



# BetterSafe

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

## Terrified Your Children Will Develop a Deadly Nut Allergy?

### Study finds Peanut Consumption in Infancy Prevents Peanut Allergy

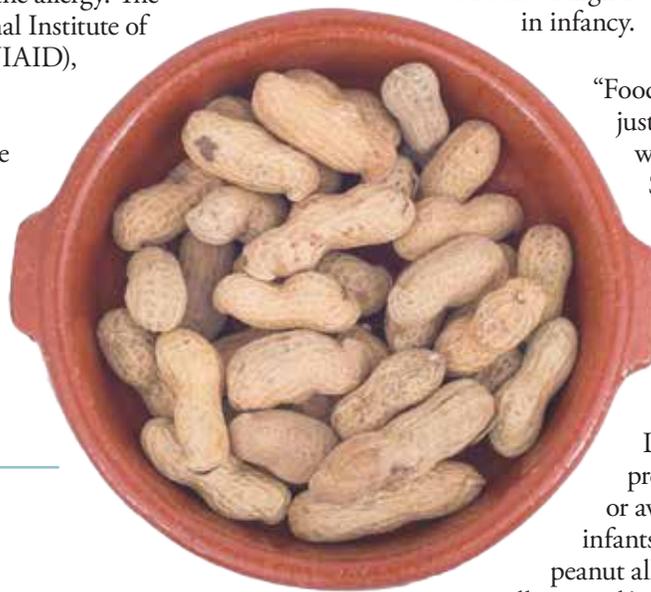
Allergies, especially nut allergies, can be terrifying—and for good reason. Those who are allergic to nuts can have severe and even fatal reactions. Fortunately, there is some good news (especially for parents) around nut allergies.

A recent study has found that the introduction of peanut products into the diets of infants at high risk of developing peanut allergy was safe and led to an 81 percent reduction in the subsequent development of the allergy. The study was supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, and was conducted by the NIAID-funded Immune Tolerance Network (ITN). The results also appear in the online issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* and were presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology.

*"The results have the potential to transform how we approach food allergy prevention."*

—ANTHONY S. FAUCI, M.D. Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

Researchers led by Gideon Lack, M.D., of King's College London, designed a study called Learning Early About Peanut Allergy (LEAP), based on observations that Israeli children have lower rates of peanut allergy compared to Jewish children of similar ancestry residing in the United Kingdom. Unlike children in the UK, Israeli children begin consuming peanut-containing foods early in life. The study tested the hypothesis that the very low rates of peanut allergy in Israeli children were a result of high levels of peanut consumption beginning in infancy.



"Food allergies are a growing concern, not just in the United States but around the world," said NIAID Director Anthony S. Fauci, M.D. "For a study to show a benefit of this magnitude in the prevention of peanut allergy is without precedent. The results have the potential to transform how we approach food allergy prevention."

LEAP compared two strategies to prevent peanut allergy — consumption or avoidance of dietary peanut — in infants who were at high risk of developing peanut allergy because they already had egg allergy and/or severe eczema, an inflammatory skin disorder.

"The study also excluded infants showing early strong signs of having already developed peanut allergy. The safety and effectiveness of early peanut consumption in this group remains unknown and requires further

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study,” said Dr. Lack. “Parents of infants and young children with eczema or egg allergy should consult with an allergist, pediatrician, or their general practitioner prior to feeding them peanut products.”

## What the Science is Saying

More than 600 high-risk infants between 4 and 11 months of age were assigned randomly either to avoid peanut entirely or to regularly include at least 6 grams of peanut protein per week in their diets. The avoidance and consumption regimens were continued until 5 years of age. Participants were monitored throughout this period with recurring visits with health care professionals, in addition to regular dietary surveys by telephone.

The researchers assessed peanut allergy at 5 years of age with a supervised, oral food challenge with peanut. They found an overall 81 percent reduction of peanut allergy in children who began early, continuous consumption of peanut compared to those who avoided peanut.

“Prior to 2008, clinical practice guidelines recommended avoidance of potentially allergenic foods in the diets of young children at heightened risk for development of food allergies,” said Daniel Rotrosen, M.D., director of NIAID’s Division of Allergy, Immunology and Transplantation. “While recent studies showed no benefit from allergen avoidance, the LEAP study is the first to show that early introduction of dietary peanut is actually beneficial and identifies an effective approach to manage a serious public health problem.”





