

Health Newsletter

-Generali China GBD

May 2022



GEB Health Kits
Musculoskeletal Health

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GEB Health Kits

Musculoskeletal Health

GEB (Generali Employee Benefit) provide clients with Health Kits available in multiple languages to help our insured members manage & prevent illness. Health kits include animated videos, infographics and more. At the time when the outbreak is continuing, we promote “Musculoskeletal health (back health)” to you, to mention pay more attention to your back health.

Musculoskeletal Health



Lower back pain and spinal health

Lower back pain is very common around the world and is caused by many different factors including prolonged inactivity, lack of stretching, poor posture, the wrong footwear, improper lifting, obesity, aging, and genetic factors. Our spine is supported by the core muscles, and if the core is weak, we're susceptible to low back pain.



Tips for better back health

- Pay attention to your posture. It's important to keep your head and neck aligned and positioned over your hips. This helps prevent unnecessary strain caused by leaning or slouching forward.
- Stop sitting so much-sitting for long periods can cause increased pressure on the spinal disks. Combine sitting, standing and movement to protect your back throughout the day.
- When you lift something, be sure to bend your knees, keep your back straight and keep the item close to your body. Do not twist as you lift. Eliminate repetitive movement patterns that involve twisting and rotating. Sometimes an extra step might make all the difference to avoid twisting.

What you can do today & every day

- Stretch your back every day-a lot can be accomplished in just a few minutes
- Wear supportive, comfortable, low-heeled shoes
- Sleep on a mattress that's firm enough to support your spine and reduce spinal curvature
- Maintain a healthy diet and weight
- Quit smoking to improve blood flow & the health of spinal tissues

We will share more article and material about health & wellbeing in the following newsletters. Your kind comment is highly expected. Click [here](#) to know more detail about GEB Health Kits.





Do you suffer from allergic rhinitis when the seasons change?

As someone with allergies, the biggest fear rises when the seasons change. The cool and the warm temperatures alternate, scattered with wind, dust, and pollen, resulting in at least 20 sneezes per day. Are you afflicted too?



Is allergic rhinitis just sneezing all the time?

If you think allergic rhinitis is defined by just a few extra and harmless sneezes, think again!

If not properly controlled, it can lead to sinusitis, otitis media with effusion, and even asthma.

So, what is allergic rhinitis?

Allergic rhinitis is caused by the body's immune system responding to environmental triggers.

Its symptoms include itching, sneezing, runny nose, nasal congestion and easy tearing. Patients may experience headaches and swollen eyelids, as well as coughing and wheezing.

I sneezed and shed tears as soon as I inhaled some dust and felt very uncomfortable. Is it also allergic rhinitis?

The diagnosis of the disease requires clinical evaluation by a doctor, skin tests and allergen-specific serum IgE testing if necessary.

But we can find out what causes allergic rhinitis?

- The most common allergens are dust, fungi, pollen, grass, trees and animals.
- Both seasonal and perennial (recurrent) allergies can lead to allergic rhinitis.
- Seasonal rhinitis: generally caused by wind-pollinated pollen, which varies by season.
- Perennial (recurrent) rhinitis is caused by perennial inhalation of indoor allergens (such as dust mite feces, cockroaches, animal dander), or a strong reaction to plant pollen during the disease season.

Is it the same thing as the common cold?

No. In the past, the understanding of allergies was insufficient, and allergic rhinitis was easily confused with the common cold, resulting in the lack of timely treatment.

- The common cold is a viral infection of the mucous membranes of the nose, sinuses and throat.
- Colds start with itchy, sore throat, or nasal discomfort, followed by sneezing, runny nose, cough, and general discomfort, but colds rarely cause itchy nose. The characteristic symptom of allergic rhinitis is an itchy nose.
- The common cold is a self-limiting disease that usually lasts 5 to 7 days. And allergic rhinitis, even seasonal allergic rhinitis, the shortest duration could last more than 4 weeks.

Is allergic rhinitis contagious?

It is not contagious. Rather, it is caused by the body's immune response, unlike a cold caused by a virus. Colds can be spread by human hands touching the nasal secretions of infected people. These secretions contain cold viruses. When human hands touch the mouth, nose, and eyes again, the virus enters the body and causes disease. Colds can also be spread by inhaling droplets that are exhaled when an infected person coughs or sneezes. They are most contagious in the first 1 or 2 days after cold symptoms appear.





