

A woman with long, dark, wavy hair and glasses is smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark red t-shirt and blue jeans. She is surrounded by lush green foliage, including large, broad leaves and some yellow flowers. The background shows a building with windows.

Eve

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HOT FLASHES

Exploring the Mystery of Women's Thermal Chaos

By Denise Grady,
*NY Times News
Service*

There comes a time in many a woman's life when she must cast off her garments, fling open windows, toss back blankets and ask repeatedly, "Is it hot in here?" Even her fondest friends and relatives may find it hard not to laugh.

Of the many little adventures that accompany menopause, hot flashes are the most common—affecting as many as 80% of women.—The rush of heat, the drenching sweat and the telltale flushed face last only a few minutes, but they can recur 10 or more times a day and several times a night. And the pattern can drag on for quite some time.

The causes of such thermal chaos are only partly understood. A hot flash is a sudden, intense version of what the body normally does to cool down when it is overheated: blood vessels

near the skin dilate to dissipate heat, and the person breaks into a sweat. The tactic works so well that after a hot flash, many women feel chilled.

But why, when a woman is sitting at her desk or driving down the street, does her body suddenly think it is overheated? The answer is not clear. One basic fact has been known for decades: Hot flashes are linked to declining estrogen levels. In women who have their ovaries removed surgically, the effect can be almost immediate. Some actually begin having hot flashes in the recovery room.

In fundamental ways, hot flashes remain a mystery. They must originate in the brain. Body temperature is regulated there, in a region called the hypothalamus. But no one knows exactly how estrogen, or the lack of it, acts on that region. Nor is it known why one woman sweats through a dozen flashes a day while another, with the same

flagging estrogen levels, stays cool. Similarly, doctors do not know why, in most women, the symptoms eventually go away on their own. And if hot flashes have a purpose or a health benefit, scientists have yet to figure out what it might be.

The unanswered questions have become more important recently, as mounting evidence has cast doubt on the safety of hormone replacement (which can stop hot flashes), especially for long-term use. Hormones are the most effective treatment for hot flashes, but many doctors and patients have begun to question whether taking them just to relieve symptoms is worth the risks, which include slightly increased odds of heart attack, stroke, breast cancer, blood clots and gallbladder disease.

Dr. Robert R. Freedman, a professor of psychiatry and obstetrics and gynecology, has been studying hot flashes for about 20 years. His

studies showed something surprising about the sleep problems that many women have after menopause.

“The common thinking is that the hot flashes wake you up and disturb your sleep, and you feel crummy in the morning,” Dr.

Freedman said. “But we found that half the flashes don’t have wakeups, and half the wakeups don’t have flashes. The insomnia is not necessarily a product of the flashes.”

Dr. Freedman’s experiments have found a major difference between menopausal women who have hot flashes and those who do not. Women without flashes have a “neutral” zone of about 0.7 degrees Fahrenheit, and their core body temperatures can rise

or fall in that zone without making them shiver or sweat. The upper limit of the zone is the threshold for sweating, and the lower limit the threshold for shivering.

But in women who do suffer from flashes, the zone has shrunk so much that it is almost nonexistent, meaning that even a tiny rise in core temperature will cause a

hot flash, and a tiny drop can cause shivering.

For women bothered by hot flashes who do not want to use drugs, Dr. Freedman recommends using air-conditioning, wearing light clothing in layers and keeping room temperatures low, because warm environments can definitely bring on hot flashes. Cold drinks can help ward off flashes.

● My Hot Flashes and Me

By Chloe, WS

When I experienced the worst of my hot flashes, what helped was discovering what would trigger them, plus what I could change in my habits or diet to

counteract them. Although I hardly have hot flashes anymore (they started around 10 or 12 years ago), I still pay attention to what brings them on and have to

JESUS SPEAKING

There are so many unanswered questions for those in the world when it comes to menopause—so many intricacies doctors and scientists just don’t understand. Because the female body is intricately made and designed by Me, it makes perfect sense that only I would have the inside scoop when it comes to how to ride the wave of menopause, knowing what brings on the uncomfortable and difficult symptoms, and how to rise above them. Some of the key “rise above ingredients” are: prayer, the keys, receiving My instruction and comfort through prophecy, and spending time in My Word to give you the faith and peace during this often tumultuous time of midlife.

But in addition, I can give you practical advice on any subject imaginable—whether on the topic of how to prevent hot flashes and other uncomfortable side affects, how to keep your body temperature regulated, and much more. I made your body, and ordained for it to go through the time of change and maturation of midlife, so I can certainly give you the wherewithal to make it through with personalized tips and strategies that will make this period of your life as smooth and comfortable as possible. And remember that it won’t last forever, and is simply a steppingstone to a new era of your life—a beautiful and full part of your life, filled with many blessings from My hand. *(End of message.)*

avoid certain things or they will resume, although not with nearly the intensity of times past.

Here's what kicks them off for me:

- synthetic clothes

(I can't wear *anything* synthetic, except sometimes rayon; I have to wear clothes made of natural fibers that breathe.)

- synthetic blankets or sheets (They brought on the nighttime version of hot flashes—night sweats.)

- caffeine (Had to cut out my beloved coffee, except for decaf, and go slow on chocolate. Sniff!)

- lack of exercise
- not enough sleep

(Now, at 56, I've found the Lord does help me cope better with little sleep than I did at the beginning—that I'd recommend it!)

- stress (Nervous tension will bring them on!)

Things that have helped decrease my hot flashes:

- daily soy intake (A glass of soymilk or some tofu pudding every day stopped the hot flashes almost completely for me, and they increased again when I would skip the soy. Soy has a plant chemical called isoflavones, which are similar to estrogen and provide a natural replacement for it. It takes about two weeks to feel the difference that this natural

remedy makes. I need to drink soymilk with at least 35 mg of isoflavones per serving. I just use it in place of milk in cereal or decaf. TTL, I like it!)

- exercising daily
- getting enough sleep
- cotton/natural fiber clothing and bedclothes
- having a cool drink nearby (just a sip helps)
- asking for prayer (Jesus always works miracles.—Thank God for key power!)

- trusting the Lord (Our sweet Husband is teaching me to trust Him for the biggies, and roll with things that aren't really a big deal.)

One interesting point in the previous article is where it says that if you are suffering from hot flashes, you can also be extremely sensitive to cold. This may be difficult for some people to understand, but it's true. The fact is that at this stage of life your body can overreact to either heat *or* cold.

What you do is slowly change, as the Lord supplies, all (and I mean *all*) your clothing, but especially your blouses, to cotton, ramie, silk, or some natural fiber that can breathe. Then you dress in layers, so you can nonchalantly and elegantly

take off a layer, put it back on, take it off again, and so on and so forth. And while you sleep (in your cotton sheets and natural-fiber nightie), it helps to have a window cracked or a fan on so that there is some circulation of the air on your face, while you are still covered up warmly enough.

Air circulation and bedding can make the difference between sleeping peacefully or waking up drenched, groping around for a dry nightgown, and wondering if you'll ever get back to sleep (or if your poor roommate or husband will either).

When I started having hot flashes, it took me a while to make the effort to change clothing and habits. But as the Lord helped me, I got cotton things, forsook caffeine, started drinking soy milk, paid attention to exercise—and all that coupled with prayer did wonders! Realizing when I am stressed, so that I can take it to the Lord, also helps me prevent the hot flashes that come when I get uptight or nervous.