# Day In Day Out

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

## Energize Yourself & Your Family

### *Get On the Move & Vow to Eat Better!*

Eating healthy foods and staying physically active can help you keep up with the demands of your busy life. Moving more and eating better may help you take better care of yourself and be there for the people who depend on you.

If you are overweight and inactive, you may be more likely to develop:

- › certain forms of cancer
- › heart disease
- › high blood pressure
- › stroke
- › type 2 diabetes (high blood sugar)

#### Why move more and eat better?

You may improve your health if you move more and eat better, but that's not the only reason to be active and make healthy food choices. You can also:

- › charge up your body for work, play, and family
- › feel better about yourself and manage stress better
- › look better in your clothes
- › set a good example for your children and your friends
- › tone your body (without losing your curves)

Your family, friends, and coworkers can be great sources of support as you adopt healthier habits. Ask them to join you in healthy eating and physical activity. Being healthy is important for them, too! By making healthy choices together, you may find it is easier to move more and eat better.

#### Should I talk to my health care provider before starting an exercise program?

Most people do not need to see their health care provider before getting physically active. If you have heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis (weak bones), or obesity, talk to your health care provider before starting a vigorous physical activity program.

You do not need to talk to your provider before you start a less intense activity like walking. If you have been inactive for some time, plan to walk at least twice a week for a month. Once you meet this goal, add another day or make your walk longer.

#### How much physical activity do I need?

Regular physical activity can be fun and help you feel great. To improve your health, aim for at least 150 minutes per week (30 minutes a day on 5 days) of moderately intense aerobic activity. This

type of aerobic activity, like brisk walking or dancing, speeds up your heart rate and breathing. To lose weight and keep it off, you may need more: Aim for 300 minutes per week (an hour a day for 5 days).

On at least 2 days per week, also try activities that strengthen your muscles. Examples include heavy gardening (digging and shoveling) and exercises that use hand weights.

For best results, spread out the physical activity throughout the week. Even 10 minutes at a time counts!

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# Day In Day Out

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

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## How can I create a healthier eating plan?

A healthy meal may include vegetables and fruits and small portions of protein and whole grains (breads, pastas, and rice). Here are some ideas on how to create a healthier eating plan for you and your family.

When planning meals for the week, think about including the following:

- a salad or other vegetables (eat “from the rainbow” of colors)
- fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- fruits (choose a variety of vibrant colors)
- lean beef or pork, chicken, seafood, eggs, tofu, or beans
- whole grains, like brown rice, oatmeal, whole-wheat bread, and whole-grain cornmeal

## How can I handle barriers to healthy eating?

Eating healthy foods may seem hard when you do not have time to cook or you are on a tight budget. Try these tips to get past barriers that keep you from eating well.

### “I don’t have time to plan healthy meals.”

Eating well doesn’t have to take a lot of time. Here are some ways that you and your family can eat better:

Fuel up every day with breakfast. Try a whole-grain cereal like bran flakes with fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt. Enjoy some fruit with your breakfast, too, like bananas, berries, or peaches.

Invite your kids to join you on the weekend to plan, shop for, and cook a healthy family meal. Make it a game!

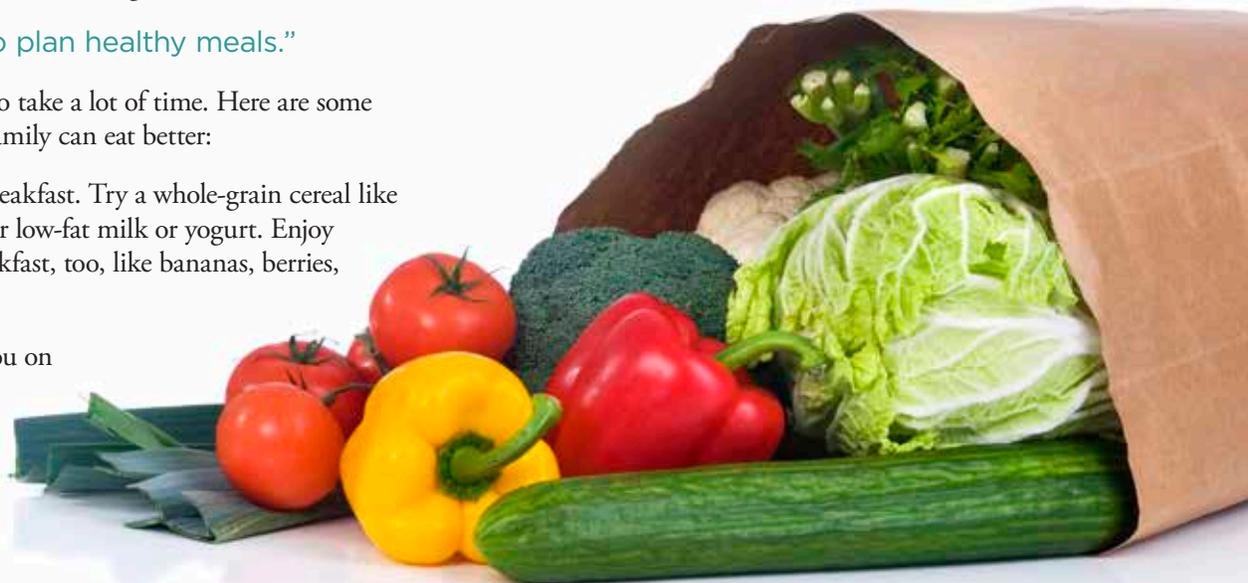
Children may be more likely to eat dishes that they help prepare.

