



PERSONALIZED MEDICINE: MEDICAL CARE MADE JUST FOR YOU

Just as one size of clothing doesn't fit everyone, the same medical treatment won't work for everyone. That's where *individualized medicine*, also known as *personalized medicine*, comes in.

Let's start with some basics. Your genome is the DNA in each of your cells. With individualized medicine, your health care team uses what it knows about your genome to treat you. Individualized medicine can help find the unique genetic causes of your condition. It can help doctors match the right treatment with what's happening in your body, all the way down to your molecules.

This information is becoming more


accessible and more cost-effective. As a result, medical specialists in almost every area are using individualized medicine to help prevent and treat disease.

Individualized medicine helps doctors make better choices when they prescribe medications or treatment. It helps prevent people from getting too little or too much of a medication, or one that won't work well.

You'll learn more about individualized medicine in this year's newsletter series, *Personalizing Your Health Care*. Learn what your genes say about your health, how your lifestyle affects your genes and much more.

© ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK



 **Read *Personalizing Your Health Care* in each issue of this newsletter on page 4 and in select issues on page 2.**

Choosing Wisely®: Things Physicians and Patients Should Question

Making a list of questions is a good way to prepare for a doctor's appointment. It sounds easy enough to do, but some patients struggle because of uncertainty over what questions to ask. Start with these 5 questions.

1. Do I really need this test or procedure?
2. What are the downsides?
3. Are there simpler, safer options?
4. What happens if I do nothing?
5. How much does it cost?

Asking questions can expand your knowledge and understanding of your condition and treatment options. But if you wait until your appointment to ask them, be realistic about expectations for getting complete and thorough answers from your doctor. Do a little homework and answer the basic questions on your own. If you have access to a computer or a library, a site like www.mayoclinic.com can explain the basics and bring you up to speed very quickly.

Materials from the **Choosing Wisely®** campaign are excellent resources for guiding patients and physicians in dialogue that leads to higher quality of care.

Choosing Wisely was developed by the American Board of Internal Medicine with input from more than 40 medical societies representing more than 500,000 physicians nationwide. Their participation and endorsement make Choosing Wisely materials highly credible resources for

continued on back cover



EXPERTINSIGHT

What's new in health in 2014?

By Brent A. Bauer, M.D., GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE, MAYO CLINIC, ROCHESTER, MINN.
Dr. Bauer is the medical editor of this publication and lectures extensively on topics related to wellness.

With each new year, there's always something to be excited about in terms of health. One area that's important for everyone right now is *individualized medicine*, also known as *personalized medicine*.

Health care is often aimed at the masses, not tailored for each person. But really, your body holds the key to your health and well-being. That's why personalized medicine is important.

By knowing more about you, all the way down to each cell in your body, your health care team can diagnose and treat you more effectively. Personalized medicine can even help you spend less on your health care.

The staff of this newsletter has teamed up with the **Mayo Clinic Center for Individualized Medicine** to bring you a series called *Personalizing Your Health Care*.

Throughout 2014, find *Personalizing Your*

Health Care on page 4 of each issue, and in select issues on page 2, where experts from the Mayo Clinic Center for Individualized Medicine will share their knowledge, experience and advice. You've already learned a little bit about personalized medicine on the cover of this issue.

This newsletter team is honored and privileged to be a part of your support team as you strive to improve your health and wellness. We're here not only to help you explore new areas of wellness, such as personalized medicine, but also to provide information to help you on your day-to-day health and wellness journey.

All the best to you for a healthy new year!

MEDICAL DIRECTOR
Philip T. Hagen, M.D.
Preventive Medicine

MEDICAL EDITOR
Brent A. Bauer, M.D.
General Internal Medicine

ASSOCIATE MEDICAL EDITOR
Matthew M. Clark, Ph.D., L.P.
Psychiatry and Psychology

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Paula M. Marlow Limbeck

MANAGING EDITOR
Stephanie K. Vaughan

ART DIRECTION
Stewart (Jay) J. Koski

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
Gunnar T. Soroos

EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

Sandra Bjerckness, R.D.
CTSA Clinical Research Unit

Alina G. Bridges, D.O.
Dermatology

David W. Claypool, M.D.
Emergency Medicine

Michael A. Covalciuc, M.D.
Preventive Medicine

Edward T. Creagan, M.D.
Medical Oncology

Donald D. Hensrud, M.D.
Preventive Medicine

Jeanne Graner Krochta, L.P.
Employee Assistance Program

Debra I. Mucha, R.N., C.N.P.
Community Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine

