



# HOPE Health Letter

*"Life Is a Journey. Have Some Fun."*

## Get Fit with HIIT

### The Benefits of High-Intensity Interval Training

**High-intensity interval training can help you get more bang for your exercise time.** Practiced by elite athletes, HIIT is now a beneficial approach for average exercisers. You can practice interval training by simply alternating short bursts (about 30 seconds) of intense activity with longer intervals (about one to two minutes) of less intense activity.

**Example:** If you walk for exercise and you're in pretty good shape, you might add short bursts of jogging into your regular brisk walks. Or if you're less fit, you might alternate regular walking with periods of fast walking.

**Example:** You can use a stationary bike or rower for 30 seconds of cycling or rowing as fast as possible with high resistance, followed by several minutes of slower motion with low resistance.

**You might typically complete four to eight repetitions in one workout,** depending on how long you exercise. The time you exercise and recover will vary based on your activity and how intensely you exercise.

#### Benefits of interval training include:

**Burning more calories:** One study compared the calories burned during 30 minutes each of HIIT, weight training, running and biking. The result: Interval exercisers burned 25% to 30% more calories compared to non-interval exercisers.

**Raising your metabolic rate:** HIIT can increase metabolism for hours post-workout — using fat for energy rather than carbohydrates.

**Reducing disease risk:** HIIT training (like any exercise) helps reduce the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

**Improving your numbers:** You might gain some muscle, boost your muscles' ability to use oxygen, and reduce heart rate, blood pressure and blood sugar.

**Note:** Get your health care provider's okay before starting HIIT.

The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, **Protect Your Immunity**, is at [personalbest.com/extras/22V8tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/22V8tools).

Volume 42 • Number 8 • August 2022

## BESTbits



### ■ National Immunization Awareness Month

observed each August, teaches the importance of vaccination for people of all ages against several serious, sometimes deadly diseases; it also celebrates the successes of the different immunizations created in the 20th and 21st centuries. It also offers an important reminder to get vaccinated against COVID-19, including booster shots. Most Americans have received COVID-19 vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history. And don't forget flu season — it's just around the corner. Ask your health care provider when flu shots will be available. Get yours as soon as possible. Vaccines for flu and COVID-19 reduce the risk of infection and lower your chances of being hospitalized and treated for serious complications if you do become ill.



### ■ Contact Lens Week is August 22 to 26.

This event emphasizes the importance of good contact lens hygienic practices in protecting wearers against serious eye infections. Washing your hands thoroughly before handling your lenses is vital to ensuring the health of your eyes. Follow your eye care provider's prescription for wearing, cleaning and storing your lenses. Learn more at [cdc.gov/contactlenses](https://www.cdc.gov/contactlenses). Fun fact: The first concept for contact lenses was designed by Leonardo da Vinci in 1508.

**Note:** Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date pandemic information visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

“A fruit is a vegetable with looks and money.”

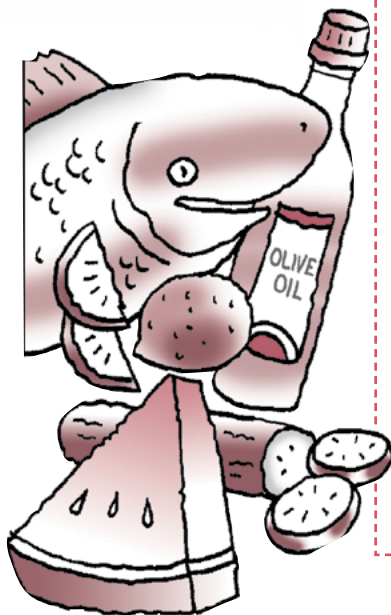
— P. J. O'Rourke



## TIP of the MONTH

### Sticky Fish Solution

If you find your fish often sticks to the grill when you barbeque, here are some possible solutions. Instead of brushing your fillet with olive oil, try mayonnaise. It has enough oil to prevent sticking, and a neutral flavor that won't change the taste of your fish. You can also try grilling fish in a grill basket, on a wooden plank or on top of a bed of lemon slices. It also helps to only put fish on a blazing hot grill.



# eating smart Intermittent Fasting

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**While most diets dictate *what* to eat, intermittent fasting dictates *when* to eat.** Intermittent fasting is cycling between hours when you eat and hours when you fast (refrain from food). The most common pattern is to fast for 16 hours, but you can eat food for eight hours during an average day (the 16:8 method). Other plans include fasting for 24 hours once or twice a week (the eat-stop-eat method).