How is allergic rhinitis treated?

- Avoiding allergen exposure can reduce symptoms, but it is not easy to do.
- Do not overlook hormones! Corticosteroid nasal sprays are great medications that reduce inflammation from many causes and are relatively safe for long-term use.
- Antihistamines, such as loratadine, help prevent allergic reactions and appearance of allergic symptoms. Some older drugs can dry out the mucous membranes of the nose, causing drowsiness, etc., especially in the elderly. Some newer products don't have as many side effects.
- Rinsing the nose with saline (nasal rinse) can also help relieve these symptoms.
- Desensitization immunotherapy, with exposure to small amounts of allergy-triggering substances, helps build long-term tolerance to specific environmental triggers, but may take months or even years to fully take effect.
- Antibiotics are ineffective against this disease.

How to prevent allergic rhinitis in daily life

- Avoid contact with allergens, wear a mask if you need to clean up
- Keep the home environment clean and dry, reduce the breeding environment of mites, and dry the quilt when the sun is full
- Wear a mask when going out during pollen season to avoid inhalation
- Nasal wash with normal saline to reduce nasal adhesion of pollutants, allergens, and remove secretions
- Adhere to long-term regular drug treatment
- Exercise more to enhance resistance
- Reduce the consumption of spicy, cold and other irritating foods

It should be noted that allergic rhinitis is difficult to cure and easy to repeat, so it is necessary to make long-term and lasting preparations.



Epidemic and anxiety

Let's face it, the world has been turned upside down and inside out over the past couple years. With the pandemic, travel restrictions, geopolitical issues, and the minor possibility of World War 3 on the horizon, it's a wonder how we as a whole population have managed to continue on and keep being our best selves. We should all pat ourselves on the back for being resilient, both mentally and physically, and also commend each other for all the love and support spread around the world through these difficult times.

Some people may have been able to handle these stressors fairly well, while a majority of others may have faced serious struggles. Whether or not we've managed to cope well, global circumstances have certainly left their mark on us – many of us could be dealing with a deep pool of anxiety, just trying to swim through everything.

Fear is one of the most powerful emotions that has an extremely strong effect on your mind and body. It can create strong signals of reflexes and responses in emergencies, for example if we're being attacked or in physical danger. It can also take place in non-dangerous events, such as exams, a new job, a date, or public speaking. Anxiety is a word used for some types of fear that are usually connected to the thought of a threat or something going wrong in the future, rather than right now in the moment.

Having occasional feelings of anxiety is a normal part of life, that can be triggered by the same causes as fear. These feelings usually last for a short time and then pass. But they can also linger much longer and you might get stuck with them. In these situations, they can take over your life and affect your ability to concentrate, work, sleep, travel, enjoy life, or even leave your home. It can be hard to break the cycle of anxiety, and if you're feeling overwhelmed, try to take comfort in the knowledge that there are many ways to overcome it.

What matters the most is taking the first step – realizing that you in fact are dealing with anxiety. The first step is just admitting it. Overcoming anxiety is a very personal journey, and methods that may work for one person may not work for another.



So how do you know if you're suffering from anxiety and what does it feel like?

- Your heart beats very fast – maybe it feels irregular
- You breathe very fast
- You get a dry mouth (due to the adrenaline)
- Your muscles feel weak or very tense
- You sweat a lot
- You find it hard to concentrate on anything else
- You feel dizzy
- Your stomach churns or your bowels feel uncomfortable
- You feel frozen on the spot, like a statue
- You have loss of appetite or can't eat
- Feeling nervous, helpless, or a sense of impending danger, panic, or doom

In the short term, these symptoms occur because your body is physiologically preparing you for an emergency, making your blood flow away from your digestive organs to your other muscles, increasing blood sugar, and giving you the mental ability to focus on the perceived threat or danger. In the longer term, you may feel additional symptoms such as irritability, trouble sleeping, headaches, difficulty concentrating or even planning for the future. You may even develop problems in your intimate relationships and might lose self-confidence.





How do I know if I need counselling or professional medical help?

As mentioned before, fear and anxiety are extremely natural responses that has given us the ability to survive and thrive, and we're all affected every now and then. It's only when they become long-lasting and/or severe that medical doctors classify it as a mental health issue. If you feel like your fear or anxiety are taking over your life or has lasted for several weeks or occurs all the time... then it's definitely a good idea to consult a counsellor or physician.

