

Health, Fitness & Beauty

The threat a sedentary lifestyle poses to kids



free time engaging in unstructured play, typically doing so outdoors, modern kids now live more sedentary lives indoors.

Low energy sitting or reclining while looking at a phone or playing video games means children are spending more time than ever in inactive states, which can lead to long-term, negative health consequences.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only about 24 percent of children between the ages of six and 17 participate in 60 minutes of physical ac-

tivity each day. The World Health Organization reports that more than 80 percent of the world's school-aged adolescent population is insufficiently physically active. Here's a look at how this lack of exercise is affecting children.

- **Increased childhood obesity:** Inactivity is directly tied to the global rise in childhood obesity, as sedentary behavior reduces metabolic rates and alters how the body processes fats and sugars, says the WHO.

- **Reduction in cardiovascular fitness:** Without regular exertion, the lungs and heart will not develop the same ef-

ficiency as they would if kids were physically active. According to data published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, sedentary childhood habits can contribute to arterial stiffness, which is a precursor to heart disease.

- **Potential for weaker bone structures:** Bone density is built through weight-bearing exercises like jumping and running. Sedentary children run the risk of entering adulthood with weaker bones, potentially leading to orthopedic issues and higher rates of fractures.

- **Adverse psychological effects:** Physical activity re-

leases feel-good chemicals in the body like endorphins and dopamine. Highly sedentary children may be at an elevated risk for anxiety and depression because they are not reaping the benefit of these natural mood boosters.

- **Decreased cognitive function:** Cognitive function could be impacted by low physical movement, which decreases blood flow to the brain, says the National Institutes of Health.

Children can benefit from being active, as it offers protective benefits against various health ailments that can manifest during childhood and even later in life.

Physical activity is an important component of a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages. Too often children aren't spending enough time being physically active, and

they could pay a hefty price for that as kids and adults.

The digital age has altered childhood for millions of youngsters. Whereas kids once spent much of their

Clean teeth could translate to clean arteries



Good dental care has the potential to positively impact heart health.

Good oral health that aims to prevent gum disease has the potential to positively impact your heart health.

The Cleveland Clinic points to research that brushing one's teeth may promote a healthier heart as well as healthier teeth. Although taking care of oral health will not eliminate the risk for heart issues down the line, some studies have found that people with gum disease may be twice as likely to have a heart attack or a stroke.

But why? Gum disease is linked to increased inflammation in the entire body, according to the experts. When combined with factors like

high cholesterol and diabetes, gum-related inflammation can contribute to the development of blockages in the arteries.

Gum disease also serves as a portal to where bacteria can enter the bloodstream. Research has found the same bacteria from common oral infections in plaques and blockages in the heart arteries. Bacteria from the mouth also may enter and attack artificial heart valves.

Brushing and flossing teeth at least twice a day and visiting the dentist for regular cleanings and check-ups can safeguard teeth and the heart.

Cherries offer some sweet perks

Eating healthy, diverse food offerings is a step in the right direction for overall wellness. Foods rich in essential vitamins and minerals should be front and center in most people's diets, and one particular fruit is quite literally the cherry on top when it comes to nutritional value.

Cherries, which are small stone fruits (fruits that have a pit or seed inside), boast some impressive benefits. Michigan grows most of the sour cherries in the United States, while Washington, California and Oregon grow 90 percent of the sweet cherries. Whether they're tart or sweet, the nutritional benefits of cherries abound. Here's a look at some of the health benefits.

- **High in antioxidants:** Cherries are high in plant chemicals (polyphenols and anthocyanins) that have antioxidant properties. The Cleveland Clinic says antioxidants fight free radicals, which can cause cell damage and contribute to chronic diseases. Cherries contain vitamins A, C and E.

- **Reduce inflammation:** These same plant chemicals also are vital in reducing inflammation throughout the

body. Healthline says cherries can reduce inflammation by blocking inflammatory enzymes and lowering inflammatory markers. This is good news for people with arthritis or gout, who may find that consuming cherries or drinking cherry juice can alleviate symptoms.

- **Promote restful sleep:** Tart cherries contain key compounds that support better sleep, says WebMD. These include melatonin, serotonin and tryptophan. These natural chemicals help promote relaxation and sleep-wake cycles.

