



Dear Patient:

Welcome to 2022! In this issue we center on the promise of a new year and a new and healthier you with the latest information on prevention. As Benjamin Franklin sagely advised three centuries ago, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, but as we've learned over the past two years, the value of avoiding disease far exceeds the original equation. You'll find recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and the American College of Lifestyle Medicine as well as a rainbow-colored vision of nutritionally enriching and potentially health-enhancing fruits and vegetables. We also explore a completely novel approach to behavior change developed by a Harvard-trained neuroscientist that can dramatically increase your chance for long-term success at incorporating healthier habits, from weight management to stress reduction.

Wishing you a healthy new year,  
*Dorothy Cohen Serna, MD*

## A Proactive Guide to Staying Well in 2022

*The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will instruct his patient in the care of the human frame, in diet, and the cause and prevention of disease.* —Thomas A. Edison

We may not yet have reached the future envisioned by Thomas Edison, but preventive care, relegated to the back seat during the pandemic, is in full gear once again. It's never been more important to take time at your Annual Wellness Exam to not only schedule preventive screenings but explore in depth your individual risk for disease and develop a personalized plan to make a real difference in your health.

The basics of prevention begin with recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), long considered the gold standard for clinical preventive services. Since 1984, the USPSTF team of volunteer, independent experts in internal medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, behavioral health, obstetrics/gynecology and nursing has conducted rigorous assessments of the scientific evidence for the effectiveness of a broad range of preventive screening, counseling and medications. Their findings, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, laid the foundation for preventive medicine in primary care, from when to get your first colonoscopy to whether an aspirin a day is really the best way to keep a heart attack at bay.

A number of USPSTF recommendations have changed significantly over the years, guided by evolving science and clinical experience. In 2021, these changes included lowering the screening age for diabetes from age 40 to 35, lowering the age for colorectal cancer screening from age 50 to 45, and strongly discouraging people over 60 from taking a low-dose aspirin each day to prevent a first cardiovascular (CV) event. As recently noted by the advisory board, this doesn't represent a flip-flop or misfire, but rather necessary updates based on new research. So, for example, when the latest evidence showed the increased risk of gastrointestinal or brain bleeds in certain populations from taking a daily aspirin to prevent CV disease, the panel reviewed, reconsidered and drafted a revision to its 2016 recommendation. Similarly, when data pointed to the incidence of diabetes increasing at age 35 and the benefits of lifestyle interventions for reducing progression from prediabetes to the more serious type 2 diabetes, the USPSTF revised accordingly.

What's on the radar for the USPSTF? Recommendations being studied now for potential updates include statin use for the prevention of CV disease; vitamin, mineral and multivitamin supplementation to prevent CV disease and cancer; behavioral counseling interventions for prevention of CV disease in low-risk adults; hormone therapy to prevent chronic conditions in postmenopausal women; effectiveness of screening for depression, eating disorders, obstructive sleep apnea, skin cancer, osteoporosis, glaucoma and atrial fibrillation; and a comparison of breast cancer screening methods. Stay tuned for new developments.

*At North Cypress Internal Medicine & Wellness, our focus on disease prevention is grounded in the evidence-based pillars of lifestyle medicine. To start the year with healthiest intentions, we encourage you to incorporate these powerful self-care practices from the American College of Lifestyle Medicine into your daily routine.*



## Take Time for Self-Care





### Keep to a Routine

**SLEEP** A regular bed time and wake time that allows for 7 to 9 hours of sleep is optimal. Have a wind-down routine that includes limiting screen time and being in a dark, cool room.

**EXERCISE** Incorporate physical activity into each day. Stand, rather than sit; take the stairs; stretch; garden; go for a walk. Remember that any movement is better than no movement.

**NUTRITION** To balance mood and stabilize blood sugar, eat complex carbohydrates found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds at regular intervals throughout the day.



### Listen to your Body

Know the signs of too much **STRESS**, and ask for help before you think you need it. **Watch out for:** muscle tension, headaches, upset stomach or difficulty sleeping. Be compassionate with yourself as well as with others.



### Drink Water

Water consumption for hydration is vital! Daily goal for men: ~15.5 cups (3.7 liters). Daily goal for women: ~11.5 cups (2.7 liters).



### Socialize

Reach out to friends, peers, older adults and family by phone, email, text, or social media platforms. Even brief virtual connections improve your mood and immune response.



**Don't rely on alcohol as a stress reducer.**



### Respect Your Emotions

Establish "no judgment" rules for yourself and your family as you experience a full range of human emotions: fear, anger, gratitude and grief.



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF  
**Lifestyle Medicine**

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## The No-Fail Approach to Behavior Change: If at First You Don't Succeed, Iterate

*"I was doing so well. I knew what to eat, when to eat, how to eat, and then I just stopped doing it...and I don't know why."*

If you've ever started a diet with great resolve only to backslide a few months later, the lament above may sound painfully familiar. For entrepreneurial physician **Kyra Bobinet, MD**, it served as the impetus for developing a completely novel approach to behavior change now used by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to enhance its diabetes prevention program. Drawing on her neuroscience training at the UCSF School of Medicine and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Bobinet conducted years of field research aimed at eliminating the inevitable gap between intention and action. What she discovered was a way to change even the most intractable bad habits and permanently replace them with healthy, life-affirming ones.

