Wellness Corner

14 Strange but True Health Tips

The major medical studies grab the spotlight in the media, but some of the best solutions to health problems are simple, little, and often unusual things. Check out this list to see how easy it can be to cure yourself.

Change Your Name:
People with "positive" initials—ones that spell out things like J.O.Y. or W.O.W.—live nearly 4 1/2 years longer than people with neutral initials. D.U.D.'s and A.S.S.'s live nearly 3 years less. Other initials that may shorten life: I.L.L. and D.E.D.

Use the First Stall:
After analyzing 51 public restrooms, experts found that the stall closest to the restroom door consistently had the lowest bacteria levels (and the most toilet paper!). The first stall probably sees less traffic because it's near the door and people want privacy. And when you're finished, stand before you flush. When toilets are flushed, a fine mist of water containing contagious bacteria sprays up. You can catch intestinal bugs and hepatitis from it.

Splint a Broken Arm with a Magazine:
To make an impromptu cast, place your wrist palm-down on top of a thick magazine. Roll the magazine into a U-shaped cradle and secure it with tape, an ace bandage, or long strips torn from a shirt. Then press it up to renew your subscription.

Accuse Others of Taking Your Keys:
Research suggests there's a marked difference between how younger and older people interpret misplacing their car keys. A young guy usually blames it on someone else: "Who took my damn keys?" An old man typically blames it on himself: "I must be getting old. I misplaced my keys again." Never use your age as an excuse for anything like this—and see if you don't remain younger longer. It's an effective mental trick.

Scratch the Other Limb:
For itchy skin under a cast, try scratching the same place on the other arm or foot. This may trick your brain into thinking you're scratching the real itch.

Break a High Fever:
Anything up to 102°F is mild and can be treated by drinking plenty of fluids. But to quickly bring down a reading above that, put an ice pack under your arm or near your groin. Icing either spot will cool your body's core. It's uncomfortable, but it works fast. Then see a doctor.

Keep the Willies at Bay:
If you get claustrophobic in small spaces such as subways, elevators, and that closet of an office they stuck you in, visit your local fruit stand. A sniff of green apple may help relieve claustrophobic sensations. Carry one with you. Also, if you're selling your house, placing a basket of fresh green apples on the table may make potential buyers perceive the house as larger.

Skip the Antibacterial Soap:
There's absolutely no reason to buy antibacterial soaps, according to the American Medical Association. While close to 50 percent of soaps sold in the States contain antimicrobial agents, the AMA claims there's no solid scientific proof that these soaps are better at preventing infection than regular soap. In fact, the group argues that antibacterial soaps may be doing more harm than good—by making bacteria stronger and more resistant to existing germ killers.

Straighten Your Drive:
Taking a long drive? Pretend someone poured a cold drink down your back—notice how your shoulders pull back and your spine curves? That's the position your back should be in when you're rolling down the highway.

Disinfect a Wound with Honey:
Pour a dab of honey on a cut before covering it with a bandage. Believe it or not, honey has powerful antibacterial properties. A recent study found that it was capable of destroying almost all strains of the most common wound-infecting bacteria.

Characteristics of High-Functioning Alcoholics

What is a High-Functioning Alcoholic?
Published on January 21, 2009 by Sarah Allen Benton, M.S., L.M.H.C. in The High-Functioning Alcoholic

Alcoholics have poor attendance at work. Alcoholics drink every day. Alcoholics are mostly old men. Alcoholics are usually homeless. Alcoholics are unable to do well in their careers. Alcoholics always drink in the morning. These are just a few of the stereotypes about alcoholics which are pervasive throughout society. These stereotypes increase denial and prevent many alcoholics from getting proper diagnosis and treatment. High-functioning alcoholics (HFAs) defy these stereotypes and often go undetected because they do not fit the image of the "typical" alcoholic. The term "high-functioning alcoholic" is one that most people seem to understand or identify with, but ironically it has yet to be formally defined or examined. A landmark study in 2007 by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism categorized alcoholics into 5 subtypes: 20% are the "functional" subtype, 32% are the "young adult" subtype, 21% are the "young antisocial" subtype, 19% are intermediate familial subtype (middle-aged with mental illness), and only 9% are of the "chronic severe" subtype, fitting the stereotype of the low-bottom alcoholic. Other addiction experts estimate that between 75% and 90% of alcoholics are high-functioning.

