

30 ways to wellness (in Waco!)

By Barbara Elmore and
Gretchen Eichenberg

Photots by Josie Roby

Your hometown guide
to taking care, looking
good, feeling great, living
longer and getting more
out of life in the city

The perpetual search for the fountain of youth puts the cart before the horse, scientists suggest. We should be striving for the fountain of health instead.

And a longer life could be a beneficial byproduct. But just how do we take those first tentative steps to better health after years of maybenot-so-great habits?

Waco Today asked that question of local scientists, nutritionists and fitness experts. Their advice varies from what to eat and drink to maintaining a sense of humor to exercise that helps mind and body. Some of their ideas are easy to incorporate into daily life; some a bit more complicated. All point toward the same goal: feeling good for life.



1

Drink more H2O.

Water is essential to your health and wellness. When it is dehydrated, the body cannot function properly. Cut the coffee and sodas — and guzzle the clear stuff.

So, Waco water's not the greatest. Get a good filter or pay for a delivery service. Locally owned, Desert Spring supplies water for about \$22-35 a month, depending on the size of your family. And, since they refill the water jugs, no plastic water bottles are going into landfills around town.

2

Visit your primary care physician once a year for a complete check-up.

4

Wear sunscreen.

Living under the intense Texas sun, it is especially important to protect your skin from chronic sun damage, which includes enhanced aging and skin cancer.

"Wear a broad spectrum sunscreen that protects from both UVA and UVB rays," said local dermatologist James Mason. "Be sure you wear at least SPF 15. Try to stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. And, be sure to see your doctor if you notice any strange spots on your skin."

Eat right: the Waco experts' way

Throughout life, Wacoans, like all Americans, have heard what's healthy to munch on and what's not so good.

But healthy notions change as knowledge advances. That means we've moved beyond the five major food groups that a nutritionist came up with in 1916. As an eating guide, they are passé, said Robin Jeep, who co-authored a book with Dr. Richard Couey and Sherie Ellington Pitman titled *The Super Antioxidant Diet and Nutrition Guide: A health plan for the body, mind and spirit*.

"Science started focusing on nutrition some 18 to 20 years ago," Jeep said. "Before that we had the five major food groups and that's how we were taught to eat. We began to see that we were not eating correctly."

Some people even challenge the latest version of the USDA Food Guide Pyramid issued in the 1990s. The confusion is enough to make you grab the remote control and rip open a bag of potato chips in frustration. But even that behavior might be beneficial if you modify it slightly: Tune in a science channel or a show that makes you laugh and munch on carrots instead.

Or take the advice of Couey, a retired Baylor professor, and Jeep, a onetime model, jockey, caterer and private

chef. Their book includes sections devoted to reclaiming your health, setting up your kitchen and preparing food, and discussions of the mind-body connection. Jeep also teaches seven-week courses on reclaiming your health. She addresses the confusion and obstacles that people face when they swear off certain foods. But sticking with an improved diet offers long-term payoffs, she said. "The body will adapt to any diet we put it on."

Couey, who speaks worldwide to medical groups about diet, asks his local clients to "take the Couey Challenge" for six weeks. "I kid them," he said. But the diet he prescribes is dead serious: For six weeks, he tells local clients who come to him with complaints of allergies, arthritis, and other ailments to eat no meat, dairy products or anything cooked in palm or coconut oil. Olive oil is good; safflower oil is better, he said.

People who adopt his diet should eat wild fish, that is, fish not raised in fish farms, three to five days a week. This includes tuna, halibut, cod, mackerel, snapper, trout, bass, wild shrimp, oysters, crab, lobster. Avoid grouper, catfish and tilapia, he noted.

He also advises people to eat foods that are low on the glycemic index — foods that have an effect on blood

glucose levels. Couey describes these highly processed, high-sugar foods as "brain fog stuff." The goal is to eat foods that make glucose go up slowly, he said, and processed foods and foods high in sugar make it go up too fast. "I tell my clients, no white bread. No white flour or pasta. No white rice. No baked, fried or mashed potatoes for six weeks."