**Some studies have linked intermittent fasting to weight loss, but that's not a surprise.** If you don't eat for many hours, you'll eat less overall, and that calorie reduction will lead to weight loss. But weight loss is not guaranteed, especially in people who continually consume more calories than they need during the non-fasting hours.

**Studies also link intermittent fasting to lower LDL (harmful) cholesterol levels and reduced inflammation.** And since there are no restricted foods, it's easy to follow.

**But before you consider intermittent fasting, there are some downsides to note.** Since it doesn't tell you what to eat, you don't learn about nutritious food or healthy eating habits. And while some can fast intermittently long-term, others find they are hungry, dizzy, tired and grumpy when they fast, and they have to stop.

**Intermittent fasting is not recommended for people with a history of eating disorders.** And research results on intermittent fasting for people with type 2 diabetes are mixed. Some show lower insulin levels, but others show poor blood sugar control and the risk of hypoglycemia. Speak to your health care provider or to a dietitian before trying this eating plan to see if it's right for you.



## Grilled Fish with Watermelon Salsa

EASY recipe

1½ lbs tilapia, cod or other whitefish	1 cup chopped cucumber
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil	1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
½ tsp salt, <i>divided</i>	¼ cup red onion, diced
1 lime, zested and juiced	¼ cup freshly chopped cilantro
2 cups chopped watermelon	

**Set** grill to medium heat. **Brush** fish with olive oil and season with ¼ tsp salt. **Place** fish on grill or in grill basket. **Grill** 4 to 5 minutes per side or until opaque, and set on serving platter. **In** a large bowl, stir together lime zest, lime juice, watermelon, cucumber, jalapeño, onion, cilantro and remaining salt. **Spoon** salsa over fish and serve with lime wedges.

**Makes 4 servings. Per serving:** 230 calories | 35g protein | 7g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 3g mono fat | 2g poly fat | 10g carbohydrate | 6g sugar | 1g fiber | 382mg sodium

“Be who you are. It’s easy to feel like you have to blend in, but it takes courage to live your life with conviction and embrace the person that you are.”

— Halima Aden



### August 31 is Opioid Misuse Awareness Day.

This global event remembers those we have lost to overdose deaths. Opioid drug abuse is an epidemic in the U.S. Oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl and other opioids are highly addictive painkilling medications. They were widely prescribed for pain in the 1990s and early 2000s. Through the years, misuse of prescription and illicit opioids increased. Today, about 136 Americans die from opioid overdoses daily, according to the CDC. Of the more than 93,000 drug overdoses reported in 2020, more than three-quarters were due to opioids. To learn more, search for **opioids** at the National Safety Council at [nsc.org](https://www.nsc.org).



## work&life

# Collaboration at Work

**Working well together on the job takes ongoing teamwork and cooperation.** Building our collaboration skills enables us to identify and achieve common goals. Here are five actions that help foster and maintain strong collaboration at work.



- 1. Identify goals.** When working solo or with a team, study and identify the purpose behind your workplace objectives. Maintain clarity to help ensure everyone is committed to success with a common purpose.
- 2. Practice clear communication.** Teams can't collaborate without it. Fortunately, there are digital tools to keep workers connected virtually — beyond just email, which isn't always the most effective way to be in touch.
- 3. Support a level playing field.** Encourage input and solicit ideas from everyone involved; acknowledge and respect your teammates' individual strengths and preferences. You might not always agree with the outcome, but you learn to recognize the needs and responsibilities of the group as a whole.
- 4. Master problem-solving.** When mistakes happen, first calmly analyze the issue as a group without blaming any one person. Instead, focus your energy on working together to find solutions.
- 5. Respect individual perspectives.** A diverse workforce will produce diverse opinions. Learn to collaborate.

**These soft skills promote resilience, commitment and camaraderie** needed to succeed as teams through potential adversity along the way. Collaboration makes our jobs more meaningful and enjoyable.

## Say Goodbye to Regrets

**Don't let regrets about the past harm your present — and even your future.** Everyone has regrets. But continuing to fret over opportunities lost or unfortunate decisions can negatively impact your mental and physical health. Studies show a high level of regret is linked to more depression, anxiety and insomnia.