Beth A. Riley
Mayo Clinic's Dan Abraham Healthy Living Center

Ray W. Squires, Ph.D.
Cardiovascular Health Clinic

Jacqueline M. Thielen, M.D.
General Internal Medicine

Maria G. Valdes, M.D.
Community Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine

Andrew I. Vaughn, M.D.
Preventive Medicine

EDITORIAL RESEARCH

Anthony J. Cook, Amanda K. Golden, Deirdre A. Herman, Erika A. Riggan

PROOFREADING

Miranda M. Attlessey, Donna L. Hanson, Julie M. Maas

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Laura B. Long

Want access to the health experts at Mayo Clinic?

This newsletter provides it. Mayo Clinic's 3,700 physicians, scientists and researchers help develop and review articles in this publication. Our editorial board also reviews each article to ensure that we're offering accurate, action-oriented information.

Best ways to treat the flu

If you have the flu, take these steps to treat it.

1. Rest, get plenty of fluids and avoid spreading the flu to others.
2. If you are 65 years old or older, are pregnant, or have a chronic health problem, ask your doctor about taking an antiviral medicine. These drugs may shorten your illness by one to three days. They can also help prevent complications, such as pneumonia. If you have mild flu but are otherwise healthy, you don't need antiviral drugs.
3. Acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs can help treat headache, sore throat and body aches. Naproxen (Aleve) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) are some options.

Is your child afraid of severe weather?

Use this advice to help your child cope with severe-weather fears.

Take your child's fear seriously.

Don't make light of it or dismiss it.


Help children learn more about storms by reading about them or watching videos. This may help

them face their fears. Having your child go outside on cloudy and rainy days also may help.

Be calm, warm and supportive.

Tell children that thunder won't hurt them and that storms are a normal part of nature.

Talk about storms matter-of-factly. Don't overemphasize dramatic or frightening stories.

 **If your child has other fears, the same advice applies.**
Expose your child to what he or she fears in small, nonthreatening doses and be patient and sympathetic.

© ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Women's Health

Managing stress during pregnancy

It's normal to feel some stress during [pregnancy](#), but it's also important to manage it. Too much stress can cause sleeplessness and loss of appetite, which can harm you and possibly even your baby.

Take these steps toward managing your stress during your pregnancy.

- Look to reliable sources of information on pregnancy so that you know what's true – and what's not.
- Rely on the relationship you have with your health care team to make sure you get your questions answered.
- Talk about your feelings with your partner, a friend or family member, or your doctor.
- Try relaxation activities, such as prenatal yoga, guided imagery or meditation.
- Enjoy your relationships with family, friends and pets.

Find your work-life balance – as a couple


Finding the right work-life balance for both you and your spouse or partner is an important part of a happy relationship. Work together to achieve balance with this advice.

Put your relationship first. Marriages sometimes suffer when one or both spouses work long hours. Find ways that both of you can compromise to put your relationship first. Spend your free time strengthening your relationships with your partner and children rather than keeping a spotless home or running unnecessary errands.

Keep an open mind. Rethink old-fashioned ideas about parenting, the division of chores, and who should work more inside and outside the home.

Communicate regularly. Work-life issues may be hard to talk about sometimes, but it's important to address the subject openly and honestly.


Encourage each other. Research shows that people who find their work meaningful and have some control in their jobs experience less work-family stress. Support your spouse or partner in finding a workplace that's a good fit.

 **Respect what your spouse or partner does for your household, and show your gratitude for the paid – and unpaid – work he or she does.**

4 tips for a new job

New on the job? Getting along with your co-workers is one path toward a satisfying and enjoyable working life. Keep these suggestions in mind.