When grocery shopping, choose whole grains like whole-wheat bread and brown rice. These are higher in fiber, protein, and nutrients than refined white grains. They also keep you full longer.

### “Eating well is too expensive.”

You don’t have to spend a lot of money to eat well:

- Avoid buying single portions (like pudding, snacks, or yogurt). Instead, buy in bulk and divide into smaller portions as needed.
- Check newspaper ads for grocery specials. Clip coupons or print them from websites.
- Buy fruits and vegetables that are in season (they are cheaper at that time).
- Try canned beans like black, butter, kidney, or pinto beans. They are loaded with protein, cost less than meat, and make quick and easy additions to your meals.





# TakeCharge

WELCOA'S ONLINE SELF-CARE BULLETIN

What You Need  
to Know About

## GER & GERD

Gastroesophageal reflux (GER) happens when your stomach contents come back up into your esophagus.

Stomach acid that touches the lining of your esophagus can cause heartburn, also called acid indigestion.

Doctors also refer to GER as:

- › acid indigestion
- › acid reflux
- › acid regurgitation
- › heartburn
- › reflux

Having GER once in a while is common. GER that occurs more than twice a week for a few weeks could be GERD. GERD can lead to more serious health problems over time. If you think you have GERD, you should see your doctor.

GERD affects about 20 percent of the U.S. population.

Anyone can develop GERD, some for unknown reasons. You are more likely to have GERD if you are:

- › overweight or obese
- › a pregnant woman
- › taking certain medicines
- › a smoker or regularly exposed to secondhand smoke

### What are the symptoms of GER and GERD?

If you have gastroesophageal reflux (GER), you may taste food or stomach acid in the back of your mouth.

The most common symptom of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) is regular heartburn, a painful, burning feeling in the middle of your chest, behind your breastbone, and in the middle of your abdomen. Not all adults with GERD have heartburn.

### Other common GERD symptoms include:

- › bad breath
- › nausea
- › pain in your chest or the upper part of your abdomen
- › problems swallowing or painful swallowing
- › respiratory problems

