

# HEALTHY OUTCOMES

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From Food & Health Communications, Inc.  
– Judy Doherty, PC

### Added Sugar Reduction Tip #1: Replace Sugary Drinks with Water

When you’re trying to cut down on sugar, follow MyPlate’s advice and “Drink water instead of sugary drinks.”

This can be easy and fun — it doesn’t have to feel like a sacrifice. Keep a pitcher of cold filtered water in the fridge so that making a healthful choice is a no-brainer. You can add slices of fresh fruit or herbs to the pitcher if you’d like to give the water a flavor boost! Some of our favorite combinations include lemons and limes, strawberries and basil, and watermelon and mint. If you miss the bubbles from soda, try drinking plain seltzer instead of water, or flavoring seltzer water with those tasty herb and fruit combos.

### Added Sugar Reduction Tip #2: Snack on Fresh Fruit Instead of Candy

We all want to indulge a sweet tooth from time to time, but why not transform that sweet tooth into a fruit tooth? The sugars in fruit are naturally-occurring and part of a full nutrient package, rather than added in huge doses to processed candies and sweets. The next time a sweet craving strikes, reach for the fridge instead of a candy dish.

The easiest way to make this transition is to slice up a bunch of fresh fruit and put it in the fridge. That way, your healthful snack is ready to go when hunger strikes. Chunks of watermelon or fresh berries are especially great stand-ins for candy. Frozen grapes or blueberries also make intriguing and refreshing sweet treats.

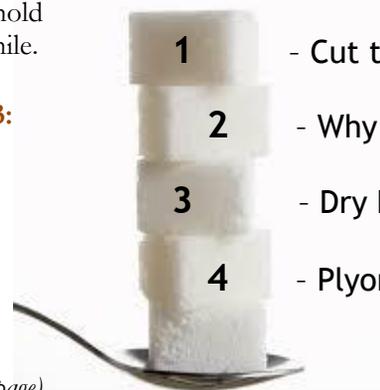
If you’re snacking on the go, consider stashing some bananas and apples in your car — they’re sturdy and hold up well outside the fridge for a while.

### Added Sugar Reduction Tip #3: Check the Facts

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans advise people to “Read the Nutrition Facts Label for information on the sodium content of foods and purchase foods that are low in sodium.”

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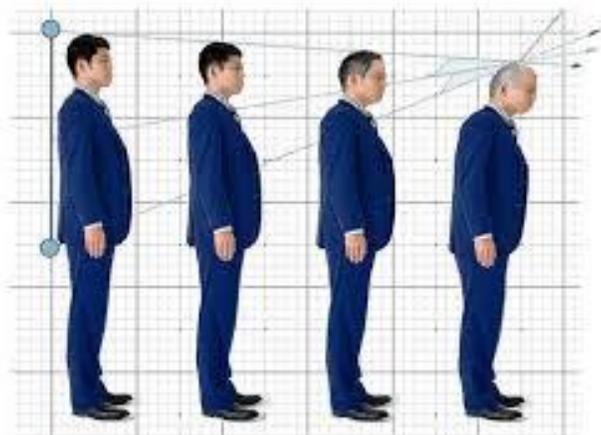
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# Why You SHRINK As You Age

From: *Berkeley Wellness* | July 21, 2015

Do you know how tall you are? Many people, especially older ones, think they're taller than they really are. Sometimes it's wishful thinking, but often it's lack of awareness of the shrinkage that almost always comes with aging. In a French study, for instance, researchers measured 8,600 women over 60 and found that they overestimated their height by an inch, on average, and had lost about 2 inches from their tallest recalled height.

No one wants to shrink, of course, but it's a normal part of life if you live long enough. Here are five things to know about shrinkage—and what you may be able to do to prevent it.



## HOW MUCH DO PEOPLE SHRINK AS THEY AGE?

Estimates vary, but on average people lose  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch every decade after age 40 or 50, with losses increasing in later years, and women generally losing more than men. Research from the *Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging*, for example, found that women lost an average of 2 inches between the ages of 30 and 70 (and just over 3 inches by age 80). Men lost a little more than 1 inch by age 70 (and 2 inches by 80). But averages hide wide variability: Some people lose an inch or more in a single decade, some shrink only after age 60 or 70, and a few don't shrink at all.

## WHY DO WE SHRINK?

People lose height because the discs between the vertebrae in the spine dehydrate and compress. The aging spine can also become more curved, and vertebrae can collapse (compression fracture) due to loss of bone density (osteoporosis). Loss of muscle in the torso can also contribute to stooped posture. Even the gradual flattening of the arches of the feet can make you slightly shorter.

