



Goodhealth

SMART WAYS TO STAY WELL, EAT RIGHT, GET FIT

A Smarter Sinus Rx

While doctors have long handed out prescriptions for acute sinus infections, the vast majority of these—up to 98%—are viral, not bacterial, and should not be treated with antibiotics, say new guidelines from the Infectious Diseases Society of America. This kind of casual prescribing leads to drug-resistant superbugs, the group notes. Instead, ease your misery with saline rinses and acetaminophen for fever or pain. Avoid antihistamines, advises committee chair Anthony W. Chow, M.D., of the University of British Columbia—they cause sleepiness and dry mouth and may not help much. Signs you may have a bacterial infection and need an antibiotic:

- You are getting worse after 10 days
- You have a high fever (over 102 degrees) for at least three days
- You seem to improve, but then get sicker

Good to Know

When you know something will hurt, distract yourself with mental math or look away. New studies suggest these tricks change the way your brain processes pain, reducing the “ouch.”

HEALING HYMNS

FOR A HOLIDAY-SEASON BOOST, open your hymnal. In interviews with 65 North Carolinians who had experienced a life-threatening illness, the death of a loved one, or another difficult time, those who expressed their faith through song said they felt strengthened, more at peace, and better able to endure stressful situations when they sang or simply hummed hymns to themselves while thinking about the lyrics. Most helpful were hymns of thanksgiving and praise, like “Amazing Grace” or “I Will Trust in the Lord,” says lead author Jill B. Hamilton, Ph.D., of the School of Nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She encourages visitors to bring a recording of favorite hymns for loved ones who are hospitalized. Also, she says, “these songs can be very comforting during the holidays as people remember those they’ve lost.”

WHY WOMEN NEED READING GLASSES SOONER It's not that our eye muscles don't focus up close as well as men's, an analysis from the University of California, Berkeley, has found. Rather, as our eyes age and we try to compensate, we can't hold menus and books as far away as men can—our arms aren't long enough. ■