- 1. Be pleasant.** Treat your new co-workers with friendliness and respect, but know your boundaries. Avoid sharing personal details or asking invasive questions.
- 2. Be professional.** For example, get to work on time. And curb your smartphone use until you learn what's acceptable in your new environment.
- 3. Show enthusiasm.** Have a "can-do" attitude. Ask questions and be proactive. Listen attentively and show interest when co-workers provide you with information.
- 4. Be smart.** Make an effort to understand workplace dynamics. Consider toning down your ideas and suggestions until you've proved your worth and built rapport with your co-workers.

 **Smile and show genuine interest in other people. A person who is likeable will have an easier time fitting in at a new workplace.**

Fish and prostate cancer risk

Eating fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids has been linked to a lower risk of prostate cancer for more than a dozen years. Recently, though, these results have been called into question. A 2013 study showed that men who have higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids in their blood may have a higher risk of developing prostate cancer, particularly an aggressive form of it.

Should men stop eating fatty fish based on the results of this study? No. The recent study is a review of older research that shows a link between fish oil and prostate cancer – but the older research wasn't necessarily meant to show whether omega-3 fatty acids raise prostate cancer risk. Although the recent study is not the first to show an increased risk of prostate cancer from omega-3s, it's not the final word on the question. If anything, it points to the fact that more research is needed.

 **Don't cut fish out of your diet based on one study. A healthy diet includes a variety of protein sources, including fish.**

Are screening tests worth your time?

Screening tests aren't always the final word on whether you have an illness. They can sometimes tell you if you have a disease or are at risk of a health condition. But they're also sometimes wrong.

So why bother with them? Experts say that for widely accepted screening tests, it's better to get them than to skip them. For example, one study showed that a screening colonoscopy lowers your risk of death from colon cancer by almost two-thirds. Another study showed that mammograms save many lives every year. And as far as

blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, the **U.S. Preventive Services Task Force** studied them and concluded that the benefits of these simple tests far outweigh any downside.

Here's the bottom line. Life is not without risk, and you can't possibly know all of the risks you face. But getting screening tests is one way you can help reduce your risks and ensure a long and enjoyable life. From there, it's up to you to make sure that the days you live are enjoyable. Screening tests can't make that happen – but you can.

Find your path to resiliency

🔗 **Resiliency** can help you manage stress, but it's also important for your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Just as strength training strengthens your muscles, there are exercises you can do to build your resiliency. Find the right resiliency exercises for you with these tips.

- **Study up.** There are many good resources on building resiliency, from books to workshops and websites. Learn ways to be more mindful, counter stress or change your attitude, and see what resonates with you.
- **Open your mind.** Be willing to experiment. Sitting

meditation doesn't appeal to you? Try meditative walking, spend time in nature or keep a gratitude journal.

- **Try one practice at a time.** Give each practice time to see how it works and what you can learn from it.
- **Identify role models.** Have a friend who seems especially resilient? Ask for advice. This can also help increase your support, an important part of resiliency.

✅ **No one resiliency practice is right for everyone. Explore as you move along the path toward greater resiliency in your life.**

Can you 'catch' healthy habits from others?

It's easy to pick up unhealthy habits from others. But research suggests that you may be able to catch your friends' *healthy* habits, too.

In one study, overweight people who took part in a team-based weight-loss competition lost the most weight when they were on teams with other people who

also lost weight. In another study of a group weight-loss program, people who had a friend in the program lost more weight than those who didn't.

A 2011 study found that you're more likely to adopt a healthy habit if you're in a group with others who have a similar body mass, age, fitness level and eating habits.

Introverts, extroverts ... and ambiverts?

While some people are clearly introverts or extroverts, most people are a little of both. If your personality falls somewhere in the middle, researchers say you're an *ambivert*.

Here's what researchers have to say about ambiverts.

- **Ambiverts have the best qualities of extroverts and introverts.** Like extroverts, they can be outgoing, enthusiastic and confident. Like introverts, they can be thoughtful, receptive and good at seeking out consensus.
- **Ambiverts get things done.** Traditionally, extroverts were thought to make the best leaders,

but ambiverts may actually have the edge in the workplace.

