## Health Newsletter

-Generali China May 2021



## What You Need to Know About Thyroid Nodules Health Benefits of Coffee Get strong—and avoid injury

World Obesity Day, Jearn How Long would Take to Lose Weight

How to Improve Your Health and Productivity without Thinking

World No Tobacco Day, Speak to Florence

World Immunizat

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## **World Immunization Week 2021**

With the theme 'Vaccines bring us closer', World Immunization Week 2021 (April 24th-30th) will show how vaccination connects us to the people, goals and moments that matter to us most, helping improve the health of everyone, everywhere throughout life.

Vaccines save millions of lives each year. Vaccines work by training and preparing the body's natural defense – the immune system – to recognize and fight off the viruses and bacteria they target. After vaccination, if the body is later exposed to those disease-causing germs, the body is immediately ready to destroy them, preventing illness.

Equitable access to safe and effective vaccines is critical to ending the COVID-19 pandemic, so it is hugely encouraging to see so many vaccines proving and going into development.

Being vaccinated does not mean that we can throw caution to the wind and put ourselves and others at risk, particularly because research is still ongoing into how much vaccines protect not only against disease but also against infection and transmission.

Safe and effective vaccines are a game-changing tool: but for the foreseeable future we must continue wearing masks, cleaning our hands, ensuring good ventilation indoors, physically distancing and avoiding crowds.



# QUTI World No Tobacco Day, **Speak to Florence**

May 31st is the World No Tobacco Day, the tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced, killing more than 8 million people a year around the world. More than 7 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while around 1.2 million are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

All forms of tobacco are harmful, and there is no safe level of exposure to tobacco. Cigarette smoking is the most common form of tobacco use worldwide. Other tobacco products include waterpipe tobacco, various smokeless tobacco products, cigars, cigarillos, roll-your-own tobacco, pipe tobacco, bidis and kreteks.

Smokeless tobacco use is highly addictive and damaging to health. Smokeless tobacco contains many cancer-causing toxins and its use increases the risk of cancers of the head, neck, throat, oesophagus and oral cavity (including cancer of the mouth, tongue, lip and gums) as well as various dental diseases.

The economic costs of tobacco use are substantial and include significant health care costs for treating the diseases caused by tobacco use as well as the lost human capital that results from tobacco-attributable morbidity and mortality.



## Quit tobacco today!

Meet Florence\*, WHO's digital health worker to help you quit tobacco.

After a short conversation via video or text, Florence can help you build your confidence to quit smoking, make a plan, and recommend toll-free quitlines or apps.

Quitting smoking is more important than ever as smokers are more likely to develop severe COVID-19, compared to non-smokers.

Copy link to your cell phone to start talking to Florence :

https://www.who.int/newsroom/spotlight/using-ai-to-quittobacco



# What You Need to Know About Thyroid Nodules

The thyroid gland is a butterfly shaped gland which wraps around the trachea (the breathing tube connected to the lungs) at the center bottom of the neck. It secretes hormones called thyroglobulin and is responsible for the body' s metabolism. You may have heard your doctor speak about your TSH, T4 and T3. These are the sentinel tests done to check for thyroid function.

## **About Thyroid Nodules**

- A common abnormality of the thyroid gland is the formation of nodules or small lumps that can grow in the thyroid.
- While the discovery of a thyroid nodule can cause anxiety in our patients, in reality less than 5% are cancerous.
- Also, many of the nodules have no effect on the function of the thyroid and its hormone production.
- But when a nodule is discovered in a patient, there are steps that should be taken to assure that it is not dangerous or damaging to the patient's thyroid or metabolism.
- Hyperthyroidism (too much thyroid hormone) and hypothyroidism (too little thyroid hormone) can result from some thyroid masses and nodules, so it is important to classify a thyroid nodule if it is found.