Our wonderful Husband has helped me to cope with the hot flashes, and they are decreasing more and more until I barely notice them. So I just want to encourage you that "This too shall pass." It does!

Taking the Surgical Path

By Peter (of Rose),
U.K.

I felt led to share the following testimony and lessons regarding faith and healing, in case it can help anyone else who may be facing life-and-death decisions regarding their health. As many of us FGAs get older, some afflictions begin to affect our lives more and more—as mine did—and we have to face serious faith-and-healing decisions.

I first experienced symptoms of ulcerative colitis (inflammation of the large intestine, resulting in loose and frequent motions, weakness, and sometimes pain) shortly before Rose and I left South America for India over 20 years ago, in 1982. I had a checkup in England on our way to India, but all the doctor could offer was that I take medication for the rest of my life. I decided it must be the Devil fighting our move to the field, and claimed the

verse, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God ... and all these things shall be added unto you.” So off we went to India by faith.

It was difficult in India, since public toilets are quite scarce and not “five star” places to visit under any circumstances, let alone with an urgent need! My condition got worse due to the change in diet and environment; nevertheless, the Lord kept me for nearly eight years on the subcontinent, a time I treasure with many fond memories and missionary lessons learned. I had united prayer for healing several times, but the condition continued and the Lord kept me through it all.

We lived and worked on several other fields in recent years, and my colitis never really abated or changed. It was just a constant thing I had to live with. I saw my health situation as something the Lord used to keep me humble, desperate and to

slow me down, and I just had to trust Him for it; He would have to take care of me if I kept serving Him. This was my “health insurance.”

Three years ago, we came to England to help get Activated Europe started. Soon after, my colitis took a turn for the worse, becoming so painful that I had to see a doctor. The pain continued for several months until the problem was sorted out with medication, but I had entered a new phase in my relationship with colitis.

At this point my spiritual pride came out, as my reaction was, “How could You do this to me, God, since I’ve been so faithfully serving You all these years?” I knew I was wrong, but since I had been thinking for years that the Lord would see me through if I put Him first, to now be so hindered by my affliction and to be in the care of doctors knocked my

theology for a loop. With a little time and Word, the Lord helped me calm down and change my bad attitude, and when I prayed about it, the Lord showed me that I should take medication if it helped me serve Him.

Coming in to the care of a specialist doctor for digestive problems, I was warned that my condition had a high probability of developing into colon cancer—of which my mother had died—and this led to a routine of regular medical checkups, which I agreed to. I had never considered man's medical options until this point, but I was told that I might need to consider having my colon removed in the near future. I was still standing on my spiritual pride, believing God would do a miracle for me because of all I had done for Him. I brushed the suggestion aside, thinking I would never need this operation.

My doctor, a Jain from Bombay, was very patient and understanding, never pushing his opinion, but gently explaining my options. He knew I was a missionary and believed in healing, and I was able to explain to him my dilemma of coming to terms with my faith

and trusting God for healing, or taking the medical route. I was his sort of "pet project," as he was amazed that I had lived so long with severe colitis without taking medication, and that I was in such good general health.

In the middle of 2001, a checkup revealed pre-cancerous cell development in the colon. I was given a choice: I could have my colon removed within the next six months and thereby eliminate the possibility of developing colon cancer, or I could wait and trust the Lord. I would only have one chance to make this choice. If I did not have the operation before cancer developed in my colon, it would be too late for surgery. I had a life-or-death decision on my hands to think about for the next six months, which drove me to my knees.

Soon after we came to England, Joy (of Andrew) developed cancer and graduated at the beginning of 2001. I was the "minister" who officiated at the burial, which was a sobering, but edifying experience which set me thinking while all my personal health lessons

were unfolding. Andrew and Joy were missionaries who I greatly admired and looked up to.

I was deeply convicted by Joy's incredible example of victory and praise in spite of how severe and painful her affliction was, even later on when she learned that her cancer was terminal. I felt so small in my struggle with my "light affliction."

Something else that Joy's graduation helped me see was that, if this was the way the Lord was leading me, surgery in time could save my life. The Lord was helping me change my attitude ever so slowly, and it was a major wrench after twenty years of thinking a certain way.

From reading different Letters on healing, I realized that I was not in line for a miracle, as humbling as this was for me to admit. I realized the truth of the statement: "If you have the faith for healing, you'll know it." I had to admit to myself that I didn't have that "knowing" faith.

When praying about whether to take the surgical path or not, I got the following story from the *Good Thots*:

There was once a clergyman whose town was hit by a major flood. The water was a foot deep in his living room. Some parishioners in a boat rowed up to his door, asking him to join them. "No, go ahead," the

clergyman replied. "I'll be just fine. God is taking care of me." So they left.

Then the water rose to the second floor. Back came his anxious parishioners in the boat. Again they asked him to join them. Again he refused.

By the time the boat came back once more, the house had been completely engulfed and the clergyman was standing on his chimney. "Reverend," his parishioners called to him, "Come with us! You'll drown!"

"No," the clergyman

Mama:

"The How-to's of Healing," ML #3153: 37-39.

When someone is ill, especially when it's a serious illness which might require hospitalization or surgery, we need to understand that it's a very grave matter. We need to approach it with desperate prayer, realizing the seriousness and soberness of the situation. The Charter states that the decision of whether or not to go the medical route is ultimately up to the one who has the affliction ("Basic Rights of Individual Members," *The Charter*, point 2.C., pg.12), but it's still the Home's responsibility to pray for him, and the shepherds' responsibility to counsel with him and pray with him about the decision.

Although the final decision concerning medical matters must be made by the individual concerned, the person, the shepherds and the Home need to try to get something specific from the Lord about what the Lord wants done, and then they need to try to support the afflicted one's faith for the direction the Lord is leading. Of course, neither the shepherds nor the others in the Home should be pushy or attempt to override the afflicted person's individual choice in the matter. You can counsel with the person, pray for him, hear from the Lord for him and help him as best you can to prayerfully and wisely interpret the messages from the Lord, but the decision about what action to take or not take is up to the person who is ill.

With all the Lord has said in His Word and the Letters about His power to heal ... I believe He wants to miraculously heal us, and for the most part He usually does, without our seeking any outside help. But we do need to be open to the possibility that in some cases He may want someone to go that route. And if He does, then they shouldn't feel condemned about it, and neither should you condemn them.

replied. "I'll be fine. The Lord is providing."

So they left. And he drowned.

Later, in Heaven, the clergyman angrily made an appointment to see God. "Why did You do this to me?" the clergyman fumed. "I did what You said. I prayed, and You didn't help me."

"Didn't help you?" God answered in surprise. "What do you mean? I sent a boat around to get you three times!" (GT1 "Communion with God," par.448.)

I could just see myself standing on the chimney top, "trusting God." I realized that this medical intervention was the "boat" the Lord had planned for me, even if it was not the one I'd wanted or expected. As I prayed and reflected, I began to see how the Lord had been working over the course of several years to bring me to the point where I was even open to considering medical treatment and surgery for my affliction—not necessarily because I was weak in faith, nor that the Lord didn't love me, but that this was the path the Lord had ordained for me to take. I was then able to decide to have

the surgery full of faith, knowing the Lord would see me through. He told me in prophecy that "this affliction was not unto death."

I sent my request in to the worldwide prayer list, and prepared for the day. I was thrilled to watch the Family's prayers being answered in the many details involved in undergoing surgery. Just before the anesthesia, my doctor (and surgeon) came to say hello. He looked in my eyes and said, "Don't worry. We'll take good care of you." Somehow this gave me the warm assurance of the Lord's voice.