- **Ambiverts know when to talk and when to listen.** They can be sociable without dominating conversations.
- **People have realistic expectations of ambiverts.** In group settings, people often underestimate the contributions of introverts and overestimate those of extroverts.

✅ **Whether you're an introvert, extrovert or ambivert, you can learn skills for better communication. Seek out workshops and classes that can help you communicate better with others.**



WELLNESS@WORK

“Our pedometer walking challenges have really motivated everyone to keep moving throughout the day. The friendly competitiveness has really pushed everyone to increase their activity level. Everyone wants to be able to display the highly coveted ‘Walk to Wellness’ trophy on their desk!”
– **Kate K., research technologist**

HOW DO YOU STAY HEALTHY AT WORK? SEND US YOUR ADVICE!

Email: HealthyLivingnewsletter@mayo.edu

Mail: *Mayo Clinic Healthy Living* newsletter
200 First St. SW, Rochester, MN 55905

All correspondence becomes the property of Mayo Clinic, which reserves the right to edit material. Readers who send in questions will not be identified. We regret that we can't respond to each question.

© ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK




Step up your physical activity



Exercising even a small amount is good for your health, but increasing your physical activity level beyond the bare minimum is even better.

Ready to get more active? Try using these methods.

- **Work out longer.** Try walking an additional 10 minutes each day.
- **Add a day or two.** If you ride your bike to work three days a week, try biking to work five days a week instead.
- **Bump up your  intensity.** Walk or jog a little faster, or set your treadmill on a higher incline.
- **Enlist support.** Ask family and friends to join you. If you have company, chances are you'll be more motivated to get active.
- **Be creative.** Avoid boredom by trying new physical activities. Mix up your routine with a dance or exercise class, or by incorporating more physical activity, such as shoveling snow or gardening, into your daily life.

Sit less for better health

You've probably heard that sitting for long periods has been linked with lots of health problems. But if your job demands you sit at a desk for most of the day, what can you do?

Actually, you can do a lot.

If you can change your workstation, consider a treadmill desk or a special vertical desk. Or, place a portable stepper in your office and use it while reading reports. Try pedaling on a minicycle placed under your desk.

A standing desk is another option. You might give this a try by improvising with a high table or counter. Just be sure to use good standing posture.

If you can't change your workstation, focus on changing your work habits by:

- Standing while talking on the phone or eating lunch
- Holding walking meetings with one or two co-workers
- Using the stairs whenever possible
- Taking breaks for quick walks

Healthy-eating habits you can keep for life

🕒 **Eating habits** can be hard to change, but with patience and effort, you can change. Here are some ways.

Expand your horizons. Maybe you think you don't like fruit, but have you tried them all? Keep trying new things, and you're bound to find some keepers.

Take baby steps. Pick something doable, such as eating more vegetables. Choose vegetables you like and add them to your meals. Once you've mastered that, set a new goal.

Give your taste buds time to change. Does skim milk taste like water to you compared with whole milk? Try it for a few weeks, or

switch gradually from whole milk to 2 percent, 1 percent or skim milk. Chances are, the next time you try whole milk, it'll taste too rich.

Forgive your trespasses. Ate too much cake? Don't let it derail your efforts. Build occasional treats into your plan. Forgive yourself for occasional mistakes. Focus on progress, not missteps.



Mediterranean white fish stacks

- 2 large tomatoes, cored and sliced into ¼-inch rounds
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 T capers, rinsed
- 1½ T balsamic vinegar
- 1 T olive oil
- ¼ cup reduced-fat feta cheese
- 1 medium zucchini, trimmed and thinly sliced into rounds
- 4 4-oz. white fish fillets
- ½ tsp. salt-free lemon pepper seasoning blend

1. Set the best 4 tomato slices aside. Chop the remaining tomatoes into small cubes. Place the tomato cubes into a bowl and add the onion, capers, vinegar, olive oil and feta cheese. Stir to mix.
2. Place the oven rack in the upper position and preheat broiler to high. Line two rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray. Place zucchini rounds in a single layer on one baking sheet and fish fillets on the other sheet. Spray the top sides with cooking spray.
3. Place the zucchini under the broiler for about 1 minute. Turn and season with half the lemon pepper. Broil for another minute and move the baking sheet to the bottom of the oven to keep warm.
4. Place the fish fillets under the broiler for about 3 minutes. Turn and continue broiling until the fillets spring back to light pressure, about 3 to 6 minutes. Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the fillets. Season with the remaining lemon pepper.
5. Place 1 tomato slice on each of four plates. Arrange zucchini in an overlapping circle on top of the tomatoes. Place a fish fillet on the zucchini and top with the diced tomato mixture.