## Nodule Types

There are many types of nodules, each with a different pattern of behavior or reasons for growth. These are the types of nodules that can be found in the thyroid:

- Colloid nodules
- Thyroid cysts
- Inflammatory nodules
- Multinodular goiter
- Hyperfunctioning thyroid nodules
- Thyroid cancer

## 2 Important points of any Thyroid Nodule

In working up a thyroid nodule, a physician will look for the following: 1) If it is NOT affecting the function of the thyroid gland, so in other words there is a lump in the thyroid, but the function of the gland is completely normal. 2)If it IS affecting the function of the thyroid gland by increasing (hyperthyroidism) or by decreasing (hypothyroidism) the amount of thyroid hormone produced.



## Symptoms of Hyperthyroidism

- Anxiety
- Weight loss
- Tremor of the hands
- Inability to sleep
- Diarrhea
- Perceptive enlargement of the eyes
- Patients are usually quite uncomfortable, fatigued, and anxious

## Symptoms of Hypothyroidism

These are exactly the opposite of hyperthyroidism.

- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Slowing of reflexes and muscle response
- Dulled thought
- Dry skin
- Thin hair/hair loss



Any good medical care starts with a history and physical exam. Your doctor should ask about any weight loss, hyperirritability, fast heartbeat, or tremor. The history of the patient is very important.



## Patients who have a higher risk of cancer

- A history of previous neck irradiation
- Those with self-noted masses:

- that have grown rapidly- are causing difficulty swallowing- causing a change in voice Patients at extreme ages (under 20 and over 70) are more likely to present with a cancerous nodule, and women are twice as likely as men to have thyroid cancer. Lastly, a family history of thyroid cancer should alert a doctor to aggressively get a diagnosis as soon as possible.

Thyroid nodules are actually quite common. They are found by palpation in 3-7% of the population and those who then have an ultrasound raise the incidence to 20-67%. The good news is that thyroid cancer is not common in these noted nodules and treatment of early or intermediate thyroid cancer has one of the highest rates of cure of all cancers. According to statistics, about three quarters of women and nearly half of men with thyroid cancer's tumors do not cause any symptoms or death, even if they are not biopsied or surgical removed.

# Health Benefits of Coffee

If you are a coffee lover, you must love its smell, taste, and the ritual of starting your day with a hot mug or icy glass of java. As a coffee enthusiast, you may interest in coffee' s pros and cons. The good news is that the beloved beverage—which comes in at just 2 calories per 8-ounce cup—offers several health benefits. Here are six, along with a few potential

## **Coffee supports happiness**

One study from a few years back confirmed what many of us intuitively believe: coffee is happy juice. Researchers found that drinking coffee is linked to positive emotions, including pleasure, kindness, affection, satisfaction, friendship, calm, and yes, happiness. The findings also noted that no negative emotions were tied to coffee consumption. Another Harvard study of over 50,000 women found that depression risk decreased as caffeinated coffee consumption increased.



#### **Coffee contains antioxidants**

Coffee beans are actually the seeds inside a small bright red or yellow fruit. Both the seeds and fruit are rich in antioxidants. Chlorogenic acid, a polyphenol abundant in coffee, has been shown to reduce inflammation, and it may play a key role in protection against chronic diseases, including obesity.

## Coffee may reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes

A 2018 meta-analysis of 30 previously published studies concluded that coffee consumption is inversely associated with the risk of type 2 diabetes. Researchers found that chance of developing the disease decreased by 6% for each cup per day increase in coffee consumption. Scientists say the possible reasons for the link include coffee's antioxidative and antiinflammatory effects, ability to boost calorie burning, and impact on the content and diversity of health-protective gut microbes.

## Coffee is tied to lower rates of other diseases

Studies show that coffee consumption may protect against certain cancers, including breast, colorectal, endometrial, and prostate cancers, as well as heart disease and Parkinson's disease. Lifelong coffee/caffeine consumption is also associated with prevention of cognitive decline, and a reduced stroke risk.

In terms of brain health, caffeinated coffee ups alertness and may also improve memory for up to 24 hours after consumption.

## Coffee may give your workout a boost

Several studies have shown that in moderation, caffeine enhances athletic performance. The effects include improved circulation, increases in muscular strength, endurance, and power, plus reduced pain. That may help you push just a little bit harder during workouts, resulting in better improvements in muscle strength and/or endurance.