- **Low glycemic index:** Cherries are low-glycemic index foods. The fiber from the skin facilitates a slow increase in blood sugar, which makes cherries a treat for those with diabetes when enjoyed in moderation. Research is underway to see if a healthy diet that includes cherries may reverse prediabetes, says the Cleveland Clinic.

It's always best to thoroughly wash cherries to remove any dirt and pesticide residue. WebMD says cherry pits naturally have small amounts of cyanide in them.



Cherries are nutritionally sound foods that offer a number of health benefits.

One would have to eat a lot of crushed pits for them to be harmful, but it's best to spit out the pits. Pits should be removed before giving

cherries to children. Select cherries that have bright green stems, plump fruit and a darker color, which have a better flavor profile.

Body Therapeutic Healing Center

117 W Main St., Monroe, WA




Occupational Therapy

Hellerwork Structural Integration

Deep Tissue Myofascial Bodywork

Lymphatic Drainage

Injury Rehabilitation Treatment

Advanced Massage Healing Techniques, Michelle Taylor, LMP

Practitioner Rooms Available

Janaki Rose, OTR/L

Cell 206-799-6771

Monroe, Index and Seattle

Health, Fitness & Beauty

Working out after age 50

Fitness is an important component of overall wellness. Indeed, staying active has been linked to a number of noteworthy benefits, including decreased disease risk and improved mental health.

Routine exercise helps a person burn calories and maintain a healthy weight. Tufts Medicine says weight gain is common among aging individuals, with both men and women tending to put on weight in their mid-sections. Weight gain is a risk factor for diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Older adults may need to step up their fitness regimens to combat growing waistlines.

Staying active also can help with muscle and bone density, which can decline with age. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons says exercise is important for maintaining bone strength as the body ages. Strength-training exercises put stress on bones so they can make bones stronger.

Now that it is apparent why fitness is key during senior years, it's time to explore some routines that may be best for people age 50 and older.

- Yoga
- Yoga is a low-impact prac-

tice that improves muscle strength, balance, mobility, and flexibility. All of these factors are important for seniors. For those who find that conventional forms of yoga are too taxing on joints and bones, chair yoga is a lower-impact form of the exercise.

- Cycling

Riding a bike is a cardiovascular workout that offers a wide range of benefits. Most people find riding a bike is easy on the joints, and regular cycling can increase muscle strength and enhance flexibility. The pace and intensity of rides can be customized depending on riders' speed and the routes they ride.

- Pilates

Joseph Pilates developed an exercise routine that now bears his name in the early twentieth century. Pilates emphasizes core strength and stability, but works all the major muscle groups in the body. Since it is another low-impact exercise, it can be suitable for people with joint issues.

- Body weight exercises

As individuals age, they may find that working with dumbbells, barbells or weight equipment at the gym is too



Fitness is key during senior years, and it's time to explore some routines that may be best for people age 50 and older.

taxing. Using body weight to build strength is a low-intensity option. Squats, wall push-ups, chair push-ups, and resistance bands can be used to build strength.

- Walking

Walking is an unsung hero in the fitness realm. According to Better Health Channel, just 30 minutes of walking every day can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and endurance. Walking is low-impact and less taxing on joints than jogging or running.

Seniors have a host of options to stay active as they navigate their changing fitness needs.

Do you need a measles booster?

Many diseases have been pushed into relative obscurity thanks to the widespread use of vaccines. Smallpox and rinderpest were eradicated worldwide due to vaccination. Polio, tetanus, Hib, and rubella are some additional diseases that most people have forgotten thanks to the vaccinations they received in childhood. But one disease that had been largely controlled has experienced a resurgence, leaving many wondering if their immunizations are still potent enough to provide protection.

Measles is back

By the end of May 2025, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had already documented 1,088 measles cases from New York City to Alaska and three people had died. Ninety-six percent were either unvaccinated or their vaccination status was unknown. Measles is highly contagious, even more so than the flu or COVID-19.

Am I protected?

According to Dr. Scott Roberts, M.D., a Yale Medicine infectious disease specialist, most people will not need a measles booster, but vaccination status should be checked.