The operation took three surgeons two and a half hours, and I awoke to find myself back in the ward. I was so thankful that Rose was able to spend much of the next eight days with me, holding my hand and stroking my head. It meant so much to be loved and cared for as I recovered. I was surrounded by hospital beds full of people of different ages suffering from different health problems, and I wondered how they handled their situations without the faith I am privileged to know. I realized how blessed I am.

Soon after the operation, the Lord raised up a few nurses who took a special interest in me, and helped me take the necessary steps to get back on my feet as soon as possible. I learned that even though the effort hurt a bit, it was for my own good and I needed to push myself. I was amazed to feel and see the rewards of this; I felt much better almost immediately. Within eight days I was off all painkillers and back home. The doctors and nurses all commented on my quick recovery, which gave me the perfect opportunity to tell them there were lots of people praying for me.

I am still amazed at how drastically the Lord has changed my way of seeing faith and healing as it applies to me—and in the process saved my life. The Lord covered every detail, and as I lay in my hospital bed after the surgery, I felt much like an actor who had participated in a God-ordained, twenty-year-long drama, the script of which was all written and planned with amazing attention to detail, and the lessons were innumerable and life changing along the way. TYJ!

Lesson Learned About Cortisone Cream

By Mercy (of Byron),
Switzerland

About eight years ago, I got eczema around my left eye. As I had a few different creams in my first aid kit, I just tried one after the other (*not* a good idea) until I found one that cleared it up. It was a 0.1% cortisone cream.

The eczema kept returning from time to time, but cleared up again each time with the same cream. So I kept using it for the next several years, as the eczema returned more frequently, and stronger.

Then, about a year ago it started to extend to my other eye. Still I kept using the cream, because nothing else I tried worked and it was bothersome as well as ugly. But then I got concerned as sometimes my eyesight was blurry. On a visit to the optician, I asked if cortisone could cause

damage to the eyes, and she said it was possible.

When we started to use the power of the keys more, I felt I should use it for the healing of my eyes. So I prayed and stopped using the cream, but the eczema got so bad that I had to use it again. Then the Lord showed me my condition would go away gradually, but I didn't know exactly how to proceed. He said He would show me.

Shortly after, I went to visit my sister who told me she had a skin problem and had used a cortisone cream on it which had made it worse. The doctor had told her that cortisone is addictive; the skin demands more and more as time goes on. She had gradually used weaker and weaker creams until she could wean her skin from the addiction, and then use something altogether

different to help her condition.

When I returned home, I asked the Lord how to apply this knowledge to my eczema, and He told me I should wean my skin by using the cream less and less often. So I did that, using it two days apart four times, then three days apart four times, then four days apart, etc.

I am now using it eight days apart, and the eczema hardly shows up. I believe the Lord used the keys to lead me in this step-by-step healing, and that He will clear it up altogether. TYJ!

Key promise: "There is no physical illness or affliction that is impervious to the power of the keys. The healing power of the keys will correct any problem or sickness, as you hold it tightly, expecting miracles."

feature: getting back your body

postpartum

health

American Council on Exercise, with additions from About Exercise Web site and Jill Stovsky, M.D.

After nine months of carrying around that extra weight, you're probably ready to think about your own fitness, including how to shed the weight that didn't disappear when your baby was born. Those last few pounds or kilos can be hard to get rid of, but consistent, safe exercise can help you do just that and maintain your well-being, too.

back in the swing

Getting back to exercise after the birth of your baby should be a gradual process. Start out with simple exercises for the first week or two, such as Kegel exercises and short, slow walks. Kegel exercises should be a priority. They will help to repair and strengthen the pelvic floor.

Slow walks during this initial period will not only help you to feel you're getting back into a fitness routine, but help you relieve tension and get

some fresh air. Don't push yourself—work to establish a regular walking time and keep a steady pace. Do what you can handle, even if it's only 10 to 15 minutes, and increase your time as you become stronger. As you walk, don't overstride, and let your arms swing naturally by your sides. Warm up with five to ten minutes of rhythmic activity such as marching, side-to-side lunges, shoulder rolls, and arm circles.

A return to the aerobic activities you participated in pre-pregnancy usually comes after about six weeks.

Back pain and posture concerns are still present in the postpartum period. The abdominal wall is loose now that the uterus is no longer pressing against it, and it can't adequately support the lower back. Try to incorporate low-back exercises and range-of-motion movements to ease

the strain and strengthen the lower back. You may also experience upper-back strain caused by fatigue and breast weight if you are lactating. Shrugging the shoulders and performing flexibility exercises for the chest and back should provide relief.

toning your middle

You may be anxious to begin abdominal exercises, but do only what you're capable of. Pelvic tilts and abdominal compression exercises are a good place to start. To do pelvic tilts, lie on the floor with your legs bent, feet resting on the floor. Slowly tighten your abdominals and roll your pelvis towards you. Breathe evenly, and try to initiate the movement with your abs. Don't forget to tighten the pelvic floor when doing pelvic tilts, since it may place pressure on it and stretch

it further. As your pelvic floor gradually becomes stronger, other exercises may be added.

eating right

Your first instinct may be to start eating less to expedite weight loss, but since breastfeeding and increased physical activity require more energy during the postpartum period, it isn't recommended. New mothers who breastfeed their babies shouldn't cut their calorie intake.—In fact, they should increase it. Breastfeeding mothers need to take in an additional 500 calories per day to provide their babies with the proper nutrients. If you skimp on calories, you're less likely to get the nutrients both you and your baby need.

cesarean care

If you have had your baby by cesarean section, your body will need more time to heal and regain strength, and chances are you will feel less like plunging into an exercise routine. Start slow and use caution when exercising, especially with your abdominal muscles. It is important to consult with your doctor to develop a

safe exercise program.

the bottom line

Go slowly with exercise to build a safe foundation for taking care of you and your newborn, and you'll both be on the pathway to good health and well-being. Remember, most women won't get back into pre-pregnancy shape for up to a year or longer. Try adding strength-training exercises two times per week to a regimen that includes aerobic exercise at least three times per week. This increases lean body mass and will speed up your metabolism, which may help tone your tummy (and other muscles as well). If your time is limited, you can still include weight training into your schedule. Lift weights while you're watching a movie or listening to music.

Be patient. Work on getting back in shape, and your shape will come back.

Keep these tips in mind as you work toward your goal.

- Weigh yourself only occasionally (not more than once per week) to keep the stress of slow weight loss to a minimum.
- Once you get the green light from your doctor or midwife, any type of aerobic exercise will help you shed the extra pounds or kilos. Exercises that use large muscle groups (walking, swimming, biking, or jogging) and elevate your heart rate are particularly effective.
- If you're new to the joy of exercise, start slowly and increase your intensity and duration over time. If you exercise too hard too soon after delivery, your vaginal flow (lochia) may increase or turn pink—a signal to slow down.
- If you're breastfeeding, exercise when your breasts aren't full of milk; for comfort and extra support, wear a sports bra over a nursing bra.

in his time

Prophecy received by a young mother, two weeks after her baby's birth

Q: Should I start on an exercise program?

A: (*Jesus speaking:*)

You shouldn't be so worried about jumping back into the swing of

things. Trust Me! Your body will return to normal in My Own good time, and you don't need to be so fretful and anxious about it.