A study published in the *Journal of Applied Physiology* found that muscle carbohydrate stores are replenished more rapidly when athletes consume both carbs and caffeine following exhaustive exercise. Compared to carbohydrates alone, the combo resulted in a 66% increase in muscle glycogen (the storage form of carbs) four hours after intense exercise. This surge in energy reserves ups your ability to exercise harder and/or longer the next time you're ready to get your heart rate up.

## Coffee isn't dehydrating if you're consistent

Caffeine has long been criticized for contributing to dehydration due to its diuretic effect, which triggers fluid loss. However, newer research indicates that after about four days of consistent caffeine intake, your body adjusts, which negates the dehydrating effect. The trick is, you have to be consistent. In other words, if you sometimes have one cup of coffee in the morning, sometimes three, or if you occasionally reach for it in the afternoon, you may feel the diuretic side effects, such as headache and low energy.

#### Potential downsides to consider

How caffeine affects your body is linked to your genes. People who are genetically slow metabolizers of caffeine actually have an increased risk of heart attack, high blood pressure, and prediabetes after increasing caffeinated coffee consumption, whereas fast metabolizers do not carry these risks. For slow metabolizers, research also shows that caffeine inhibits athletic performance, rather than enhancing it.

Testing your genes for the variants that impact caffeine metabolism isn't something you can typically request from your doctor. But researchbased testing is available through a company called Nutrigenomix.

For some people caffeine can also trigger digestive irritation, including heartburn, as well as an upset stomach, anxiety, rapid heartbeat, and rebound fatigue. Finally, coffee consumption during pregnancy is linked to low birth weight, pre-term birth, and pregnancy loss.

#### Bottom line advice

If you love coffee, enjoy its benefits. But aim for consistency, and don't overdo it—drink no more than 5 8-ounce cups a day (the amount in 5 short cups or 2.5 grande cups from Starbucks). Also, avoid doctoring it up with undesirable add-ins like artificial sweeteners or large amounts of added sugar. If you drink regular coffee, don't combine it with other stimulants, and cut off your caffeine intake at least six hours before bed to optimize sleep (even if you think it doesn't affect you).

As with many things nutrition-related, the best advice is to listen to your body. If you suspect that caffeine is triggering some unwanted effects or limiting your performance, try decaf. And, don't forget good old H2O, which should always remain your primary and most consumed beverage.

## Get strong—and avoid injury

## with these full-body moves

Exercise is the ultimate form of self-care. And strength training, in particular, can fight off disease and back pain, improve bone and heart health, and ease anxiety. Before you start, you better analyzing your alignment: Look at a picture of yourself in profile, simply standing. Check to see if your neck is straight; your shoulders sit on top of hips, hips on top of knees, and knees on top of ankles— when they're stacked properly, that signals a neutral spine, which should be the base of every exercise you do. If something looks off, make adjustments, and note how it feels. Checking alignment is really important [for body awareness], Then take a video of yourself doing each of the moves in this workout—whether it's your first time or you've been doing them for years. Look at these exercises and reevaluate them, Nail down how to do them properly, and you'll feel stronger and prevent injuries.

Now, give it a go! Read on for expert's form tips and corrective-exercise advice to make sure you're hitting each move with precision.









## Plank a

Get in a plank position by placing forearms on the mat, elbows under shoulders, shoulders pulled down and back. Tuck hips under slightly and squeeze glutes, maintaining a neutral spine. Hold for 30 seconds.

## Push-up

Start in a straight-arm plank position, hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Bend elbows to a 45-degree angle and lower body down, keeping core engaged and spine neutral you should be in one straight line from shoulders to heels. Push back up to the top of the plank.

Correct it: Hips sinking or raising? Perform your push-up on an incline, with hands on a bench, chair, or your couch. You can even take it to the wall—no matter how you do it, maintain a neutral spine.



Correct it: If hips are sinking or raising, drop your knees to the mat or place your hands on a bench, chair, or couch. Keep feet wide to help with stability.