Bobinet asserts that this approach, called the Iterative Mindset, is the key to success despite seemingly insurmountable odds. In her early work helping frontline Walmart employees manage conditions such as obesity, cardiac disease and diabetes, she observed that only a small percentage of people were able to achieve the necessary lifestyle changes. Notably, they faced every possible headwind of financial and social stress – single parenting, working two jobs and little access to healthy food.

"Nonetheless, they bloomed like a desert rose and were able to lose weight, get off their medications and dramatically improve their health," she recounts. "The only common link between them was an iterative mindset, a resilient way of thinking that helped them approach behavior change like an experiment – with curiosity, innovation and no blame if it doesn't work out as planned."

It's a stark contrast to the way most people view their failure to change

*If you're interested in trying the iterative mindset approach to behavior change, Dr. Bobinet's innovative Fresh Tri app is available at no cost through the Apple App Store and Google Play.*

long-standing habits. Bobinet describes why: "The habenula, a recently characterized area of the thalamus, has two functions – detecting failure and then suppressing your motivation to keep trying. By lighting up whenever you believe you've failed to reach a goal, it places you in a state of learned helplessness, associated with depressive thinking and low self-efficacy. This is when most people give up and bad choices ensue."

She posits that those who form new habits by continually trying again in different ways are able to bypass that switch in the brain. The more familiar performance mindset, as exemplified by SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based) goals, is focused on outcomes and achievement.

"This works well to motivate and to optimize, such as for athletes who are striving to reach the next level," says Bobinet. "In other situations, an iterative mindset may succeed where the performance mindset may not."

While it may appear that the two approaches are mutually exclusive, experts agree that the art of behavior change is more nuanced. At North Cypress Internal Medicine & Wellness, we draw on a combination of tools, such as using SMART goals in an iterative way, to help each patient create their personal vision of health. True change happens when a new behavior turns into a habit, repeated so frequently it grows to be automatic, and eventually becomes part of your lifestyle, says Bobinet. The process can take up to two years, with multiple relapses expected.

"It's completely natural to regress when you're stressed or distracted, but you *cannot fail* as long as you iterate," emphasizes Bobinet. "Don't blame yourself; blame what you tried. Think of it as your behavioral operating system, and continue to version on the habit until it's exactly the right fit for you."

## Color Your World with Fruits and Vegetables

Fill your plate with a vibrant, colorful array of fruits and vegetables for a naturally delicious way to meet your daily requirement of vitamins, minerals and nutrients. Plant foods contain natural compounds called phytonutrients, which may have anti-inflammatory benefits that can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Every color has a contribution to make – aim for a few different ones each day, and enjoy the entire spectrum.

**BLUE & PURPLE** Anthocyanins – powerful antioxidants that may help delay cellular aging, block the formation of blood clots and boost urinary tract health – abound.

blackberries	grapes
blueberries	plums
black currants	prunes
dates	purple figs
eggplants	raisins

**GREEN** Rich in chemicals like sulforaphane, isocyanate and indoles, which may inhibit the action of carcinogens; and potassium, lutein, isothiocyanates, isoflavones and vitamin K, which can be important for vision, bone and blood health. Bonus: greens like kale have as much calcium as milk.

artichokes	kale
asparagus	kiwis
avocados	leeks
bok choy	limes
broccoli	mustard greens
Brussels sprouts	okra
celery	pears
collard greens	peas
cucumbers	romaine lettuce
green beans	snow peas
green cabbage	spinach
green grapes	sugar snap peas
green onions	watercress
green peppers	zucchini

**RED & PINK** An abundant source of the carotenoid lycopene, which may help balance free radical activity in the body, protecting against prostate cancer and heart and lung disease.

beets	red grapes
cherries	red peppers
cranberries	red potatoes
pink grapefruit	rhubarbs
pomegranates	strawberries
radicchio	tomatoes
red radishes	watermelons
red apples	



**WHITE** Healthy compound sulforaphane in cauliflower; potentially anti-tumor properties of allicin and quercetin in onions and garlic; and immune-supporting selenium in mushrooms.

bananas	Jerusalem artichokes	potatoes
cauliflower	mushrooms	parsnips
garlic	onions	shallots

**YELLOW & ORANGE** Boosts beta cryptoxanthin, which supports intracellular communication and may help prevent heart disease; also rich in vitamin C and beta-carotene, associated with promoting healthy vision and cell growth.

acorn squash	papayas
butternut squash	peaches
apricots	pineapples
cantaloupes	pumpkins
carrots	summer squash
grapefruit	sweet potatoes
lemons	tangerines
mangoes	yams
nectarines	yellow apples
oranges	yellow peppers
orange peppers	yellow squash