

# HEALTHNET NEWS

*A newsletter for public librarians and others interested in consumer health information services*

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## NETNEWS

### *USING TWITTER TO KEEP UP WITH HEALTH NEWS*

Do you follow the Twitter feed at the MedlinePlus website for health consumers at <http://twitter.com/medlineplus> ?

Its brief tweets offer information about health news, fitness recommendations appropriate to the season, developments about medications and diseases, and links to reliable consumer health websites. Its publisher, the National Library of Medicine, is part of the National Institutes of Health.

More than 26,000 followers gather health information from MedlinePlus' Twitter feed.

### *A SPANISH VERSION OF TWITTER HEALTH NEWS...*



A new MedlinePlus Twitter feed has been added.

MedlinePlus en español <http://twitter.com/medlineplusesp> now makes brief consumer health entries available in Spanish.

### *NEW SPANISH LANGUAGE GUIDES TO MEDICAL TREATMENT*

How can you determine which medical treatments are most effective, even if you are not skilled at deciphering research articles in the New England Journal of Medicine?

Where can health consumers find resources that explain medical research in easier-to-understand English terms and in Spanish?

The federal government offers a website about effective medical treatments, created especially for patients and health consumers.

Guides to medical research reviews for patients and health consumers are published online by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality at <http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/research-summaries-for-consumers-clinicians-and-policy-makers/>

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<http://library.uhc.edu/departm/hnet>

Based on research studies, each Consumer Guide offers a link to the technical research report on which it is based...in case you'd like to read the report written especially for physicians as well the report adapted for health consumers.

The Consumer Guides are written in plain language, without medical jargon, in both English and Spanish, to guide health consumers in "Helping [To].. Make Better Treatment Choices."

Six new Spanish language Effective Health Care patient guides are available at <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/informacion-en-espanol>

These newly published medical treatment guides compare drugs for heart attack prevention, evaluate therapies for hip fracture pain, offer treatments for rotator cuff tears, discuss therapy for depression after brain injuries, describe radiotherapy for head and neck cancer, and human growth hormone for children with cystic fibrosis.

Twenty-three Spanish language treatment guides are now available.

Free printed copies may be requested by contacting the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Publications Clearinghouse at 1-800-358-9295 or by email at [ahrqpubs@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:ahrqpubs@ahrq.hhs.gov)

Additional Spanish language health care resources, published by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), are online at <http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/espanoix.htm>

Links to more medical research information, in plain language, may be found on the Healthnet website at <http://uchc.libguides.com/content.php?pid=111926&sid=842802> within a Subject Guide entitled, "Medical Research: What You Need to Know."

### *WEIGHT MANAGEMENT APPS*

Have you resolved to lose weight in the New Year?

How are you planning to keep track of your progress?

Would a weight management app on your iPhone be helpful in keeping you on target?

The challenge will be choosing a convenient app that incorporates scientifically valid information.... from among the thousands of nutrition-focused apps available.

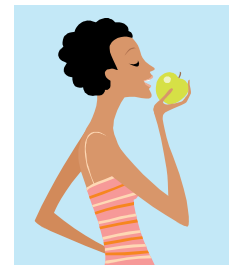
Help is now available on the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the American Dietetic Association), the national professional association of dietitians, at <http://www.eatright.org/appreviews/>

The website's "Consumer and Lifestyle App Reviews" incorporate "science-based reviews" of popular apps that target weight loss. The apps are rated on a star system from one to five stars.

The succinct reviews are written by a registered dietitian from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. There is a brief synopsis of each app, a list of pros and cons of each (e.g. size of food database, ease of use, visual appeal, Nutrition Facts labels, physical activity log, compatibility with Facebook and Twitter ), and a "bottom line" evaluation.

Each review encourages users to consult a dietitian in order to make the most effective use of these weight management apps.

In addition to reviews of weight management apps, the webpage includes reviews of Diabetes Apps and Gluten-Free Apps.



*A NEW “SUPER TRACKER” GUIDES HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES*

*“Enjoy your food, but eat less.”*

Have you resolved to eat healthy foods and exercise each day in the New Year?

Would you appreciate some assistance in implementing these New Year’s resolutions?

A new online nutrition tool has been designed to help keep track of the foods you consume and record your exercise level each day.

The free online SuperTracker website at <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/SuperTracker/default.aspx> helps users create a “personalized nutrition and physical activity plan.” It “can help you plan, analyze, and track your diet and physical activity.”