Total time:

25

minutes

Serves

4



© MFMR

Nutrition analysis per serving (1 fillet with vegetables):
200 calories, 6 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 3 g monounsaturated fat), 55 mg cholesterol, 310 mg sodium, 10 g total carbohydrate (3 g dietary fiber, 6 g sugars), 25 g protein



HAVE A STORY IDEA OR HEALTH TOPIC YOU'D LIKE TO READ ABOUT?

Email: HealthyLivingnewsletter@mayo.edu
Mail: Mayo Clinic Healthy Living newsletter
200 First St. SW, Rochester, MN 55905

All correspondence becomes the property of Mayo Clinic, which reserves the right to edit material. Readers who send in questions will not be identified. We regret that we can't respond to each question.

HealthQuestions

Q Can certain foods help relieve pain?

A Soybeans, fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, extra-virgin olive oil and tart cherries may help reduce pain. In fact, compounds in tart cherries have been shown to reduce pain as well as some over-the-counter pain relievers do. Some of these foods have anti-inflammatory qualities, which also help relieve pain.

Some small studies show that ginger and acai juice also may be helpful, but more research is needed. If you enjoy these foods as part of a healthy diet, you may see some pain relief, too.

Q I just got over having the flu. Can I jump right back into my normal exercise routine?

A If you've had the flu and a fever, extreme fatigue, muscle aches, and swollen glands, ease back into exercise little by little.

If you've been severely ill, it may take four or more weeks before you're back to your normal routine. While you're getting back up to speed, focus on light aerobics and bodyweight exercises. If you aren't sure if you're ready for exercise, talk with your doctor.

Things Physicians and Patients Should Question

continued from front cover

patients and doctors alike.

The Consumers Union also has a strong voice in the campaign. Founded in 1936, the Consumers Union is best known for publishing *Consumer Reports* magazine, which is read by millions of subscribers every month for guidance on many consumer topics, including healthcare quality and healthcare reform.

By simultaneously addressing clinical and consumer guidelines, the *Choosing Wisely* materials put doctors and patients on the same page so they can choose care that is necessary, safe, supported by evidence, and does not duplicate tests or procedures already received.

The campaign offers free, patient-friendly flyers on more than 30 topics of interest. For example, a flyer called Migraine Headaches, endorsed by the American Academy of Neurology, recommends avoiding certain drugs because of evidence that they make headaches worse, present serious health risks, are not as effective as other drugs, and don't provide good value for the consumer. The flyer recommends trying other drugs first and offers tips for managing migraines without medication.

The *Choosing Wisely* campaign also offers lists of *Five Things Physicians and Patients Should Question*. These brief but informative flyers, produced with input from leading medical societies, list common tests or procedures that should be discussed or questioned by patients and doctors. The collection of 40-plus lists includes recommendations for cervical cancer screenings, early elective deliveries, overuse of antibiotics, overuse of cardiac imaging, and overuse of imaging for lower back pain.

At the most basic level, questions facilitate dialogue. That's the intended purpose of the *Choosing Wisely* materials. They provide reliable information to help patients and doctor's discuss and decide treatment options that offer the best outcomes and highest quality of care.

Resources

The Carpenters Trusts of Western Washington supports *Choosing Wisely* through the Puget Sound Health Alliance. Links to *Choosing Wisely* materials and lists can be found online at www.wacomcommunitycheckup.org/ownyourhealth.

Choosing Wisely is also supported by the Washington State Medical Association. Visit www.wsma.org/choosing-wisely to access patient-friendly materials and lists.

Consumer Reports promotes sensible healthcare decisions through a dedicated website offering free access to *Choosing Wisely* materials and other resources. Visit www.consumerhealthchoices.org.