

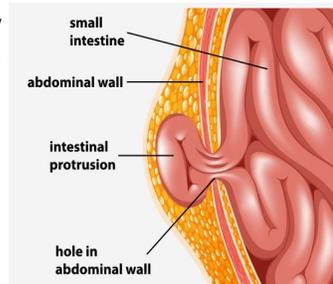


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### Battling of a Bulging: An Abdominal Hernia

#### Don't Ignore Your Groin Pain

Usually, the wall of the abdomen is strong and the muscles keep your intestine in place. But if there's a weak spot, the intestine can push through and form a hernia. A person may be born with a weak spot, or it may develop over time later in life.



- A hernia in the abdomen is very common.
- People of all ages, even babies, get them.
- They are most common in men over 40.
- Lifting heavy objects may cause a hernia if you already have a weakness in the wall of your abdomen.

Most abdominal wall hernias are in the groin, which is in the lower abdomen.

The first sign of a hernia is a small bulge from the lower abdomen.

- You may notice it only when you stand up, cough, jump, or strain.
- Those activities increase the pressure within your abdomen, which can make a part of your intestine pop out of an area of weakness.
- The bulge may go away when you lie down,

If you think you may have a hernia, see your doctor.

- If the bulge is very soft, your doctor may be able to massage the intestine back into the abdomen.
- A small, soft hernia that does not cause pain may not need treatment right away.
- The doctor may suggest watching and waiting for changes, like pain, to develop.

If the intestine can't be massaged back into the abdomen, that means it's trapped. A trapped intestine is dangerous because its blood supply can be cut off (strangulated).

- A strangulated hernia can be very serious and even life threatening.
- Symptoms include severe pain that doesn't go away, nausea, and vomiting.
- Surgery is usually needed if the intestine is trapped - and emergency surgery if it's strangulated.

A hernia is one of the most common reasons for surgery in the United States.

**\*Keep in mind that anyone with sudden pain in the groin should immediately seek medical help\***

#### Tips to prevent a hernia from getting worse:

- Avoid heavy lifting when you can. Lifting puts stress on the groin.
- When you must lift, don't bend over. Lift objects by using the legs, not the back.
- Eat high-fiber foods and drink plenty of water. This helps prevent constipation and straining during



### Skip artificial sweeteners



Although they don't add calories, artificial sweeteners may create their own issues.

A review of studies following more than 400,000 people for 10 yrs. concluded that artificial sweeteners are associated with long-term weight gain. There are several theories why.

Artificial sweeteners may:

- ◆ change the body's way of metabolizing sugar
- ◆ intensify your sweet tooth, or
- ◆ alter your gut bacteria in a way that slows your

## Music-A Benefit to Health

Music has been around since ancient times and is part of every known culture. It can get your foot tapping, lift your mood, and even help you recall a distant memory. Did you know that music can bring health benefits?



When music stimulates the brain, it lights up areas involved in emotion, memory and even physical movement.

Music can help people with Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, stroke, autism and hearing loss.

Playing a musical instrument can improve the ability to focus, improve behavior and help with language development.



So go ahead—listen to and play more music. Ways to add more music to your life:

- Listen to music during the day, like on your way to work or during exercise.
- Sing and dance while you're doing chores or cooking meals.
- Play a musical instrument. Consider taking lessons or joining friends to make music.
- Attend concerts, plays, and other community music activities in your area.

## No time for breakfast? We have a solution.

Monday: cold cereal. Tuesday: oatmeal. Wednesday: cold cereal. Thursday: oatmeal.

If that's the way your breakfasts tend to go, it might be time to hit the freezer case.

### Start with the egg whites.

Get some frozen egg white patties (such as *Good Food Made Simple* brand). One patty is power-packed with 6 grams of protein and is ready in about a minute.



The ingredients: About 35 calories' worth of mostly egg whites and only enough salt to give each pre-cooked patty 140 milligrams of sodium. Cholesterol? Zero. (It's all in the yolk.)

**How should you use it?** Try throwing one on a toasted whole wheat English muffin and stack it with avocado, tomato, spinach, or other veggies and maybe a thin slice of cheese. M-m-m. The possibilities are endless.



### Or try whole wheat buttermilk waffles.

Brands vary but two, 100 percent whole-grain waffles will only run you about 140 calories and 220-300 milligrams of sodium, with a bonus 3 grams of fiber and 4 grams of protein.

**Our advice:** Ditch the maple syrup and top them with plain low-fat greek yogurt and berries.

## Fit Tip - Neck Stretches

### Upper Trapezius Stretch

- Sit on right hand to anchor arm.
- Gently tilt head left dropping ear to shoulder until stretch is felt along side of neck. Hold 30 seconds. Gently return to starting position. Do 2 times and then repeat on other side.
- Watch to be sure head continues to face straight ahead and torso does not tilt to side – the only motion is the head tilting.



### Scapula Stretch

- Looking straight ahead, rotate head to left.
- Gently tilt head down so you are looking towards your armpit and can feel a stretch from the top of your shoulder blade extending up your neck.
- Hold 30 sec. then lift head and rotate back to starting position. Do 2 times and then repeat