The interactive Food Tracker section of the website gives users an opportunity to enter the foods eaten in each meal and retrieve a calorie count for the meal. You can save favorite foods or food combos for easy reentry in future days. The website cumulatively calculates the calories eaten at each meal throughout the day and subtracts the calories eaten from the daily default total of 2,000 calories. This total can be adjusted depending on your height, weight, and weight loss goals.

The SuperTracker indicates how closely you have reached daily food group targets. It shows how well your choices match the federal government’s 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. To help you achieve your goals, it offers sample meal plans.

A “Food-A-Pedia” feature may be used to look up nutrition information about more than 8,000 foods

This new resource is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s ChooseMyPlate.gov website at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> The website is designed to help consumers “make smart choices from every food group,” on the basis of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

A colorful, interactive resource, it allows the user to “view food and activity trends over time,” and “create food consumption and activity reports.”



*(graphic is a publication of the U.S. Department of Agriculture)*

The “Physical Activity Tracker” calculates your weekly exercise total on the basis of the exercise you’ve selected and the duration each day. It compares your total weekly exercise to a healthy physical activity target.

“My Weight Manager” tracks weight over time. “My Coach Center” provides virtual coaching toward goals you have set. An online journal may be used to indicate not only what you’ve eaten and when, but also what mood and snack location might have triggered you to eat that extra chocolate chip cookie.

In the future, mobile apps may be created to enhance the SuperTracker.

No chance to avoid the actual results of your good intentions. The SuperTracker presents it all in colorful numbers, graphics, and charts.

## SOUL FOOD FOR GOOD HEALTH

Can sweet potato pie be part of your new, healthy 2012 diet? Can you still eat cornbread and pecans if you have made a New Year's resolution to consume only healthy food?

An African Heritage Diet Pyramid, to help you enjoy some of your favorite comfort foods without sabotaging your new resolutions, has been created by Oldways <http://www.oldwayspt.org/> a nonprofit education organization that promotes healthy nutrition. It emphasizes "healthy food traditions of people with African roots."

The African Heritage diet plan at <http://www.oldwayspt.org/AHH-pyramid> includes rice and beans, potato salad, cornbread and other tasty foods of African heritage, cooked in a healthy, delicious way.

The Diet Pyramid is intended to "use heritage as a guide to eating well." The Diet Pyramid and the accompanying recipes focus on the "traditional healthy eating patterns of African Heritage, with roots in America, Africa, the Caribbean, or South America." Oldways describes the African Heritage Diet Pyramid as "a new model for healthful eating designed specifically for African Americans and descendants of Africans everywhere."

## OLDWAYS HEALTH THROUGH HERITAGE African Heritage Diet Pyramid



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<http://www.oldwayspt.org/>

The health challenges of African-American cultural tradition are explained in a valuable book, **Reclaiming Our Health. A Guide to African American Wellness** by Dr. Michelle A. Gourdine. The book is described on page 8 of the Fall 2011 issue of Healthnet News at <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet/fall11.pdf>

According to Dr. Gourdine, large quantities of fat, salt, and sugar in traditional African American foods led to consumption of unhealthy foods for generations. It can be hard to reject these foods since many of these comfort dishes were associated with family celebrations and had positive associations.

The African Heritage Diet Pyramid can assist in overcoming the challenges of patterns of sugary, fat laden, salty foods.

The African Heritage diet plan is introduced in an attractive online two page brochure, "Welcome to the African Heritage Diet" at <https://www.oldwayspt.org/sites/all/files/African%20Heritage%20brochure.pdf>

The "Common foods of African heritage," in a colorful chart on the Oldways website at <http://www.oldwayspt.org/AHH-foods>, include cashews, olive oil, turkey, blackberries, mangos, pumpkin, and wild rice.

"Setting Up Your African Heritage Kitchen" at [http://www.oldwayspt.org/sites/all/files/AHH-Set\\_up\\_kitchen.pdf](http://www.oldwayspt.org/sites/all/files/AHH-Set_up_kitchen.pdf) encourages cooks to keep on hand black-eyed peas, butter beans, jams and pickled fruit, brazil nuts, pecans, molasses, and Caribbean seasonings.

An African Heritage Diet grocery list at <http://www.oldwayspt.org/sites/all/files/African%20Heritage%20Grocery%20List.pdf> includes catfish, fava beans, a variety of spices, mustard greens, mangoes, and plantains.

