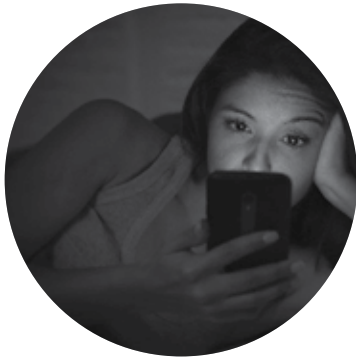


A MONTHLY HEALTHLETTER FROM THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA



## YOU MAY BE GETTING TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME IF...

- » You miss parties and other events because you have to watch a certain show or stay online.
- » You regularly eat meals in front of the TV or computer.
- » You go to bed and fall asleep with the television on.
- » You stay awake waiting for another text.
- » You often feel anxious and envious or inadequate after viewing social media sites or apps.
- » You wake up in the middle of the night to check your phone or turn on the TV.

If any of the statements above apply to you, you may want to think about reducing your screen time. Check out "Igniting Your Best You" for some simple strategies that can help you find the right balance.

# ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM DEVICE OVERDOSE?

The Ill Effects of Too Much Screen Time

The web, TV, Netflix, tablets, smart phones—technology has paved the way to convenience and enjoyment for millions of Americans. Indeed, screen time can be fun. Unfortunately, many of us (our children included) are getting way too much of it and it's taking a toll on our health. Think about this: according to a national survey conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation the average child (ages 8-18) clocks in more than seven hours of screen time a day!

Too much screen time can wreak havoc on our health. If you or your children are glued to a screen it could lead to:

**WEIGHT GAIN:** Screen time usually equals sitting, and prolonged sitting slows your metabolism and can lead to weight gain along with a slew of other conditions like increased blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels. When you're sitting and staring at a screen you're using up time that you could spend being active.

**LACK OF SLEEP:** It's not uncommon for many of us to text, check emails and/or watch TV well into the night. Problem is, this often robs us from the seven to nine hours of daily sleep that's critical for your health.

**MOODINESS AND DEPRESSION:** Some research shows that the more TV you watch, the more likely you are to be depressed. Further, a University of Texas study found that the more lonely and depressed you are, the more likely you are to "binge-watch" TV shows. Watching the tube takes time away from social activities like spending time with friends or playing with your kids.

**POOR POSTURE AND REPETITIVE INJURIES:** All that time staring at a screen, texting and typing has resulted in an uptick in wrist and forearm soreness and injuries. There's also been an increase in neck and spine soreness caused from looking down at a phone. In fact, some experts suggest that the angle at which your head tilts downward while staring at a phone places about 60 pounds of extra stress on the neck!

**CHRONIC HEADACHES:** Viewing digital content or quickly scrolling on your smart phone can cause a sensory conflict between your eyes and body. You may feel dizzy or experience a headache as a result.

Check out  
"Igniting Your Best You"  
for simple tips to reduce  
screen time for you and  
your family.





# HEALTHY, KID-FRIENDLY PB & J

- 2 slices 100% whole wheat bread
- 2 Tbsp any nut butter (peanut, almond, cashew), natural best
- 1-2 Tbsp fruit-based spread, berry-based best
- 1 Tbsp hemp kernels

## DIRECTIONS

Spread nut butter evenly over slices of bread. Repeat with the fruit-spread. Sprinkle hemp kernels on both pieces. (Optional: Add additional fiber and nutrients by including slices of fresh fruit.) Close the sandwich and cut into triangles for easy eating.

**SERVES:** 1



*Another Kid Friendly Option*

## Fruit Kabob with Yogurt Dip

- » 1 wooden kabob skewer
- » Grapes
- » Strawberries
- » Pineapple chunks
- » 1 small container of vanilla Greek yogurt

Alternate placing fruit selection on skewer to create a colorful, fun fruit stick. After kabob is full, break off the sharp ends of the skewer for safety. Include yogurt as a fun dip for the fruit and a great source of calcium and complete protein.



**Dr. Ann**  
WELLNESS

With formal training in nutrition and medicine, plus hands-on experience as a mother of four and family physician, Dr. Ann is a unique nutrition expert for the real world.