## Side lunge de lunge

Start standing with feet together and dumbbells on shoulders. Step right foot out to the side with knee and toe pointing forward, bending the knee and sending hips back, keeping weight in the heel, and left leg straight. Drive through right foot to stand back up. Repeat for 10 reps, then switch legs.

Correct it: Make sure to push your butt back into a hinge. To help master that position, eliminate the stepping in and out: Stand with feet wider than hips, then bend right knee and push hips down and back.



## **Deadlift**

Start standing with feet together and holding dumbbells. Then put weight on left foot, and step right foot back. Lower chest toward floor as right leg lifts straight back behind you. Keep shoulders down, and maintain one straight line from shoulders to heels, with a slight bend in left knee. Drive through left foot to stand back up, and repeat for 10 reps; then switch legs.

Correct it: Avoid turning your hips—keep both square to the ground to isolate the hamstring and glute. To better your balance before lifting your leg, do a staggered deadlift: Stand with feet hip-width apart, then step your left foot back slightly, keeping toes on the ground as you do the deadlift.

## Squat

Start standing with feet slightly wider than hipwidth apart and toes slightly turned out, holding a dumbbell at chest. Keeping chest up, send hips back and bend knees as if you're sitting in a chair. Drive through feet to stand back up.

Correct it: If your knees buckle inward, place a mini band around the thighs and practice the squat while pushing outward against the band. From the side view, check if your knees extend too far over your toes. If yes, sit your hips back more, sending weight to the heel to help maintain strong form.





## Single-leg deadlift

Start standing with feet together and holding dumbbells. Then put weight on left foot, and step right foot back. Lower chest toward floor as right leg lifts straight back behind you. Keep shoulders down, and maintain one straight line from shoulders to heels, with a slight bend in left knee. Drive through left foot to stand back up, and repeat for 10 reps; then switch legs.



Correct it: Avoid turning your hips keep both square to the ground to isolate the hamstring and glute. To better your balance before lifting your leg, do a staggered deadlift: Stand with feet hip-width apart, then step your left foot back slightly, keeping toes on the ground as you do the deadlift.

## Leg lift

Start lying on back, legs straight up with feet over hips, arms by sides. Lower legs toward floor, as low as possible without arching your lower back. Lift legs back up, and repeat for 30 seconds.

Correct it: Press your spine into the floor and pull your ribs down as you lower your legs, so you feel it in your abs, not your lower back. Keep the legs as high as needed to avoid arching in the spine.





## The drill

Perform this workout in circuits, doing three rounds of each circuit before moving on to the next.

**CIRCUIT 1**: Push-Up: 10 reps; Bent-Over Row: 10 reps

**CIRCUIT 2**: Squat: 10 reps; Deadlift: 10 reps; Plank: 30 seconds

**CIRCUIT 3**: Side Lunge: 10 reps each; Single-Leg Deadlift: 10 reps each; Leg Lift: 30 seconds

# World Obesity Day, learn How Long would Take to Lose Weight

May 11th is World Obesity Day, one thing I've learned for certain after counseling hundreds of clients over the years is that there is no way to accurately predict how long it will take to lose weight. But it's helpful to understand the factors that can affect weight loss and why. This knowledge can explain what to expect, and help you hang in there if you feel frustrated with the rate at which you're losing weight. Here are some insights about how weight loss works, and why ditching restrictive diets is one of the best ways to see results.

## Slow, steady weight loss is generally better

You may have heard that a healthy rate of weight loss is one to two pounds per week. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people who shed pounds at this rate are more successful at keeping weight off (the ultimate goal). And while many people would like to lose weight faster, even modest weight loss has been shown to result in health benefits, such as improvements in blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and blood sugars.

One to two pounds per week is also a rate that's reasonable for many, in that it shouldn't require extreme eating or exercise habits. That said, there are several factors that affect the speed of weight loss.

## People who are more overweight generally lose weight faster

which is partly calorie-driven. For example, if you've been eating enough calories to maintain a weight of 170 pounds, and you reduce your calories to a level that will only maintain 130 pounds, you've created a calorie deficit. The greater the deficit, the faster the weight loss, which is why people who have 40 pounds to lose typically lose weight faster than those who only have 15 pounds to lose. But as you lose weight, the deficit shrinks, which is why the rate of weight loss tapers the closer you get to your weight goal, regardless of where you started.

