

FAMILY LIVING IDEAS

May 2003

HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT IT TO BE?

A company was hiring a new CEO. After an extensive interview each finalist was asked one final question: "How much is two plus two?" Ann, an accountant, answered forthrightly, "Four, of course." Terry, who was an engineer, said, "It depends on whether you're dealing with positive or negative numbers. The answer could be plus four, zero or minus four." Chuck, whose background was in marketing, looked directly at the questioner and whispered, "How much do you want it to be?"

While Ann and Terry took different approaches, they were trying to give a correct answer. Chuck wasn't. To him the right answer was the one that worked. Should his response disqualify him or get him the job? I'd show him the door.

First, let's note that there's a big difference between a rational decision and a rationalization. It's rational to reason first and decide what to do; it's a rationalization to invent reasons to justify what you want to do.

Chuck is a rationalizer and rationalizers don't make good employees. They don't make good leaders or friends either. They make excuses and give explanations without regard for truth. Some become so adept that they even deceive themselves, to the point where they don't even know what's true, let alone what's right.

Remember, an employee that will lie for you will lie to you. Inevitably it will become clear to everyone: "This person can't be trusted." Rationalizing is essentially dishonest. That's why we get so disgusted when politicians, pitchmen or even our own friends try to con or manipulate us with insincere, clever justifications that sound good but we know are not true. And that's why people of character don't rationalize.

Source: Josephson, Josephson Institute of Ethics

Master Food Preserver Class

The Master Food Preserver class will start May 6 at 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Grant County Public Works, 124 Enterprise St. SE, Ephrata, and meet each Tuesday morning through June 24. There is still room for some more interested people. Please call the Extension office if you plan to attend to sign up, 765-2160 Ext. 413

When visiting older relatives, bring pictures, photo albums and videotapes of family members and friends ● Take word games, simple puzzles and books your relative may enjoy ● Choose a few topics to talk about in advance—if you went on a trip, for instance, bring souvenirs and photos ● Take a small gift, such as a plant, picture frame, hairbrush or homemade cookies in a pretty container ● Don't stay long if your relative becomes agitated during your visit. *Source: Susan Beerman, coauthor of Eldercare 911*

Caffeine Counts

No-Doz (per pill).....	200 mg
6-oz cup drip coffee.....	150 mg
6-oz cup instant coffee.....	100 mg
Excedrin (per pill).....	65 mg
8 oz Häagen-Dazs coffee ice cream.....	58 mg
6-oz cup black tea.....	50 mg
12-oz cup caffeinated soft drink.....	40 mg
6-oz cup green tea.....	15 mg
1.5 oz Hershey's milk chocolate bar.....	10 mg
6-oz cup hot chocolate.....	10 mg

**Only those who will risk going too far
 can possibly find out how far one can go.**

Asparagus Season Begins—It wouldn't be spring without local asparagus! Harvest season for Washington asparagus is typically early April through June. Our state's 350 asparagus growers are located primarily in the Columbia Basin, Yakima Valley and Walla Walla area, and they produce 40% of the nation's crop. Fresh asparagus is best enjoyed as soon as it's purchased. To store asparagus, place bundled stalks upright in a bowl with about an inch of water and refrigerate. Or, wrap the cut ends in a damp paper towel, then cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Source: *Take 5, April 2003*



Pop quiz on water

A lot of misinformation about water has been floating around lately. **True or false?**

1. Most Americans are dehydrated.
2. Whether you're thirsty or not, you should force yourself to drink water throughout the day.
3. You need at least eight glasses of water a day.
4. The water in other beverages, fruits and soups counts.
5. Drinking anything caffeinated results in a net loss of water.
6. All alcoholic beverages are dehydrating.
7. Drinking lots of water cures or prevents hypertension, ulcers, heart disease, arthritis, asthma, diabetes, headaches and back pain.
8. Drinking while eating does not help digestion.
9. "Oxygenated" water, infused with five to ten times as much oxygen as regular water, will help your muscles and improve performance. So will vitamin-enriched water.

