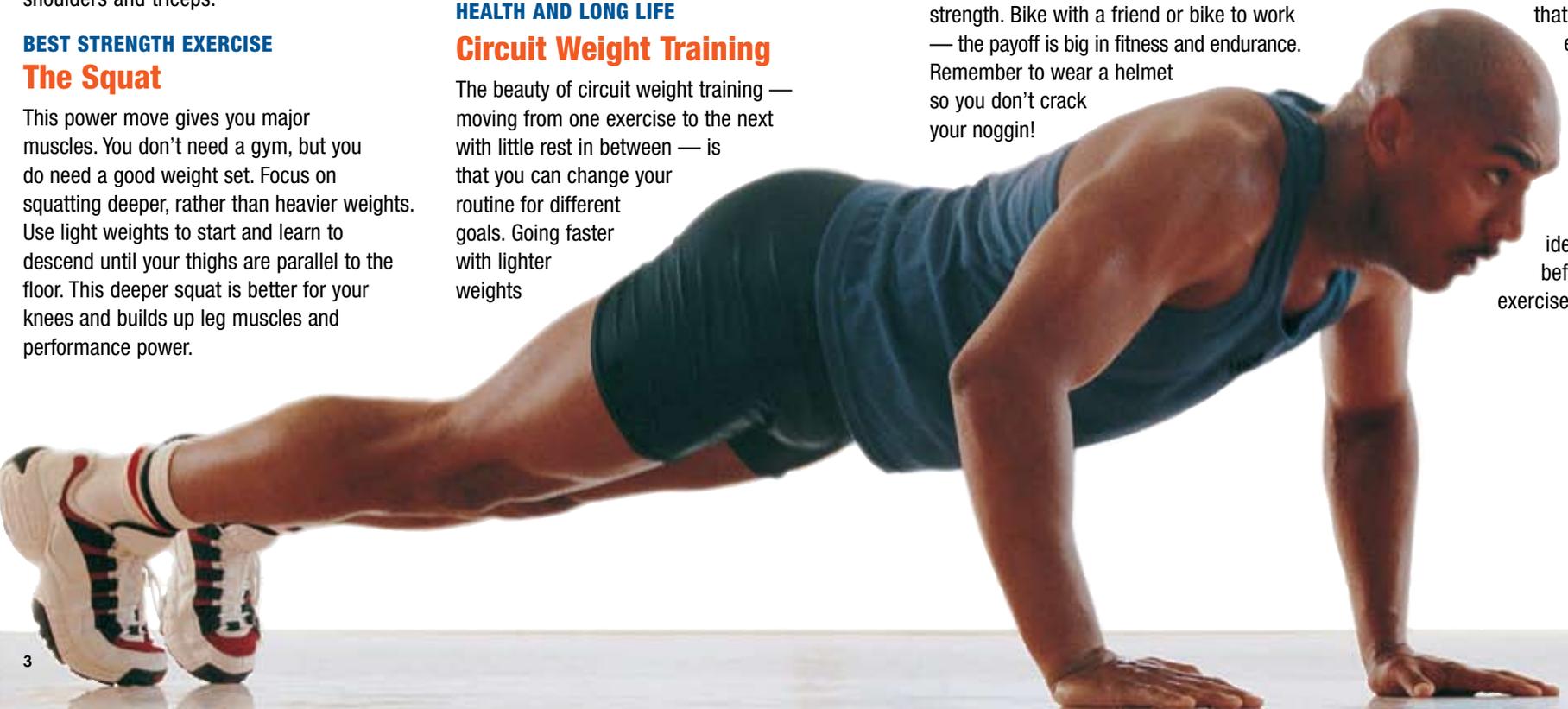
ALL-TIME BEST AEROBIC EXERCISE

Running

You can do it anywhere, at any age and you don't need expensive equipment (only a decent pair of running shoes). If you haven't been exercising, start out walking and build up to a steady jog, then a run. Try to run three times a week to help your heart and melt away the flab. Run with a group to keep up your motivation or even enter a few races to give you a goal to improve.



In general, fitness experts recommend a combination of aerobic exercise and weight training for maximum fitness. But be realistic about your exercise routine. These classics are awesome, but anything that gets you moving — even yard work — is better than sitting on your butt. If you have any health issues or haven't exercised in a while, it's a smart idea to see your doctor before starting an exercise program.



Fast Food: How to Take Out & Trim Down

Is a double cheeseburger, giant fries and milkshake your idea of a gourmet meal? If so, you're a fast food junkie. And you're not alone. Most Anne Arundel County men eat out 2-4 times a week. The problem is that a steady diet of fast food can lead to obesity, heart disease and cancer.