It's good to get exercise, but you should make sure you have the right motives, that you're not just trying to lose weight and get back in shape in a hurry.—Not that that's bad, but that

shouldn't be your focus and priority. Firstly, you should be getting in touch with Me, connecting with your little one, rebuilding your strength, and learning to function as a strong family unit. Those are much more important than a little physical activity.

It will be good to start exercising, but take it easy.

Go slow. You can try out that gentle postpartum workout video if you like. You can take short walks when the conditions allow it. It's fine to do little bits here and there, but just don't push it. Relax! You've got plenty of time, so trust Me that I am taking care of you and your body. (*End of message.*)

anytime

primer

By Love (of Abe), Romania

Here is a great tip I got from my doctor after I had our second daughter. I was telling my doctor how I noticed that losing my tummy the second time around was harder; getting it to look sort of flat again definitely took longer than after my first child. Though I wanted to work out, I didn't have much time for abdominal exercises. (This was six weeks after my delivery, not immediately after giving birth.)

She suggested the following: Whenever you're doing something that doesn't take much concentration, such as nursing your baby, reading, or sitting at the computer, just pull your tummy in and

then tighten the muscles, hold it for a few seconds and release. Gradually hold it in tight longer and longer, and repeat the exercise as many times a day as you can.

It doesn't require any special time set aside, but you can do it while you're doing other things. Gradually it becomes easier, and as the muscles get

strengthened your tummy starts showing it too.

This worked wonders for me, so I thought other busy mommies might want to try it too (or anybody who wants a bit tighter tummy). It's great if you can also do your regular workout and use this just as an addition. Of course, check with the Lord—He is the best coach you could have!

don't rush the

workouts

By Mary Brophy Marcus, *U.S. News and World Report*

A sensible exercise program can help a

mother recover from childbirth. Strenuous

exercise right after childbirth, however, can slow healing of the uterus and cause bleeding. It can also slow the healing of incisions from a cesarean section or an episiotomy (a cut made through the vaginal wall to ease delivery).

Because hormonal changes during pregnancy soften connective tissues, joints are especially vulnerable to injury in the weeks after birth. During that period, a new mother should limit herself to slow walking and light stretching.

Once it's safe to exercise more vigorously (usually after six weeks), women should be careful

not to get dehydrated, especially if they are breastfeeding. "We recommend women drink according to their thirst—usually more than eight glasses of fluid a day," says Dawn Houston, supervisor of the lactation department at WellStar Cobb Hospital in Austell, Georgia. Houston says if your urine or the baby's is dark yellow, or if the baby is not producing at least six to eight wet diapers every 24 hours, then fluid intake is too low.

A nursing woman should lose no more than half a pound a week, doctors add. A 2,700-calorie-a-day diet, about 500 more than normal,

is a safe minimum: At that rate, a woman will still shed pounds, because breastfeeding burns lots of calories—about 650 a day by four months after delivery.

New mothers who exercise don't need a special diet, but healthful eating is more important than ever.

- **What to drink.** Water or milk; avoid sugary drinks.
- **No fad diets.** High-protein diets can cause swings in blood sugar.
- **Vary your vegetables.** Try to eat yellow, green, red, and orange fruits and vegetables daily.
- **Fiber matters.** Fill up on whole grains.

— strollerfit: fitness solutions for new

moms and babies

By Amy Stuart, Kara Schneider, Laurie Flanagan and Lisa Kvietok

Your workout doesn't have to happen while baby is sleeping. Exercising with your baby can be a fun time for both of you. There are significant benefits for baby too. You have the perfect opportunity to teach your baby lifelong exercise habits, by setting an example that

fitness is important and can be fun.

Part of making this happen is incorporating age-appropriate games and stimulation for all of baby's senses while you exercise. This will stimulate your baby's mental, physical and emotional growth while you save time and get fit.

Stroller Posture Walk:

Starting your day with a brisk stroller walk is a wonderful way to get some fresh air, spend time with your baby and jumpstart your metabolism for the day. (Eve: *This is a great time to get in some praise and prayer time, while walking around your property, street, or on a*

longer walk with another mom or friend.) Try to head out as soon as you can get baby changed, fed and ready to go.

Crunch Diaper

Change: This is a great way to flatten your stomach. Change baby's diaper and then get down on the floor with your baby for 30 to 50 abdominal crunches.

(1) Lie on the ground with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Place your hands lightly behind your head while keeping your elbows back and out of sight. Pretend to have an apple under your chin to maintain proper alignment.

(2) Curl up half way to your knees, keeping your low back on the floor. Exhaling, contract your

navel to your spine.

(3) Pause, then lower slowly as you inhale. Keep your navel pressed into your spine the entire time.

Try laying your baby on your belly as you do this exercise or prop your baby up with her back to your knees, supporting her with your hands. Give your baby a kiss each time you roll up. Say a letter of the alphabet each time you crunch up and you'll have 26 crunches and your ABCs done in no time!

You can substitute this basic isometric contraction if you are experiencing any discomfort with basic crunches after an uncomplicated vaginal delivery. Lie in the start position for a basic crunch (arms may be resting on abs or crossed over

chest) and tighten your abdominal muscles by 1) inhaling and relaxing the abdomen, then 2) exhaling and tightening a few inches below the surface, pulling the abdomen toward the back of the waist.

Red Light Kegeling:

Kegeling is extremely important exercise for all women, but especially effective after childbirth. Kegels will reduce your risk of incontinence and increase the strength and endurance of your pelvic floor muscles, which have been severely weakened by pregnancy. Try to link a specific activity with performing the exercise to make it a part of your everyday routine—for example, every time you are in a car stopped at a red light.

more strollercize

ideas

By Lisa Druxman and Jenny McCarthy (compiled)

Ready to get started? We've included a sample workout for you to try. Feel free to get creative and modify it for your enjoyment.

Warm Up: Stand in front of your baby and roll your head from

shoulder to shoulder. Always do head "rolls" in the front, never the back. After a few of those, do some shoulder rolls. Roll out any kinks and tension you might have in your body. From there, put your hands on

your thighs and round your back followed by a slight arch. Lastly, stand behind your stroller and do some gentle squats. Sit back as if your bottom were reaching for a seat and then stand back up again.

The Stroller Stride:

The walk is where you will get your cardiovascular workout. Always walk with good posture.

Your shoulders should be dropped, your arms relaxed and your wrists in neutral position as you push the stroller.

Your abdominal muscles should be pulled in at all times. Make sure you're not holding your breath, though.

Your stride is as long as is comfortable. Use your glutes and your thighs in every step. Your feet and knees are facing forward and your foot strikes heel to toe. Okay, start walking. Try to vary your intensity by changing your stride and your speed.

The Muscle: To give you a total body workout, we want to start reshaping those muscles. You can stop during your walk every 5 minutes or so for a body toning "station."

Following are some sample strength-training exercises:

Squat: Begin in a standing position with hands on your stroller handlebars. Feet are about hips-width apart, feet and knees are facing forward. Sit down as if reaching for a seat and then squeeze

your glutes and thighs to bring yourself back to the starting, standing position. Be careful not to go so low as to put stress on your knees. You can push the stroller out as you sit and pull it back in as you come up (optional).

Lunge: Stand behind your stroller with hands on handlebars. Step forward with your right leg about 1.5 times your normal stride. The stroller will move forward as you move forward. Bend your knee to a 90-degree angle, so your right thigh is parallel to the ground and your right shin is perpendicular to the ground. Your back leg is almost straight. Keep your torso upright, with your hips and shoulders facing forward. Use your right leg to come back to your starting position. Alternate with the other leg.