Answers

1. **False.** There is no evidence for this, though many bottled-water companies and a variety of health experts promote this claim.
2. **False.** Fortunately, in healthy people, the body is very good at regulating fluid balance, and thirst is a reliable indicator of water needs. Under normal circumstances, there's no reason to tote a water bottle around all day. Exceptions: when you're exercising strenuously or doing hard physical work, especially over long periods and in hot weather, you should make an effort to drink even if you don't feel thirsty. Very dry environments such as plane cabins may also dehydrate you; you'll be more comfortable if you drink extra fluids when flying. Cold, dry winter air also depletes the body of water.
3. **False.** This is a myth. Water is essential, but most people can stay perfectly healthy with six or even three glasses of fluids a day, depending on how active they are, how hot it is and what else they are consuming.
4. **True.** Milk and other beverages consist almost entirely of water. Most foods are mainly water, particularly fruits, greens and other vegetables (some are 95% water). Soups are mostly water. Even meats contain lots of water.
5. **False.** Caffeinated beverages such as coffee, tea or cola tend to promote urination, but they also count, in part, as fluid intake. Drinking a cup of

coffee does *not* result in a net loss of water. You do retain some of the fluid from it. In fact, three years ago a study from the University of Nebraska found that people showed the same "hydration status" (as determined from urine analysis and other medical tests) when they drank caffeinated colas and/or coffee as when they drank only water and/or fruit drinks.

6. False, for many alcoholic beverages.

Concentrated alcoholic beverages, such as vodka or brandy, if drunk undiluted, are very dehydrating. But beer and many mixed drinks contain lots of water (the alcohol in wine is also fairly diluted). Still, if you're exercising or working in hot weather, you're better off with nonalcoholic beverages.

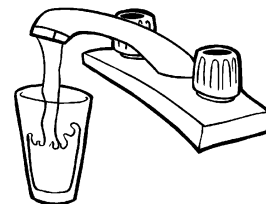
7. False. If only it could! There is no evidence for any of this, though these and other claims are often made. A few years ago, for instance, one book blamed most illnesses on lack of water—without offering any scientific support. Of course, severe dehydration can lead to serious problems such as muscle spasms and sharp drops in blood pressure, as well as impaired exercise performance.

8. True. Drinking liquids with meals is a matter of preference. The stomach needs water to digest foods, but it draws in what it needs from the rest of the body, temporarily. And as we said, nearly everything you eat contains water.

9. False and false. One study found that oxygenated water did not improve aerobic performance; another found that it did not increase oxygen levels in the blood. The only way to get oxygen into the blood and to the muscles is through your lungs. Vitamin-enriched waters, or those containing herbs, also won't improve performance or benefit your health in any way. However, "sports drinks" containing low levels of sugar and sodium can help you conserve your carbohydrate stores and delay fatigue during a prolonged workout or race.

When to reach for a glass

Don't get us wrong. We love water—plain old *eau de tap*. Every organ and bodily function depends on it. It's in your cells and around your cells. The average person is toting 10 to 12 gallons of it. But water is not magic. And you don't need to worry about it.



A few exceptions:

- ✓ As we've said, you need to drink more when exercising strenuously or working in hot weather.
- ✓ It's a good idea to drink a glass of water or juice on arising in the morning, since you've had no fluids for many hours.
- ✓ If you are constipated, increasing your fluid intake can help.
- ✓ If you are upping your fiber intake (fruits, vegetables and especially grains), you should increase your fluid intake.
- ✓ Drinking plenty of fluids may help ward off kidney stones, or prevent a recurrence of kidney stones if you're a stone-former.
- ✓ Plenty of fluids may also help prevent urinary tract infections.