## The concept that weight loss is purely driven by "calories in versus calories out" is outdated

It's also a poor predictor of how fast you'll shed pounds. That's because the quality, balance, and timing of the calories you take in also play key roles in how weight is lost. For example, simply slashing your caloric intake while still consuming a lot of processed foods, or eating a big chunk of your calories in the evening, may not result in losing weight as quickly.



And a 2020 study, published in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism, found that eating a late dinner worsened blood sugar tolerance and reduced the amount of fat burned. So no, a simple math equation isn't the ultimate determinant of how much weight you'll lose, or how quickly.

#### Watch your waistline

On the other hand, if you see a steady increase in your weight, rather than an up-and-down pattern, or if your clothes are consistently getting tighter, take an objective look at your habits. Have you been ordering takeout more often (which can mean extra hidden calories), or snacking frequently because of stress? If so, you can address those issues and then continue to see results.

#### Food affects metabolic rate

A 2017 study, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, found that replacing refined grains with whole grains for six weeks resulted in higher resting metabolic rates (greater calorie burning), among both men and post-menopausal women. A Washington University in St. Louis study found that in post-menopausal women, those who ate the recommended amount of protein experienced the greatest benefits in metabolism and insulin sensitivity, even compared to those who followed a high protein diet.

#### The calorie equation is complicated

Metabolism, which is basically how your body burns calories, is an important factor in the weight loss puzzle, and it's complex. Appetite-regulating hormones also play a role in weight loss. Both can be affected by factors like poor sleep, stress, and the makeup of your gut micro biome, the collection of microbes that reside in the digestive system.

Research shows that gut macrobiotic can actually influence both sides of the calorie balance equation; meaning it impacts how we utilize calories from the foods we eat, and how we burn or store them. For this reason, as well as genetic factors, weight loss—and how quickly you may drop pounds—isn't so straightforward.

#### Weight fluctuations are normal

It's also important to know that weight loss isn't always linear. **It's normal for your** weight to shift from day to day, even hour to hour. When you step on a scale, you're measuring everything that has weight — not just your muscle, bone, and body fat, but also water volume (which can change quickly and wildly), undigested food (even if it will all later be burned off), and waste in your GI tract that your body hasn't eliminated yet. If you're retaining water, due to PMS or an extra salty meal, your weight on the scale will be higher, even if you've simultaneously lost body fat.

teste stat

#### Too few calories can stall weight loss

If you're tempted to eat as few calories as possible, please don't. Cutting calories too low can negatively impact weight loss—because your body can kick into survival mode, conserve calories, and resist weight loss. This is especially true when you eat fewer calories than it takes to support a healthy weight.

For example, if it takes 1,600 calories to support your ideal weight and you cut your intake to 1,200, or even below 1,600, your are likely to either resist weight loss, or lose too much lean muscle mass as part of your weight loss. The latter can weaken immune function, increase injury risk, and reduce the chances of keeping the weight off. Basically, it's a myth that you need to undereat in order to lose weight. You just have to stop eating more than it takes to maintain a healthy weight goal.

### Be patient, not discouraged

Hopefully I've driven home the point that weight loss is complex, and nobody can realistically forecast exactly how much weight you'll lose within a given time frame. The truth is that focusing on healthy, balanced habits you can stick with is far more important. I've seen countless people lose weight with quick fixes that resulted in gaining back all (or more) of the weight they lost. That kind of yo-yoing isn't good for your health, and it's just not worth the mental agony.

If you're on a weight loss journey, the best thing you can do is to focus on the bigger picture, be consistent with healthy habits (which does not mean being perfect), and remain patient. You'll know if you're moving in the right direction. And even if it takes longer to get there, you're far more likely to keep the weight off for good, and feel a whole lot happier along the way.



# How to Improve Your Health and Productivity without Thinking

Making changes can be difficult. It's hard to get motivated to do something over and over again — even if you know that it's good for you. But what if I told you that there was a different option? Something didn't require an ounce of motivation.