There are also numerous methods you can attempt in the meanwhile that could help in overcoming anxiety. What works for one person might not work for another, so what's important is that you try a variety of simple methods to see if they help.

COPING STRATEGIES

The Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA) recommends the following coping strategies for anxiety:

Mental/physical relaxation:

practicing meditation, yoga, breathing exercises, massage or other relaxation techniques

- Sleep: getting enough restful sleep every night can help reset your brain
- Perspective: step back from your anxious feelings and question whether it's worth worrying about right now, which can make it seem less scary
- Diet: eating a well-balanced diet with regular meal times and healthy snacks can nourish your body and keep it healthy. Avoid caffeine and alcohol, as these substances can raise anxiety
- Achievable goals: you can try to do your best, at a realistic expectation instead of being a perfectionist. Be kind to yourself, as this can help you feel more positive about your achievements and decrease the pressure you put on yourself

Support:

talking to friends and/or family or a professional healthcare provider can always be helpful. You can learn new perspectives and adopt them if you agree!

EXERCISE AND FITNESS

- Studies have suggested that regular exercise has similar effects to antidepressant medications and improves anxiety
- People with anxiety or depression have decreased levels of the neurotrophin BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor). After exercise, BDNF levels increase in the brain, which may improve the symptoms of anxiety
- The ADAA recommends 2.5 hours of moderate intensity exercise or 1.25 hours of vigorous intensity exercise each week, or a combination of both
- Jogging, walking, cycling, or dancing 3 to 5 times a week for 30 minutes

In summary, there are many different triggers and types of anxiety, and treatment may be different for each. Coping strategies, lifestyle changes, therapy or medication can all be utilized and participate in a person's journey to overcome their anxiety. The way someone responds to anxiety treatments is very unique and individualized, but it all begins with baby steps along with trial and error, until the most effective methods are discovered.



Some Foods That Are Good For Your Thyroid

Technically, there's no specific diet used to treat thyroid disorders, but there are certain foods that can help you feel your best—and ones that you might want to avoid.

Your thyroid needs iodine to work properly and produce enough thyroid hormone for your body's needs. Don't get enough iodine, and you run the risk of hypothyroidism or a goiter (a thyroid gland that becomes enlarged to make up for the shortage of thyroid hormone).

Many types of seaweed are chock-full of iodine, but the amount can vary wildly, according to the National Institutes of Health, a 1-gram portion can contain anywhere from 11% to a whopping 1,989% of your percent daily value. But since seaweed is especially high in iodine, you shouldn't start eating sushi every day of the week. Too much iodine can be just as harmful to your thyroid as too little by triggering (or worsening) hypothyroidism. To get seaweed's big benefits without going overboard, and Health's contributing nutrition editor advises sticking to one fresh seaweed salad per week (in addition to sushi), and steering clear of seaweed teas and supplements.





Yogurt

Short of eating a few kelp salads, you probably don't have to worry about getting too much iodine from any other foods. In particular, dairy products are full of this nutrient (and in more manageable amounts), according to a 2012 research in the journal *Nutrition Reviews*. Part of the reason is because livestock are given iodine supplements and the milking process involves iodine-based cleaners. Plain, low-fat yogurt, or Greek yogurt is a good source—it can make up about 50% of your daily intake of iodine.

Brazil nuts

Brazil nuts are packed with another nutrient that helps regulate thyroid hormones: selenium. In one 2003 study by researchers in France, women who consumed higher amounts of selenium were less likely to develop goiters and thyroid tissue damage than those who didn't. Plus, it may also help stave off long-term thyroid damage in people with thyroid-related problems like Hashimoto's and Graves' disease, according to a 2013 review in the journal *Clinical Endocrinology*.

Just one kernel contains 96 micrograms, which is almost double the daily recommended intake of 55 micrograms. And remember, the max upper limit of selenium is 400 micrograms a day, so don't go overboard. Too much selenium can cause "garlic breath," hair loss, discolored nails, and even heart failure.

Milk

Much of the iodine in the average American diet comes from dairy products, according to a 2008 study by researchers from the Food and Drug Administration. One 2013 study found that people with an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) were more likely to be deficient in D than their healthier counterparts. (Another honorable dairy mention is cheese, especially cheddar: just one slice is good for 12 micrograms of iodine and 7 IU of vitamin D.)

