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Rucking for beginners

Rucking is an excellent cardiovascular exercise and builds strength and stamina. It simply means to walk while carrying weight. All you need is a backpack to hold some weight and a safe place to walk. Here's how to get started:

- **Plan a walking path.** Depending on your fitness level, beginners should plan to walk 2 miles or less. Over time, up your mileage as your strength and endurance increase.
- **Choose a sack.** You don't need a special rucksack. Any pack can work, but backpacks with a hip belt will be most comfortable as you carry more weight.
- **Start with light weights.** Adding 10-15% of your body weight is a good starting point. You can use any weight, such as gym weight plates, heavy books, or water bottles.
- **Wear comfortable walking shoes.** And don't forget to hydrate!
- **Aim for 2-3 weekly rucking sessions.** You should begin to see gains in strength and endurance.

Protect your vision

Your eye health is an essential part of your well-being. Whether you wear glasses or not, your eyes benefit from regular self-care.

As you age, your risk of eye disease goes up. But simple steps taken now can protect your vision in the future.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

The health of your eyes is directly linked to the health of the rest of your body.

- Eat a healthy diet. Dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, and collards provide many essential nutrients for your eyes. Fatty fish such as salmon provide omega-3s which are also good for eye health.
- Exercise. An active lifestyle decreases risk of being overweight, having diabetes, or having high blood pressure.
- Quit smoking. Smoking increases risk of eye diseases like macular degeneration and cataracts.

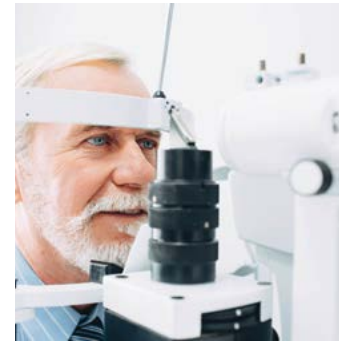


KNOW YOUR RISK FACTORS

Certain factors increase your risk of eye disease. Your family and eye doctor can discuss risk factors with you and help manage future risks.

Common risk factors for eye disease include:

- Age. Older adults are at higher risk.
- Overweight or obesity
- Family history of eye disease
- African American, Hispanic, or Native American heritage
- Health conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes



GET A COMPREHENSIVE DILATED EYE EXAM

Many vision issues have no symptoms or warning signs. A dilated eye exam is the best way to catch problems early.

During a dilated eye exam, your eye doctor will put drops in your eyes to dilate them. This allows more light into your eyes, which makes it easier for the doctor to see your retina and check for problems.

Depending on your risk factors and your age, you should have a dilated eye exam every 1 to 2 years.



PROTECT YOUR EYES

- Wear sunglasses, even on cloudy days. Look for sunglasses that protect against both UVA and UVB rays.
- Use protective eyewear when playing sports or doing home repairs.
- Give eyes a break from screens. Every 20 minutes, look away from your computer at something at least 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Follow good handwashing hygiene to protect eyes from infections.

Fiber spotlight: Chia seeds



Chia seeds are an easy way to add more fiber to your diet. As part of a plant-rich diet, these tiny seeds provide an added boost of nutrients.

NUTRIENTS IN CHIA

Chia seeds are one of the richest plant sources of Omega-3 fatty acids, known for their anti-inflammatory benefits.

One tablespoon of chia seeds provides:

- 70 calories
- 2 grams of protein
- 5 grams of fiber
- 4 grams of mostly polyunsaturated fat as Omega 3's
- A good dose of calcium, zinc, and phosphorus



HOW TO EAT THEM

Chia seeds can be eaten in their whole form, mixed with some type of liquid. When wet, they absorb fluid and swell, breaking apart their outer surface. This allows for digestion and absorption of their nutrients. Try these tips to add them to your diet:

- Add them to smoothies.
- Make chia pudding by mixing ½ cup milk with 2 tablespoons of chia seeds and one teaspoon of a sweetener like maple syrup or honey. Let it sit overnight in the fridge.
- Mix chia seeds into oatmeal or other hot cereal.
- Add them to stir-fries.
- Mix into salad dressing.
- Sprinkle them on yogurt.

Recipe: Chia Oatmeal with Berries



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup low-fat milk
- 1/4 cup fat-free Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup uncooked rolled oats
- 1/4 cup fresh or frozen raspberries (or other berry)

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine milk, yogurt, chia, honey, cinnamon, and vanilla in a container or jar with a lid.
2. Add oats and mix well.
3. Gently fold in raspberries.
4. Cover and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or overnight
5. Enjoy cold or heat as desired.

Nutritional information: Serves 2. Per serving: 381 calories, 8 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 89 g sodium, 59 g carbohydrates, 14 g fiber, 19 g protein

Adapted from MyPlate.gov

Prepare yourself for surgery

Any surgery, whether big or small, will go better if you're fully prepared. A little knowledge and advanced planning can make recovery easier, quickly getting you back on your feet.



ASK QUESTIONS

Find out how long the surgery will take, whether you need someone to drive you home, what restrictions you must follow afterward, and how long recovery will take. Depending on the type of surgery, ask about dietary restrictions, caring for the wound, and supplies for home.

INSURANCE

Make sure you know what's covered and what medical bills you can expect. Some procedures may require prior authorization or additional paperwork for approval.

PREVENT INFECTION

Talk to your doctor about any medical issues, such as diabetes that may increase your risk of infection. If you are a smoker, quit smoking to reduce infection risk. Also, follow your doctor's instructions on cleaning your skin before and after surgery.

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

Your doctor will likely provide instructions for the night before and the day of your procedure. Review those in advance and get any questions you may have answered.

LIST MEDICATIONS

Talk to your doctor in advance about your medication and supplement regimen. Your doctor may make changes to your medication schedule before or after your surgery. Bring a detailed list of your medications on the day of your surgery and review it with the surgical team.

CAREGIVER

Your support person can make a note of any information provided after surgery when you may not feel your best.