Source: *UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, May 2003*

Most Americans don't follow the "5-a-day" recommendation for fruit or vegetables. A recent Minnesota study, for instance, found that only 35% of women and 19% of men met this goal. The goal is *at least* five servings. The USDA actually recommends at least three to five vegetables, *plus* two to four fruit servings. Five servings might be the minimum for, say, a small woman eating 1,500 calories a day, but nine would be a better goal for a man eating 3,000 calories. **It really isn't hard to eat "5-a-day,"** since the official serving sizes are small. A large apple or banana, a cup of broccoli or lentils, or a medium-sized salad each counts as two servings.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, May 2003

BREAKFAST Meal Of Champions

In America, breakfast is mostly carbohydrates with less protein in comparison to a Mediterranean diet. The European diet always includes breakfast with fruit, cheese and even baked beans, an English tradition. For some in this country, breakfast is liquid with only juice and coffee on the run.

Remember:

- 1 A pattern of missing breakfast increases the future likelihood of obesity.
- 2 Always get your fruit serving at breakfast; otherwise, it is unlikely that the minimum will be reached for 2-4 servings daily.
- 3 Try to get a good protein source for the first meal such as lowfat cheeses, fat free milk, whole grain breads, or soy products such as soymilk and soy enhanced cereal.
- 4 Breakfast is a great time to start on fiber. Try to get at least 25 to 35 grams per day.
- 5 Watch the fat content of sausage, bacon, whole eggs and sweetened cereals.

Source: Richard E. Collins, MD, *The Cooking Cardiologist*

Cleaning Up Outdoor Furniture

Bring outdoor furniture back to life! Clean aluminum furniture with a mild, non-abrasive cleaner. Molded resin furniture, including resin-weave wicker, should be cleaned with mild detergent and water. Don't use abrasive powders, chlorine bleaches and silicone cleaners on resin surfaces.

If wood furniture is exposed to moisture and dirt, spotting or mildew may occur. If this happens, sand with a fine-grade sandpaper, clean with a wood cleaner, then re-oil the surface. Teak wood is extremely dense and can be periodically scrubbed, using soap, water and a brush. Always follow the furniture manufacturer's recommended cleaning procedures.

Acrylic, polyester and cotton fabrics should be spot-cleaned by sponging with a solution of liquid dishwashing detergent and lukewarm water. Rinse with clear water to remove soap; air dry.

Source: *Cleanliness Facts*, March/April 2003

Most Dangerous Foods to Eat When Driving

Here's an aspect of food safety that differs from the microbes we usually talk about.

Hagerty Classic Insurance of Michigan has rated foods that are commonly eaten when people are driving and developed a "Ten Most Dangerous Foods to Eat While Driving" list. The insurance agency rated foods according to the degree of distraction posed, difficulty to eat one-handed, and overall popularity. They singled out foods that were messy and spilled easily because they cause drivers to look away from the road to wipe up.

- Coffee
- Hot soups
- Tacos
- Chili
- Juicy hamburgers
- Any barbecued food
- Fried chicken
- Jelly and cream-filled doughnuts
- Soft drinks
- Chocolate

According to the article, more than one-half of all fast food is sold in the drive-through lane. Surveys have suggested that Americans eat more than 10 percent of all meals in the car; "cup-holder" cuisine is a rapidly growing market niche for the food industry.

Source: Lisa Gutierrez, *Kansas City Star*. "Dining and driving is a recipe for disaster." *The Spokesman Review*, p F1, September 1, 2002.

In case of a terrorist attack, the average American needs enough cash on hand to cover a few days' worth of expenses, says consumer finance expert Steve Rhode. Withdrawing large amounts from the bank is unnecessary. Even after the September 11 terrorist attacks, electronic payment systems and banks functioned normally. For extra security, also carry a major credit card.

Source: Steve Rhode, president and cofounder of Myvesta.org.

