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Multimed Center
Dr. David Taylor, D.C.
74 Main St
Greenfield, MA 01301
USA
<http://www.taylorchiro.com>
dntaylor@comcast.net
(413) 774-7501



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Insurances Accepted at Multimed Center, Inc

Admar	GIC
Aetna US Healthcare	Great West
Amalgamated Welfare Trust	Harvard Pilgrim Health Plan
ASMED	Healthcare Value Management
Associated Plan Administrators	HMC
All Auto Insurance Carriers	Private Health Care Systems
American Specialty Health Networks	The New England
American Chiropractic Network	Northeast Direct
BMC HealthNet	Pioneer Health PPO
Beech Street	Prudential
Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Massachusetts	Masshealth
Managed Blue Cross/Blue Shield	State College Student Health Plans- Boston Mutual
Blue Care 65	Tufts Associated Health Plans
Cigna Healthcare	Unicare
Clais & Co.	Union/Longmeadow-Teamsters
CNA/Mailhandlers	United Health Care
Connecticut General	Western Mass. Preferred Plus
Health New England	Workers Compensation Carriers
EBPA	Many Others. Check Your Network or Call Multimed
Guardian	
The Hartford	



Chocolate: The Next Miracle Food? Chocolate is rapidly becoming the next miracle food. If minimally processed, it contains the highest flavanol content of any food. Several research papers report striking effects from eating these "special" chocolates regularly, including that eating chocolate lowers blood pressure, improves cholesterol levels, and lowers blood sugar. One of the most intriguing suggests chocolate even prevents sunburn.

The Kuna are a group of indigenous people living along the coast of Panama who for the most part live as their ancestors did, hunting and fishing. However, some have moved to Panama City. The Kuna stand out in the medical literature because they have no age-related increase in blood pressure; 60-year-olds have the same blood pressure as 20-year-olds - that is, as long as they stay out of Panama City.

In 2006, Harvard researchers explained the Kuna's apparent "immunity" to hypertension. Island-dwelling Kuna drink large quantities of flavanol-rich cocoa on a daily basis (5 cups or more) and incorporate it into numerous recipes. On the other hand, Kuna who live in the city consume far less cocoa, and what they do consume is commercially produced and thus has little flavanol content.

Chocolate also decreases blood markers of vascular inflammation and improves cholesterol levels. A 2008 paper published in the *Southern Medical Journal* reported that after one week of eating a daily dose of chocolate providing 700 mg of flavanols, subjects' low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels (the "bad cholesterol") fell by 6 percent and their high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (the "good cholesterol") rose by 9 percent.

But wait, there's more. London researchers gave chocolates to 30 healthy volunteers, half of whom ate a high-flavanol chocolate while the others ate a low-flavanol chocolate. A minimal erythema dose (MED), a measurement of how much sun exposure it takes to trigger a sunburn reaction, was calculated at the start of the experiment and again three months later. Volunteers who ate the regular chocolate had no change in sun sensitivity. But in those who ate the high-flavanol chocolate, the length of time it took for their skin to start to "burn" more than doubled. In other words, they could tolerate twice the sun exposure without burning as before they started eating the chocolate.

Two major companies claim to have figured out how to preserve the flavanols in chocolate. One is the Belgium chocolate manufacturer Barry Callebaut, who has developed a special refining process marketed under the brand name Acticoa. This brand of chocolate has been used in most of these recent research papers. Callebaut does not currently sell its chocolate in North America, though a rumor hints that it will introduce it to the U.S. market this summer.

The other company marketing high-flavanol chocolate is part of the Mars candy company and sells their product under the brand name CirkuHealth. This product line replaces Mars' older specialty brand called CocoaVia, which was manufactured and sold for about 10 years, but discontinued in 2009.

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Building the Perfect Abs

It's important to understand that the rationale for abdominal training goes far beyond "looks." The increased strength and recruitment of the abdominal muscles will carry over into better posture and more body control, both in daily life and in sporting movements. Working the muscles you can't see -- the ones deep inside your core areas -- can be a difficult process, but target those areas and your whole body benefits. Not only will you look better, but you'll also have more strength and suffer fewer injuries.



Here's a great beginner routine for anyone who doesn't focus on their abs regularly or who hasn't exercised this area (or any area) of the body in awhile. Perform this routine at the end of your regular workout or as a stand-alone workout, 3-4 days a week. Start with six repetitions per exercise and build up to 15 reps each (except the plank - you can perform one set and increase your holding time, up to one minute). Complete the routine as a circuit, doing one set of each movement in succession and without resting. If that feels easy, try to perform the circuit a second time after a 90-second rest.

1. *Single-Leg Abdominal Press*: Lying on your back on a floor mat or a padded bench, touch your right palm to the right knee. Raise your right leg off the floor so your knee and hip are bent at 90-degree angles. Rest the right hand on top of your right knee. Push your hand forward while using your abdominal muscles to pull your knee toward your hand. Hold for three deep breaths and return to the start position.