Side Squat Walk: This time have your right side facing the stroller. With the right hand on the stroller, take a large step to the right. Squat down as we did before. This time, you're working more inner thighs. As you come up, pull the left leg in to meet the right. Each squat down is another side step. After about 8 repetitions, do the other side.

Ab Pull: Again, have your right side facing the

stroller. Standing still, use the right hand to push the stroller away, while reaching overhead with the left arm. Use your abs on the left side to pull the stroller back. Focus on pulling the ribs to hips. After about eight to ten repetitions, do the other side.

Push-Ups: Find a park table to do your modified push-up. Your hand should be about shoulder width apart on the table. Your torso should stay straight as you lower your chest to the table and push back up. Do not lock your elbows in the up position.

Dips: Have a seat at that park table or bench. Put your hands on either side of you with your fingers coming off the bench. Bring your body off the bench with your legs at about a right angle on the ground. Lower your body, by bending your arms without letting your shoulders rise to your ears. The work should be felt in your triceps (the upper part of the back of your arm). Push back up. This is one rep.

These are just a few of the many exercises that can be done with your stroller and with your baby. And here are a few other baby-in-tote exercises:

Baby Tilt: Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground. Seat your baby as low on your hips as possible. Keeping your feet planted, squeeze your buttocks to lift your hips. Lower and repeat for two sets of 10. Benefits: This exercise tightens up glutes, hamstrings and abs.

Baby Squats: Hold your baby to your chest facing you and stand with feet shoulder-width apart,

toes pointing slightly outward, abdominal muscles tight. Keeping your chest up, bend your knees so your thighs are parallel to the floor (as though sitting back), being careful to keep your knees directly over your toes. Push up from your heels to return to standing. Repeat for two sets of 10. Benefits: This move strengthens your back, tones saggy abs and firms flabby legs and butt.

jesus speaking

It's extremely important to check in with Me about your postpartum exercise program, as well as your proposed timetable. Depending on your delivery and whether or not there were complications, how many children you have had, as well as a host of other factors, each woman's needs vary considerably. That's why you need to know for sure that you're doing the right thing, and not overdoing it or pushing yourself, which could end up causing more damage in the long run, and the only way to do that is to ask Me. Be prayerful, careful, check in with Me, and take it slow.

And then once you have the go ahead from Me to begin exercising, some of the best and most useful ones are those that you can do on the go or with your baby, such as those included in this feature. They're the most efficient and timesaving for you busy Family moms—those that you can do while feeding or changing the baby, or during your prayer vigil or praise time, or other spare moments throughout the day. In the beginning, when your baby is very young, you may not have a lot of extra time, especially if you have other children, which most of you wonderful moms do. So just do what you can, and I will do what you can't. (*End of message.*)

ab

check

By Colleen Porter,
from *Legendary Abs*

Postpartum moms should check their abdominal muscles for separation before starting any abdominal exercise program, because damage can be exacerbated by exercise if there is separation. Test this by pressing your fingers into the area by your belly button as you attempt to do an abdominal crunch. If you can put more than one or two fingers in between the muscles, they have separated and you will need to modify your crunches.

When doing crunches, place your feet the same way, but cross your arms across the abdomen and squeeze the muscles together as you exhale and contract the abdominals, lifting only your head (not the shoulders). You may also use a length of material (such as old sheeting) wrapped around the abdomen and pulled across to achieve the same effect.

find the best bra fit for you

Please see the **chart on page 18** for quick comparisons between **U.S. bra sizes and other major standards** of measurement. Although the specific details included in this article are written for an American public, we thought that the **overall tips and advice** would be a blessing and helpful to some of you **Family women worldwide. WLY!**

from the **ivillage** web site

We tried on 125 bras to uncover the ones that give the perfect fit, the most comfort, and great cleavage. One of our staff testers had been wearing a 38B for years. So you can imagine her surprise when a professional fitter broke the news to her that she was actually a 36C. "Unbelievable!" the staffer exclaimed. "But you know what? The 36C feels much better—more supportive and comfortable." Her advice? Get thee to a professional fitter; many large department stores have one. Or, if you're strapped for time, at least check your measurements yourself. Keep in mind, though, that bras are like shoes: No two fit the same. You have to try them on.

A properly fitted bra will not only feel more comfortable, but it will also make your clothes fit and look better. First step: Learn how to do the math,

so you can figure out your own dimensions. Here is the secret formula for determining your true size.

Stand straight, and relax. Don't inhale and expand your rib cage as if you're about to blow out candles.

Using a soft tape measure, measure all the way around your body, placing the tape measure right beneath your breasts (example: 30½). Add five to that number, rounding up if necessary to the next even number (36). Congratulations: That's your band size.

Next step: The cup. While wearing a bra, measure completely around the fullest part of your bust (across the nipple) without pulling tight. Make sure the tape measure goes around your entire back (38).

Subtract the number from your band size (38–36=2). The result will indicate your appropriate

cup size, based on the following guide: 0=AA 1=A 2=B 3=C 4=D 5=DD 6=DDD

How to know if you've found an ideal bra? The most important consideration is comfort. Here's what to check for next:

- While putting on the bra, bend over and allow your breasts to fall naturally into the cups. Stand slowly and adjust the bra: Put a hand to each breast and raise the nipple so that it's at the center of the cup. The center of the bra should lie flat against the breastbone. Be sure there is no gap.

- Check that the bra cups are smooth with no wrinkles.

- Finally, turn to the side and look in a mirror to see whether the back of the bra hikes up. If it does, then the bra doesn't fit correctly. The back of the bra should rest comfortably against the middle of your back.

It's also important that the edge of the cup, under your arms, fits comfortably and is not putting pressure on or cutting into your breast in any place.

Q How can I keep my bra straps from falling off my shoulders?

A Try shortening the straps upward on either side of the bra, or wearing a racer back bra (also known as a T-strap).

Q How often do I need to measure my bra size?

A You should recheck your bra size if you've gained or lost more than 10 pounds (4.5 kg), had a baby, or started exercising regularly. In other words, often.

Q I'm on the heavy side. Can a bra help me smooth out my plump back?

A Look for bras that have a leotard band (one that scoops up instead of running straight across the back). You can also try a bra with a wider back band.

Q What do I do if my cup sizes are different?

A The easiest solution is to fit the larger breast and then add padding to the smaller breast.

International Size Chart for Bras

U.S.	U.K.	france	aus-tralia	international
32AA	32A	85A	10AA	70A
32A	32B	85B	10A	70B
32B	32C	85C	10B	70C
32C	32D	85D	10C	70D
32D	32DD	85DD	10D	70DD
34AA	34A	90A	12AA	75A
34A	34B	90B	12A	75B
34B	34C	90C	12B	75C
34C	34D	90D	12C	75D
34D	34DD	90DD	12D	75DD
34DD	34E	90E	12DD	75E
36AA	36A	95A	14AA	80A
36A	36B	95B	14A	80B
36B	36C	95C	14B	80C
36C	36D	95D	14C	80D
36D	36DD	95DD	14D	80DD
36DD	36E	95E	14DD	80E
38AA	38A	100A	16AA	85A
38A	38B	100B	16A	85B
38B	38C	100C	16B	85C
38C	38D	100D	16C	85D
38D	38DD	100DD	16D	85DD
38DD	38E	100E	16DD	85E
40AA	40A	105A	18AA	90A
40A	40B	105B	18A	90B
40B	40C	105C	18B	90C
40C	40D	105D	18C	90D
40D	40DD	105DD	18D	90DD
40DD	40E	105E	18DD	90E

Q I often have “side spillage” near my underarms when I wear a bra. How can I avoid this?

a You are probably wearing the wrong size. Try a different size with fuller coverage or get refitted.