The whole food ingredients found in Dr. Ann's recipes are the right foods for health and vitality. Nutritional excellence naturally follows.

For more, visit [DrAnnWellness.com](http://DrAnnWellness.com).

# Greens FOR A GREATER MIND!

If you suffer from a lack of concentration and focus the remedy could very well be found in a salad! At least that was the conclusion of a new study that sought to investigate the relationship between **lutein, a potent antioxidant abundant in dark, leafy greens**, and brain activation during a period of focused attention. For this study, published in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*, the researchers measured the lutein levels in the back of the eyes (a reliable indicator of lutein levels in the brain) of 60 middle-aged adults. Then they measured the electrical activity in the study subjects' brains as they engaged in a task that tested focus and concentration. The scientists found that study subjects with higher levels of lutein exhibited greater brain activation, with levels typical of significantly younger individuals.

Scientists believe the lutein found in leafy greens helps protect brain cells from the ravages of free radical oxidation. Greens also deliver folate, which help produce neurotransmitters; chemical messengers in the brain that are critical to thinking and mood.

## GET MORE GREENS

Some of the most nutrient-dense and lutein-rich greens include kale, spinach, Swiss chard, collard greens, mixed greens, arugula and mustard greens. If the thought of a salad bores your taste buds, try these tasty tips:

**Sauté your greens.** Bring a large pan to medium heat. Melt 1-2 tablespoons of coconut or extra virgin olive oil. Toss onions or minced garlic to the pan and stir for 1-2 minutes. Add your greens and sauté until wilted or soft. Make sure not to over-cook your greens—the longer they cook in heat the more they may lose their nutritional value.

**Add greens to a smoothie.** Toss a handful of leafy greens like spinach, kale and Swiss chard to your morning or afternoon smoothie. Balance the smoothie out with a sweet fruit like pineapple or blueberries and you won't even notice the greens are in there!

**Whip up some green eggs.** If you regularly enjoy eggs for breakfast dial up the nutritional content by adding some spinach, arugula or mixed greens to your scramble or frittata.

**Get your soup on.** Leafy greens pair exceptionally well with a variety of soups. Toss collard greens, kale, spinach and/or Swiss chard into some minestrone or chicken noodle soup.



## SUPER STAR FOOD OF THE MONTH: Dark, Leafy Greens

Dark, leafy greens are unequivocally the nutrient Goliath, packing in more nutrition per unit calorie than any other food. To give you perspective, 100 calories of kale provides 190x more calcium, 4x more iron, 12x more magnesium, 15x more folate, 800x more vitamin A, 2x more protein, and 11,000x more antioxidant power than 100 calories of sirloin. Enjoy some form of dark, leafy greens daily.



# 16 SIMPLE TIPS TO REDUCE SCREEN TIME FOR YOU & YOUR FAMILY



According to research published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, kids who have TVs in their room tend to watch about 1.5 hours more TV a day than those who don't.

**1 Identify how much time you and your family spend in front of a screen.** This includes TV, computers, video games and your phone. This can be an eye-opening experience.

**2 Get explicitly specific on limits.** It's not enough to say "we want to cut down on screen time" with your family. Get very specific: "we will spend no more than one hour a day on our devices". This way everyone is clear on the rule.

**3 Make it a competition.** Who doesn't like a little competition? Create a competition—the family member who spends the least amount of time on a device every week wins (you can predefine the prize).

**4 Ask for suggestions.** Make your effort to reduce screen time a collaborative effort. Ask your family for their suggestions and ideas on what you can do to create a healthy balance of TV and device

use—the more involved and invested everyone is in this effort the better.

**5 Enforce the rule.** Limits won't be effective unless you enforce consequences when they're exceeded. Set clear expectations and consequences if someone in the family exceeds your defined screen limit.

**6 Set goals for physical activity.** Less screen time should

equal more time being active. If you're spending 30 less minutes a day on a device, make sure that time is going towards something productive like being physically active.

**7 Set a good example.** Be a role model and put your device aside when you are with your children. Show them that you value being active and recognize the importance of limiting screen time yourself. If your kids see you following your own rules, then they'll be more likely to follow suit.

