






# insideout



A guide to better health published by **Education for Health and Wellness**

FALL

## The Builder

A master builder informed his employer of his plan to retire. Although he would miss the paycheck, he wanted a more leisurely life and time with family and friends.  Sorry to lose a good worker, the contractor asked the employee if he would build just one more house as a personal favor. The builder agreed but in time lost interest in the project, resorted to shoddy workmanship, and used inferior materials. An unfortunate way to end his career, but he was eager to be done with it all.  When the house was finished, the employer came to inspect. Handing the builder the deed to the house, the employer said: "This is your house; my gift to you."  What a shock! If only he had known he was building his own house, he would have done things so differently. What was intended as a gift of gratitude, a house that would showcase the builder's great skills, was instead a poorly constructed building.  So it sometimes happens with us. Forgetting that what we are building, our lives, is the result of each day's activities, we become bored and distracted, willing to do less than our best. We lose interest and become satisfied with inferior results. Then with a shock we realize that the "house" we have built is a poor reflection of our unique and wonderful talents. Had we only realized, we would have done things so differently!  The approaching millennium is a great time to reflect upon what we are building. What does our "house" currently look like? What we do, how we live, whom we love, choices we make, and attitudes we take, all contribute to life's structure. Be well and build wisely... from the "inside-out."

## If It Sounds Too Good to Be True ...

**Wise consumers should be "tipped off" about health-related products by:**

**Words such as "miraculous," "instant"**

**\* Vague claims such as "raise your energy level"**

**\* Ads that persuade you that you are "over-stressed", have vitamin deficiencies,... and then offer you the cure**

**\* Weight loss supplements or devices guaranteed to "melt off" pounds, "spot reduce" effortlessly**

**\* Claims that a product will cure any problem or illness**

**When any real "miraculous" medical discovery occurs, it's safe to assume that it will be covered by the major media. Such an event will not be relegated to "ads".**

THIS ISSUE

DATES | DRUGS | DANGER

PAINS IN THE NECK

**SAFETY**

## Date Rape Drugs

The most publicized “date rape” drug is the sedative Rohypnol, which is used widely for medical purposes in other parts of the world but is not approved for use in the United States.

Rohypnol is a chemical cousin of the popular sedative Valium but is 10 times stronger. Called “roofies” on the street, the drug is tasteless and odorless and can be mixed with drinks without being detected. (To make it easier to detect in a drink, manufacturers have begun adding a blue dye to Rohypnol pills.) Once taken, it can produce deep intoxication and amnesia for up to eight hours.

**HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF:**

- If you choose to drink alcohol, pour your own drink and keep track of it. This helps you know exactly how much alcohol you’ve had and prevents someone from adding other substances.
- Don’t drink “punch” or drink from a container that is being passed around.
- Use the “buddy” system if you are in any place where alcohol is being consumed. Go to, and leave, parties with friends. Don’t go out alone.
- Don’t leave your drink unattended. If you need to leave your drink for any reason, have someone you trust watch it.
- If a drink tastes, looks, or smells unusual, stop drinking and report it to a responsible person. Do not accept a replacement drink, do not drink anything further, and seek medical assistance.
- If you suspect a friend may have been drugged, get assistance for them.
- If you feel disoriented or in any way “strange” after consuming only a small or moderate amount of alcohol, seek the aid of a responsible person and get immediate medical assistance.
- If you feel you have been drugged or suspect you may have been sexually assaulted, contact the Health Center, the Dean of Students, or other campus official to assist or advise you.

*Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse*

**For additional information on Rohypnol or other date rape drugs, contact the office of Education for Health and Wellness at ext. 8396.**

**DRIVE TO ARRIVE**

*If driving is in your holiday or semester-break plans:*

- Get plenty of rest before you go.
- Avoid heavy meals. They take longer to digest and make you lethargic.
- Roll down your windows or point air vents directly onto your face to be instantly revived.
- Stop for a break every hour. Get out of the car, stretch your upper body, rotate your head from side to side, squat to stretch your legs, and take several deep breaths.
- Listen to talk shows or motivational tapes that involve you and keep you more alert than music.
- Wear sunglasses. Glare from the sun strains your eyes causing you to tire more quickly.
- Stop if you get sleepy. If necessary, stay in a motel rather than try to fight drowsiness that isn’t alleviated by the above suggestions!

**A STUDENT ASKS:**

**Q** *A friend told me that when you have diarrhea you should avoid milk products. Why is that?*

**A** Diarrhea associated with stomach upset (viral gastroenteritis) is aggravated by lactose, the sugar in milk. The enzyme needed to absorb lactose is reduced. As a result, sugar passes through the gastrointestinal tract, pulling water with it, increasing the diarrhea. Even after the infection, sensitivity to milk may continue if the intestines are not yet producing sufficient enzymes. When you have a diarrheal illness, it’s a good idea to avoid lactose-containing foods until you feel better. Reintroduce them gradually.

GENERAL HEALTH

## Men: SAVE YOUR OWN LIFE

We all know that women should perform routine breast exams. Far less attention has been given to the need for men to conduct monthly testicular exams. A complete testicular self-exam takes less than three minutes and could save your life. After a warm bath or shower, hold your scrotum and gently roll each testicle between your thumb and your first two fingers. Feel for any firm, hard, or fixed lumps, nodules, or irregularities inside the testicle itself. Most abnormalities are found at the front side of the testicle.

