



Health

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THINK SMART

Helpful tips for your everyday life

Too sick for school?

I admit it: I'm that mom who sends her kids to school with the sniffles. But here in the middle of cold and flu season, I feel somewhat vindicated by research from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center that finds parents keep sick kids home when they don't have to do so.

"Parents tend to over-exclude children, which can cause unnecessary work absences for parents and doctor visits for kids," says lead researcher Kristen Copeland. Parents, caregivers and even pediatricians are not up on the American Academy of Pediatrics' latest guidelines. Read on for a sick-child primer.

A child can go to school with:

A common cold or a runny nose (regardless of mucus color)
 A mild fever
 Watery eyes but no discharge or pain
 A rash without fever
 Ringworm, for one day, before seeing a doctor; or with treatment

Keep a child home who:

Has fever plus another symptom
 Has vomited twice in 24 hours
 Has eye discharge and underside of eyelid is red
 Needs rest to recover

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FitSmart

JORGE CRUISE

Get serious: Hire a trainer

A personal trainer can be a huge help as you pursue fitness goals. There's no national standard for personal trainers, but there are keys to choosing one.

A trainer should have a degree in a related field and be certified by a nationally recognized organization (find a list of organizations at noca.org). Ask how long he has been training and what his specialty is. Do a personality check: Is *he* motivated, and can he share that with you?

"Ask for references," says Tom Baechle, executive director of the National Strength and Conditioning Association Certification Commission, "and ask other gym-goers about their trainers. Find out if they've seen results."

A personal trainer should start by obtaining your health history. If you have underlying problems, he should refer you to a doctor, physical therapist or certified athletic trainer.

How does a personal trainer differ from a certified athletic trainer? The latter must hold a degree in athletic training from an accredited college, pass a nationally recognized certification exam and, in many states, have a license. Such qualifications are important if you have consistent swelling or persistent pain, says Chuck Kimmel, of the National Athletic Trainers' Association. "Athletic trainers can help you pursue your goals while providing treatment for injuries," he says.

To find an athletic trainer, call the athletic department at your local university or sports medicine clinic.

Contact Jorge Cruise, author of *The 3-Hour Diet*, at 3hourdiet.com.

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EatSmart

JEAN CARPER

Heart-helper muffins

Here's a muffin packed with antioxidants in the apples, cranberries and nuts, fiber in the oats and even cinnamon to cut blood sugar. All benefit your cardiovascular system.

Oatmeal Apple Muffins

1 egg
3/4 cup fat-free half-and-half
3 Tbs. canola or olive oil
1/3 cup Splenda or sugar
1 medium apple, peeled and chopped
3/4 cup dried cranberries or raisins
1/2 cup walnut pieces
1 cup whole-wheat flour
1 cup quick-cooking oats
1/4 tsp. salt
1 Tb. baking powder
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
2 tsps. cinnamon

Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

In a bowl, beat together egg, half-and-half, oil and Splenda (or sugar). In a large bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Fold egg mixture into dry mixture, just to moisten.

Fill non-stick muffin tins 3/4 full. Bake 15 to 20 minutes.

Makes 12

Per Muffin: 173 calories, 4g protein, 23g carbohydrates, 8g fat (1g saturated), 20mg cholesterol, 3g fiber, 192mg sodium

For more great USA WEEKEND recipes, visit
<http://usaweekend.allrecipes.com>.

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TravelSmart EVERETT POTTER

8 tips to avoid hotel theft

Hotel theft is a major problem. To be safe:

1. Don't discuss your room number in front of strangers.
2. Avoid displaying cash or jewelry.
3. Avoid ground-floor rooms, which outsiders can access more easily.
4. Make sure your room door locks securely; lock any sliding-glass doors, windows and connecting room doors.
5. Don't leave cash, traveler's checks or other valuables in plain sight.

6. Use the in-room safe for all valuables.
7. When leaving your room, put the "do not disturb" sign on your door, and leave on the TV or radio.
8. Don't display your room key in public or leave it at the hotel's restaurant or pool, where it could be stolen.

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