He also instructs them to avoid soft drinks, jams, jellies, cookies, cakes. "They can eat complex carbohydrates," he said. These include whole-grain breads with almond butter, whole-grain rice, and whole grain oats. "No one-minute oatmeal," cautioned Couey. Also good are legumes, which include peas and beans. "Eat them fresh if you can. Frozen is OK, but not out of a can because they have too much sodium."

Tubers are good except for white potatoes, he said. Sweet potatoes and red new potatoes are acceptable. Carrots, peanuts, onions, beets, radishes and turnips make the good list. All fruits are good, but he advises going easy on such things as watermelons and bananas, especially if you are diabetic.

Also good are cruciferous vegetables, which Couey and Jeep both recommend. These are the "super antioxidants" and include broccoli, kale, cabbage, cauliflower, asparagus and Brussels sprouts. Eat two to five servings a day of these foods, and at least two servings raw. "Cooking foods destroys enzymes," Couey said. "Too much cooked food puts pressure on your pancreas and digestive system,

causing digestive disorders." This leads to overworking the organs, he said, which causes other problems.

After the six weeks end, he advises his clients to eat free-range chicken and grass-fed beef, as well as continuing with the wild fish diet. Salads and nuts, berries and seeds balance out the meat. "Eat a salad every day, and eat raw stuff in it," Couey said. He advises people to stay away from eggs and farm-raised animals because they are grain-fed and often get steroids.

Jeep also emphasizes eating raw plant food, like a daily large salad, and broccoli. "Eat kale, bok choy, dark leafy greens," she said. "Food restriction is not necessary to lose weight. Just eat the right foods. Portion control diets do not work. Consume as many antioxidant-rich foods as possible."

She also advises eating blueberries and pomegranates. "People who want to lose weight should cut back on grains," she said. Concentrate on raw nuts and seeds only, she said. And people with heart disease should eat fewer nuts and seeds and no avocado.

Dr. LuAnn Soliah, director of Nutrition Sciences at Baylor, who wrote the book *Good Things Happen to Healthy People*, also focuses on fruits, colorful vegetables, whole grains and lean meat. "No one food is perfect or flawed," she said. "Eat as few as possible sweets and treats."

Her book advises people to drink water instead of carbonated beverages, unsweetened tea, coffee, and other calorie-free beverages, and soy milk.

5

Study a musical instrument.

"Many people find playing an instrument very relaxing, especially if it is completely different from what they do all day at work," said Dr. Sue Jacobson, associate director and violin instructor of the Central Texas String Academy. "It's an opportunity to use that other side of your brain. And, if you are part of a band, orchestra or choir, music promotes companionship. It's fun to be part of a group of people who share your interest."

Studies have shown music to improve quality of life when designed to: promote wellness, manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication, or promote physical rehabilitation.

To find a music instructor, call the Baylor University School of Music at 710-3571 or the McLennan Community College at 299-8283.

Pray.

6

"Prayer is that practicing of the connection with the Great Mercy who grants us our life out of dust and whose love can exorcise anxiety and worry," said Rev. Jimmie Johnson,

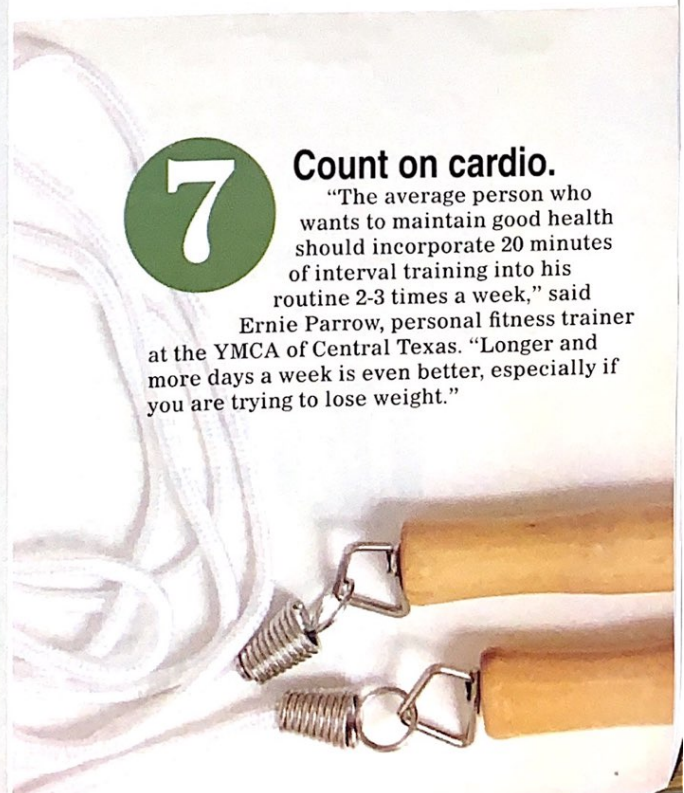
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Waco. Jeep agrees on the importance of prayer in our physical life.