Chicken and beef

Zinc is another key nutrient for your thyroid—your body needs it to churn out thyroid hormone. Take in too little zinc, and it can lead to hypothyroidism. But get this: If you develop hypothyroidism, you can also become deficient in zinc, since your thyroid hormones help absorb the mineral, explains Ilic. Meats are a good source: One 3-ounce serving of beef chuck roast contains 7 milligrams; a 3-ounce beef patty contains 3 milligrams; and a 3-ounce serving of dark chicken meat contains 2.4 milligrams.

Fish

Since iodine is found in soils and seawater, fish are another good source of this nutrient. In fact, researchers have long known that people who live in remote, mountainous regions with no access to the sea are at risk for goiters. The most convincing evidence we have [for thyroid problems] is the absence of adequate nutrition.

One 3-ounce serving of baked cod contains about 99 micrograms of iodine—or 66% of your daily recommended intake. Canned tuna is another good option: a 3-ounce serving runs about 17 micrograms, or 11% of your daily iodine quota. (Bonus: One 3-ounce serving of canned yellowfin tuna also contains 92 micrograms of selenium.)





shrimp

Unless a food is fortified with iodine, the Food and Drug Administration doesn't require manufacturers to list it on their products. That's just one of the reasons why it's hard to know how much of this nutrient is in certain foods. But as a general rule, shellfish like lobster and shrimp are good sources of iodine, she says. In fact, just 3 ounces of shrimp (about 4 or 5 pieces) contains more than 20% of your recommended intake. Bonus: shellfish can also be a good source of zinc, too. Three ounces of Alaskan crab and lobster contain 6.5 and 3.4 milligrams of zinc, respectively.

Eggs

One large egg contains about 16% of the iodine and 20% of the selenium you need for the day, making them a thyroid superfood. If you haven't been instructed otherwise by your doctor, eat the whole egg (try our foolproof trick for cooking eggs over easy)—much of that iodine and selenium is located in the yolk.

Berries

The best diet for your thyroid requires more than just iodine, selenium, and vitamin D. And—perhaps unsurprisingly—foods that are high in antioxidants are also good for your thyroid. One 2008 study by researchers from Turkey suggests that people with hypothyroidism have higher levels of harmful free radicals than those without the condition.

Berries are chock-full of antioxidants. The researchers examined more than 3,000 foods and found that wild strawberries, blackberries, goji berries, and cranberries ranked especially high.

Hate Exercise?

5 Tips That May Change Your Mind

You don't have to be a gym hero to get enough physical activity to improve your health. There are a lot of ways to make regular activity part of your life – which can help you have more energy, handle stress better, reduce your risk of illness and disease, and look and feel good! It's pretty much a no-brainer. But most of us (about 80 percent of Americans) don't make exercise a regular habit. And many say it's because they just don't like it.

So how can you stop being a hater and get over exercise aversion? Here are some tips to help you add physical activity to your life – and maybe even learn to like it!





Find your jam

Instead of forcing yourself to do something you don't enjoy, find ways to exercise that fit your personality. If you're a social person, do something that engages you socially – take a group dance class, join a recreational sports team, or start a walking group with friends. Connecting with your peeps is a great way to stay motivated and avoid working out alone. If you're more of a lone wolf, running or swimming might be a better fit. And if you're not a morning person, you're not likely to get up at the crack of dawn to make a boot camp class.

Give it time

It can take a while for a new behavior to become a habit, so give yourself time to get into a regular routine. One way is to try to be active around the same time each day. Exercise can become addictive in a good way. Once it becomes a habit, you'll notice when you aren't doing it.

Keep going

If you miss a day or a workout, don't worry about it. Everybody struggles once in a while. Just make sure you hit it again the next day. And if what you're doing just isn't working for you, revisit this list. You may need to try a different activity or a different time of day. Don't give up!

Build it in

Build activity into your schedule and lifestyle so it doesn't feel like a chore. There are many ways to fit exercise into your life, and it doesn't mean you have to give up something else, like time with family and friends. Get active together as a family, you'll all benefit. And if you just can't imagine life without your daily phone chat with your BFF, take that call for a walk around the block.

Break it up

It's OK to fit in physical activity when you can. The American Heart Association recommends a total of at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week, but if that sounds overwhelming, try adding two or three short activity sessions most days of the week. It all adds up! You could do a quick yoga routine when you wake up, take a brisk walk after lunch at work, and if you commute with public transportation, get off a stop earlier and walk the rest of the way home.