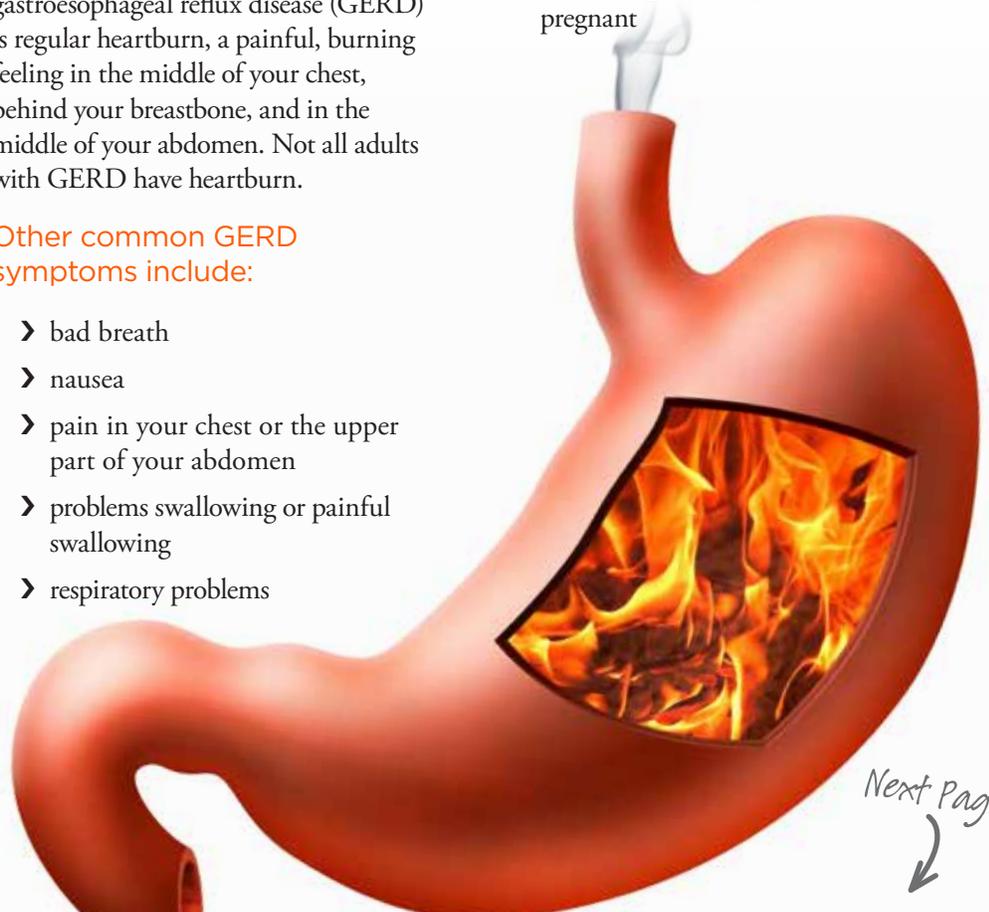
- › vomiting
- › the wearing away of your teeth

Some symptoms of GERD come from its complications, including those that affect your lungs.

### What causes GER and GERD?

GER and GERD happen when your lower esophageal sphincter becomes weak or relaxes when it shouldn't, causing stomach contents to rise up into the esophagus. The lower esophageal sphincter becomes weak or relaxes due to certain things, such as:

- › increased pressure on your abdomen from being overweight, obese, or pregnant





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- › certain medicines, including:
  - calcium channel blockers—medicines that treat high blood pressure
  - antihistamines—medicines that treat allergy symptoms
  - painkillers
  - sedatives—medicines that help put you to sleep
  - antidepressants
- › smoking, or inhaling secondhand smoke

A hiatal hernia can also cause GERD. Hiatal hernia is a condition in which the opening in your diaphragm lets the upper part of the stomach move up into your chest, which lowers the pressure in the esophageal sphincter.

## When should I seek a doctor's help?

You should see a doctor if you have persistent GER symptoms that do not get better with over-the-counter medications or change in your diet.

Call a doctor right away if you:

- › vomit large amounts
- › have regular projectile, or forceful, vomiting
- › vomit fluid that is
  - green or yellow
  - looks like coffee grounds
  - contains blood

- › have problems breathing after vomiting
- › have pain in the mouth or throat when you eat
- › have problems swallowing or painful swallowing

## What are the complications of GERD?

Without treatment, GERD can sometimes cause serious complications over time, such as

Esophagitis, which is inflammation in the esophagus. Adults who have chronic esophagitis over many years are more likely to develop precancerous changes in the esophagus.

Additionally, with GERD you might breathe stomach acid into your lungs. The stomach acid can then irritate your throat and lungs, causing respiratory problems, such as:

- › asthma—a long-lasting disease in your lungs that makes you extra sensitive to things that you're allergic to
- › chest congestion, or extra fluid in your lungs
- › a dry, long-lasting cough or a sore throat
- › hoarseness—the partial loss of your voice
- › laryngitis—the swelling of your voice box that can lead to a short-term loss of your voice

- › pneumonia—an infection in one or both of your lungs—that keeps coming back
- › wheezing—a high-pitched whistling sound when you breathe





# ToYourHealth

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

## How Can I Start Feeling Fit & Fabulous?

No matter what your age, you may be able to improve your health if you move more and eat better!