**8 If you watch late night shows, record them.** Don't lose sleep just so you can catch your favorite late night show. Record it or catch the replay on an app the next day.

**9 Watch with purpose.** When you and your family decide to watch TV, have a plan. In other words, know what you want to watch and when. Don't fall into the "channel surfing" trap.

**10 Make mealtime meaningful.** This means no devices at the table and no TV on during dinner. Family meals are a good time to talk to each other. Aim to eat together at a table on most nights of the week.

**11 Make the bedroom 100% screen-free.** This means no cell phones and no TVs in any bedroom in the house.

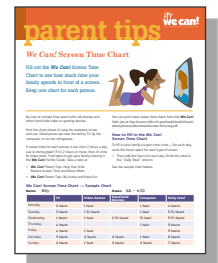
**12 Don't use TV/ screen time as reward or punishment.** This can make TV and device time seem even more enticing.

**13 Talk to your kids about why less screen time is important.** Make sure your kids know how too much screen time can negatively affect them and why you feel it's important for them to reduce it.

**14 Get active while watching.** Make it a habit to pause the TV and move around or do some activity during commercial breaks. Or try to walk on a treadmill or exercise on a machine while you watch.

**15 Make your home a playground.** Encourage screen-free time and active play by inviting other children over to play at your home.

**16 Designate screen-free days.** Aim to have one day a week (Sundays may be ideal) where the family doesn't watch TV or log on to a device. Sounds unthinkable for many—but can feel surprisingly liberating. Try it!



*Cool Tool!*

Do an Internet search for "NIH screen time chart". The NIH offers a free chart you can download and use to track screen time.

**REMEMBER**  
TALK WITH  
YOUR DOCTOR  
IF YOU HAVE ANY  
CONCERNS  
ABOUT YOUR  
HEALTH.



# SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED WITH YOUR CHILD'S WEIGHT?

It's important to keep an eye on your child's weight. If your child is carrying around too many extra pounds it may increase the chance that he/she will develop health problems or become overweight or obese now or later in life.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

There's no reason to panic if your child is overweight. More importantly, you don't want to instill fear and worry on to your child. Ensuring your child gets and stays on a healthy track is as easy as following a few simple strategies and guidelines:

→ **Let your children talk to you about weight, not the other way around.** If your child is overweight you may be tempted to have a formal talk with them about weight and health. This usually isn't a good idea as it may make your child feel as though they've

done something wrong and they may feel ashamed and embarrassed. If/when your child does talk to you, be open and honest. Try to avoid statements like "everyone is unique" or "I love you just the way you are". These statements may feel fake to kids. Instead, try to steer the conversation towards what would make your child feel better about themselves and what you can do as a family to be healthy.

→ **Don't put them on a diet.** Your child is likely still growing, and if this is the case they may just need to maintain the weight they have. If they maintain the weight they have (or decrease the pace of their weight gain) they will likely move to a healthy weight range when they get taller. You can definitely introduce healthier foods (fruits, veggies, lean protein) into your home, but don't put your child on a weight-loss diet unless your child's doctor tells you to.

## → Avoid using numbers and labels.

Focusing on weight and numbers and using terms like "obesity" will likely cause confusion and panic for your kids. Instead, focus on being healthy and feeling good. Talk about how being fit and making good food choices gives you more energy and makes you feel better about yourself.

→ **Be inclusive.** Don't ever single out your child for their weight. For example, don't allow your normal weight child to have dessert, but then encourage your overweight child to have fruit instead. Your entire family should be focusing on healthy lifestyle habits—whatever goes for your overweight child should go for the rest of the family.

## HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS OVERWEIGHT?

Aside from visiting and getting information from your family physician, you can learn your child's weight range any time by accessing an online weight calculator offered by the CDC (check it out at <http://bit.ly/1pmKFtK>).

The calculator uses your child's height, weight and age to calculate a percentile, which will compare your child to other children of the same age and gender. Children are considered overweight if they fall into the 85th percentile or obese if they fall into the 95th percentile. If your child is below the 85th percentile you probably don't have reason to be concerned about excessive weight.