## IS LOSING HEIGHT AN INDICATOR OF HEALTH PROBLEMS?

It can be, which is one reason why your health care provider should measure your height; usually as part of a periodic health exam. Height loss is especially worrisome if it is largely the result of a compression fracture or other skeletal conditions. Such fractures can cause back pain and limit mobility, though often there is no pain or other symptoms. And the same loss of muscle that contributes to shrinkage can also contribute to back pain. Moreover, the greater the shrinkage, the greater the risk of hip and other non-vertebral fractures. Several studies have found that people over 65 who lost at least 2 inches in the past 15 to 20 years were at significantly higher risk for hip fracture than those who shrank less; one study found the increase in risk was greater in men.

Loss of height can also be related to a host of metabolic and physiological changes that may have a negative impact on health. Or height loss may simply be a marker for poor health in general or poor nutrition. But don't despair: Many people with markedly diminished stature remain perfectly healthy.

Certainly, if you have any concerns about your loss of height, especially if you have chronic back pain, discuss this with your health care provider.

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## Cut the Sugar...

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This advice will also stand you in good stead when it comes to reducing added sugars.

Of course, the added sugar content isn't on the Nutrition Facts Label (yet!), so you would need to check the ingredients list instead. Since ingredients in processed foods are listed from most to least, you can see which items have a disproportionate level of added sugars. When comparing foods, try to choose an option with less added sugar.

Oh! And beware of sneaky labeling. Some manufacturers use several different types of sugar to sweeten a product so that sugar won't be one of the top ingredients listed. It is helpful to get familiar with the different types of and names for sweeteners. ■

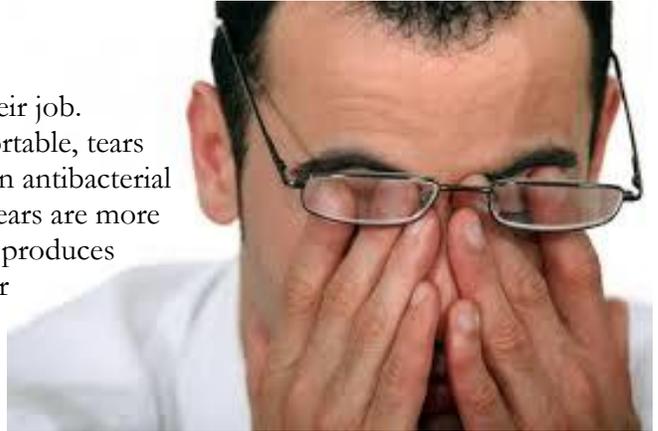
# DRY EYES: Prevention & Treatment

by Berkeley Wellness | August 10, 2015

It's easy to take tears for granted—until they stop doing their job. Not only do they lubricate your eyes and keep them comfortable, tears also deliver oxygen to the cornea, flush away debris, contain antibacterial agents, maintain vision clarity, and promote healing. And tears are more complicated than they seem. A system of glands and ducts produces a three-layer film—an oily outer layer, a watery middle layer (containing proteins, sodium, and other substances), and a mucus coating over the cornea—that spreads evenly over the eyes and limits evaporation.

Everyone experiences dry eyes at least occasionally.

But if your eyes constantly burn, sting, feel scratchy and gritty, and even hurt, you may have what's commonly called dry eye syndrome (or disease). The symptoms may also include blurry vision and increased light sensitivity. Paradoxically, you may also experience excessive tearing and watering intermittently, which is a response to microscopic corneal scratches caused by the dryness. In addition to having dry eye syndrome, some people suffer from allergies that affect their eyes, leading to even worse symptoms and complicating treatment. If dry eye syndrome is severe and left untreated, it can eventually scar the cornea and possibly cause permanent vision problems.



## How dry I am

Dry eye syndrome is common, especially after age 40, and can interfere with reading, work, driving, and life in general. Women are more susceptible than men, particularly around menopause, suggesting that hormonal changes play a role.

The syndrome can be the result of decreased tear production, altered tear composition, and/or rapid evaporation or drainage of tears. It has many different causes and contributing factors. For example, Sjögren's syndrome and certain other autoimmune diseases can reduce tear production or alter tear composition, as can blepharitis (a common condition of the eyelids that affects the oily layer of the tear film). Parkinson's disease and Bell's palsy can reduce blinking and thus cause dryness. Chronic dry eye is a side effect of many drugs, notably beta blockers (for hypertension and cardiac arrhythmias), diuretics, and certain antidepressants and antihistamines. Contact lenses and LASIK eye surgery can also contribute to or cause dry eyes. One relatively new theory is that chronic inflammation of tear glands often plays a major role in the syndrome.