### Symptoms of testicle cancer:

- a lump in the testicle itself
- enlargement of one testicle
- enlargement of the breasts and nipples
- heavy sensation in the testicle or groin

The highest incidence of testicular cancer is found in Caucasian males between the ages of 15 and 34. Men who have had an undescended testicle or have a family history of testicular cancer are at greater risk than others. Testicular cancer is highly curable—especially when detected early. Men need to become as comfortable with testicular self-exams as women are with breast self-exams. It could save your life.

Source: American Cancer Society

## AWFUL AVOIDABLE

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) can have few, if any, symptoms. Some common symptoms are burning, itching, unusual discharge, odor, sores, swollen glands, or painless bumps involving the genital or anal area. Fatigue, stomach pain, and yellow eyes or skin are symptoms of hepatitis B, while HIV infection may include flulike symptoms a month after exposure, then no symptoms for five to 10 years. Some STDs can be fatal, some are treatable, some are treatable but with lifelong effects. All STDs are preventable (with regard to transmission via sexual contact).

If you and your partner decide to have sexual contact, determine together what kind of sexual activity is right for you and what safety measures you are both comfortable with. For safer sex, use a new condom for each act of vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse. Condoms must be used consistently and correctly to provide maximum protection. If using a lubricant, choose one that is water-based (oil-containing products such as Vaseline or baby oil can destroy latex). Other contraceptive products (e.g., IUD, oral contraceptives) do not protect against STDs. Products containing Nonoxynol-9 (a spermicide) may provide extra protection but should not be relied on alone.

If you think you may have an STD, or experience any of the above symptoms, contact your health care provider or the Health Center at ext. 8270. Take care of yourself, take care of someone you love. If you care enough about another person to have intimate contact, show it by practicing safer sex.

Last year, 16,600 Americans died of AIDS; 83,000 died of the flu. Source: National Center for Health Statistics

## A Pain in the Neck

Students spend significant amounts of time in positions that can cause short-term pain and long-term syndromes. Hours spent reading, studying, and using the computer all cause stress and strain that is cumulative but often outside our awareness.... Rarely do we consider the wear and tear of these activities until we “hurt.” Carpel tunnel syndrome, back pain, neck strain, and headaches are only some of the complaints for which people seek relief. You may not be interested in the science of ergonomics, but how about taking a few minutes to consider what you can do to alleviate or prevent problems.

- | Work at the computer for shorter periods of time; stand and stretch your entire body at least every 20–30 minutes.
- | Set your computer monitor so you can see it without strain on your neck or shoulders.
- | Rearrange your work space so you can see your papers and use your mouse without having to reach or assume an awkward position.
- | Sit up straight when reading and studying.
- | If you are on the phone for long periods of time, consider using headphones.

RELATIONSHIPS

## Are You Listening?

Many “people problems” are the result of miscommunication. Communicating is a two-way process. While it obviously involves speaking; it is the listening part that gets us into trouble.... And it’s often the more difficult skill in being a good communicator. Are you guilty of any of the following “Listening Errors”?

- Editing.** Hearing only what you want to hear. **Rehearsing.** Thinking about what you want to say while the other person is talking. **Daydreaming.** Letting your mind wander.
- Personalizing.** Relating everything the person is saying to your own life. **Switching.** Changing the subject as soon as the person stops speaking.

If you find yourself committing these errors, work on listening “actively.” A good listener is able to repeat what the other person said and understands that person’s feelings about the subject. Using phrases that assess whether you heard correctly can help: “What I heard you say was... Is that right?” “You sound as if you’re feeling really frustrated.” Becoming a good listener takes time, patience, and practice. It’s worth the payoff: better relationships!

Many cultures consider body odors (BO) normal, acceptable, or even erotic. Americans, however, generally find it offensive or a source of embarrassment. By itself, sweat doesn’t have an odor. Only after sweat is acted upon by naturally occurring bacteria does a person develop what we recognize as a sweaty smell. The smell is especially noticeable in the armpits, groin, and feet because these areas have many sweat glands. When the body is overheated, specific glands help regulate body temperature by expelling a solution of water and salts that evaporate and cool the skin.

Other glands, which develop during puberty, respond to such conditions as sexual arousal, nervousness, and anger. The sweat they produce is rich in organic substances that attract bacteria and produce a strong odor. It is probable that such odors were recognized as sexual signals by our ancient ancestors, just as they are in most animals.

Eating certain foods and taking certain drugs, deficiencies in specific nutrients, and some diseases and metabolic problems may also contribute to body odor. Women are sometimes troubled by odors associated with menstruation, but most of these can be prevented with good hygiene.

The most effective way to deal with BO is to wash with soap and water daily, or more often as determined by your activities and your own personal circumstances. Deodorants with antibacterial agents and scents slow bacterial action and cover up underarm odor, but they don’t stop perspiration. To do that, use an antiperspirant, which suppresses the function of sweat glands. Some authorities discourage the use of antiperspirants. They believe that people should not interfere with the body’s natural processes.



**Education for  
Health and Wellness**  
AMR II, Room 0223  
Phone 410-516-8396  
Fax 410-516-5000  
Visit our home page:  
[http://www.jhu.edu/  
~health](http://www.jhu.edu/~health)

HERE IS DIVINE BEAUTY IN LEARNING, JUST AS THERE IS HUMAN BEAUTY IN TOLERANCE. TO LEARN MEANS TO ACCEPT THE POSTULATE THAT LIFE DID NOT BEGIN AT MY BIRTH. OTHERS HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE ME, AND I WALK IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS. THE BOOKS I HAVE READ WERE COMPOSED BY GENERATIONS OF FATHERS AND SONS, MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS, TEACHERS AND DISCIPLES. I AM THE SUM TOTAL OF THEIR EXPERIENCES, THEIR QUESTS. AND SO ARE YOU.—*Elie Wiesel*