

MENTORING MINUTES

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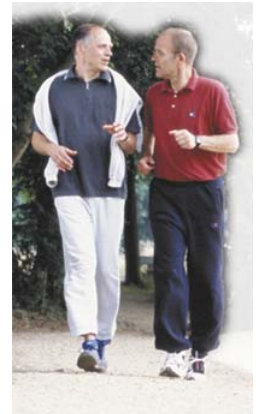
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MEN WHO EXERCISE REGULARLY

Men who exercise regularly and vigorously as young adults halve their risk of developing Parkinson's disease. More than 48,000 men and 77,000 women were studied from 1986 and asked about their health and lifestyle practices every two years until 2000. During this 14-year period, 387 cases of Parkinson's were recorded in The study in issue 22 of the Journal Neurology.

The men who had been the most physically active had a 50% lower risk of Parkinson's compared to the least active. Women also appeared to have a lesser risk if they had been active, but in their case the difference was so slight as to be statistically insignificant.

[JAMA 2005; 293:935-48]



EXERCISE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

Exercise and stress management training reduces emotional distress and lowered the factors that increases the chance of having a stroke or heart attack. A randomized controlled trial of 134 patients with stable ischaemic heart disease compared the

outcomes on patients of treating them with normal medical treatment, normal treatment plus exercise, and normal treatment plus stress management. The study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found patients

who received either the stress management or exercise showed a reduction in flow mediated dilation—a measure of blood flow that is associated with cardiovascular risk—of 25%.

[JAMA 2005; 293:1626-1634]

20 REASONS WHY MEN ARE JUST HAPPIER PEOPLE

1. Your last name stays put.
2. The garage is yours.
3. You can wear a white T-shirt in a swimming pool.
4. You can wear no T-shirt in a swimming pool.
5. Car mechanics tell you the truth.
6. One mood all the time.
7. Phone conversations are over in 30 seconds flat.
8. You know stuff about tanks.
9. If someone forgets to invite you, he or she can still be your friend.
10. Your underwear is \$5.95 for a three-pack.
11. You are unable to see wrinkles in your clothes.
12. Everything on your face stays its original colour.
13. The same hairstyle lasts for years, maybe decades.
14. You can play with toys all your life.
15. Your belly usually hides your big hips.
16. One wallet and one pair of shoes for all seasons.
17. You can wear shorts no matter how your legs look.
18. You can "do" your nails with a pocketknife.
19. You have freedom of choice concerning growing a mustache.
20. Wedding dress \$5,000, renting a tux \$100.

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BABIES SLEEP FOR LONGER

Babies sleep for longer if parents fuss over them less at bedtime and take longer to respond to crying. A randomized controlled trial in the Medical Journal of Australia found that babies whose parents were given a 45-minute briefing with a nurse on better

sleeping techniques slept 15 hours or more per day on 62% of days. Babies whose parents were not given the information slept this much only on 36% of recorded days. Parents were taught that going to sleep is a “learned” skill and to help

they should minimize handling the baby at bed time, and regard crying at bed time as being probably due to tiredness. They should leave an infant that cries at bed time for five minutes before responding, and extend the interval by five min-



utes for each subsequent visit to the child.

[MJA 2005; 182:215-8]

MODERN DILEMMA

Q *I'm offended by the current fad for T-shirts with aggressive slogans, F-words or pictures of half-naked women in rude poses. Am I a wowser?*

The Humanist: I often fantasise about a padded cell—for the sheer joy of being greeted by white walls each day and the gentle sound of nothing. Away from the noise pollution of weekend home

renovations and crying mobile phones. Away from the sight of inane slogans on ugly billboards and uglier T-shirts. You are not a wowser, merely a poor, overloaded soul seeking tranquility in a nutso society.

The Jurist: Confrontational behaviour, whether by gesture, speech or T-shirt slogan, is almost always offensive. There is room for tolerance in contexts such as the Gay and

Lesbian Mardi Gras, but current community standards are affronted by intentionally intimidating or shocking conduct. The T-shirt can be a vehicle for gentle levity, but deliberate affronts are simply not acceptable. Those who perpetrate them are best avoided.

The Ethicist: The offense is in having those things which are important, even sacred,

treated in a way that indicates contempt. In flaunting demeaned sexuality they are making an assertion not only about themselves, but also about those whom they confront. Feeling this way does not make you a wowser. One can appreciate sexuality and the human form but also want the presentation and context to be dignified and meaningful.

[Australian: 2005]

LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR YOU!

Laughter really may be good for you, with researchers finding that watching a funny film increases blood flow. US researchers show 20 healthy volunteers a

segment of either the war film Saving Private Ryan, or the comedy King Pin, and their blood flow was measured. They found that stress caused blood to flow to slow

by around 35%, but laughter increased it by 22%.

The scientists from the University of Maryland school of medicine in Baltimore sug-

gested laughter caused the inner lining of blood vessels to expand, increasing blood flow—a process that might help ward off cardiovascular disease.

PHILS FACT FILE

■ **Longest ear hair**—Radhakant Bajpai (India, above) has hair sprouting from the centre of his outer ears (middle of the pinna) which measures 13.2cm at its longest point.

■ **Smallest Muscle**—The smallest muscle in the human body is the stapedius, which controls the stapes in the ear. The muscle is less than 0.127cm long.

■ **Most eggs balanced by an individual**—Kenneth Epperson (USA) balanced simultaneously a total of 210 eggs on their ends at Monroe, Georgia, USA, in 1990.

■ **Heaviest vehicle pulled by teeth**—Walter Arfeuille (Belgium) used his teeth to pull eight railway carriages weighing 223.8 tones over a distance of 3.2m along rails in Belgium in 1996.

■ **Most distant object in the universe**—Astronomers from Caltech (USA) using the Hubble Space Telescope and the Keck Observatory, have discovered a small and compact system of stars around 2000 light years across, with a redshift of 7. This corresponds to a distance of around 13 million light years away.

■ **Tallest and longest dog**—Harvey, a Great Dane owned by Charles Dodman (UK) stands at 105.4cm tall and measures 231.14cm from nose to tip.

■ **Largest bird**—The largest living bird is the North African ostrich. Male examples of this ratite sub-species have been recorded up to 2.75m tall and weighing 156.5kg.

[Source Guinness Book of Records 2005]