

# Health Ally



*Alliance Health Quarterly Newsletter*

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- New! Kidzone
- New! Focus on...



Food for thought...

## FROM THE EDITOR

Summer is here and soon the rains will be falling. With the sunshine and rain comes new life and blossoming plants.

Just as summer ushers in growth, in this edition of Health Ally, you will note that we have grown the newsletter in order to keep you in the loop on recent developments as well as health issues that may be of interest.

IT'S A NEW DAY  
*expect great things.*

To note are the two new sections on page 4 and 5. One is dedicated to our special little ones; (Kidzone), and the other being a focus page for nutritional concerns.

We sincerely hope you enjoy this first extended version of the newsletter and find the information contained within of use to a healthier, happier you.

Happy reading!

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## BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

Has anyone ever asked you what your BMI is?

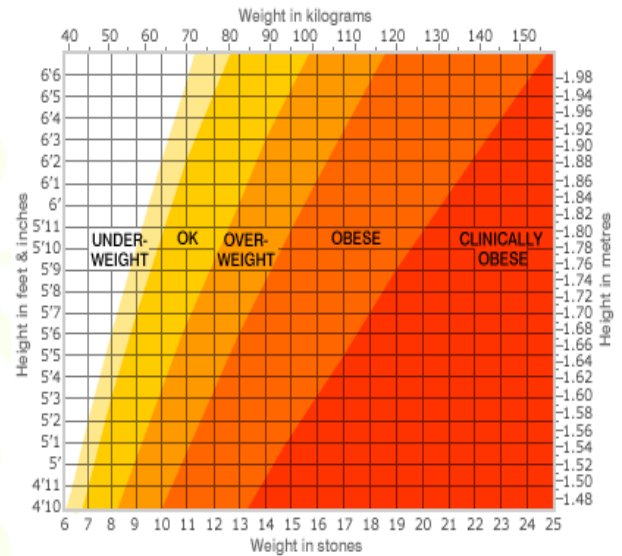
The **body mass index (BMI)**, is a measure of relative weight based on an individual's mass and height.

BMI can also be determined using a table or from a chart which displays BMI as a function of mass and height using contour lines, or colours for different BMI categories.

The BMI is used in a wide variety of contexts as a simple method to assess how much an individual's body weight departs from what is normal or desirable for a person of his or her height.

The current value settings are as follows:

- a BMI of 18.5 to 25 may indicate **optimal / normal weight**,
- a BMI lower than 18.5 suggests the person is **underweight**,
- a number above 25 may indicate the person is **overweight**,
- a number above 30 suggests the person is **obese**.



## COMMON ALLERGY TRIGGERS

Almost anything can trigger an allergic reaction, which can range from mild and annoying to sudden and life-threatening. Your body's defences react to a usually harmless substance, such as pollen, animal dander, or food. Here are some of the most common triggers.

**Pollen** from trees, grasses, and weeds can trigger hay fever or seasonal allergies. You might have symptoms like sneezing, runny nose, nasal congestion, and itchy, watery eyes. Treatments include over-the-counter products, prescription drugs, and allergy shots. Prevent symptoms by staying inside on windy days when pollen counts are high and closing windows.

Proteins secreted by oil glands in an **animal's** skin and present in their saliva can cause allergic reactions for some people. The allergy can take two or more years to develop and symptoms may not go away until months after being away from the animal. If your pet is causing allergies, avoid carpets, and wash him regularly. Allergy shots may be beneficial.

**Dust mites** are microscopic organisms that live in house dust. They thrive in high humidity and feed on the dead skin cells of people and pets, as well as on pollen, bacteria, and fungi. Help prevent

dust mite allergies by covering mattresses, pillows, using hypoallergenic pillows, washing sheets weekly in hot water, and keeping the house free of dust collecting-items such as stuffed animals.

**Molds** make allergens, irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances. Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions in some people. There are many types of mold. They all need moisture to grow. They can be found in damp areas such as basements or bathrooms, as well as in grass or mulch. Ventilate moist areas in your home.

**Milk, shellfish, eggs, and nuts** are among the most common foods that cause allergies. An allergic reaction usually happens within minutes of eating the offending food. Symptoms, which can include breathing problems, hives, vomiting, diarrhoea, and swelling around the mouth, can be severe. Avoid all foods that you are allergic to.

**Fragrances** found in products like perfumes, scented candles, laundry detergent, and cosmetics can cause mild to severe health problems. For most people, symptoms ease up once the scent is gone.

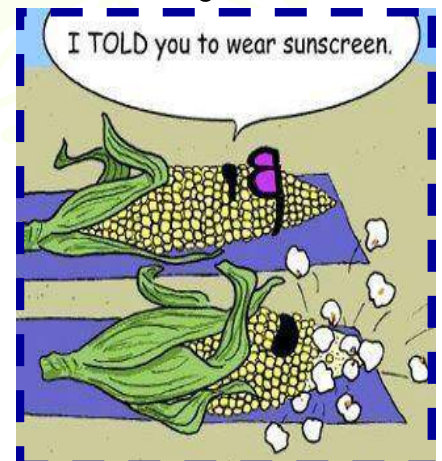
Symptoms of allergies to **medications**,

such as penicillin or aspirin, can range from mild to life-threatening and can include hives, itchy eyes, congestion, and swelling in the face, mouth and throat. If you're exposed, mild symptoms may be treated with antihistamines. If you're allergic to any medication, wear a MedicAlert bracelet.

