

STUDY BREAK

Watch what you eat after teeth-whitening

Eating certain foods and avoiding others can help keep your teeth white after you've used an at-home whitening kit or had cosmetic bleaching, an expert says.

"For many individuals who have had good results with either dentist-directed or over-the-counter whitening techniques, a significant concern is how to keep the teeth white after bleaching," Dr. Raymond Garrison, professor and chairman of the Wake Forest Baptist Department of Dentistry, said in a Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center news release.

"We now know that there are foods that actually help to keep your teeth white rather than stain them. In fact, it may help patients avoid the time and expense of whitening re-treatment."

Firm fruits and vegetables such as apples, green beans, cauliflower, carrots and celery help scrub teeth while you chew. They also help promote the flow of saliva, which neutralizes acids and protects teeth, Garrison said.

Dairy products, especially those high in calcium, and cheeses also help keep teeth white. The lactic acid in these products helps prevent decay. Harder cheeses also help remove food particles left on the teeth.

People should avoid or limit consumption of foods and other products that stain teeth, such as tobacco, soy sauce, soft drinks, red and white wine and blueberries.

While bleaching is an effective method for whitening teeth, it can cause short-term effects such as sensitivity. Too many whitening treatments can lead to permanent damage, such as erosion of tooth enamel.

Before you undergo bleaching or use teeth whitening kits, consult a dentist, Garrison said.

HealthDay

Rethink approach to angry people

Telling yourself that an angry person is just having a bad day and that it's not about you

can help take the sting out of their ire, a new study suggests.

This strategy of finding another way to regard an angry person is an approach commonly suggested in cognitive behavioral therapy. For example, you can tell yourself that the angry person has just lost his dog or received bad news and is taking it out on you.

Stanford University researchers conducted two experiments to examine the speed and efficiency of this process of reappraising others' emotions.

In one experiment, participants were upset when they were shown a picture of an angry face. But when some of them were told to consider that the person had had a bad day and saw the same angry face again, it had less impact.

Participants who were told to just feel the emotions triggered by the angry face continued to be upset when they saw it again.

In the other experiment, the researchers monitored participants' brain activity and found that reappraising another person's anger eliminated the electrical signals associated with negative emotions when seeing angry faces.

The study will appear in an upcoming issue of the journal *Psychological Science*.

"You can see this as a kind of race between the emotional information and the reappraisal information in the brain: Emotional processing proceeds from the back to the front of the brain, and the reappraisal is generated in the front of the brain and proceeds toward the back of the brain where it modifies emotional processing," researcher Jens Blechert said in a journal news release.

"If you're trained with reappraisal, and you know your boss is frequently in a bad mood, you can prepare yourself to go into a meeting," Blechert suggested. "He can scream and yell and shout but there'll be nothing."

HealthDay

Senior services something to be thankful for



JOE STECKLER
FOCUS ON SENIORS

This is the Focus on Seniors column's first Thanksgiving in our new home, the Health section of FLORIDA TODAY. On behalf of the many senior citizens in Brevard County and the writers of this column, I want to thank FLORIDA TODAY for publishing Focus on Seniors.

The information in this column makes a significant difference in the lives of many people. I know this because I am aware of the calls received from readers of this column who have questioned health

care charges, ways they are treated by businesses, etc. It is important for seniors to have access to reliable information, and that is what the writers of this column have been able to provide.

A significant need that is not being met in Brevard is transportation for seniors. Recently, I came across the Center for Independent Living's transportation program.

The program to which I refer is the Space Coast CIL's "Need-A-Ride" program. To arrange a ride, call 321-633-6011. They offer trips to the VA Clinic that are capped at \$10, no matter where you are picked up. In addition to the VA, trips are made to assisted living facilities, nursing homes, medical,

legal or personal appointments, shopping and social activities. Fees start at \$5 for a 10-mile round trip. And, drivers will take your packages from the van to your door. Wheelchair van service is included.

Like any other organization, they have rules, but they are simple and reasonable. I highly recommend you call to inquire about the many other services that are available through this wonderful organization.

I also am thankful for Community Services Council's Meals On Wheels program and the Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation "Your Care Brevard" program. Both enable the frail elderly to avail themselves of services to help them age with dignity. Call 321-

253-4430 for "Your Care Brevard" and 321-639-8770 for Meals on Wheels.

I thank each of you for the privilege of informing you through this column. May you enjoy a happy and bountiful Thanksgiving Day, remembering there are many who are not as fortunate. On this day it is appropriate to remember what many regard as the two most important commandments: Love of God and love of neighbor.

Happy Thanksgiving. Be thankful for all you have.

Joe Steckler is a retired Navy captain who long has been an elder advocate in Brevard County. He is a member of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Advisory Council and the Governor's Veterans and Elder Affairs Councils. He also hosts radio and television programs for seniors.

More Americans raise their glasses

By Will Morton
Special for USA TODAY

Consumption of alcohol hit a 25-year high in 2010, when 67 percent of Americans reported drinking alcoholic beverages, according to a Gallup poll. That's a level unseen since the late 1970s, when 71 percent of Americans said they drank. In 2011, 64 percent of Americans consumed alcohol.

For many, it's social: Shana Pack, 45, says her monthly "Martini Club" is "just an excuse for the girls to get together."

Yet social drinking habits vary across the country. A few highlights:

Regionally, New Englanders and people in the far West and the Upper Plains states drink the most, according to the Beer Institute, a Washington-based trade group. Texas, the Deep South and the Mid-Atlantic (except for Washington, D.C.) were among the driest parts of the country.

Which state pours itself a drink most often?

New Hampshire. People in the Granite State downed an average of



Social drinking is on the rise, according to a new Gallup poll. GANNETT FILE

6.7 gallons of wine apiece and 3.8 gallons of liquor last year — more than double the national average, Beer Institute data show.

It's not because of long winters, says Shawn La-

France, executive director of the Foundation for Healthy Communities, a New Hampshire nonprofit. More likely, it's because the state is a popular vacation spot.

COOL STUFF

Therapik zaps itch from bites

Living in Florida, we've all experienced mosquito and fire ant bites, and maybe even the occasional jellyfish sting. The itching and burning can be annoying and painful. Now there's relief in a portable device that delivers results in about 30 seconds. The FDA-approved Therapik beams itch-relieving heat (120 to 140 degrees) to the infected site. The heat neutralizes the venom and increases blood flow to the affected area, reducing swelling, redness, pain and



itching. Therapik can be reapplied as often as necessary until sufficient relief is reached, although most will find one time is enough. Small, lightweight and battery-powered, Therapik retails for \$12.95 and is available at: therapik.com or amazon.com, where it has a four-star rating from consumers.

MEDICINE

Antibiotic use highest in the Southeast

HealthDay

Overall outpatient use of antibiotics in the United States fell about 12 percent between 1999 and 2007, but alarmingly high use in the Southeast could speed the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, researchers warn.

The findings were released by Extending the Cure, a project of the Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy

in Washington, D.C.

The five states with the highest antibiotic use are West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana and Alabama. Residents of West Virginia and Kentucky take about twice as many antibiotics per capita as those living in Oregon and Alaska.

Penicillins are the most popular antibiotics and account for nearly one out of every three prescriptions filled.

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