#### A mysterious phenomenon

Columbia University did a surprising study that revealed just how much our environment impacts our behavior — often without we even realizing it. The researchers collected data on organ donors from 11 countries in Europe for comparison. Initially, they thought the difference in donations would be caused by factors like religion and culture, but that wasn't the case.

The difference in donation rates was due to the type of form that each country sent out.

- The countries with low rates of organ donors sent out a form that said, "If you want to be an organ donor, check here." In other words, the form required people to opt-in.
- Meanwhile, the countries with high rates of donation sent out a form that said, "If you don't want to be an organ donor, check here." In other words, the form required people to opt-out.

The researchers summarized the impact of the environment design by saying, "In most cases, the majority of people choose the default option to which they were assigned." In other words, most of us respond the same way to the cues that surround us. If you are sent a form that asks you to make a tough decision, you will probably go with the default option. If you see a cookie on the counter, you will probably eat it. If you hear music, you will probably start tapping your feet.

#### How to motivate yourself

By changing your surroundings, you can place a hurdle in the way of bad behaviors and remove the barriers to good ones.

Here's an easy way to apply environment design to your own life: think about your environment in relation to the number of steps it takes to perform a habit. To make good habits easier, reduce the number of steps to do them.

## motīvate yourself

#### **Reduce mindless eating**

**Phenomenon :** I don't know about you, but if I see a cookie sitting on the kitchen counter, then I'm going to eat it. I don't even need to be hungry. It's just there, so I respond. I'm simply reacting to my environment.

**Cope with :** Make life easier on yourself by removing unhealthy food from your view. Put healthier options like fruit and nuts on the kitchen counter.

#### Turn on the TV less often

**Phenomenon :** Watching TV is a perfect example of responding to your environment. If you walk into any living room in America, where are all of the couches and chairs facing? Directly toward the TV. The screen is the first thing you see when you sit down, no wonder you turn it on when you're bored.

**Cope with 1:** Pick up your remote and put it in a drawer, a closet, or somewhere out of sight. Where your remote used to be, put a book. If you want to watch TV — not just when you're bored, but when there is actually a show on that want to see — you can walk up to the TV and turn it on. This also prevents mindless channel surfing and makes it more likely that you'll pick up a book instead of the remote control. **Cope with 2:** Turn the couches and chairs in your living room, so that they don't all face the TV. You'll watch less TV and, hopefully, read more, talk more, or move more. If you're really bold, unplug the TV and put it in a closet for the next week. Give that a try and you'll begin to notice how your environment impacts your behavior.

#### Workout more frequently

**Phenomenon :** When you get home from a long day of work or when you're tucked into a warm bed in the morning, it doesn't take much of an obstacle to keep you from working out.

**Cope with:** You can remove one hurdle in your environment by laying out your workout clothes the night before. When your shoes, water bottle, and gear are ready and waiting for you, there is one less hurdle between you and a good workout.

#### Start flossing

**Phenomenon :** I floss every day, but it wasn't always that way, because I never remembered to take the floss out of the drawer and use it.

**Cope with:** Then, You may buy a small bowl, drop a handful of pre-made flossers in it, and set it next to my toothbrush. That simple change in my environment was all I needed to start flossing consistently. What small visual cues can you make for yourself?



Most of the time we assume that to take a certain action, we need to have an incentive. You hear people say this all the time: "I need to get motivated." or "I need to have a good reason for doing X." We also assume this same approach for managing and motivating others. Managers will often assume that they need to incentivize their employees, teammates to take a particular action. Environment design paints a different picture. It proves that our choices and

preferences can be crafted by the environment around us. Suddenly, it becomes apparent that we don't need to be motivated or incentivized to take action — we simply need to be surrounded by the right cues.

Imagine if your world — your home, your office, your gym, all of it — was crafted in a way that made the good behaviors easier and the bad behaviors harder. How often would you make healthy and productive choices if they were simply your default response to your environment? And how much easier would that be than trying to motivate yourself all of the time?



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