Repeat this exercise using your left hand and left knee. Keep your arm straight and avoid bending more than 90 degrees at your hip.

2. *Opposite Hand on Opposite Knee*: Push your right hand against your left knee while pulling your knee toward your hand. You'll be pushing and pulling across the center of your body. Repeat this exercise using your other hand and leg. Hold for three deep breaths and return to the start position.
3. *Hand on Outside of Knee*: Raise your left leg off the floor so your knee and hip are bent at 90-degree angles. Place your left hand along the outside of your left knee. Use your hand to push your leg inward. At the same time, create resistance by pushing your knee away from the center. Keep the back flat. Repeat using your other hand and leg.
4. *Opposite Hands on Opposite Knees*: Place each hand on the opposite knee, toward the inside of each knee. Your arms will cross over each other. Push your hands against your knees and create resistance by pulling your knees in toward your hands. Hold and repeat.
5. *Hands on Outside of Knees* (right hand/right knee): Use your hands to push your legs in toward the center of your body. At the same time, create resistance by pushing your knees out. Hold and repeat.
6. *Plank*: Lie on your stomach. Raise yourself up so you're resting on your forearms and your knees. Keep your head and back in line and imagine your back as a tabletop. Align your shoulders directly above your elbows. Squeeze your core muscles. Create resistance by pressing your elbows and your knees toward one another. Neither should move from their positions on the floor. Hold for three deep breaths, then return to the start position and repeat.

Talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program if you have an existing health condition that limits movement, or if you haven't really exercised before (or if it's been a long time). You want to make sure you're doing these exercises correctly, so ask your doctor to explain the precise movement if you're not

absolutely sure. Then get started on your perfect abs one repetition at a time!

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The Top Stress Busters



There are several different types of stress, and learning how to control them can make all the difference. You have physical stress (lack of exercise, illness, sleep habits, etc.), mental stress (how you deal emotionally with life) and chemical stress (nutritional and environmental). Here are a few straightforward ways to help you reduce all three stress factors.

Proper Breathing: Proper breathing has a dramatic impact on muscle relaxation, tension reduction, normalizing heart rate, and increasing mental clarity. What you want to strive for is learning to breathe mostly with your diaphragm instead of your lungs. The diaphragm is the most efficient muscle for breathing. It is a large, dome-shaped muscle located at the base of the lungs. Learning how to breathe with your diaphragm takes some practice, but in time it will become second nature.

Practice the following technique on a daily basis for 5-10 minutes. Lie on your back, putting a pillow or similar support under your knees to relax your lower back. Place one hand on your abdomen and the other on your chest. Slowly inhale through your nose and make sure the only hand that moves is the one on your abdomen. Try to keep the hand on your chest as still as possible. Exhale through pursed lips and repeat.

Organization: Are you feeling overwhelmed with so much to do and so little time? Unclutter your life and get organized to take back control. Where do you start? You've got to have a plan. Create a list of the five most important tasks you need to complete for the day. Put the one you want to do the least at the top of the list to help prevent procrastination. It is human nature to delay things that make you feel uncomfortable. By accomplishing the difficult task first you set the tone for positive action and motivation the rest of the day.

Healthy Snacking: Eat healthy and eat often to control blood sugar levels. When you go long periods between meals, a hormone known as insulin spikes. This hormone controls how fast sugar enters your bloodstream after eating. Big surges in insulin occur when you wait too long between meals, which may increase stress on your body chemistry. You can get cravings and mood swings. Eating only three meals a day is insufficient for keeping this delicate balance of hormones in check. It is recommended that in addition to eating three regular meals a day, you mix in 2-3 healthy snacks. You will notice a renewed sense of energy and vitality as you provide your body and mind with the nutrition it needs.

Exercising: Get in shape and get out of stress; now there's a win-win proposition. Find an exercise you truly enjoy doing, not one you dread. Once you make it a part of your daily routine, it will become an integral part of your healthy lifestyle. Strive to get 20 minutes a day of some type of exercise. Walking is a great way to start. Get outside and enjoy the open air while at the same time clearing your mind. It can be an escape from all the chaos in your life. There is nothing like the calming effect of being around Mother Nature. Excess weight is also a stress on your body; regular exercise will help eliminate the pounds, improving your looks, your health and your state of mind.

Finding "Me Time": Take some solo time every morning before you start the day. Use this time to reflect on yesterday and plan out today's events. Set your alarm 15 minutes early and wake up to silence. Do not turn on the television or open the newspaper. You may find that problems which have plagued you suddenly become more manageable and put into perspective. When was the last time you sat in a room without white noise all around? Try it and see what happens. I have a feeling you will find it to be one of the most

enjoyable moments of your day.

Try these stress busters for just one month and you can change your life. Even if you can't do all of them, start with a few and see how much less stress you have in your life. Talk to your doctor for other great ways to manage stress.

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This newsletter was sent from Multimed Center, Dr. David Taylor, D.C. - 74 Main St, Greenfield, MA 01301, USA