### Five ways to move past regrets:

- 1. Stop negative self-talk.** Avoid telling yourself you made a stupid decision or calling yourself an idiot. Practice self-kindness and remind yourself you'll make better decisions next time.
- 2. Distract yourself from obsessing over regrets.** Focusing your attention on socializing with friends or pursuing a new interest or exercise goal can help you move forward.
- 3. Use journaling to help you create new goals.** List the lessons learned from decisions you regret and use this information to plan and build a brighter future.
- 4. Take time for a reality check.** Just because you made a bad choice in a job, relationship or anything else doesn't mean you are doomed to repeat your mistake. And thinking what might have been would have been wonderful isn't realistic. You don't know how things would be different.
- 5. Consider counseling.** If regrets are negatively impacting your life, therapy with a mental health professional can help you stop repeating cycles of self-blame and empower you to move forward. Cognitive behavioral therapy is recognized as especially helpful in moving past obsessive feelings of regret.



Experience is a great teacher.

— John Legend



### August is Minority Donor Awareness Month.

More people of color are needed as organ donors. Organ transplant donors and recipients don't have to be the same ethnicity. However, long-term survival odds can be greatest with closely matched genetic donor and recipient backgrounds. Minority Donor Awareness Month aims to share this information with diverse communities, especially African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders, who are at higher-than-average risk for kidney failure. To learn more about minority organ donation and how to register as an organ, eye and tissue donor, visit [donatelife.net/race-ethnicity-and-donation](https://donatelife.net/race-ethnicity-and-donation).

## body&mind

# Q: How can I support a transgender family member?

**A:** If this topic is new for you, begin by learning more. Here are some key points:

- Even if you don't fully understand someone's gender identity, you can still be respectful and supportive. Steer clear of advice, criticism or comments involving gender stereotypes.
- Transgender people may express their identity in a variety of ways. Try to be open and nonjudgmental.
- You aren't expected to guess someone's pronouns or preferred terms; it's best to ask. Respect the terminology that they use, just as you'd expect them to respect yours.
- Certain topics may be sensitive or personal, such as a person's birth name, medical/surgical history and sexual orientation, so consider if you need the information before asking.

Transgender individuals often encounter discrimination, so your support is vital. Learn more at [transequality.org](https://transequality.org).

— Eric Endlich, PhD



# Why Your Doc May Not Prescribe Antibiotics

**Does your health care provider tend to be stingy when prescribing antibiotics?** Let's review what antibiotics do. They, along with vaccines, are some of the greatest medical discoveries in recent history. They can cure many infectious diseases that previously caused severe complications and deaths. To clear up any confusion about what antibiotics can or cannot treat, review the following list.

**Antibiotics only treat certain infections caused by bacteria**, including strep throat, whooping cough and urinary tract infection.

**Antibiotics can also treat life-threatening conditions** caused by bacteria, such as **sepsis**, which is the body's extreme response to infection.

**Antibiotics do not work on viruses**, such as those that cause:

- Flu, colds and runny noses.
- Most sore throats, except strep throat, which is bacterial.
- Most cases of chest colds (bronchitis).
- Some upper respiratory sinus and ear infections.



**Use antibiotics responsibly:**

1. **Don't share antibiotics** or take someone else's antibiotics. Taking the wrong antibiotic may keep you sick longer, kill good bacteria or allow antibiotic-resistant bacteria to grow.
2. **Don't save antibiotics** for the next illness or take leftover antibiotics. Discard them once the course has ended.
3. **If you are prescribed antibiotics**, take the entire course as prescribed. Stopping early can lead to resurgent infections and resistant bacteria.

Continuous effort — not strength or intelligence — is the key to unlocking our potential.

— Liane Cordes



### August is Children's Eye Health and Safety

**Month**, when the American Academy of Ophthalmology puts the focus on children's vision — the perfect time for back-to-school vision screenings. Studies show uncorrected vision problems can impact learning and classroom behavior. Preschoolers need regular eye checkups, too, according to the CDC. It's also a good idea to talk to your kids about eye safety when they participate in sports.

## body&mind

### Q: How to stop snoring?

**A:** Nearly everyone snores occasionally, but it can sometimes become a chronic problem. Frequent snoring should be evaluated by your health care provider, as it could signal **sleep apnea**. Other signs of possible obstructive sleep apnea include daytime sleepiness, loud snoring, breathing pauses and gasping or choking during sleep.

**Lifestyle measures can help.** Losing excess weight and stopping smoking can alleviate snoring. So can sleeping on your side instead of your back. Avoid drinking alcohol close to bedtime and aim to get seven to nine hours of sleep every 24 hours.

