



Thomas Orthopedic & Sports Physical Therapy
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Hours of Operation:
M, W, F: 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Tu, Th: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Randy's Ramblings
PAGE 1
- Get Out From Under the Shadow of Sugar
PAGE 1
- Why Seniors Are Flocking
to Home-Sharing Platforms
PAGE 2
- Take a Deep Breath
PAGE 3
- Upcoming Workshops
PAGE 3
- Zucchini Salad With Toasted Hazelnuts
PAGE 3
- 2 Stretches to Improve Your Balance
PAGE 4

2 STRETCHES YOU SHOULD DO EVERY DAY
For Better Balance and Flexibility

Your fitness routine is likely centered on building strength, tone, and endurance. But what about your balance? As American Council on Exercise (ACE) certified trainer Robbie Ann Darby points out, improving your balance benefits everything you do. By improving your flexibility through stretching, you'll be able to master the transitions between exercises and develop the power you need for better balance. Here are two essential stretches you can incorporate into your everyday routine.

FOOT STRETCH

Our feet carry us every day, and when they're tight, our balance can be affected. Help ease foot tension with this stretch (which is also great for anyone who suffers from plantar fasciitis): Kneel on the floor, arranging your legs under you so that your shins and the tops of your feet are on the floor and your glutes are resting on the bottoms of your feet. Maintain an upright posture. Raise yourself slightly, pick up your heels, and tuck your toes under. Slowly ease your weight back over your feet so that your glutes are resting on your heels and your toes are stretched.

This can be an intense stretch, so ease into it. If it's too much right now, start by sitting in a comfortable position with one foot in your lap. Gently pull back on your toes until you feel a stretch. Hold for one minute.



CALF STRETCH

Your calf muscles can limit your ability to place your feet flat on the ground while doing lunges, squats, and other movements. If your calves are tight, stability can be difficult. To stretch your calves, stand facing a wall and put your left foot behind you, toes facing straight ahead. Lean forward, keeping your heel on the ground and using the wall for stability, until you feel a stretch. Hold for 30–60 seconds, then switch sides. Try adding these stretches to your routine 3–5 days a week, building up to once per day, every day.

If you're experiencing balance issues or are concerned about falling, physical therapy can help. Whether you experience balance challenges related to aging or an inner ear issue, physical therapists can show you how to strengthen muscles and improve flexibility relative to balance — and make it fun in the process! Contact your local PT team to find out how they can help.



JUNE 2019

Randy's Ramblings

CELEBRATE EVERY DAY WITH THESE
ODD JUNE HOLIDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Dare Day | 15. Smile Power Day |
| 2. National Rocky Road Day | 16. Fresh Veggies Day |
| 3. Repeat Day | 17. Eat Your Vegetables Day |
| 4. Hug Your Cat Day | 18. International Panic Day |
| 5. World Environment Day | 19. Juneteenth |
| 6. National Yo-Yo Day | 20. Ice Cream Soda Day |
| 7. VCR Day | 21. National Selfie Day |
| 8. World Ocean Day | 22. National Chocolate Eclair Day |
| 9. Donald Duck Day | 23. National Pink Day |
| 10. Ballpoint Pen Day | 24. Swim a Lap Day |
| 11. National Corn on the Cob Day | 25. National Catfish Day |
| 12. National Peanut Butter Cookie Day | 26. Forgiveness Day |
| 13. National Weed Your Garden Day | 27. Sunglasses Day |
| 14. Monkey Around Day | 28. Paul Bunyan Day |
| | 29. Waffle Iron Day |
| | 30. Meteor Day |



-Randy Thomas

THE THOMAS
TIMES

UNDER THE SHADOW OF SUGAR
Reduce Your Intake and Become a Healthier You



Sugar is addictive, and it's in almost all the foods we eat. When you look at the nutrition facts and ingredient list of common food items, you're almost certain to find it. Sugar comes in many forms, including honey, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup solids, dextrose, glucose, and maltose.

Regardless of its type, sugar is one of the unhealthiest substances we consume regularly. Sugar — more than fat or refined carbohydrates — is a leading cause of Type 2 diabetes, obesity, heart disease, cancer, and a whole host of other detrimental conditions.

The average daily intake of sugar for an American is about 77 grams, which is about 18 teaspoons or 310 calories. This means that most Americans consume over 60 pounds of sugar every year!

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends limiting your sugar intake to about 36 grams per day for men or 25 grams for women. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends even less, advising that all adults should keep their consumption *under* 25 grams per day.