Q Is there any way to make my bras last longer?

a Think tender loving care. Wash bras by hand, or if you do toss them in the machine, use cold water with the wash cycle set to delicate. Try hooking a bra’s eyes together and popping it in a lingerie bag. But never dry a bra in the dryer; let it air dry instead. Bras should be washed every two days or so, because they absorb perspiration. If it’s well cared for, the bra should last a good couple of years.

their best.

Basic manicure: Soak your hands in a bowl of warm water and then rub with moisturizing cream. Gently work the moisturizer into the base of each nail. Use a small piece of soft cotton flannel or cuticle tool to gently push back your cuticles on each finger and thumb. Trim your nails and remove any jagged edges. Massage a dab more of the cream into your hands and fingers. Buff your nails with the flannel cloth or the buffered side of a nail file, but be careful not to buff so hard that your nails burn.

Protecting your hands: Depending on what type of work you do, your hands can receive a lot of abuse from weather, harsh chemicals and cleansers, dirt, grease and heat. Hands can become dry, cracked and rough, with thick hard fingernails and unattractive calluses.

Wearing gloves, when possible (plastic for cleaning jobs, cotton for gardening, woolen for cold weather), can certainly help protect our hands from the elements, but applying a good moisturizer frequently can be a wonderful protective coating as well.

To avoid sun damage

blotchiness and premature aging of our skin, we need to remember to use a good sunscreen of at least a SPF-15 or more.

Avoid soaps that have a high alkaline content. They can strip your skin of its natural oils and leave it dry and tight. Try to use a mild gentle soap that is pH balanced to keep your hands young and supple.

dad speaking

Some of these body care tips that the System promotes can be a little excessive, and it’s important to keep them in their place. We are full-time missionaries first and foremost, and we can’t be expected to spend the hours and hours on personal grooming that many in the world like to indulge in. On the other hand, the only Bible many people in the world read is the one bound in shoe leather—you and me—and taking a little time to have a well-kept appearance can go a long way towards enhancing your sample.

So while I’m certainly

beautiful hands

by rachel webb

Hands are one of our most expressive features, and they need to be cared for to keep them looking

not advising hours spent on personal maintenance, picking up a few of these handy tips that can be worked into your busy schedule can be a real blessing and can go a long way towards keeping your body looking good, healthy and inspiring. You're the temple of the Holy Ghost, so take good care of that temple, and most of all let His love shine through you in all that you do. *(End of message.)*

how to handle garlic

Q At different times there have been articles recommending the use of garlic and advocating its many benefits. However, it is not usually specified how the garlic is to be used. Does it lose its effect if not used raw, or is it okay to sauté it?—And if you sauté it, should you then use more than if eaten raw?—*Gentleness, Ukraine*

a *(From an article in USA Today:)* To get the

most benefit from garlic:

- At the market: Buy unpackaged garlic, so you can feel the bulb. It should be solid, not light, airy or dried out. Press the cloves with your fingertips to be sure they're firm. Look for large-cloved bulbs in which the outer skin is tight, unbroken and free of soft spots.

- In the kitchen: Keep garlic in a cool, dry place. Store it in any container that allows good air circulation, such as special ceramic garlic jars with vent holes or any glass jar, small box, basket or similar container, loosely covered. Most experts do not advise refrigerating garlic. Peeled garlic cloves, tightly wrapped, can become moldy rather quickly in the refrigerator. Freezing, too, ruins uncooked garlic. Cloves that have sprouted are all right to use but may be milder in taste.

(Dr. Koger speaking:) The ideal is to store garlic in a cool, dry place (especially garlic that is still in its skin). But it's not bad or dangerous to store it in the fridge, unless it becomes moldy—at which time, it's best not to eat. Some Homes that are large like to have someone help pre-peel

their garlic for meals, so that it's easier for the cooks and they don't have to peel every little clove of garlic during meal prep. In some places you can even purchase or provision pre-peeled garlic. With peeled garlic, it's better to store it in the fridge, as it lasts longer and doesn't dry out. But it's important to keep an eye on it, so that it doesn't become moldy or bad. If it does, throw it away, as it's better not to risk it. *(End of message.)*

Caution: If you make dressings, oils, butters or marinades containing garlic, be sure to keep them refrigerated, and don't store them longer than a week. Otherwise, they pose a threat of potentially deadly botulism. *[See following article "The Dangers of Garlic-In-Oil" for more info.]*

> Raw or cooked?

- For anti-bacterial or anti-viral effect, only raw garlic will do. Both raw and cooked garlic seem to have cardiovascular, decongestive and anti-cancer benefits.

- Eating more than three raw cloves a day can cause gas, bloating, diarrhea and fever in some people. Cooked garlic is gentler on the stomach.

- All garlic (crushed, chopped in jars, paste, even garlic powder off the spice shelf) can have health benefits.

> Garlic breath:

Eating parsley or mints or sloshing mouthwash only temporarily diminishes garlic breath. Garlic infuses your blood and lungs, typically giving off an odor for 4–18 hours. The strength and duration of the odor depend on your body's individual reaction.

or if you keep it in the fridge for too long. These actions could result in contamination of the product by the bacteria spores that cause botulism.

The bacteria spores that cause botulism—*Clostridium Botulinum*—are widespread in nature, but they seldom cause problems because they can't grow if they're exposed to oxygen. If the spores don't grow, then they can't produce the toxins that make us sick.

However, when garlic containing the bacteria is covered with oil, there's no oxygen present. That means conditions are ripe for the spores to grow and produce toxins. You can slow down the growth of bacteria (and the production of toxins) by refrigerating the product.

What's worse is that there won't be any obvious signs that the garlic-in-oil is spoiled. You won't be able to tell if it's dangerous, because it will still look, smell and taste the same.

If you eat garlic-in-oil that contains the toxins, you can get botulism—a potentially fatal food poisoning that may cause the following symptoms:

- Dizziness
- Blurred or double vision

- Difficulty in swallowing, breathing and speaking

- Paralysis that gets worse with time

You can protect your health and reduce the chance of food poisoning by following these rules:

- Prepare garlic-in-oil fresh, and use it immediately.
- It's best to throw away any garlic-in-oil that's left over. If you decide to store it, make sure it goes into the refrigerator right away, and use it within a week.
- Never store garlic-in-oil at room temperature. Throw away any that has been in the refrigerator for more than a week.

(Dr. Koger speaking:)

Refrigerating garlic-in-oil—such as salad dressings with fresh garlic, etc.—and using it within a week is the safest course of action in most cases. However, you can keep it for up to two weeks if you pray and confirm with the Lord that it's safe in your situation. If you have a fridge that is always very cold, and you live in a cool climate, it would be safe to store garlic-in-oil for up to two weeks. However, if your fridge doesn't keep things that cool, or you live in warm or hot weather, where

the dangers of of garlic-in-oil

from the health canada web site

Garlic-in-oil is any mixture of vegetable oil and raw fresh garlic, either whole, chopped or minced, alone or with other ingredients (such as salad dressings). When you make it at home and use it right away, it's a safe product. It's also safe if you keep it refrigerated on a continuous basis, and use it within a week.