"The spiritual component is the most important thing," author Robin Jeep said. "Everything I do is motivated by my relationship with God. I study the Scriptures, and live life according to the Scriptures."

7

Count on cardio.

"The average person who wants to maintain good health should incorporate 20 minutes of interval training into his routine 2-3 times a week," said Ernie Parrow, personal fitness trainer at the YMCA of Central Texas. "Longer and more days a week is even better, especially if you are trying to lose weight."



8

Take the tests.

Early detection is the key to beating many illnesses. Follow proper protocol for health screenings, like mammograms, colonoscopies, cholesterol and blood pressure. Talk to your doctor about what screenings are appropriate and necessary for your age and personal risk factors.

9

Get a pet.

Studies have shown that having a pet can help lower heart rates and blood pressure, relieve stress and actually add years to our lives, according to the American Humane Association. Cuddling an animal can offer comfort and even diminish fear. And then there's companionship — furry friends add so much to life!

Many animals need a good home in Waco. To adopt a pet locally, contact Fuzzy Friends (754-9444) or the Waco Humane Society (754-1454).

10

Spend some time alone with your own private thoughts.

12

13

Remember this.

Trying to boost your memory? Much of the research on this topic comes from animal studies, so no ironclad proof exists. But these things might help:

1. Eat a high-protein, high-fiber breakfast (eggs, meat, dairy, beans, whole wheat bread or high-fiber cereal).
2. Eat fruits and vegetables daily.
3. Omega-3 fats, which come from fatty fish, flaxseed, canola and soybean oils, and walnuts, might prevent memory loss and dementia.
4. Drink water to prevent dehydration, which can lead to confusion and memory problems.

Source: medicinenet.com

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Go up & down Jacob's Ladder in Cameron Park.

Get your heart pumping by scaling this concrete stairwell, lined with cedar railing, that zig-zags 100 feet from the Cameron Park Clubhouse to Rock Shelter and the Brazos River below. It's great exercise and a sight to behold — all in one.

10 Laugh often!

11

Buy locally-grown, organic produce.

The World Hunger Relief Farm offers fresh and seasonal produce to our local area through its Community Supported Agriculture Food Club. The CSA Food Club is available for two seasons, spring and fall. Members pay a small deposit to cover the initial cost for seed and organic fertilizers. When the season begins, members are charged a weekly rate, and billed at the end of each month. This subscription method helps encourage ownership in the operation, but allows flexibility for families who cannot afford a full payment up front. Vegetables, fruit, herbs and cut flowers are harvested the morning of each pick-up day. Members can collect their produce either at the farm or at a drop site in Waco. Members are eligible to order additional items for an extra charge including grass-fed beef and goat meat, Grade-A goat milk, farm fresh eggs, award-winning honey, organic whole wheat flour, and fair-trade coffee from the Village Store. A CSA membership helps us address local hunger as the farm donates 10 percent of its produce to the Caritas food bank. CSA Food Club enriches the health of our local community with quality chemical-free food.

5

Practice yoga.

One exercise for all is yoga, said Thomas Marvin, a 10-year practitioner who teaches the gentle stretching and breathing exercises almost daily. His students have ranged from ages through 94. Yoga works for "all ages, all abilities, no matter where you were born or what religion you are," he said.

Marvin instructs a Continuing Education class at McLennan Community College and holds several classes for the public at Crestview Church of Christ's Community Center. He also offers a session at a local hospital for survivors of heart disease, cancer and patients with breathing problems. In another setting, a nursing home, "everybody is in a chair of some kind," he said. "Some are amputees or paraplegic. We start off with breathing." This gets oxygen to the body, helping the organs, and calms emotions, he said.