**If you have sleep apnea**, your health care provider may recommend **continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)**, a device which involves wearing a specialized mask connected to a hose that delivers steady air pressure during sleep. A dental oral appliance that helps position your jaw, tongue and soft palate can sometimes be beneficial. Other options include treating nasal congestion and practicing upper airway exercises. Much less commonly, surgery may be advised for snoring.

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD



## Stomach Pain and Stress

**Your brain and your digestive system have a direct relationship.** That's why almost everyone has felt butterflies in their stomach when nervous or even experienced stomach pain, nausea or other digestive problems when stressed about personal or work matters.

**Of course, stress can be physical, such as barely missing getting in a car accident.** And emotional stress can be related to a happy event, such as a wedding. But these stressful situations aren't constant.

**It is ongoing stress, often related to work or personal relationships, which can keep your brain's stress response system — the flight or fight reaction — on high alert and impact other parts of your body.** Your heart beats faster and your blood pressure rises. And the flight-or-fight response also causes delayed emptying of the stomach, potentially leading to heartburn, nausea and stomach pain. What's more, worrying about your stress-caused digestive symptoms can cause even more stress and more stomach pain.



**Of course, any chronic or severe stomach pain should warrant a visit with your health care provider.** But if your stomach pain is stress-driven, the Anxiety and Depression Association of America advises these self-care strategies to help soothe stress and calm related tummy ills.

- Take short breaks during the day. Practice slow breathing to dampen down your body's stress response. Inhale slowly, pushing your stomach out and then exhale slowly through your nose.
- Exercise — whether it's aerobics, a walk or doing yoga. Just 15 minutes a day can help reduce chronic stress.
- Learn to say **no**. Don't add to your stress level by taking on too many extra responsibilities.

## Non-Traditional Food Shopping

By Jamie Lynn Byram, PhD, CFP, AFC, MBA

**COVID-19 has changed the way people shop**, with many consumers looking for ways to spend less time in physical stores. As online shopping has continued to gain popularity, we have more choices to fit our needs:

- Order from an online-only store and have the items shipped to your home.
- Order from a local store's website and pick up curbside.
- Order your groceries from a local personal shopping service. An added benefit: The shopper can visit multiple stores to meet your preferences.
- Try an online subscription meal delivery service. Consumers choose a meal, and ingredients for the recipe are included. All you have to do is follow the recipe card to cook the meal. Menu options cater to different diets and allergies.
- Online meat or vegetable clubs: Members receive monthly boxes of items selected.

### PROS:

- This shopping method removes temptation for those who struggle with sticking to a list and a budget.
- You can track what you have on hand and the ingredients needed. No more wandering aisles to find particular brands or buying ingredients for incomplete meals.
- Most stores offer coupons for online shopping and curbside pickup.

### CONS:

- It often costs more to shop this way, especially if the service includes delivery fees and if tips are added.
- You may not get exactly what you order, as substitutions may be made.
- With online services, you need to plan meals a couple of days in advance.
- The personal shopper may not be as particular as you are when choosing fresh produce or other items.

## Dirty Desktops

**Here's something that may make you think twice about eating at your desk:**

Researchers at the University of Arizona found that the average desktop has 400 times more bacteria than the average toilet seat. Here are some helpful tips to keep desktops and other work surfaces clean:

**Make it a priority** to spend the last five to ten minutes of your day to clear clutter from your desktop. **Bonus:** It will give you an organized, fresh start to the next workday.

**Clean your keyboard.** Shut down your computer or laptop. Use a soft brush to whisk away trapped crumbs and dirt or use a can of compressed air to blow away dirt. Then, use a cotton swab slightly dampened with water or isopropyl alcohol to clean between the keys. Dampen (not dripping or soaking) a clean cloth with water or alcohol and wipe the keys.

**Don't eat at your desk.** If you must, keep crumbs away from your computer and thoroughly brush off and clean the desktop afterward. Wash your hands before returning to work.