Tiny Bites = Big Calories

Adding "mystery" pounds? Consider counting calories in those tiny bites. **Bite 1:** 1/4 cup of orange juice in the carton—might as well finish it off – 26 calories. **Bite 2:** 2 tablespoons granola left in box; add it to your serving of cereal – 64 calories. **Bite 3:** 2 teaspoons powdered creamer in your coffee – 20 calories. **Bite 4:** small sample of cake and a second sliver too – 73 calories. **Bite 5:** mayo on the burger – 100 calories. **Bite 6:** 2 mints for onion control – 20 calories. **Bite 7:** chocolate kiss from the candy jar – 25 calories. **Bite 8:** second chocolate kiss – 25 calories. **Bite 9:** handful of peanuts – 105 calories. **Bite 10:** cheese on cracker at grocery store – 55 calories. **Bite 11:** 2 tablespoons macaroni and cheese, just a taste while cooking – 54 calories. **Bite 12:** 1/4 cup macaroni and cheese left over after dinner – 108 calories. Grand total extra calories for the day = 675. Eaten daily, these extra calories could mean a pound a week! Remember: 3500 extra calories = 1 pound.

Source: *The Topic Tickler*, Chelan & Douglas Counties, February 2003

Spring Cleaning the Fridge

While spring isn't the only time refrigerators should be cleaned, it's a good starting point. Discard anything that smells or looks bad! Check the expiration dates on remaining items

For major cleaning, unplug the refrigerator and remove everything. Put perishable foods in a cooler or ice chest to keep them at a safe temperature. Give the interior walls a gentle scrubbing, using warm water and a mild detergent; rinse and wipe dry. Wash the walls again, this time with a solution of two tablespoons of baking soda in a quart of warm water; rinse and wipe dry. Use the same two-step process to clean removable drawers and shelves.

With the refrigerator still unplugged, clean the condenser coils, located underneath the refrigerator. Pet hair and dust accumulate here, causing the condenser to work harder. To clean, remove the base grill and vacuum the coils with the vacuum's long, narrow attachment.

Finally, wash the rubber gasket around the door with warm water and mild dish detergent. Then wipe down bottles, jars and other containers before putting them back in the refrigerator. Plug in the refrigerator and you're ready for spring!

Source: Cleanliness Facts, March/April 2003

Fridge Quiz!

Put your knowledge of proper refrigeration to the test.

1. Should hot food be placed directly in the refrigerator? Yes or No
2. Refrigeration prevents bacterial growth. True or False
3. At what temperature should you set your refrigerator? _____ °F

Answers:

1. Yes, but divide large quantities of food into shallow containers for quicker cooling.
2. False. Refrigeration *slows*, but does not prevent the growth of harmful bacteria.
3. 40 °F to discourage the growth of food borne bacteria. Use a refrigerator/freezer thermometer to check the temperature of your refrigerator regularly.

Source: Something for Today, Carol J. Schultz, CSU, Larimer Co., CO

AIM HIGH

A recent report in the New England Journal of Medicine brought good news for people with diabetes—and maybe for everyone else. For about eight years, Danish researchers tracked 160 people with diabetes. Half were given standard treatment. The other half were urged to set high goals for controlling blood sugar and reducing blood pressure, weight and blood cholesterol—and were given a wider variety of drugs than the other group, including low-dose aspirin. They followed a heart-healthy diet, and got light to moderate exercise. The medical team that followed these people kept close track of their progress and urged them on. The patients had ambitious goals, and lots of support from their doctors. The group with ambitious goals did much better—they were only half as likely to develop heart disease (common in people with diabetes) as the others. This story has a moral that's not too difficult to figure out. When it comes to exercising and following a healthy diet, or giving up smoking and other harmful habits, be ambitious. Set your goals high and work to meet them. It's easier and better to avoid diabetes, if you can, than to have to treat it. Recruit a cheering section—a friend, a family member, your doctor, your nurse practitioner, a trainer at the gym, yourself.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, May 2003



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