Not only are **cockroaches** creepy, but a protein in their droppings can be a troublesome allergen. Treat for roaches by using pesticides, keeping a clean kitchen, and repairing cracks and holes in floors, walls, and windows to stop them from entering your home.

Have a happy and healthy summer!

On a lighter note...





# EVERY DROP COUNTS! SEPTEMBER BLOOD DRIVE IN PICTURES

A special thank you to all who came through and donated blood on the recent blood drive held at the Alliance Health offices on the 4th of September. Your contribution could help save a life.

There was a good turnout as members and non-members came in to play their part and brought in friends and relatives as well.

The Alliance Health staff members could not be outdone as they were also seen availing themselves to add that extra pint which could mean a second chance at life for a person in need some day.

Alliance Health in conjunction with National Blood Transfusion Service have high expectations that future blood drive efforts will be bigger and better and that those who could not make it for various reasons will be able to play a part.

**YOU** can make a difference: Give blood and save a life. Every drop counts.



Grp Chairman Leading by example



**WHEN DID YOU  
LAST  
GIVE BLOOD?**





## RIDDLE DIDDLE!!!!

Q1 What has a face and two hands but no arms or legs?

Q2 What is the easiest way to double your money?

Q3 What has a thumb and four fingers but is not alive?

Q4 What has to be broken before you can use it?

Q5 What has a neck but no head?

Q6 What gets wetter as it dries?

Q7 What goes up and doesn't come back down?

Q8 What belongs to you but is used more by others?

Q9 Everyone has it and no one can lose it, what is it?

Q10 It's been around for millions of years, but it's no more than a month old. What is it?  
(Answers on page 6)

## WHY IS HANDWASHING SO IMPORTANT???

*"Did you wash your hands?????"*

How many times did you hear that today? Probably a lot. But why are adults so hung up on hand washing?

Washing your hands is the best way to stop germs from spreading. Think about all of the things that you touched today — from the telephone to the toilet. Maybe you blew your nose in a tissue too.

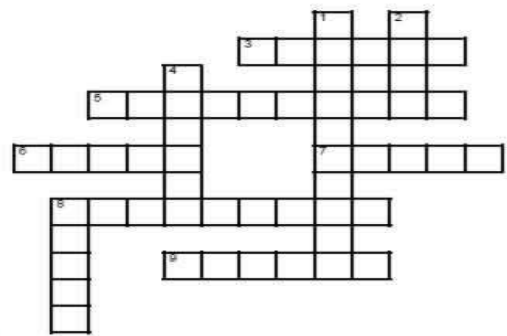
Whatever you did today, you came into contact with germs. It's easy for a germ on your hand to end up in your mouth. Think about how many foods you eat with your hands.

Remember to wash your hands:







- before eating or touching food (if you're helping cook or bake)
- after using the bathroom
- after blowing your nose or coughing
- after touching pets or other animals
- after playing outside
- before and after visiting a sick relative or friend







## Fruits Crossword



### Across

3. gr \_ \_ \_ \_ 
5. st \_ \_ w \_ e \_ \_ y 
6. l \_ \_ \_ 
7. m \_ \_ g \_ 
8. p \_ n \_ ap \_ \_ 
9. b \_ n \_ n \_ 

### Down

1. w \_ t \_ r m \_ l \_ n 
2. p \_ \_ r 
4. or \_ \_ \_ \_ 
8. p \_ \_ \_ 



## YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!!

## FOCUS ON: BREAKFAST



Everyone needs a tasty, filling breakfast that supplies energy for the whole morning -- even if you're not a "morning person." Simple breakfasts can be satisfying, as these easy ideas show.

### Smoothie

One of the fastest (and yummiest) ways to get fruit, protein, and calcium is with smoothies. You can use frozen berries when fresh ones aren't in season. They have more flavour and vitamins than out-of-season berries.

Toss into the blender:

- A handful of ice cubes
- Frozen or ripe fruit chunks (like mango or strawberries)
- 3/4 cup low-fat, plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup orange juice

### Peanut Butter Waffle

Instead of dousing a whole-grain or bran toaster waffle in syrup, cut

the sugar and boost the protein and fibre by spreading it with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter. You can also sprinkle on 1 tablespoon of raisins, sesame seeds, or extra peanuts for even more fibre, which helps deliver the meal's nutrients slowly and steadily.

### Cereal "Sundae"

A bowl of fibre-rich bran flakes with 8 ounces of low-fat milk is nearly the perfect breakfast. Make it portable by replacing the milk with vanilla yogurt. Increase the fibre and vitamins by adding 1/4 cup of nuts or fresh or dried fruit.

