



April 2018

### Occupational Therapy Month

Occupational Therapy (OT) is treatment focused on improving a person's ability to perform **activities of daily living (ADL)**.

Occupational therapists work with people of all ages who need assistance in learning skills to help them live as independently as possible and have productive and satisfying lives.

Some reasons a person may need help include:

- illness
- injury
- developmental delays
- psychological problems



Occupational therapists use work, recreational activities and self-care to increase the client's ability to function as independently as possible.

OT is adapted to meet the specific needs of each person and can include:

- Assistance and training in performing daily activities, such as:
  - Personal care activities. Two examples are dressing and eating.
  - Home skills. Some examples are house-keeping, gardening and cooking.
  - Personal management skills. Two examples are balancing a checkbook and keeping a schedule.
  - Skills needed to drive a car or other vehicles. It also may involve finding out whether special adaptations such as hand brakes are needed.
- Physical exercises to increase good posture and joint motion as well as overall strength and flexibility.
- Instruction in protecting your joints and conserving your energy.
- Fitting splints or braces.

- Evaluation of your daily living needs and assessment of your home and work environments. Your occupational therapist may recommend changes in those environments that may help you continue your activities.
- Assessment and training in the use of assistive devices. Examples are special key-holders for people who have stiff hands, computer-aided adaptive equipment, and wheelchairs.
- Guidance for family members and caregivers.

Some examples of the many different conditions and situations that can be helped with OT.

- Mental and physical impairments a person has had since birth.
- Recovery and return to work after a work-related injury.
- Sudden serious health conditions such as a stroke, heart attack, brain injury or amputations.
- Chronic (ongoing) conditions, such as arthritis, multiple sclerosis, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Learning or developmental disabilities.
- Mental health or behavioral issues such as Alzheimer's disease, post-traumatic stress, substance abuse, and eating disorders.



Source: WebMD Medical Reference from Healthwise

### Nutrition Information

70% of registered dietitians say Facebook is the No.1 source of nutrition misinformation, according to *Today's Dietitian*.

Before you share that story or change your own eating habits because of it, verify it on a fact-checking site like Snopes.com.



And, bookmark **Nutrition Source** ([hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource](http://hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource)), run by the Harvard School of Public Health, for when you want to read up on health foods.

## **HOT** Spice It Up for Lower Blood Pressure

People who love very spicy food consumed less salt and had blood-pressure readings lower than those who steered clear of the tongue-sizzling tastes. The average was 7 points for the top number and 4 for the bottom (the recommended blood pressure is less than 120/80).

That's according to a recent study from China's Third Military Medical University.

Brain scans of the study subjects found something surprising (and useful if you're trying to cut back on added salt): Chili peppers increased activity in brain regions that were also stimulated when salt was consumed. Spicy flavors seem to make the brain more sensitive to salty tastes, so it takes less salt to feel satisfied.

Source: Hypertension, Oct. 31, 2017

## Fresh and Spicy Salsa

### Ingredients:

- ◆ 5 roma (plum) tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- ◆ 10 green onions
- ◆ 2 fresh jalapeno peppers, seeded
- ◆ ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ◆ 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- ◆ 2 tablespoons hot pepper sauce
- ◆ 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ◆ 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ◆ 1 teaspoon salt



### Directions:

Prep time: 15 min.

1. In a blender or food processor, pulse the tomatoes, green onions, jalapeno peppers and cilantro to desired consistency.
2. Transfer to a bowl, and mix in the lime juice, hot pepper sauce, black pepper, garlic powder and salt.

## How to Eat Fewer Sweets

You probably know that overdoing it on added sugars is linked with weight gain, type 2 diabetes, and an increased risk of dying from heart disease, so moderation is important. **Added sugar** are sugars and syrups put in foods during preparation or processing, or added at the table.

The American Heart Association recommends no more than:

- ⇒ 24 grams (6 teaspoons) of added sugar per day for women
- ⇒ 36 grams (9 teaspoons) for men

To give you a reference point, there are about 30 grams of sugar in a 1.69-ounce bag of M&Ms.

So what can you do?

- It's best to avoid sodas and other sweet drinks (the top source of added sugars in the American diet).
- Also, stick with prepackaged, single-serve sweets.
- Keep only a small amount of sugary items at home.



## Fit Tip - Even a Little Exercise Helps

Regular exercise is probably the best prescription for healthy living and healthy aging. Unfortunately, most adults don't get even the minimum recommended amount.

Here are 3 ways to get started today:

- **Take a walk.** It's underappreciated, but walking is probably the single best exercise for most people.



- **Do what you can.** Walk at a pace that's comfortable; it's that simple. As you get fitter, you can increase the time and/or intensity.
- **Break it up.** A few short bouts per day are just as helpful as doing longer sessions and can feel more doable. Aim for 10-minute mini workouts two or three times each day. Go for a walk around the block a couple of times at lunch and then repeat before dinner.