The trouble starts if you store homemade garlic-in-oil at room temperature,

hot air gets into the fridge every time it's opened, it's better to be safe and throw away garlic-in-oil after one week. The only way to know for sure is to ask the Lord.

And an easy way to keep tabs on how long you've been refrigerating something is to stick a little date on the container or bottle or lid (with masking tape and a pen, which comes off easily when it's time to wash the container). That way you can see at a glance how long you have to use up the garlic-in-oil, and avoid it going to waste before it's time to throw it out. *(End of message.)*

health properties of garlic

from the health reaction web site

Garlic has been used medicinally for many years for such purposes as treating bites, tumors, wounds, headaches and heart disease, and preventing infections such as the common cold. Evidence to support the beneficial effects

of garlic is still being gathered.

How to use garlic effectively:

- Preventing cold and flu: Taking small amounts of garlic every day tends to reduce the frequency of colds and flu. Many people who have had one or two colds every year report that using garlic prevents them altogether.

- Handy tip to stop colds and flu: If you sense you have a cold coming on, immediately taking large doses of garlic often stops it altogether. Once the cold has actually started, it seems as though it often needs to "run its course," and although garlic will help, it will not be as effective as if taken beforehand.

- Using as a natural antibiotic: Taking garlic in large quantities can often have a similar effect to taking antibiotics—without the side effects. A suggested dose would be to take 10 garlic tablets/capsules of 2 mg three times a day until the infection disappears altogether.

- How to take garlic: Garlic can be taken with food or on an empty stomach. If taking garlic tablets or capsules with

food, make sure it is the type of food that you would have garlic with—for example, vegetables and proteins, but not fruit or confectionery, which may cause some people to have indigestion.

Raw garlic has all the medicinal qualities still in it, whereas cooking it destroys many of them. There are many ways to eat raw fresh garlic. Always prepare it fresh, just before you intend to use it. If you are not used to eating garlic raw, slicing it very finely and adding it to a small amount of olive oil tends to make it more easily acceptable. You can add it to salad dressings, to soups, stews or most hot dishes just before serving. Have it on sandwiches or on toast with any savory spread.

- A handy tip about the garlic smell: Many people are hesitant to use garlic as a "serious medicine" because of its smell. The best way to overcome this problem is to encourage everyone around you to take it too!

- Precautions: A very small number of people have been known to exhibit hypersensitivity to garlic. This usually shows itself in digestive problems.

(Renewing Your Relationship)

Counsel from Jesus to a married couple

(Jesus speaking:) My dear, sweet loves, I love you both so very much. You're both so precious to Me! I'm so excited with how our love bond and link is growing even more of late, as you've both individually taken up the challenge and commitment of giving Me and My Word more time and priority in your lives. I'm proud of you both!

What you're experiencing in your marriage and relationship is just as I have already been showing you, My loves: This is an attack of the Evil One. The Enemy is furious at your renewed commitment to Me and My Words [after the Feast 2003 Word Revolution]. And he's furious at your spiritual growth because of it. Remember, his main mission is to cast doubt on Me and My Words, and with this renewed emphasis and priority on the Word in each of My brides' lives, his next line of attack is to cast doubt on My Words and their

fruit, application and effect in your lives.

The truth is that as you both draw closer to Me and My Words, strengthening your connections with Me as your Husband, this will cause you to draw closer to each other. This will be the fruit as you put My loving principles into practice—of manifesting My love to each other, preferring one another, acting in unselfishness, tolerance and humility toward one another—of My Word becoming part of you. When My Word is truly living in your heart, and not just your mind, these virtues naturally spring up within your own spirits as a result. The seeds of My Words, received in fertile, receptive hearts, bring forth the fruits of love, patience, kindness, and tolerance.

The Enemy is the author of this recent breakdown of communication between you. His goal?—To cast doubt on My Word and

the fruits of My Word in action in your life and marriage. He'd like you to believe him when he says, "You can read the Word all you like, but look at your marriage, look at your relationship! The Word isn't helping you have more love and respect for each other, and giving the Word and the Lord more priority in your life isn't going to help you or your marriage!" That's his heinous goal, My loves, because he is the father and author of lies, and that's the big lie he's attempting to foist on you both through your recent strained communications. Recognizing this as a direct attack on your link with Me and the Word will give you the fight to go on the attack right away.

Thank you, My loves, for coming to Me and asking for prayer. That's the first step in launching an initiative against this and going on the attack. Don't just lie down and accept this in your marriage, as the poor

worldlings do, who have no other recourse.

I understand that it's easy to let familiarity slip in when you've been with someone a long time. That's natural, that's human, and I don't condemn you for this. There's not a relationship or marriage in the world which hasn't been touched with familiarity at some point in time. The key is in recognizing this intruder and not tolerating or allowing him time or space in the home of your relationship.

Remember, through My Word and the supernatural power of the keys, you can become new creatures at any given time! And not only individually, but your marriage can be renewed and become as a new creature at any time as well—no matter how long

you've been together or what you've been through. All it requires is the desire to be made anew, and for your marriage to be made anew; then I'll do the rest as you pray, claim it, and put My instruction and your faith into action.

Pray and claim this renewal as yours! Seek to be renewed personally first and then make the renewed joint commitment to make things work between you—no matter what it costs personally. Ask Me to give you both a new, vibrant, fresh and passionate love for one another, to be able to see each other with renewed faith and respect, and most of all to be able to see Me in each other. That's the key—seeing Me in each other's eyes.

I have given you both a great love for each other and made you a fruitful

team. I have forged a strong bond between you and have broken down the middle wall of partition between you both long ago, and it's certainly My perfect and highest will that there be no walls or partitions springing up between you.

I have a wonderful keys promise for you! It's been custom designed for you both, My loves, for your forthcoming efforts and commitment toward a more loving, respectful, and deeper communication and relationship. This is My promise to you both:

“Claim the keys of renewal to infuse your relationship, marriage, or commitment with the regeneration, faith, and love needed, and you shall see miracles and all things will become new!” (*End of message from Jesus.*)

(Being Goofballs Together)

By Jim and Judith Sniezowski, The New Intimacy Newsletter

From time to time, you can be pretty goofy, right? Do you worry that your special someone will make

fun of you? Maybe even reject you, if you get too weird? Well, think about how you respond when

your sweetheart reveals that “dumb” side. Do you make fun of it? Or do you embrace it with affection?

Dad speaking:

Have a good laugh at yourself and the funny things you do! The Lord brings a lot of humor into life to add spice and variety, and to keep you from getting too serious. It's the same with marriage. A good sense of humor and being able to laugh at the funny things you do or say, can keep your marriage fresh, lively, and spirit filled. After all, we have a happy God Who wants us to be happy and enjoy the life He's given us.

If you get too serious or sober or reach the point where you're unable to just let your hair down and relax, then you're probably not going to be much fun to live with and your relationship is on the road to becoming stale and boring. Having a good laugh, enjoying life, and keeping a happy spirit, are important ingredients for a happy marriage. The Lord is all in favor of good, clean, loving, humbling fun, and it will do wonders for any relationship! (*End of message.*)

JIM: Tonight, Judith tried on a crocheted hat my mother had sent her. She pulled it way down and she looked sweetly ridiculous. I ran for the camera and said, "Hold it! We have to get this one for our memory book!" Judith squealed, and we captured the moment.

JUDITH: A few minutes later, Jim peeled a banana and found a little brown spot. He gets the willies over bananas with brown spots. I insisted he at least try it

and he refused, saying it was too soft to eat. He is possessed by an unfounded prejudice against ripe bananas. He was adamant. No way!