2022, Quit tobacco to save our planet

WHO today announces the 2022 global campaign for World No Tobacco Day - "Tobacco: Threat to our environment." The campaign is aimed to raise awareness among the public on the environmental impact of tobacco – from cultivation, production, distribution and waste. It will give tobacco users one extra reason to quit.

The campaign will also aim to expose tobacco industry's effort to "greenwash" its reputation and products by marketing themselves as environmentally friendly.

With an annual greenhouse gas contribution of 84 megatons carbon dioxide equivalent, the tobacco industry contributes to climate change and reduces climate resilience, wasting resources and damaging ecosystems.



How does tobacco destroy our forests

- An estimated 1.5 billion hectares of (mainly tropical) forests have been lost worldwide since the 1970s due to tobacco, contributing to up to 20% of annual greenhouse gas increase.
- Trees are cut down to clear land for tobacco farming, in addition wood is burned for the curing of tobacco leaves after harvest. It takes approximately one entire tree, to make 300 cigarettes.
- Approximately 200,000 hectares of land is cleared annually for tobacco growing and curing.
- Tobacco farming accounts for about 5% of the total national deforestation, disproportionately affecting tobacco growing regions of the world, including Southern Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, South America and the Caribbean.

How does tobacco farming harm our soil ?

- Fertile land that could be used to grow nutritious crops is used for tobacco. The soil depletion caused by tobacco growing further contributes to food insecurity and nutrition challenges.
- Rehabbing the soil after tobacco farming is costly. Based on data collected in 2014, it would cost 20.6 million USD to reverse the negative effects on soil in Bangladesh caused by one year of tobacco farming.
- Desertification attributable to tobacco growing is now being seen within many countries including Brazil, India, Jordan, and Cuba.



How does the growth and use of tobacco affect water supplies

- The entire life cycle of a single cigarette requires approximately 3.7 liters of water, this includes the growing, manufacturing, distribution, use, and disposal. The average smoker could save up to 74 liters of water per day if they quit smoking.
- Tobacco growing depletes water tables. The cultivation stage of tobacco alone requires the same amount of water that an individual would need for an entire year.
- Based on the number of cigarettes produced in 2015 in Brazil, the 3rd largest producer of tobacco, 263,813,700,000 liters of water was utilized to produce its annual supply. Given that the average person drinks about 700 liters of water per year, if all this water were to be converted to drinking water, it would be able to hydrate an approximate 3.7 million people, which is about the entire population of its capital, Brasília.
- It is now well established that cigarette filters (butts) are among the topmost polluting and toxic substances found in water bodies. It takes a cigarette butt approximately 10 years to decompose, allowing time for nicotine and chemicals to leach into surrounding ecosystems.
- A study from the EPA concluded that when cigarette butts are soaked in freshwater for 96 hours, approximately half the fish died.

How does tobacco pollute our air

- To produce a single cigarette, 14g of CO₂ is emitted throughout its lifecycle.
- Tobacco production contributes almost 84 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent emissions annually. That is equivalent to 280,000 rockets launching into outer space.
- Tobacco smoke contributes to higher air pollution levels and contains three kinds of greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxides, which pollutes indoor and outdoor environments.

How does tobacco contribute to littering

- Globally, the approximate weight of waste generated annually from the overall tobacco life cycle is approximately 25 million metric tons.
- Almost all commercial cigarettes have a cellulose acetate filter attached; this additive is poorly degradable and a source of micro plastics contamination of the environment.
- Approximately 4.5 trillion cigarettes are discarded in the environment every year.
- Surveys of littering behavior have found that approximately 65% of smokers discard cigarette butts improperly (e.g., on pavements, beaches, etc.)
- There are over 7,000 chemicals released into the environment from use of a cigarette – 70 of which are known carcinogens.



All in all, the harmful impact of the tobacco industry on the environment is vast and growing adding unnecessary pressure to our planet's already scarce resources and fragile ecosystems. To Protect our environment, World No Tobacco Day 2022 will give you one more reason to quit, please quit smoking!

Quick tips to curb your cravings:

1. **Delay:** Delay as long as you can before giving in to your urge.
2. **Deep breathing:** Take 10 deep breaths to relax yourself from within until the urge passes.
3. **Drink water:** Drinking water is a healthy alternative to sticking a cigarette in your mouth.
4. **Do something else to distract yourself:** Take a shower, read, go for a walk, listen to music!

Note: For more detail information, please click [here](#)





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