BMI Calculator for Child and Teen (English) (Metric)

1. Birth Date: Month [dropdown] Day [dropdown] Year [dropdown]

2. Date of Measurement: Month [dropdown] Day [dropdown] Year [dropdown]

3. Sex:  Boy  Girl

4. Height, to nearest 1/8 inch:  
 Feet: [input] Inches: [input] Fractions of an inch: [input]  
 (12 inches = 1 foot; Example: 4 feet, 5 1/2 inches)

5. Weight, to nearest 1/4 (25) pound:  
 Weight (pounds): [input] Fractions of a pound: [input]  
 (8 ounces = 1/2 pound; Example: 75 3/4 pounds)

Calculate

# THE Dangers OF DESK JOBS

## Injuries & Disorders You May Have Without Even Knowing

Firefighters, police, construction—these are the professions that we usually classify as risky and hazardous to one's well-being. Although they can indeed be dangerous jobs, there's another role that poses significant risk to one's health: the standard, 9 to 5 desk job.

In addition to the obvious and substantial health risks of prolonged sitting, typical desk jobs increase your risk of developing repetitive motion injuries. Repetitive motion injuries (RMIs) are injuries to the bones, muscles, or nerves and are caused by overuse. The way you sit and work behind your screen all day can indeed wreak havoc on your body.

### SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

If you're suffering from an RMI you'll likely feel pain in your upper extremities (fingers, palms, wrists, forearms, shoulders) or pain in your neck, shoulders and/or back. The pain may be burning, aching or shooting. However, many professionals live with these injuries without experiencing pain. Rather, they may experience one or more of the following:

- » Fatigue or lack of endurance
- » Weakness, tingling or numbness in the hands or forearms
- » "Heavy hands"—your hands may feel extremely heavy
- » Lack of coordination or increased clumsiness—you may often find yourself dropping items
- » Chronically cold hands

### SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

Fortunately, there's a lot you can do to treat and prevent repetitive use disorders. Take note of the following:

**Take a 30 to 60 second break for every 10 minutes at your desk.** RMIs occur when a muscle or connective tissue is used too frequently to repair itself. So take a minute or so to rest your eyes, neck, hands, and back. Get up and stretch and take your eyes of the monitor. These regular breaks can prevent injury and allow your body to regenerate.

**Only allow your fingertips to touch the keyboard.** This can help prevent undue stress on your hands and wrists and has been shown to be the best typing method for preventing most office-related RMIs.

**Sit up straight, don't slouch.** Good posture ensures you don't slouch and place unwanted stress on your neck, lower back and shoulders. When sitting, roll your shoulders back and allow for a slight arch in your lower back (your shoulders shouldn't be hunched forward and your lower back shouldn't be touching the back of the chair).

**Place your monitor an arm's length away from you.** This will help prevent eyestrain and/or injuries to the neck and back.