A variety of recipes at <http://www.oldwayspt.org/recipesresources/browse/496> include African peanut soup, braised collard greens, grilled red snapper, pecan-crust catfish, and shrimp gumbo.

There is also a food glossary at <http://www.oldwayspt.org/AHD-food-glossary> to help explain terms such as Moqueca De Peixe, pigeon peas, Callaloo, and Teff.



## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The following titles are recommended to public libraries and other libraries providing consumer health information services. They are not part of the UCONN Health Center Library collection.

**Finding Your Way: A Medical Ethics Handbook for Patients and Families.** Katrina A. Bramstedt and Albert R. Jonsen. Munster, Indiana. Hilton Publishing Company, 2012. 152 p. (ISBN 0-984-756647 paperback).

An elderly dementia patient suffers a stroke and may have experienced extensive brain damage..

A patient refuses treatment that may save his life...

Parents deny permission for medical care that their child urgently needs...

A patient's family wants her to be kept on life-support machines despite the patient's imminent death...

These medical challenges are ones that involve, not only the medical specialists treating the patient, but also the patient, who must express her wishes about continued care. In many circumstances, they involve the patient's family if she is unable to express her own desires.

Bioethical decisions are based on the medical circumstances of each case as well as the preferences of the patient about continued life and type of health care.

Each chapter in this medical ethics handbook, written expressly for patients and their families, portrays a dramatic hypothetical ethical challenge that many families may actually encounter.

Ethicist and author Katrina A. Bramstedt understands that "Complex [medical and ethical] questions are [often] posed at a time when decisions must be urgently made." She realizes that the toughest decisions we and our families must make can come when there is little time to weigh the options for care.

At a time of serious illness, when accidents occur, or when end of life decisions must be confronted, it is challenging to determine which is the best path to follow. When relatives disagree on the best direction to take, the decision-making process becomes even more fraught with emotion.

Moreover, medical decision making, in this complex technological society, can resemble the experience of navigating a "maze."

Decisions are based on four medical principles of care: the right of patients to make decisions about their own care, the requirement that medical treatment provides benefit and does no harm to the patient, and that medical care is fairly distributed within society.

A professional ethicist and former professor at the Cleveland Clinic and the California Pacific Medical Center, Dr. Katrina A. Bramstedt uses real-life examples of medical ethics situations to clarify dilemmas that patients and families may face. Dr. Albert R. Jonsen, her co-author, with many years of experience in this field, is Co-Director of the Program in Medicine and Human Values at the California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco

The authors explain the ethical principles that guide medical decision-making, the process of ethics consultations in hospitals, the importance of completing advance directives, appointment of a surrogate decision-maker, transplant ethics, ethics involving reproduction, decision making when treatment is futile, evaluating quality of life, confidentiality of medical information, and refusal of medical treatment by adults.

Challenging topics that need the guidance of medical ethics principles...

**YOU The Owner's Manual for Teens. A Guide to a Healthy Body and Happy Life.** Michael F. Roizen, M.D. and Mehmet C. Oz, M.D.. Ellen Rome, M.D. New York. Free Press, 2011. 438 p. (ISBN 978-0-7432-9258-0 paperback).

A light-hearted, casual, informative guide to sickness and good health for teenagers from Dr. Roizen and Dr. Oz, the popular authors and stars of many television medical shows.

The book includes explanations of skin care, nutrition, fitness, sexuality, memory, stress, allergies, sleep, mood, relationships, diet, addictions, the immune system, athletic injuries, and other topics on the mind of teenagers, even if they hesitate to discuss them with their parents.

The text is straightforward and humorous, offering basic, medical explanations of adolescent development and health with a modern, realistic understanding of teen experiences. Lots of cartoon-style diagrams and illustrations reinforce the explanations.

The "YOU/Plan" offers a chart of twenty-five healthy tips ("Do one small (or big) form of stress management each day." "Protect your ears from noise louder than a lawn mower...." "Do some kind of exercise nearly every day..." "Wear a helmet while cycling...") with opportunities for teens check off the frequency with which they perform them.

Practical, "Tool" sections at the end of the books offer exercises with illustrations, imaginative, easy recipes, brief explanations of cosmetic surgery, and discussions of medical confidentiality ("informed consent," "HIPAA," and "minors").



*Healthnet News is written by Alberta L. Richetelle and Judith Kronick.  
If you have questions about anything in the newsletter or about Healthnet services for Connecticut public libraries,  
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