**Do a weekly purge of unnecessary papers.** Either recycle them or file them appropriately.

**Wipe down or dust your desktop and keyboard weekly.** This will keep germs to a minimum.



## 8 DIY Safety Tips

**Working on home projects is a great way to save money and feel accomplished at the same time. However, make sure you don't end up in the emergency room while doing it yourself. Here are eight DIY safety tips to keep in mind.**

1. Always wear recommended personal protective gear, including safety goggles, gloves and hearing protection. Wear closed-toed shoes. Removing jewelry and tying hair back are also suggested.
2. Read the instruction manual. Understand how your tools work before using them.
3. Always paint in a well-ventilated area. If you are working in an area that's difficult to ventilate, use a respirator mask.
4. Don't work when you're tired. It might seem like a good idea to do that last thing on your to-do list, but injuries and mistakes usually happen when people are fatigued.
5. Clean up and eliminate tripping hazards. Make sure obstacles and electrical cords aren't in pathways.
6. Work with good overhead lighting. Use task lighting when projects are detailed.
7. Turn off and unplug your power tools, even if you're stepping away for only a moment. Also, unplug tools before making any adjustments to them.
8. Keep a first-aid kit close by.





# Suicide Prevention

By Eric Endlich, PhD

**Every 11 minutes, someone in the U.S. dies by suicide**, which is one of the leading causes of death. What so many people want to know is: How can we predict and prevent these tragic, seemingly unnecessary deaths? Unfortunately, while we might seek to identify the personality types of people at higher risk for suicide, it is exceedingly difficult to predict the behavior of an individual person.

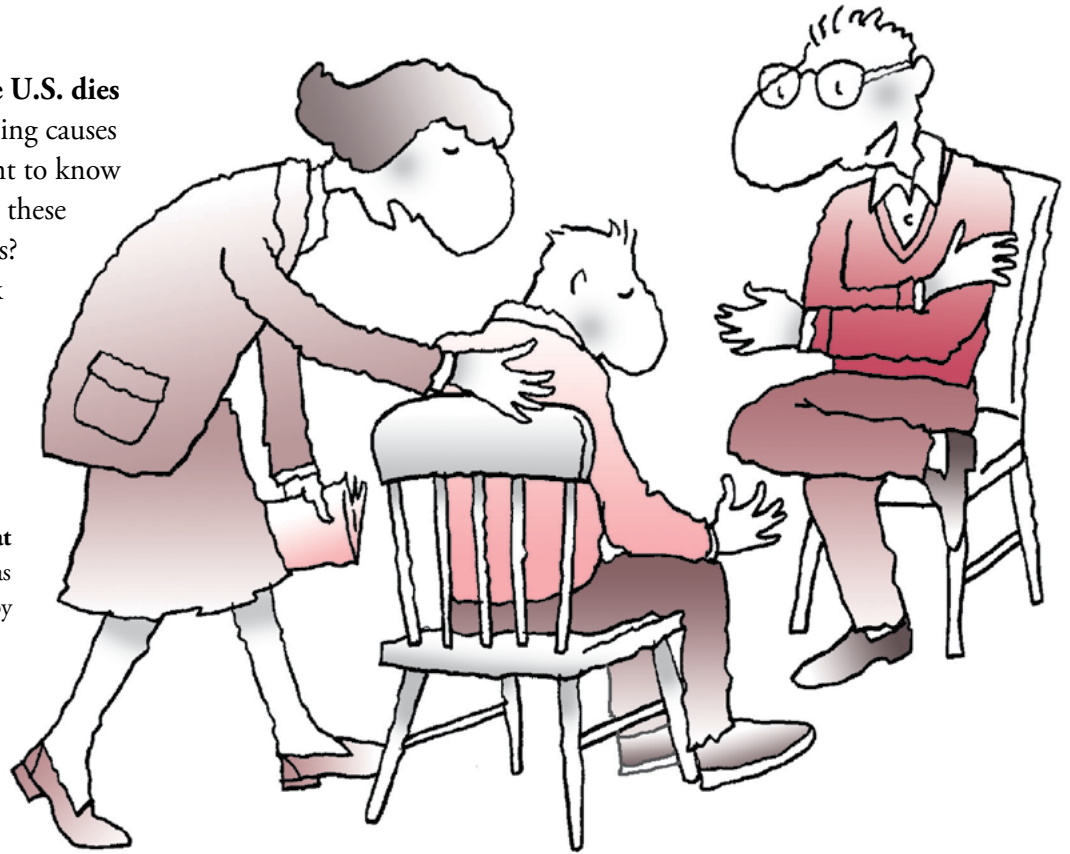
**Still, it's valuable to review the factors that put someone at higher risk of self-harm**, as well as the interventions that are endorsed by experts and supported by research.