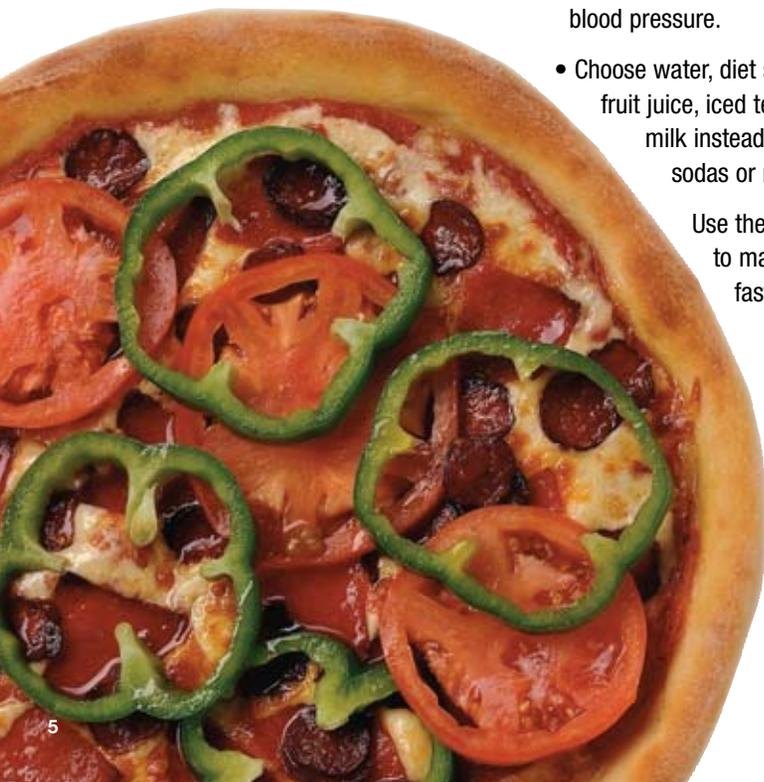
But many fast food joints offer healthy choices and other items that are fairly low in fat with just a few minor changes.

How To Make Good Fast Food Choices:

- Use barbecue sauce, mustard or ketchup instead of mayo or creamy sauces like Thousand Island. Ask for extra lettuce, onions, tomatoes and pickles instead of bacon and cheese.

- Avoid "super-sizing" and value meals.
- Go for grilled, broiled or roasted foods instead of anything fried, battered or breaded.
- Salads are your friend. Avoid lots of cheese, bacon bits and high-fat dressings.
- Try baked potatoes topped with a little chili or barbecue sauce, not butter, cheese or sour cream.
- Croissants, Danishes and breakfast sandwiches are all high in fat. Opt for low-fat muffins, bagels, pancakes or cereal with low-fat milk.
- Order pizza with less cheese, veggie toppings and a thin crust.
- Don't shake on extra salt, and ask about the sodium content if you're watching your blood pressure.
- Choose water, diet sodas, 100 percent fruit juice, iced tea or low-fat milk instead of regular sodas or milkshakes.

Use these simple tips to make healthier fast food choices.



Free Fast Food Guide

Call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979 for your free "Fast Food Nutrition Guide," which rates hundreds of fast food meals. Or order a free Healthy Eating Kit at 410-222-7979 or download at www.aahealth.org. Click on Learn To Live, then Healthy Eating.

How Well Are You Eating?

Think you're eating pretty well? Find out by taking the Healthy Eating Quiz. Click on Learn To Live, then Healthy Eating and choose the Healthy Eating Quiz at www.aahealth.org. Get an instant score!

Rating Our Fast Food Favorites

Here's a quick look at some of your best and worst fast food choices. The lower the calories, fat grams (g) and sodium milligrams (mg), the better.

	Calories	Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)
Some of the best...			
Six-inch turkey sub	105	2	820
Fried chicken drumstick	140	9	422
Roasted chicken salad	160	2.5	700
Rotisserie turkey breast	170	1	850
Chicken nugget 6-pack	250	14	630
Some of the worst...			
Six-inch meatball sub	501	25	1,350
Large French fries	590	30	1,180
Large "popcorn chicken"	620	40	1,046
Chicken pot pie	750	46	1,530
Six-inch Italian sub	780	53	2,440
Double cheeseburger	1,020	65	1,460

Quit & Win: 10 Ways to Stop Smoking

Here are 10 tips that have helped thousands of smokers kick the habit.

1. Get your head in the game. Think about your reasons for quitting, write them down, and repeat them to yourself.
2. Don't chicken out! Mark a day on your calendar and tell other people so that you don't back out. As your day approaches, cut down on the amount you smoke.
3. Find a friend. Pick an "on call" person to be your coach. An ex-smoker will understand what you are going through.
4. Make a clean start. Clean out your car, wash your clothes, air out your house and throw away all cigarettes and ashtrays.
5. Take it one day at a time. You are ten times more likely to quit for good if you make it through day one. Drink lots of water to prevent tobacco urges, and avoid caffeine.
6. For the first few weeks, stay away from the things that make you want to smoke, like bars and parties.
7. Be prepared. You will get the urge to smoke, but most cravings pass in a few minutes. So keep sugarless gum, a toothpick or sunflower seeds handy. And carry some loose change or a rubber band to keep your hands busy.
8. Relax, man! Go bowling, play tennis or listen to music.
9. Fight fire with fire. If you can't handle it, talk with your doctor about nicotine gum, the patch or other quit-smoking aids.
10. You can do it! If you slip and have a cigarette, don't give up. It often takes people several tries to quit. You can, too!

Free Quit-Smoking Help

Want some help? Call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979 for your free Xtreme Quitting Kit or download it at www.aahealth.org. Click on Learn To Live, then Smoking Cessation.

Free Stuff!

Get any of this stuff free by calling the Learn To Live Line, 410-222-7979, or going to www.aahealth.org. Click on Learn To Live, then Request Free Materials at the bottom of the page.

Smoking

- Xtreme Quitting Kit: A stop-smoking plan for guys who like extreme sports
- Quit-Smoking Kit: An easy-to-use plan to help adults kick the cigarette habit
- Teen Quit Kit: A self-help kit that helps teens stop smoking

Eating Right

- Fast Food Nutrition Guide
- Healthy Eating Kit

Sun Safety

- Safe-In-The-Sun Kit



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Healthy Living From The Anne Arundel County Department Of Health

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