A single can of Coca-Cola contains 39 grams of sugar, mostly in the form of high fructose corn syrup. That covers the AHA's recommendation and then some. Unfortunately, many people drink far more than just one can of sugary soda every day.

A recent study published in April 2019 by researchers at Pennsylvania State University tackled daily soda and sugary drink consumption. They found that one-fifth of American children don't drink water on a daily basis and instead choose to drink sugar-based beverages.

Since these drinks have largely replaced water as a source of hydration, children are consuming more calories every day — not to mention suffering from the health detriments that come with consistent sugar intake.

Continued on Page 2 ...

While sugar negatively affects our bodies overall, it can have a much more severe impact on our brains. Have you ever noticed that shortly after eating or drinking something high in sugar, you get a rush of good feelings? Sugar triggers the release of dopamine in your brain, and this reward of feel-good chemicals is a major symptom of addiction.

Some researchers have compared sugar to illicit drugs, such as heroin and cocaine. Scientists at Princeton University put this theory to the test by performing experiments on rats. They increased the rats’ sugar intakes over time as they became more accustomed to it. Then, the scientists reduced or removed sugar from the rats’ diets. Shortly after, the rats began exhibiting withdrawal symptoms.

This exact phenomenon has been observed in humans. When you cut sugar out of your diet, it’s not uncommon to experience headaches, low energy, and cravings. One author put sugar addiction to the test and chronicled the experience, which you can read here:

FastCompany.com/3050319/how-giving-up-refined-sugar-changed-my-brain.

In short, he calls the process of cutting sugar from his diet a “roller-coaster ride” of emotion and concentration. Eventually, the author shifted from craving sugar to feeling better than ever. It wasn’t easy, but in the end, making the effort to cut down on sugar was worth it.

It’s something you can do too! Reducing sugar in your diet can do wonders for your health, mentally and physically. The hardest part is getting started and taking that first, all-important step.

One of the best ways to lower your sugar intake is to make meals and snacks from scratch. A bulk of the sugar we consume daily is in pre-made foods — including just about anything you buy from the grocery store.

Making your own meals and snacks gives you 100 percent control over the ingredients you put in your food and your body. For busy

people, this can sound challenging, but all it takes is a small, dedicated change in routine.

For example, plan a day to meal prep. Among the meal-prep community — which is prospering online with many subgroups dedicated to slow cookers and pressure cookers — Sunday is the most popular day.

You gather your ingredients, do the necessary cooking, and assemble your meals for the week, organizing everything in neat containers. You can prep for just the week and refrigerate your food or plan for multiple weeks and freeze meals so they don’t go bad as time goes on. You’ll save time on preparation and cooking, and you’re left with healthy meals and snacks when you’re done. There is no doubt that cutting down or eliminating sugar from your diet is hard. It takes time and effort, but the end result is more energy and greater mental clarity. Get out from under the shadow of sugar!

Why Seniors Are Flocking to Home-Sharing Platforms

An Opportunity for Easy Money and Social Engagement

The freedom of retirement certainly comes with its perks, but challenges of post-work living exist as well. Chief among them, for most elderly folks, are fears of social isolation and financial insolvency, as having coworkers and a regular income are not as common in retirement.

Perhaps this is why so many retirees are flocking to home-sharing platforms like Airbnb or its seniors-only cousin, The Freebird Club. Airbnb reported last year that the 60-plus age bracket is its fastest-growing demographic worldwide, with the number of senior hosts as much as doubling every year.

Home-sharing platforms can be a tremendous boon to a tight retirement budget. It’s an especially attractive option to elderly folks who find themselves rich in assets but struggling with liquid finances. Home-sharing allows them to tap into these resources. According to Priceonomics, U.S. Airbnb hosts bring in a monthly average of \$924.

But home-sharing can do more than boost your income. By opening a room in your home to travelers, you’ll encounter all kinds of people you

might never otherwise meet, prompting dynamic social interactions and meaningful connections. The rating systems on Airbnb and similar platforms almost entirely prevent would-be troublemakers from entering your property, and users report that when a rare negative experience *does* occur, the company typically has your back. It’s a great way to stay socially engaged while staving off loneliness.

Best of all, running a modestly successful Airbnb usually doesn’t take much work. It simply requires you to set up a neat, welcoming space, keep in contact with your guests, and ensure the check-in and check-out processes are as straightforward as possible. In fact, senior hosts seem to have a leg up on their younger counterparts, as elderly hosts earn the most consistently positive ratings across the globe.