"The number one killer of men and women is heart disease," Marvin said. "Yoga helps reduce the manifestation of stress, which contributes to heart disease."

The exercises also help reduce cravings for cigarettes and alcohol and guide the practitioner to make better nutritional choices, he said.

People who practice yoga regularly should also find themselves gaining flexibility and endurance. "As we gain time on the planet, the body is not as flexible as it once was," Marvin noted. "Disks in the spine dry out. Yoga brings fluid to the disks. This keeps the spinal column active, young and supple, and it adds to the quality of life. If you are more flexible, you can enjoy life more by participating in more activities."

It's not imperative to change clothes and roll out a mat to benefit from yoga, Marvin added. He encourages students to take 20 minutes out of each day at least twice a week to practice yoga breathing and stretching.

"Do seven minutes of breathing, seven minutes of stretches and finish with relaxation. You can do this at the office or wherever, and you don't need to change clothes or drag out the yoga mat," he said. "Stand up and rotate your arms, do a twist, a supported back bend and a forward bend. At the office, try to take a break every 90 minutes and do seven minutes of exercise. At the end of the day, you will be more refreshed and won't feel like you are dragging your body home with you."

For yoga classes in Waco, call:

- The Yoga Place, 744-7157
- YMCA, 776-6612
- MCC School of Continuing Education, 299-8888
- WRS, 776-6575
- Crestview, 776-0083



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Love deeply and, whenever possible, unconditionally.

Health index

AUDIOLOGY

Martin Audiology – p. 75 Earstore – p. 51

Melody Martin, Au.D., Ph.D., CCC/SP-A
Curtis Martin M.A., BC-HIS
4716 W. Waco Dr., Waco
254-772-7253
martinaudiology.com

CLINICS

Arthritis & Osteoporosis Clinic – p. 101

2911 Herring Avenue, Waco
254-755-4514

Concentra Medical Centers – p. 106

4205 Franklin Avenue, Waco
254-772-2777
Concentra.com

Interim Healthcare – p. 100

6701 Sanger Ave., Ste. 106, Waco
254-751-9393
Interimhealthcare.com

Treat n'Go Clinic – p. 69

2403 E. Waco Dr., Bellmead
254-399-6364
treatngo.com

DENTAL

Brazos Braces – p. 17

Bryan E. Taylor, D.D.S.
8304 Old McGregor Rd. #A, Waco
254-776-4818
Brazosbraces.com

Central Texas Dental Care – p. 25

Dale L. Williams, D.D.S.
Monte B. Cooper, D.D.S.
Michael J. Cooney, D.D.S.
506 North Hewitt Drive, Hewitt
254-666-1686
Wonderful-Smiles.com

Steven T. Cutbirth, D.D.S. – p. 31

1613 Lake Success, Waco
254-772-5420
wacosedationdentist.com

Ron G. Evans, D.D.S. – p. 50

2300 Columbus Ave. Waco
254-752-7671

Heart Of The Brazos – p. 15

Charles Clark, DDS
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
103 Burnett Court, Woodway
254-399-9925
brazosurgery.com

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Grow & cook with fresh herbs.

Herbs taste great, have many time-honored healing properties and can be grown in your own back yard. Pick up a copy of the Waco Herb Society's new cookbook — *Herbs, Spice & Everything Nice* — at the Gardner's Gathering from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, April 27 at the Carleen Bright Arboretum. Or, call Cindy McGregor at 772-6446. The book is \$10.

Herb Society Punch

- 2 bunches lemon balm or lemon verbena
- 2 bunches mild-flavored mint
- 1 (48-oz) bottle cranberry-apple juice
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1 lemon, cut in slices
- Lime-flavored sparkling water to taste

Place lemon balm or verbena and mint in large pitcher; cover with juices and lemon slices. Chill overnight, occasionally stirring and pressing down with a wooden spoon. The next day, strain herbs and lemon from mixture. Add sparkling water and new lemon slices before pouring into punch bowl.

18

Volunteer.

Offer your time, talents and skills to care for others and you can't help but feel good. Just a few of the local organizations that need your help now:

- Bluebonnet Hospice, 751-1790
- Campfire USA — Tejas Council, 752-5515
- Waco Humane Society, 754-1454

19

Nurture your friendships.