The symptoms may worsen in windy, dry, or hot conditions and when air pollution levels rise. Activities such as computer use can cause dry eyes, largely because blinking tends to slow, leading to greater tear evaporation.

## Relief and prevention

If your eyes often feel dry and burn, try the following:

- When working at a computer screen or reading a book or newspaper, remember to blink regularly and take frequent breaks.
- Avoid tobacco smoke, hair dryers, overheated rooms, fans blowing on your face, and riding in a car with the windows open. Wear wraparound sunglasses outdoors.
- If you wear contact lenses, consider switching to glasses or changing your replacement schedule.

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## Why You Shrink...

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### WHAT HEIGHT SHOULD OLDER PEOPLE USE TO CALCULATE THEIR BMI—CURRENT OR MAXIMUM HEIGHT?

You should probably use your current height, but experts disagree. Body mass index, or BMI, is a formula that evaluates weight relative to height, with higher results generally indicating more body fat. If you shrink and your weight stays the same, your BMI will go up, which may shift you from, say, the healthy weight category to overweight. Thus, a woman who is 5 foot 3 inches tall and weighs 150 pounds has a BMI of 26.6, in the low-middle end of “overweight,” but if she shrinks to 5 feet tall and weighs the same, her BMI will increase to 29.3 (obesity starts at 30). If older people shrink largely because of spinal compression and loss of bone and muscle but stay the same weight, then body fat must account for the difference—so it makes sense that their BMI increases (along with waist circumference). ■

# PLYOMETRICS

*Web MD – Reviewed by Hansa D. Bhargava, MD | July 10, 2014*

### HOW IT WORKS

Remember the fun you had as a kid, hopping, skipping, and jumping around the playground? The exercises you do with plyometrics mimic those dynamic moves.

Plyometrics (“plyo,” for short) used to be called “jump training.” It’s a technique that you can use in many different ways. For instance, you can do plyometrics to help train for basketball, volleyball, tennis, or any other activity that uses explosive movements.

You’ll do a series of jumps and hops, like jump squats or one-leg hops. You might jump up and onto a box or bench, or jump over cones. Some moves will be faster than others.

Every time you land from a jump, your muscles get a stretch. That gives your next jump even more power. The combination of stretching and contracting your muscles whips them into shape.

You won’t do plyometrics every day, because your muscles will need a break from all that jumping. If you’re not active now, you may need to start working on your basic fitness first and later have a pro show you how to do the moves, so you don’t get injured.

It’s a fun alternative to an everyday strength-training workout that boosts your muscle power, strength, balance, and agility. You

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# HEALTH & WELLNESS Fair

**Date:** Thursday, October 22, 2015

**Time:** 9 am – 2 pm

**Venue:** First Baptist Church  
20 Brookside Dr., Danville, PA

For a vendor registration form, email Lesley at [lgmurphy@geisinger.edu](mailto:lgmurphy@geisinger.edu)

## Dry eyes...

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- Over-the-counter "artificial tears," preferably preservative-free brands, can lubricate and moisturize dry eyes. They come in different formulas and viscosities. Thinner drops provide fast—but short-term—relief. More viscous products (which may also come as gels) provide greater moisturizing ability, but because they cause temporary blurring they are best used at bedtime and should not be used before driving. Avoid drops that claim to "get the red out," which usually contain a decongestant (such as phenylephrine or naphazoline) and can worsen dry eyes.
- Lubricating ointments (such as DuoLube, Refresh PM, or Lacri-Lube), used at bedtime, help treat dry eyes overnight, allowing you to start the day with moist eyes.
- Warm compresses on the lids can help melt semi-solid secretions blocking the tear glands and increase the production of some tear components. You can use a warm washcloth, but there are also eye masks (usually microwavable) designed for this purpose.



## Plyometrics...

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can either do a workout based around plyometrics, or add some plyo moves to your usual routine without giving it an entire session.

### INTENSITY LEVEL: HIGH

This workout uses maximum power to strengthen your muscles. The moves are quick and explosive, so prepare to use a lot more energy than you do in a typical strength-training session.



### AREAS IT TARGETS

**Core:** No. This workout doesn't specifically target your core.

**Arms:** No. Most plyometric workouts don't target your arms. But if you want to work them, you can add upper-body moves like medicine-ball throws and plyometric push-ups.

**Legs:** Yes. Expect your legs to get in great shape from all the jumping and hopping.

**Glutes:** Yes. Moves like jump squats fire up your glutes to make them stronger.

**Back:** No. Though the workout involves your whole body, it's not focused on your back muscles. ■