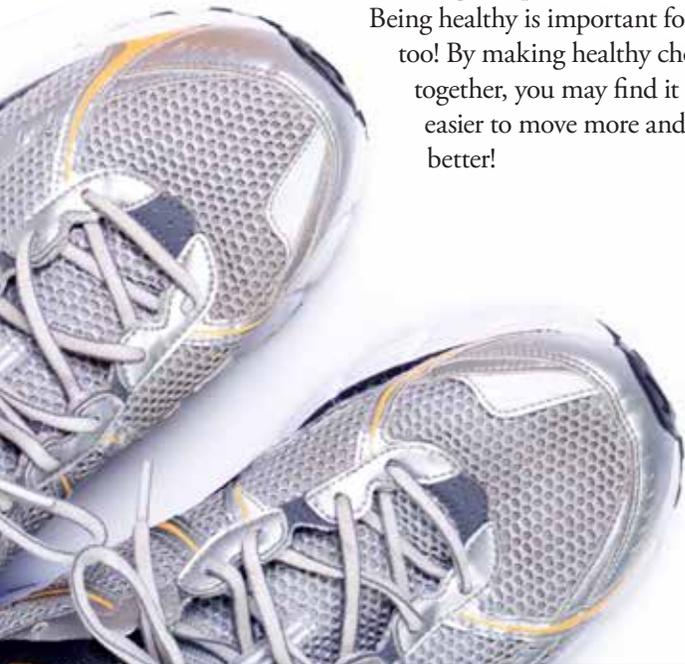
Being physically active and eating well may help you to stay fit and feel fabulous over the years.

Being physically active and making healthier food choices are good for you. In addition to improving your physical health, moving more and eating better may also do the following:

- › Reduce stress.
- › Set an example for your family.

Your family and friends can be great sources of support as you adopt a healthier lifestyle. Ask them to join you in healthy eating and physical activity.

Being healthy is important for them, too! By making healthy choices together, you may find it is easier to move more and eat better!



### Aim to Move More for 30 Minutes a Day

Try to do at least 30 minutes of moderately intense physical activity on most or all days of the week. Moderately intense activities, like brisk walking or dancing, speed up your heart rate and breathing. Getting 150 total minutes spread over the week is suggested. But even 60 total minutes a week of activity that is moderately intense may bring you health benefits.

### Start with 10

Fitting in physical activity is not as hard as you may think. You don't have to do the whole 30 minutes at one time. Start with a 10-minute session three times a day, then move to 15 minutes twice a day.

### Strengthen Your Muscles

Also try to do activities to strengthen your muscles at least two times a week. If you have weights or a rubber exercise band, they are good options to use. You can also lift canned food as weights for strengthening your arms and back. These activities are important because older adults—especially women—tend to lose muscle and bone every year. Activities to strengthen your muscles may help prevent or reduce this loss.

### Battle Your Barriers

Several reasons may occur to you about why you find being physically active difficult. If some of the thoughts below sound familiar to you, try the tips after each comment to overcome things that may keep you from being active.

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## *"It's too late for me to get physically active."*

It is never too late to start moving more! Physical activity may help you manage your arthritis and osteoporosis (bone loss). Being more active may also help you do the following:

- › Keep your body flexible.
- › Help you to improve your balance.
- › Control high blood sugar, especially if you lose weight.
- › Let you keep living in your own home without help.

## *"Physical activity is a chore."*

Physical activity can be fun once you figure out what you like to do. The more enjoyable it is, the more likely you are to stick with it.

Start a small garden in your yard or in a community space.

Break physical activity into short blocks of time. Taking three 10-minute walks during your day may be easier than taking one 30-minute walk.

Vary what you do from day to day so you can stay interested.

## *"I don't have enough time."*

No matter how busy you are, there are ways to fit in 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day:

- › Set aside time to be active. For instance, make it part of your daily routine to walk after breakfast or dinner.
- › Get up and move. Take breaks from sitting at the computer or watching TV.

- › If you have a job that requires a lot of sitting, walk around the block when you take your break. Send computer files to the printer farthest from your desk so you can move around a little more.

## *"I'm not an athlete so why strength train?"*

Activities to build strength are good for everyone, including older adults. For example, lifting weights may help protect your bones. Strength training may also help you perform your daily activities with more ease. In addition to weight lifting, there are many ways to become stronger.

- › Use canned foods or filled water bottles as weights to work your arms, shoulders, and back.
- › If you are able to, walk up stairs—lifting your body weight strengthens your legs and hips.