A good friend can offer love, support, confidence and loyalty — all qualities that make us feel secure, valued and loved. A friend listens when you need to talk or grabs a beer with you when you just want to hang out. Spend time with a friend at one of Waco's beautiful parks, tasty restaurants or right in your own living room over a cup of green tea. Call a friend today!

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DENTAL continued

Hillcrest Dental Care – p.83

Michael T. Thrasher D.D.S.
3500 Hillcrest Dr. Suite 4, Waco
254-753-0313
sedationdentistwaco.com

Lisa L. Kerns, D.D.S. – p. 32

Orthodontist
5180 W. Waco Drive, Waco,
254-399-9800

Larry J. Pritchard, D.D.S. – p. 41

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
7030 Sanger, Suite 100, Waco
254-751-1171
omsapc.com

Starr General Dentistry – p. 14

Kent T. Starr, D.D.S.
Taylor M. Starr, D.D.S.
Martin A. Starr, D.D.S.
6400 Cobbs Dr. Suite 500, Waco

Stonewood Dental – p. 37

Steve Childress, D.D.S.
Jeannette Cunningham, D.D.S.
Chad Latino, D.D.S.
421 N. Robinson Drive, Robinson
254-662-3306

EDUCATION

Center For Aesthetic Restorative Dentistry – p. 49

Director Steven T. Cutbirth, D.D.S.
P.O. Box 91055, Austin
888-271-7774
centerforard.com

Alternative Body Care – p. 101

School of Massage Therapy
716 Lake Air Dr., Waco
254-776-9200

FITNESS

Kaki Simons Pilates – p. 79

254-399-0089

Super Slow Zone – p. 9

6501 Sanger, Waco
254-735-4279
superslowzone.com

WRS Athletic Club – p. 87

5047 Franklin Ave, Waco
254-776-6575
wrsathleticclub.com

HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

Colonial Supplemental Insurance – p. 50

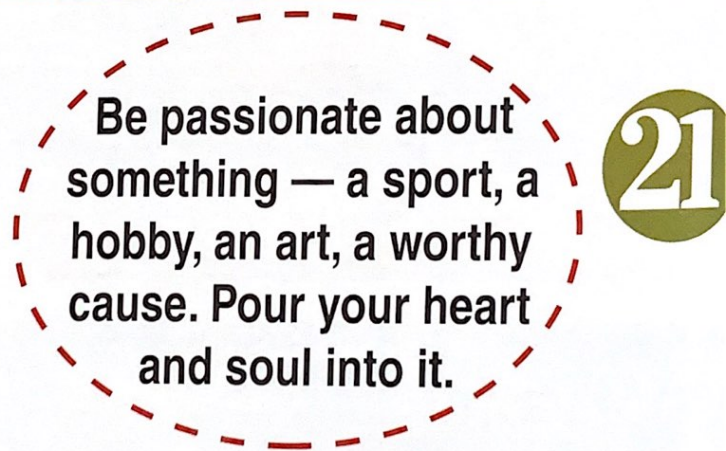
Jack Boyd
7543 Bosque Blvd., Ste. E, Waco
254-399-0168
coloniallife.com

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Tend to your teeth.

"Your oral health directly affects overall wellness," said Kent Starr, DDS. "People with periodontal disease have a higher incidence of heart disease. And, when you can't chew your food, you can develop stomach problems. Visit your dentist twice a year; brush and floss regularly; and smile!"



Be passionate about something — a sport, a hobby, an art, a worthy cause. Pour your heart and soul into it.



Balance your body.

Back pain, knee pain and migraines — that have already been treated by a medical doctor — many times respond to non-medical practices, like synergy release therapy. National certified rehabilitation specialist John Patterson of the Body Mechanics Institute in Waco (one of Waco's best kept secrets) practices just that — and his patients include elite athletes like Andy Roddick, pro golfer Fred Couples, many Dallas Cowboys football players and professional baseball players. Synergy release therapy is a program that looks at the entire body to find out what may be misaligned, causing a specific pain. The treatment includes a balancing of the structure of the muscle system through passive resistance and stretching. Some Wacoans say they swear by it. But, appointments are hard (not impossible) to get and can cost from \$300-500 a visit, depending on the treatment. Contact the Body Mechanics Institute at 666-7366.