## TOO BUSY FOR BREAKFAST?? THINK AGAIN...

Skipping breakfast is like starting on a long road trip with your fuel gauge almost on empty. You're bound to run out of gas halfway through your busy morning.

Yet as many as 37% of young adults do skip breakfast, according to one survey. The truth is: breakfast is key to health *and* weight management. Eating a good breakfast actually helps you eat fewer calories over the course of the day.

The right breakfast foods -- those high in fibre and protein -- keep your energy up throughout the morning and stave off hunger for hours.

So do yourself and your children a favour. No matter how hectic your mornings, take just five minutes for a fast breakfast.

### 5 Golden Rules for Busy Breakfasts

#### 1. Go for 5 Grams of Fibre (or More)

Choose whole grains and fruits with your breakfast to get fibre -- two slices of whole wheat bread provide 6 grams of fibre; 1 cup of fresh ber-

ries or 1 cup of raisin bran provides 5 grams or more.

#### 2. Try Breakfast-Friendly Fruits

Fruits not only provide fibre but also important vitamins and minerals. Try one of these as you're rushing out the door.

- 1 cup orange segments = 3.4 grams
- 1 cup sliced peaches = 3.1 grams
- 1 cup banana slices = 3.1 grams
- 1 large apple = 4.2 grams
- 1 pear = 4 grams
- 1 1/4 cups strawberries = 3.1 grams

#### 3. Aim for 5 Grams of Protein

Protein helps fill you up and staves off hunger longer. You can find protein in plenty of fast-breakfast products: Cereals, breakfast bars, and instant shakes. Just check the label to make sure it contains enough protein and not too much sugar. You can easily add 5g of protein to your homemade breakfast. Pour 1/2 cup of low-fat milk into your cereal. Use whole milk in cereal for children under age 2.

#### 4. Avoid High-Sugar and High-Fat Choices

Many breakfast products marketed to busy parents are loaded with sugar or fat -- and sometimes both! Check the food labels carefully before you buy. Look at the grams of fat and grams of sugar per serving. If it's loaded with sugar and fat, it's junk food. So find products you like, keeping these four goals in mind: high fibre, a little protein, low sugar, and low fat. Then buy a boxful and keep them handy at home for those extra busy mornings.

#### 5. Microwave It

On leisurely weekend mornings, have fun making some whole-wheat waffles, blueberry pancakes, muffins, or French toast. Freeze them in plastic bags. Then just pop a serving into the microwave on weekday mornings.

Breakfast made easy.  
**Enjoy!**



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## It's Competition time!!!

Test your knowledge and stand a chance to win. Email the answers to these questions to [clientservices@healthzim.com](mailto:clientservices@healthzim.com)

The first 5 CORRECT entries will win the senders Alliance Health Gift packs. (\*Please state your membership number)

1. How many packages does Alliance Health offer?
2. What does the acronym BMI stand for?
3. Give one reason why authorisation is necessary.
4. What document should always accompany a member claim?
5. From the list below, which vitamin is essential in the prevention of the common cold?

Vitamin A,      Vitamin B,      Vitamin C,      Vitamin D.



**Hint:** Answers to these questions can be found in this and previous editions of the **Health Ally** newsletter.

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- It is our standard policy to use **email communications** to provide our members with updates, invoices, statements and payment advice notices. We recommend that you add our [@healthzim.com](mailto:@healthzim.com) email address to your **safe list** to ensure the emails arrive safely in your inbox rather than your junk mail.
- Ensure that your **email addresses and contact details** are kept up to date by advising Alliance Health of any changes to such. The importance of being able to contact members via email or phone cannot be overstated.
- Kindly ensure that all **claim forms** are completed in full before submitting, taking note of the key areas marked "critical information".
- Lost / stolen membership cards attract a \$20 **replacement fee** unless member can produce a police report.
- **Pre-authorization** is required for all major procedures, tests or treatment.
- Members are advised that you may be **required to wait a few minutes** whilst the pharmacist, radiologist, hospital, etc. calls Alliance Health to seek **authorisation** for your treatment or medication. Please bear with us and with the service provider as this is necessary to ensure guarantee of payment for claims and to check availability of benefits.
- Information on Alliance Health products, application forms and new rates and benefits can be downloaded from the website and any feedback is welcome. [www.alliancehealth.co.zw](http://www.alliancehealth.co.zw)
- Members and service providers may use the 24HR Emergency numbers below for after hour **emergency** cases: **0772 126 120 / 0712 347 879**.
- Please be advised that **Medic Alert has moved** to No. 1 Van Praagh Avenue, Milton Park. Telephone number 704488 and 2916307. [medialert@africaonline.co.zw](mailto:medialert@africaonline.co.zw)

### Answers to Riddle Diddle (Page 4)

1. A clock
2. Put it in front of a mirror
3. A glove
4. An egg
5. A bottle
6. A towel
7. Your age
8. Your name
9. A shadow
10. The moon

**Good    Average    Poor**



*Impressed by our service?  
Or not happy with our service?*

Let us know:  
[clientservices@healthzim.com](mailto:clientservices@healthzim.com)