The measles vaccine first became available in the U.S. in 1963. The vaccine contains

a live but significantly weakened strain of the measles virus. This modified strain is too weak to cause measles, but it is similar enough to the full-blown illness for the body's immune system to recognize it. Previously, measles was so contagious that everyone contracted it before age 15, according to PBS, and people born before 1957 are presumed to have lifelong immunity as a result. Most people born after 1957 would have received the shot as children. People who previously had measles (those born before 1957) as well as those who received two MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) shots as children are considered to have full immunization for life.

Who may need a measles vaccine now?

Older children, adolescents and adults born after 1957 who never had the measles and were not vaccinated or are unsure of vaccination should get at least one MMR shot. Certain groups, like students at post-secondary institutions, health care workers, international travelers, and women of childbearing age, should get two MMR shots at least 28 days apart if they've never been previously vaccinated for measles, advises Yale Medicine.

Before 1989, only one dose of MMR was standard. Therefore, most people born before 1989 likely received only one dose, which is still 93 percent effective. But the same special group of individuals noted above should consider getting a second shot to receive the modern recommendation for a full series of measles vaccinations, says Harvard Health. People vaccinated between 1963 and 1967 also didn't receive the "live" virus, and it is recommended that they get one dose of the live vaccine at some point as well.

Anyone who has questions about their vaccination status can speak with their doctors to determine if a measles booster is warranted. Some wonder if they should have a titer test done. A titer test checks the level of antibodies in the blood, but it is only one part of the immune system's infection-fighting capabilities, and doesn't necessarily reflect one's level of immunity. So it really only will indicate if there are antibodies present, which is a good indicator if a shot was administered at any point or if the person had measles. Working with a medical professional is the best way to navigate the recent rise in measles cases.

CBD and THC: Understanding the cannabis alphabet soup

Recent years have witnessed a growing acceptance of the use of cannabis products to address various health needs and conditions. Consumers may come across CBD or THC on the labels of many different items and wonder if these edibles, lotions or tinctures are one and the same. In fact, CBD (cannabidiol) is not the same as THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol), and it's important to recognize distinctions between the two.

CBD and THC are both produced by the cannabis sativa species of plant, says the National Institutes of Health. But they differ dramatically in their mechanisms of action and effects on the brain. Both compounds interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, but they have very different effects. Cannabis plants actually produce more than 100 cannabinoids, but THC and CBD are the main ones.

CBD

CBD and THC both come from the same plant. However, CBD is not psychoactive, so it will not make a person feel "high." CBD typically is extracted from hemp, which

is considered cannabis with 0.3 percent or less of THC. Marijuana is cannabis with a higher amount of THC. CBD comes from the resin on the leaves and buds of female cannabis plants, as well as the flowering heads of the hemp plant.

THC

THC is similar to CBD, but it is a psychoactive ingredient in the cannabis plant, which makes a person feel "high" when consumed. In the United States, THC products and marijuana are considered Schedule I controlled substances. However, marijuana is legal in some cities and states (and approved in others for medical purposes), but laws are continually evolving. According to

the Department of Justice Canada, cannabis is legal in Canada and is regulated by The Cannabis Act.

Health benefits

Both CBD and THC offer many of the same medicinal benefits. However, Healthline indicates that factors like dose, frequency and product quality may affect how individuals respond.

CBD may be used for treating symptoms of depression, anxiety, insomnia, and schizophrenia. It also may offer mild pain relief. THC largely is used to help with issues like nausea, appetite, pain, and insomnia. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved prescription medications that include either CBD or THC. For ex-

ample, Epidiolex is a CBD medication used to treat rare, difficult-to-control forms of epilepsy. Commercially available products containing CBD and THC also are available in certain areas.

Healthline advises that CBD is typically well tolerated, even in large doses. THC may cause a higher number of temporary side effects and the potential for long-term negative psychiatric effects.

CBD and THC are similar substances but produce very different effects. Use of CBD and THC should be discussed



CBD and THC differ dramatically in their mechanisms of action and effects on the brain.

with a medical professional, and careful considerations must be made to ensure legality where one lives.