JIM: Rather than do a number on me, Judith just laughed and ate the banana.

Are we goofy? Sure. Can goofy be fun? You bet.

When you open your affection, acceptance and humor you can enjoy being goofballs together—and that's real romance!

(Blinding Sex)

By David Stovny, Ask Men Web site

This tip is all about making your sex life a little more exciting and interesting with the use of blindfolds.

It's not necessary to go out of your way to purchase special blindfolds. Instead, you can find things around the house like your ties, her scarves, or anything else that can cover your eyes adequately.

Blinded by food: Set up a special dinner for

two in a private place. After the food is served and the table is set, take out two blindfolds and tie them around each other's eyes. After that, proceed with dinner as usual. Be aware that eating may be a little more difficult since your eyesight will no longer help you find the way to that fork full of salad.

As you try to feed her and she tries to feed you, you will find that

you must depend on your other senses to lead the way. The point of the blindfolds is to feel your way through to each other and concentrate on the smell and taste of whatever is tantalizing your palette.

After dinner, which for most couples is a memorable experience in itself, hold hands and lead each other to the bed—leaving the blindfolds on, of course. You will need to rely on your partner for help. Consider this to be a confidence-building exercise as well as a sensual one.

The blind leading the blind: Once in the bedroom, begin touching and feeling each other. Try massaging each other's body parts. Considering that you're blindfolded, both your inhibitions will diminish

somewhat since your sense of sight is blurred. Rub each other's hands, toes, thighs, lips, and whatever other parts will arouse you and her.

Can you imagine what it feels like to engage in sensual foreplay minus your eyesight? It can be more exciting for both of you because you are being sexual without looking at one another. You'd be surprised how exciting things can become when sight is subtracted from the game of love.

Undress each other slowly and begin inhaling, tasting, licking, feeling, and rubbing each other. Finding your way to her "secret garden" is so exciting when you're forced to use your other senses to get there. Her excitement will be so intense that you might find her more than willing

to reciprocate every favor you furnish her with. Pay attention to your other senses because that is the whole point of this experiment.

One at a time: If you prefer to be in control, then blindfold her whilst you have your fun with her body. The fact that she can't see what you're about to do makes her anticipation that much more intense.

Surprise her—begin by licking up her thigh, then stop and surprise her again by nibbling her shoulder. If you continuously move from one end of her body to a completely different one, she'll be so ready for you, that you'll think she's a different woman! The kind of bravado a simple blindfold can provide is incredible.

Are you the blind kind? Perhaps you can be the submissive one and let her tie the blindfold on you. Let her have her way with you. She can go completely crazy. After all, if you can't see what she's doing, then anything she does will feel so good.

If you think sex is good when you can see what she's doing, imagine how crazy it'll feel when you can't see a thing.

Jesus speaking:

It's never a bad thing to add a bit of spice and excitement to your sex life—as long as it's good, clean, godly fun! Variety is the spice of life, and sometimes a little bit can go a long way, especially for those who enjoy it. There's nothing wrong with trying something new, even if it's a little bottle breaking. It may not be your "thing," but you never know ... you just might like it. *(End of message.)*

Glorify God in the Dance

By Vessel, Mexico

About a year ago, I was told I had high blood pressure and also *nervioso excesivo*—i.e., that I was too nervous! What a surprise, since I had always had very *low* blood pressure! Besides beginning to take some natural remedies for the pressure and nervousness, I also began trying to change my diet and to exercise more, praying that the Lord would help me to lose needed weight. Since I have always been overweight and have tried almost every diet known to mankind, I knew that “going on a diet” would only make me more nervous. So I asked the Lord to help me think “healthy,” instead of thinking specifically of “needing to lose weight.”

This really helped, and I began losing weight

slowly but surely. It was difficult, however, to keep the vision for exercising regularly. I did the best I could, but my progress reached a stalemate.

Recently, the teen girls in our Home began taking Hawaiian and Tahitian dance classes at a nearby studio. When I accompanied them to the first class, I had a real desire to take the classes with them. I gave my petition to the Lord, telling Him that Hawaiian dance was something I had always had a burden to learn, and asking if He could possibly work it out.

Just a couple days later, the girls went with some other Home members to see an exhibition of some of the classes at the studio. It was close to Mother’s Day, so those attending played some games, and a

raffle was also held. One of the brothers in the Home won a month’s worth of free classes at the studio—and he gave it to me for Mother’s Day! TYJ!

These classes have really helped me get into shape. My physical stamina has increased, I’m losing weight, and I’m having fun with the girls at the same time! The Home has sweetly agreed to let me continue with the classes, and we pay the small fee on a weekly basis.

I understand that not all of us have the chance to be able to take classes of this sort outside of the Home, but if any of your young people are looking to take some classes of this sort, it might be a way for some of us older folks to enjoy the benefits of them as well.

The Importance of Taking Care of Your Temple

By Dad

Those of you older men and women who are faithful to take care of your bodies and get good, regular exercise are doing your part, and the Lord’s going to do what you

can’t—keeping you strong and healthy for His service.

You who are older deserve a lot of credit for your faithfulness—for eating good, healthy food, sacrificing things that you

once enjoyed and could indulge in when younger, and exercising and doing your best to stay fit even when it’s difficult and you have some aches and pains.

Fitness/Feedback

You're doing your part, and the Lord's going to keep you. And even if it's difficult, it's bearing fruit in your life—it's keeping you healthier, keeping every part of your body stronger. Consistent physical upkeep of your body is so important at any age, but especially important as you get older.

Even if you haven't been super faithful to stay on top of your health or keep your fitness level high when you were

younger, it's not too late to start. Even if you are older and weaker, the benefits of taking care of yourself and being physically active are worth whatever sacrifice it requires. It keeps you healthy, it keeps you strong, and it gives you more energy and vitality, even if it's a big investment and takes more effort than ever.

So I just wanted to encourage those of you who are older—all you

wonderful men and women—that it pays to exercise and do your part. You may not be able to "beat the clock," but it sure will make your days happier and help you to stay in good shape to serve the Lord for many years to come. The Lord knows it takes extra willpower when you're at the age when everything you do takes more effort, but He'll bless you when you do your part to take care of your temple. (*End of message.*)

Feedback

I just finished reading "Coming Out of the Fog" by Gentleness Fighter in *Eve #36* and thought, *Wow! She has had so many of the same experiences as I have had! I am not the only one!* It was so comforting and reassuring. It helped me know that the Lord is in perfect control of how much we can take. I can say amen to all she said! (GBY, Gentleness! ILY!)

I also really appreciate the articles about health and staying fit, as I know that whether I *feel* like doing exercises or not, it is necessary to keep it up and do my part to stay as strong and healthy for as long as possible. (I am going on 58 years!) At times I simply don't *feel* that urge to have get-out, but some of the tips you have published about stretches and other things has helped me to keep at it.—*Tender Joy, Pakistan*

I liked the article in *Eve #29*, "Bend and Stretch," with all the points about the good effects of stretching on the body. I started to do some stretching, and in

a few days I felt those good effects. I felt more flexible, less tense, and generally better all around.—*Mark Heaven, Bulgaria*

Index Spotlight

Body image—*Eve #12:9, 27; 24:10–11*

Natural cleansers—*Eve #25:6–7*

Yogurt—*Eve #12:9; 13:11*

Cover photo: Teresa (of Jay, mother of 7, grandmother of 3), Japan

Suggested reading for ages 16 and up.

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