Share your burden.

When life gets to be too much, talk to a professional counselor or psychologist to help sort out your feelings. Don't let stress, anxiety or depression worsen — get help today. To find a counselor, check the yellow pages under "counselors," "psychologists" or "psychotherapists."

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HEALTH SPAS

Facelogic Essential Skincare Spa – p. 85

2436 W. Loop 340, Ste. 2, Waco
254-662-9788
facelogicwaco.com

Formela Skin Care – p. 17

114 North 25th Street, Waco
254-756-6656
formelaskincare.com

Ultimate Escape Spa & Wellness Center – p. 28

1217 S. Hewitt Drive, Hewitt
254-235-8800
UltimateEscape.net

HOSPITALS

Hillcrest Health System – p. 120

3000 Herring Avenue, Waco
254-202-2000
hillcrest.net

Providence Healthcare Network – p. 56

6901 Medical Parkway, Waco
254-751-4000
Providence-waco.org

Scott & White – p. 11

800-792-3710
www.sw.org

ORGANIZATIONS

McLennan County Medical Society – p. 111

1105 Wooded Acres, Suite 325,
Waco
254-776-2882
wacomedicine.org

MEDICAL SERVICES

Bluebonnet Home Care & Hospice – p. 63

307 Londonderry, Waco
254-772-5577

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Med-Equip – p. 19

6931 Woodway Drive, Waco
254-772-6970
medequiptexas.com

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Go green.

Improve your health and the health of Mother Earth by taking steps to protect the local environment. Recycle. Conserve energy. Don't litter. Plant a tree. Get involved. Get started today by visiting www.keepwacobeautiful.com for a list of community events.

Spend time with a senior citizen.

Whether it's your own grandmother or a long-time family friend, make time to visit with someone who yearns to talk about the good old days. Really listen. Don't watch the time. Get caught up in the stories. It will affect their wellness — and yours, too.

To find a senior citizen who needs a friend, call Friends For Life, an organization dedicated to connecting the generations to enrich the lives of children and older adults, giving independence, dignity and quality of life to elderly and people with disabilities in our community.

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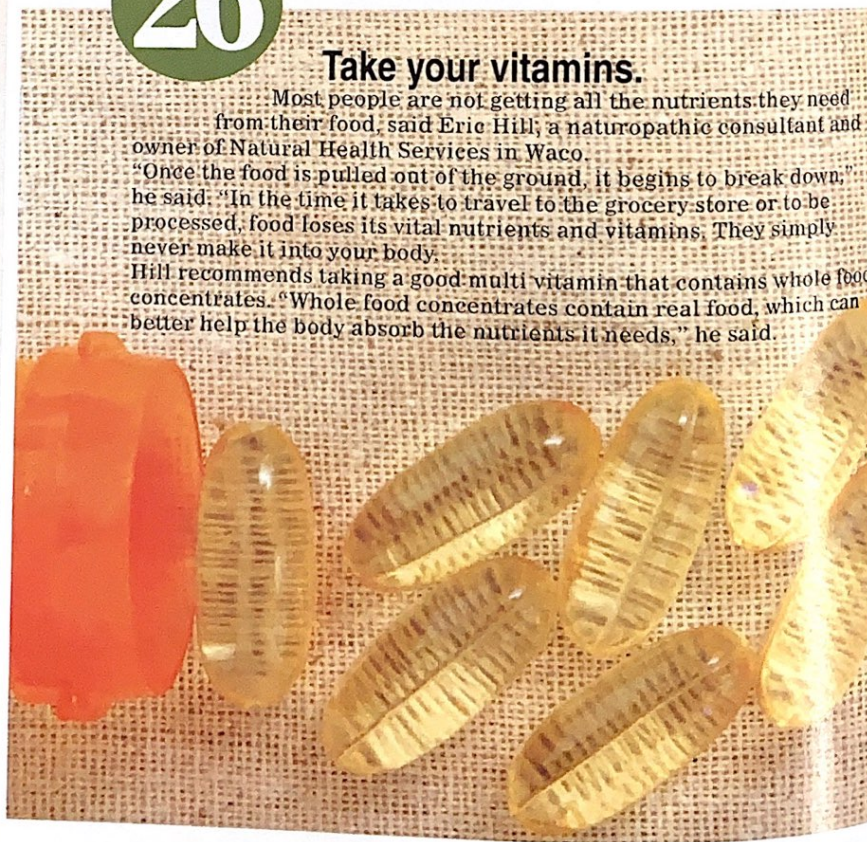
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Take your vitamins.

