May is National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. From dust mites to molds to cockroaches and other household pests, many things can trigger allergies. And with spring in full swing, seasonal asthma and allergies are on their way, too. If you suspect that you are allergic to something, your doctor can perform some simple tests to pinpoint the allergy, and suggest ways to reduce your exposure. If you have a severe allergy, make sure friends, family and co-workers know and are aware of what to do in case of a serious reaction.

Grilling the Safe Way

Grilling is a common activity in the spring and summer months—in addition to avoiding heating up your house with your stove or oven, grilling is often a good way to get family and friends together for some outdoor fun. With this activity, however, there are dangers. Grill safety is important and should not be overlooked.

Follow these tips to keep your grilling experience from taking a wrong turn.

- Always read your grill’s instructions prior to use.
- Never use your grill indoors, and keep it at least 10 feet away from any building or home when in use.
- Make sure the grill is off or the coals are cold when you are finished. Never leave a hot grill unattended.
- If you have a gas grill:
  - Check its tubes for blockage regularly, and clear blockage out prior to use.
  - Make sure hoses are not cracking or brittle, and that there are no holes, leaks or sharp bends in them.
  - Replace scratched or nicked connectors to avoid gas leakage.
  - Keep gas hoses as far away from hot surfaces and hot grease as possible.
  - Regularly check for gas leaks, per the grill’s instruction manual.

Take extra safety precautions when grilling to ensure a fun, accident-free experience.

DID YOU KNOW

Asthma and allergies are often overlooked, but in reality, they affect one in five (60 million) Americans.
Healthier Alternatives to Common Unhealthy Foods

Think you can’t live without certain indulgent treats and snacks? Think again. Check out these common foods, and their healthier alternatives:

- **Ice cream**: sorbet, sherbet, frozen yogurt
- **Donuts, sweet rolls, muffins or pastries**: English muffins, bagels or scones
- **Chips**: popcorn (air or microwave popped) or baked kettle chips
- **Mayonnaise on sandwiches**: avocado
- **Bacon**: turkey bacon
- **Creamy salad dressings**: olive oil or vinegar based dressings
- **Hamburgers**: turkey burgers, bean burgers, veggie burgers
- **Potatoes**: sweet potatoes

Affordable Décor Refresh

From cleaning out closets to getting the yard ready for summer, spring is a time of change. If you’ve been itching to redecorate your home, but putting it off because you can’t afford it, check out these simple ways to save money and give your décor a lift.

**Skip the interior decorator.** There are many free and inexpensive ways to get ideas and learn how to take on home improvement projects. Use the Internet and magazines to get an idea of what appeals to you. You’ll save money, and will likely end up with a style that complements your personality.

**Determine what you want to spend.** If you go into a redecorating project with an idea of what you’re willing to spend, you will be less likely to blow your budget on one item. Tell yourself you can spend a certain amount of money on each item or room, and stick to it.

**Take advantage of what you already have.** Realize that you can repurpose things and give them new appeal with a little do-it-yourself creativity. That wooden crate collecting dust in the corner, filled with your adult daughter’s old toys doesn’t necessarily have to go. Sand it, paint it and turn it on its side to serve as a rustic end table.

**Don’t think big-name stores are the only option.** From thrift shops to craft fairs to garage sales, there are many ways to get exactly what you want without overspending. While shopping takes time and patience, you are likely to find what you want at a lower price than if you bought from a big-name store.

When you fire up the grill this spring, meat isn’t the only option—grilled vegetables are delicious and good for you, too. Try this recipe for grilled vegetable kabobs and start your spring the healthy way.

2 medium zucchini
2 medium yellow squash
2 red or green bell peppers, seeded
2 medium red onions
16 cherry tomatoes
8 oz. fresh mushrooms
2 medium ears sweet corn
Nonstick vegetable oil spray
½ c. balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp. mustard
3 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp. thyme

Rinse all the vegetables. Cut zucchini, squash and bell peppers into 2-inch chunks. Cut red onions into wedges. Combine the cut vegetables with the tomatoes and mushrooms in a bowl. Cut the corn into 1-inch pieces and cook in boiling water for about 10 minutes. Add cooked corn to other vegetables. Mix the vinegar, mustard, garlic and thyme for the sauce. Toss vegetables in the sauce and thread vegetables onto skewers. Before starting the grill, spray it with vegetable oil spray. Place the skewers on the grill over medium heat. Baste occasionally with extra sauce. Grill 20 minutes, or until tender.
Lyme Disease

Lyme disease, a bacterial infection spread by certain kinds of ticks, can cause serious complications if not treated early and properly. Though the risk of contracting Lyme disease is relatively low, it is always helpful to be prepared and protected.

