

live healthy

Get a Happier, Healthier Outlook

A positive attitude may defend against illness, says new research from the University of Kentucky in Lexington. During a six-month period, study participants took tests that measured optimism, then received injections of an illness-inducing antigen. People who scored higher for optimism were found to have better immune responses. "Positive emotions may be associated with hormones that boost immunity," says study author Suzanne Segerstrom, Ph.D. To turn a pessimistic POV into a sunnier one, start with a reality check of whether evidence supports your doomsday attitude; acknowledging that it's not based on fact may help you reconsider. And keep your mind open to what-ifs: True, you could bomb during this weekend's 10K, but it hasn't happened yet. Choose a happier ending instead.





Bone Up Your Diet

Eating a diet of 10 to 15 percent fructans, a compound found in agave, or the same amount of inulin, a kind of fructan in chicory root, aids the absorption of calcium from food and increases your body's production of the bone-building protein osteocalcin by more than 50 percent, new research shows. Look for products that use raw or organic agave nectar, because "fructans lose their benefits when they're hydrolyzed, or heated to high temps, in the syrup-making process," says study author Mercedes G. López, Ph.D. Not a fan of agave? Add these other fructan-rich foods to your shopping list: ✓ **asparagus** ✓ **artichokes** ✓ **onions** ✓ **garlic** ✓ **bananas**

BUG OFF!

Move over, MRSA. There's a new bad bug in town, *Clostridium difficile* (*C. diff*), which causes 25 percent more infections in hospitals than MRSA. This bacterium can live on floors and tables for months if they're not properly disinfected. Worse,

there's a hypervirulent strain of *C. diff* that can cause serious infections and even death,

says Becky Miller, M.D., an infectious disease specialist at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina. One

common symptom is diarrhea. Safeguard your health by taking antibiotics only when necessary, to prevent killing "good" bacteria in your gut, and by washing your hands frequently with soap and warm water.



Stop the Leak It's more than just annoying when gotta-pee problems interfere with your workout; it could be a serious health issue.

Your concern *You could have...* *The fix*

Sudden leaks when you sneeze, cough or lift a heavy weight

stress incontinence, which is prompted by engaging in activity that puts sudden pressure on your bladder.

Kegel exercises (squeezing the muscles that hold in pee) will strengthen the pelvic floor. Squeeze and hold for a count of five. Do 10 reps three times daily.

Leaking while doing cardio work, such as running

vitamin D deficiency. The vitamin maintains healthy connective tissues and pelvic ligaments; one in five women who are D deficient also have exercise-related urinary incontinence.

Take a daily D supplement of 2,000 IUs and start Kegel exercises, says researcher Samuel Badalian, M.D., at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York.

An urgent and frequent need to pee

urge incontinence, a condition that occurs because of contractions and spasms in the bladder.

See your doc right away to get checked out, because feeling like you've got to go when your bladder isn't full could indicate a more serious condition caused by infection or nerve or neurological damage.

TOUGH BREAK When hip pain sidelined 2009 New York City Marathon champ Meb Keflezighi three years ago, an MRI revealed a fracture. New research shows that MRIs find fractures X-rays miss in 15 percent of high-risk patients. If an X-ray of your sports injury comes up blank, ask your doc about an MRI.

Source: Charles E. Spritzer, M.D. professor of radiology at Duke University Medical Center