Most people are not getting all the nutrients they need from their food, said Eric Hill, a naturopathic consultant and owner of Natural Health Services in Waco.

"Once the food is pulled out of the ground, it begins to break down," he said. "In the time it takes to travel to the grocery store or to be processed, food loses its vital nutrients and vitamins. They simply never make it into your body."

Hill recommends taking a good multi-vitamin that contains whole food concentrates. "Whole food concentrates contain real food, which can better help the body absorb the nutrients it needs," he said.



Register for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

Set for Saturday, May 3 at Heritage Square in downtown Waco, this is an event not to be missed.

It's a great reason to train and get in shape while raising funds for the very important cause of curing breast cancer. To register, go to www.komencentraltexas.org.

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PHYSICIANS

Brazos Eye Surgery of Texas – p. 35

Russell E. Swann, M.D.
201 Londonderry, Waco
254-772-4499

Family Health Center – p. 117

Roland Goertz, M.D.
1600 Providence Drive, Waco
254-750-8201
wacofpc.org

Hillcrest Aesthetic and Laser Center – p. 107

Gerard Marroquin, M.D.
Scott Blattman, M.D.
Hwy. 6 & 7300 Bosque Blvd., Waco
254-202-SKIN
hillcrest.net/bosque

Eric F. O'Neill, M.D. F.A.C.S. – p. 105

Plastic / Reconstructive Surgery
1000 W. Hwy 6; Ridge Office Park
#500, Waco
254-741-6832
droneillps.com

Sanger Avenue Medical – p. 42

Patricia Horner Wilcox, M.D.
Robert W. Wilcox, M.D.
6614 Sanger Ave, Waco
254-752-2300

Vein Care of Central Texas – p. 37

William A. Peper, M.D.
Philip H. Croyle, M.D.
405 Londonderry Dr., Suite 303,
Waco
254-751-1700

Waco Center for Women's Health – p. 45

Paul C. Redman II, M.D. Obstetrics &
Gynecology
601 W Hwy 6, Suite 101, Waco
254-772-5454

Waco Medical Laser & Skin Care – p. 27

Lisa Kirk, M.D.
301 Richland W. Circle, Ste. A, Waco
254-776-8009
wacolaser.com

Waco Surgical Group Breast Center – p. 39

David G. Hoffman, M.D.; Elizabeth M. Kiraly, M.D.
Todd A. Moffatt, M.D.; Ross B. Reagan, M.D.
Gayland L. Sims, M.D.; William H. Turney, M.D.
John J. Bawdluniak, M.D.; Christen J. LeBlanc, M.D.
6600 Fish Pond Road,
Suite 101, Waco
254-776-3188
wacosurgicalgroup.com

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Grow your own tomatoes.

Tomatoes are rich in vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps maintain a healthy immune system. They also contain beta-carotene and several other carotenoids that may help prevent heart disease and cancer — especially lycopene, which may reduce the risk of prostate cancer. Tomatoes also offer plenty of potassium, which may help prevent stroke. They are low in calories and big on flavor.

Tomatoes are the most popular garden vegetable crop in Texas, according to Sam Cotner, a horticulturist from the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. They grow well in most areas if planted in well-drained soil where they receive at least six hours of sunlight each day. Wait until all chance of frost has passed before setting out your tomatoes. Visit any local nursery to purchase tomato plants of all sizes and varieties.

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Be creative!

Buy a pad and a set of watercolors — and just let your brush dance across the page in no particular pattern. Draw a picture on your driveway with sidewalk chalk. Redecorate your bedroom in bright, bold colors.

Take a class at Art Center Waco: mosaics, bubble prints, butterfly puppets, painting with Flip Kimmel, kites and handmade bird feeders — all are on the schedule for April.

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Forgive & forget.