Airbnb and The Freebird Club won’t make you rich, but they’re relatively low effort enterprises that come with some massive benefits. If you’re looking for a little busywork, some extra cash, and a little social interaction in your retirement, hosting may be your best bet!

AN ANCIENT SOLUTION TO MODERN PROBLEMS

The Truth About Meditation

Close your eyes and take a deep breath.

This is the first step in every meditation session. Though often associated with the New Age metaphysical movement, meditation isn’t all about incense and healing crystals. Meditation is an ancient practice that strengthens your mental focus, and recent research suggests that it offers real solutions to modern problems.

WHAT IS MEDITATION?

Meditation has strong roots in various religious and cultural traditions, but anyone can find value in practicing it. The purpose of meditation is to strengthen your mind by promoting mindfulness, focus, and awareness.

DOES MEDITATION WORK?

It depends on what you mean by “work.” Will meditation allow you to defy gravity and hover above the earth? Probably not. But there are so many benefits that will leave you feeling lighter in another way. A study published in JAMA Internal Medicine found that mindful meditation lowers stress levels, and patients who habitually meditate report less chronic pain. Another

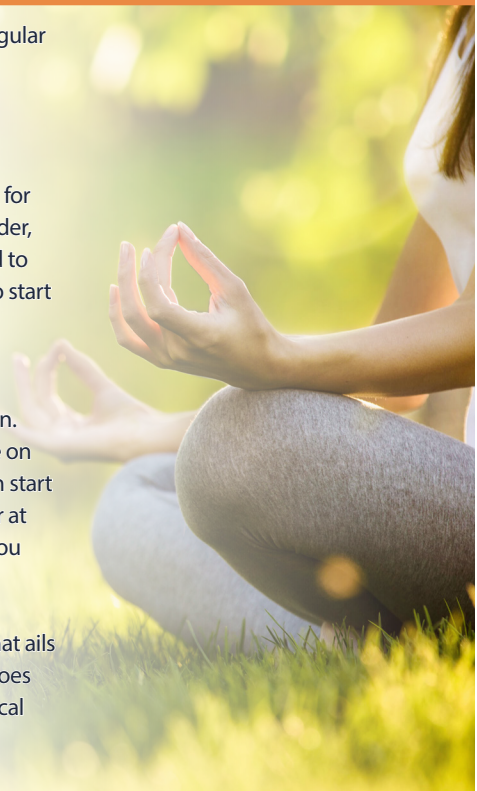
study published in the same journal found that regular meditation also fights depression.

HOW DO I MEDITATE?

Meditating is as simple as sitting in a quiet place, closing your eyes, and focusing on your breathing for a few minutes. Whenever your mind starts to wander, gently bring it back to your breath. You don’t need to climb a mountain or pay for a week-long retreat to start meditating.

That said, there are plenty of resources that help beginners build a strong foundation for meditation. Popular apps like Calm or Headspace are available on any smartphone and offer guided courses you can start anywhere, anytime. You could also check online or at your local community center for group classes if you would like some in-person guidance.

Meditation isn’t a magical ritual that will cure all that ails you, but plenty of research suggests meditation does provide tangible benefits to our mental and physical well-being. Maybe one day, meditation will be as commonplace as daily exercise.



Upcoming Workshops

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Our workshops are full of great information to help you lead a healthier and more active life!

| Date | Clinic & Workshop | PT |
|---------|----------------------------|------------------|
| June 20 | Knee Pain | Sarah Thomas, PT |
| June 25 | Lower Back Pain & Sciatica | Randy Thomas, PT |
| July 23 | Lower Back Pain & Sciatica | Randy Thomas, PT |

Note: All clinics and workshops are free and are held 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

RSVP TODAY
386-257-2672



ZUCCHINI SALAD WITH TOASTED HAZELNUTS

With raw zucchini, toasted hazelnuts, and a robust Parmigiano-Reggiano, this early summer salad is a delight of different textures and flavors that will make a great side at your next cookout.

Ingredients

- 3 small zucchini (3/4 lb.)
- 1/2 tsp lemon zest, grated
- 3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup toasted hazelnuts, coarsely chopped
- Mint leaves, for garnish
- Parmesan cheese, preferably Parmigiano-Reggiano, for garnish

Directions

1. Using a mandolin or very sharp knife, slice zucchini lengthwise into extremely thin, wide ribbons.
2. Arrange zucchini ribbons on a plate, sprinkle with lemon zest, and drizzle with juice.
3. Drizzle oil over zucchini, season with salt and pepper, and toss.
4. Scatter hazelnuts over the top, garnish with mint and cheese, and serve.