



January 2010

## Love Thyself... Practice Self-Care

To avoid unnecessary – and often costly – visits to the doctor’s office, incorporate these self-care techniques into your wellness regime.

- Think about over-the-counter (OTC) medications that could fight off symptoms to common ailments before heading to the doctor.
- Join a virtual support group on the Internet. Seek out resources to common health problems from reputable sources, such as government and educational sites.
- Take a class from a local hospital on caring for common ailments suffered by children such as fevers, burns and bug bites.



January 4-10 is  
Folic Acid  
Awareness Week!

# LIVE WELL, WORK WELL

## Women: Take Folic Acid for Health!

Folic Acid Awareness Week is January 4 through 10. Taking folic acid can promote your baby’s healthy development in the womb. Read on to find out answers to the most common questions regarding this nutrient.

### How does folic acid help a baby’s growth?

This important vitamin assists the body in cell creation. A pregnant woman requires more folic acid because there needs to be enough for her and the baby.

### Does a woman who is not pregnant need to take folic acid?

Yes, especially if she is planning on getting pregnant. The spinal birth defect spina bifida usually occurs in a fetus before a woman even realizes she’s pregnant.

### In what foods can folic acid be found?

Green vegetables, fruits and orange juice all contain the vitamin folate, as well as enriched cereals and breads. Most people do not get enough folic acid through food alone, however, so it’s wise to take a multivitamin.

### How much folic acid is needed daily?

Women who could become pregnant should take 400 mcg (0.4 mg) via a vitamin. Any woman who is already a parent of a child affected with spina bifida should take 4,000 mcg (4.0 mg) for one to three months before getting pregnant again. A prescription will be needed for this amount.

For more information, visit the National Council on Folic Acid at [www.folicacidinfo.org](http://www.folicacidinfo.org).



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## Assistance with Assisted Living

Has it come to that dreaded time where you think you may have to place your parent(s) in a facility to help with dressing, bathing, eating and the like? Then assisted living is probably the best choice. This is a residence that helps older adults who should no longer live on their own, yet does not provide full-time nursing services.

Choosing a facility may seem daunting, but the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers these suggestions to help you get started:

- Think ahead. What will your parent(s) need in the future? Will the residence meet those needs?
- Is the facility close to family and friends?
- Does the facility have limits on allowing residents to remain if their condition deteriorates (such as mental impairment)?
- Visit each facility more than once, sometimes

unannounced.

- Visit at meal times and sample the food.
- Talk to residents – do they enjoy being there?
- Learn what types of training the staff receives and how frequent it is.
- Review state licensing reports.



## Still Looking for a Resolution?

Try some of these ideas to start 2010 off right!

- Take a first aid course.
- Go to bed earlier.
- Establish a monthly budget for the whole year.
- Start a daily walking routine with your neighbors or family.
- Donate blood.
- Eat a high-fiber, low-fat breakfast every day.
- Add a fruit or vegetable to every meal.
- Reuse glass and plastic packaging instead of throwing it away.
- Replace light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).
- Volunteer a few hours a week.
- Try a new physical activity, such as cross-country skiing or badminton.

## Satisfy Your Palate the Healthy Way

What's the most popular New Year's resolution? To lose weight/get in shape, of course! Stay on course after your workout with one of these low-calorie, filling dinner ideas from [www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov).

### Chicken Dinner = 750 calories

- Entrée: Grill 7 oz. boneless skinless chicken; serve with 1 cup steamed asparagus and 6 oz. cooked brown rice.
- Salad: Combine baby spinach, sliced tomatoes and mushrooms; spritz with low-calorie dressing.
- Dessert: 3 oz. fresh strawberries

### Fresh Shrimp Dinner = 840 calories

- Entrée: Grill 12 oz. fresh shrimp; serve with 2 cups fresh green beans and half a medium steamed sweet potato.
- Salad: Spinach with sliced tomatoes, cucumbers and carrots; spray with low-calorie dressing.
- Dessert: Dark chocolate bar