**People who are more likely to commit suicide include individuals who:**

- Have a history of suicide attempts.
- Engage in risky behaviors (e.g., reckless driving).
- Have experienced major losses recently.
- Have depression or bipolar disorder.
- Have been victims of violence or abuse.
- Are 75 or older.
- Are young (e.g., high school age) and gay, lesbian or bisexual.
- Are military veterans.
- Are Native Americans.
- Are males, especially those working in construction or mining.

**Be concerned if you observe one or more of the following behaviors in someone:**

- Oral or written comments about suicide.
- Preoccupation with death.
- Expressions of hopelessness or feeling trapped.
- Difficulties with eating or sleeping.
- Loss of interest in usual activities, such as work or school.
- Making arrangements for death (e.g., a will) or giving away important items.
- Stockpiling pills or buying a firearm.
- Decreased self-care.
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs.
- Social withdrawal.
- Dramatic mood swings or emotional volatility.



## How to Help

**Here are some key steps you can take to help someone who might be at risk for suicide:**

1. Ask the person about thoughts or plans to harm themselves. Doing so does not increase the risk; in fact, it demonstrates that you care.
2. Remove access to means of self-harm, such as firearms.
3. Encourage the person to seek professional help if they haven't already. Medication and certain forms of therapy, such as **cognitive behavioral therapy** and **dialectical behavior therapy**. Free 24-hour hotlines are available, too: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is **800-273-8255**. In case of imminent danger, call 911.
4. Consider ways you can support the person, whether it's simply offering to listen when they're upset, sending a caring note or doing practical favors for them.
5. Follow up after a crisis or hospitalization. Keep showing that you care.

# August Fill-in-the-Blank Puzzle

Find out how well you know the topics covered in this issue of the newsletter.

- 1 Intermittent fasting is not recommended for people with a history of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Studies show a high level of \_\_\_\_\_ is linked to more depression, anxiety and insomnia.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ behavioral therapy is recognized as especially helpful in moving past obsessive feelings of regret.
- 4 Today, about 136 Americans die from \_\_\_\_\_ overdoses daily.
- 5 Antibiotics only treat certain infections caused by \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 Organ transplant donors and recipients don't have to be the same \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 Frequent \_\_\_\_\_ should be evaluated by your health care provider, as it could be a sign of sleep apnea.
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the leading causes of death.



You'll find the answers at [personalbest.com/extras/Aug2022puzzle.pdf](https://personalbest.com/extras/Aug2022puzzle.pdf).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Protect Your Immunity**, is at [personalbest.com/extras/22V8tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/22V8tools).

## Dr. Zorba's corner

### Melatonin

**Having trouble sleeping?** You're not alone. Over-the-counter (OTC) sleeping pills usually contain antihistamines, which make you sleepy. However, these medications can make you groggy during the day. If you're an older adult, they can make you dizzy and cause you to fall. Some people turn to OTC **melatonin**, the sleep hormone produced by the pineal gland. Your brain produces it when you're in the dark. It helps time your circadian rhythm, the body's 24-hour internal clock. Research is mixed on the effectiveness of melatonin supplements, but because the side effects are minimal, ask your health care provider about trying it. But if your problem continues, see your provider to rule out a medication side effect or something more serious.

— Zorba Paster, MD

#### Stay in Touch. Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

Email: [PBeditor@ebix.com](mailto:PBeditor@ebix.com) • Website: [personalbest.com](https://personalbest.com)

Executive Editor: Susan Cottman

Advisers: Patricia C. Buchsel, RN, MSN, FAAN; Jamie Lynn Byram, PhD, AFC, MBA, MS; Eric Endlich, PhD; Mary P. Hollins, MS, JD, CSHM; Kenneth Holtyn, MS; Reed Humphrey, PhD; Gary B. Kushner, SPHR, CBP; Diane McReynolds, Executive Editor Emeritus; Zorba Paster, MD; Charles Stuart Platkin, PhD; Cara Rosenbloom, RD; Elizabeth Smoots, MD; Margaret Spencer, MD

Editor: Aimie Miller

The content herein is in no way intended to serve as a substitute for professional advice. Sources available on request. © 2022 Ebix Inc. All rights reserved. Unauthorized reproduction in any form of any part of this publication is a violation of federal copyright law and is strictly prohibited. Hope Health® is a registered trademark of Ebix, LLC.

1 Ebix Way, Johns Creek, GA 30097

Phone: 800-871-9525 • Fax: 205-437-3084