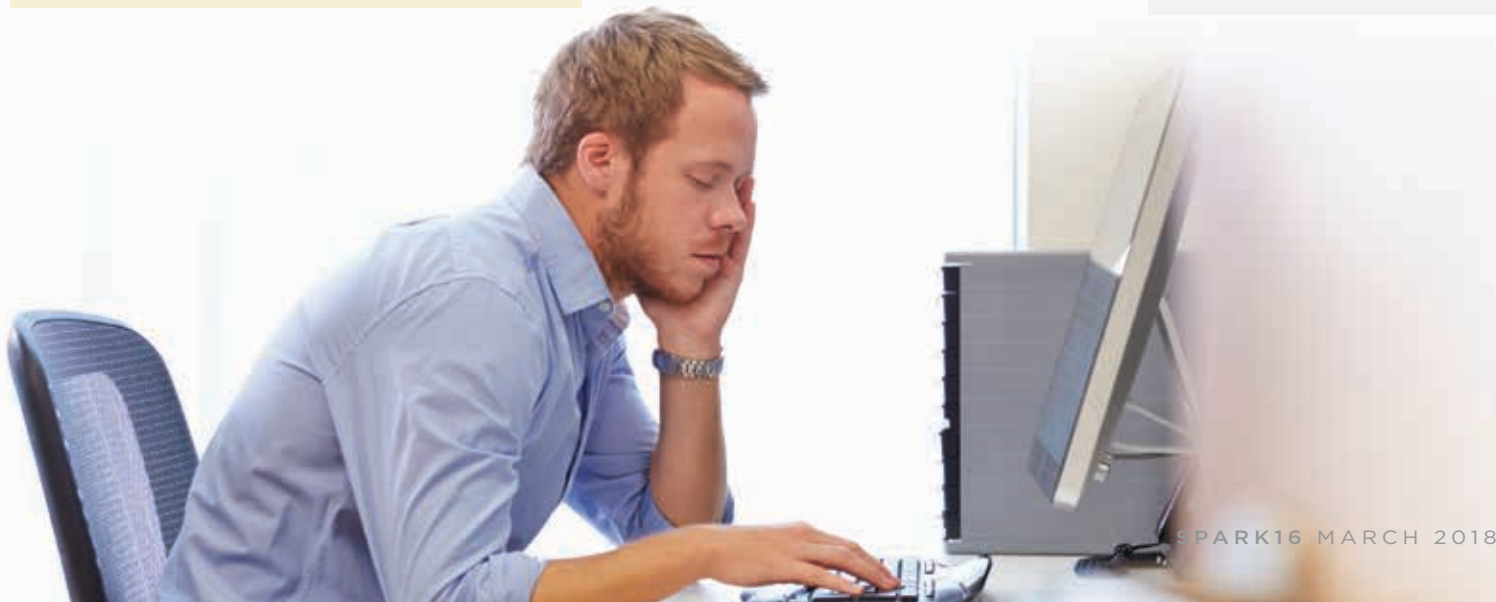
**Stretch every day.** Stretching your entire body is an extremely simple and effective way to prevent injury. Pay special attention to the muscles that you habitually work.

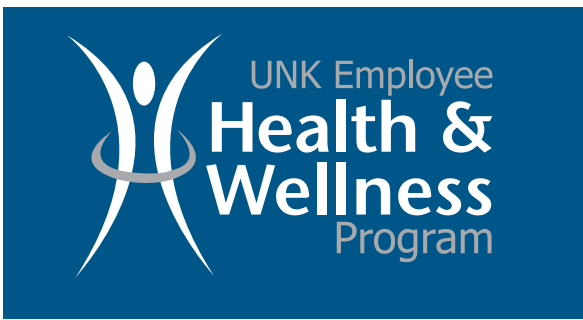


### SNEAKY SYMPTOMS!

You may not even notice it, but a repetitive motion injury can cause you to alter or avoid every day activities. Examples include:

- Favoring one hand and hardly ever using the other
- Avoiding clothing with buttons because you find it too difficult to button
- Using shopping carts even when you only have a few items because you can't properly grip and carry a basket
- Dropping things without any reasonable cause
- Not playing sports you once enjoyed
- Feeling overly protective of your hands





**7**  
HOURS

A survey conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that the average child (ages 8-18) clocks in more than seven hours of screen time a day!



**11,000x**  
ANTIOXIDANT POWER

100 calories of kale provides 11,000 times more antioxidant power than 100 calories of sirloin!



**1.5**  
HOURS

According to research published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, kids who have TVs in their room tend to watch about 1.5 hours more TV a day than those who don't.



## SCREEN-TIME STATISTICS

You probably know that children seem to be increasingly tied to screens and devices, but you may be unaware of the extent. The Kaiser Foundation conducted studies and surveys to get an idea of how much screen time kids really get. Here's what they found.

Children ages 8–18 spend a following amount of time in front of the screen each day:

- » Approximately 7.5 hours using entertainment media
- » Approximately 4.5 hours watching TV
- » Approximately 1.5 hours on the computer
- » Over an hour playing video games

This data is in stark contrast to the 25 minutes per day that children spend reading books.



## WHAT'S IN A NUMBER?

**167**  
CALORIES

Calories a 155-pound person will burn during a 30-minute walk (moderate pace).



**28**  
CALORIES

Calories a 155-pound person burns watching TV or sitting behind a screen for 30 minutes. Break up prolonged sitting with walking or stretching to increase your overall daily calorie burn.

**WELCOA\*** The content in Spark16 is created for informational purposes only. The content is not to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment and should not be used as such. Please refer to a licensed medical professional with any questions regarding medical conditions.

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