Risks
Most often Lyme disease comes from contact with a deer tick that has feasted off another infected animal. If an infected tick bites, it can stay attached to the skin for 36 to 48 hours, and the bacteria is transferred into the bloodstream and travels throughout the body.

Signs & Symptoms
There are three stages of Lyme disease:
• Early localized Lyme disease—A rash develops at the site of the bite within 1 to 31 days. It resembles a bull’s-eye, and slowly expands and grows, followed by flu-like symptoms.
• Early disseminated Lyme disease—This is when skin, joint, nervous system and heart complications can begin.
• Late persistent Lyme disease—Development of severe joint, nervous system and heart complications.

Prevention
Symptoms of Lyme disease are somewhat vague and similar to other conditions, so it is often overlooked and untreated. Unfortunately, that means it can be difficult to cure. Reducing your risk is your best defense against Lyme disease. Here are preventive measures to help reduce your chances of tick bites and Lyme disease:
• Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants when in wooded areas, and tuck pant legs into socks or boots.
• Wear light-colored clothing to make identifying ticks easier.
• Spray yourself with insect repellent that contains DEET.
• Walk in the center of trails to avoid overhanging trees or bushes.
• Wash your body and clothing after all outdoor activities.
• Look periodically for ticks if you have been in bushy areas or working in a garden.
• Avoid sitting on the ground.
• Keep long hair tied back.
• Stack woodpiles neatly, off the ground and in a dry location.
• Remove ticks promptly.
• Remember to also check your dog’s coat if he or she has been in a possible tick-infested area as well. Animals can also contract Lyme disease.

Tick Removal
Remember, in the case of a tick bite, bacteria do not transmit Lyme disease to your bloodstream for about 36 to 48 hours. Your chance of contracting Lyme disease greatly decreases if you remove a tick within 24 hours. Removing a tick is not too difficult. Using a good pair of fine-tip scissors or tweezers, follow this process for removing an attached tick from your skin:
• Grab the tick firmly where it entered the skin. Do not squeeze the tick’s body as it could cause bacteria to inject into your skin.
• Slowly and firmly pull the tick directly outward. Do not try to twist it out, that could break the tick in half, leaving half still in your skin.
• Once removed, clean the bite with an antiseptic.

Did You Know...?
After removing a tick from the skin, you should save it for future analysis should you become sick. Place it in a dry jar or a sealed plastic bag, and keep it in the freezer. After one month, if you experience no symptoms, you may discard it.
### May 2013

#### Make Mental Health a Priority

The stress of everyday life can take its toll on both your body and your mind. While stress probably won’t go away altogether, it’s important to take care of your mental health.

Try doing the following things to improve your mental health:
- Build and maintain supportive relationships
- Set aside time to relax and enjoy life
- Give back to your community
- Know your major stressors and how to deal with your reactions
- Take care of your body

If everyday stressors are getting to you, don’t be afraid to ask for help—talk to a family member, close friend or even a counselor to figure out what’s bothering you and what you can do about it.

### May 2013 Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are you looking for an online fitness site for food and exercise tracking? Check out <a href="http://www.sparkpeople.com">www.sparkpeople.com</a> and <a href="http://www.myfitnesspal.com">www.myfitnesspal.com</a>. There are other sites out there, just search online for the one that fits you style best. Good Luck!</strong></td>
<td><strong>March in place every time a commercial comes on.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Add almonds to your snack list. They are good for you.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arm Circles</strong> (Four sets of 10 each throughout the day. Large/Small Forward/Backward.)</td>
<td><strong>Wash and Wax the car today. Great exercise.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>100 Reps</strong> Work in 100 Reps of any exercise you choose today.</td>
<td><strong>Portion Control</strong> (Top habit of slim people is modest portions at least 5 days a week.)</td>
<td><strong>Take a walk. Try walking for at least 30 minutes.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Try a new flavor of yogurt today.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arm Circles</strong> (Four sets of 10 each throughout the day. Large/Small Forward/Backward.)</td>
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<td><strong>Size it up Sunday! Measure out your potion sizes for all your meals today!</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Eat Healthy! 2-minutes to make a salad!</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Take the pledge to not text and drive.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Memorial Day!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arm Circles</strong> (Four sets of 10 each throughout the day. Large/Small Forward/Backward.)</td>
<td><strong>When outdoors, protect yourself from mosquitoes and ticks.</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 Reps</strong> Work in 100 Reps of any exercise you choose today.</td>
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Start a walking program. Keep track of your progress. You will find you feel more energized if you start a regular program. Check your footwear. It may be time for a new pair of walking shoes. Make sure your shoes fit properly.

The information contained in this calendar is for informational purposes only. Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. If you have a condition that may keep you from participating in this program as currently presented, please see HR and accommodations will be made for your participation.

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