An HFA is an alcoholic who is able to maintain his or her outside life, such as a job, home, family, and friendships, all while drinking alcoholically. HFAs have the same disease as the stereotypical "skid-row" alcoholic, but it manifests or progresses differently. Many are not viewed by society as being alcoholic, because they have functioned, succeeded and/or over-achieved throughout their lifetimes. These achievements often lead to an increase in personal denial as well as denial from colleagues and loved ones. HFAs are less apt to feel that they need treatment or help for their alcoholism and often slide through the cracks of the health care system, both medically and psychologically, because they are not diagnosed. Sadly, according to the National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions only 25% of alcoholics ever receive treatment—indicating a serious problem of denial on a societal level. HFAs can exhibit various characteristics at different times or phases of their drinking that can be broken down into different categories and include but are not limited to:

Denial:
• have difficulty viewing themselves as alcoholics because they don't fit the stereotypical image
• believe that they are not alcoholics because they are successful
• use alcohol as a reward and/or justify drinking to relieve stress

Professional and Personal Life:
• able to maintain consistent employment and/or gain an education
• well respected for job/academic performance and accomplishments

From the Director
If I had to name one thing that was responsible for the destruction of more careers, marriages and lives in law enforcement, it would be alcohol. Studies have shown that alcohol abuse in law enforcement is over double that of the general public. The police subculture of using alcohol as a bonding tool and as self-medication for occupational stressors and negative life events increases the risk of personal and professional harm. We cover for and enable each other thinking that we are helping but, in reality, we are only perpetuating the problem. You cannot help someone with substance abuse by looking the other way. You cannot help yourself by ignoring the signs that you may have a problem. Admitting that you do not have control over something that is so destructive in your life does not make you weak. Times have changed. Acceptance of alcohol consumption by law enforcement as part of the job has changed. Take control. Ask for help. We have many resources available to help employees and their family members battle and overcome substance abuse. Remember, if you think you may have a problem, you probably do so don't wait until it destroys your life, please reach out for help.
Strange but True

High Functioning Alcoholic

Continued from front page

Interpersonal Relationships:
• sustain friendships and family relations
• have romantic relationships

Drinking Habits:
• one alcoholic drink sets off a craving
• obsessed about the next drinking opportunity
• display personality changes and/or compromise morals when intoxicated
• repeat unwanted drinking patterns and behaviors

"Double Life":
• appear to the outside world to be managing life well
• skilled at living a compartmentalized life (separating their professional and drinking lives)
• appearances contradict the alcoholic stereotype

Hitting Bottom:
• experience few tangible losses and consequences from their drinking, often by sheer luck
• experience recurrent thoughts that because they have not "lost everything," they have not hit bottom

My understanding of HFAs is also from a personal perspective-I have been in recovery from alcoholism for almost 5 years. I too struggled to see that I could be accomplished academically and then professionally while drinking alcoholically. My image of the alcoholic was always an individual who could not hold his or her life together, and I certainly did not fit that description. The denial that I experienced was so deeply rooted and was reinforced not only from my loved ones but from society as a whole.

Alcoholism is a chronic, progressive and lifelong disease that needs to be treated whether the alcoholic is a lawyer or a homeless person. The face of the alcoholic needs to be changed and the walls of denial must be broken down in order that alcoholics everywhere can receive proper diagnosis and treatment.

More information on this topic is available in the book Understanding the High-Functioning Alcoholic: Professional Views and Personal Insights (www.highfunctioningalcoholic.com).

Do you have the following?

- Masters Degree in Psychology
- Masters Degree in Social Work
- Licensed Professional Counselor
- Certified Drug Alcohol Counselor

For future reference, Peer Support is looking to create a database of qualified individuals with relevant professional expertise within the Sheriff’s Office.

If you have the above or similar degree and certification, please email your resume to:
ccsoppeersupport@cookcountyil.gov

The CAGE Questionnaire – Alcohol

Self-assessment tests and screening tools can be the key to identifying, understanding, and getting support for alcohol abuse problems. They are not designed to provide a diagnosis. If you think you or someone you know may have an alcohol problem, please consult a physician for a full evaluation.

The goal of screening, therefore, is to determine whether a person should receive a more thorough evaluation.

The answers to the questions are scored 0 for "no" and 1 for "yes", with a total score of 2 or greater considered indicative of an alcohol or drug problem.

The CAGE Questionnaire for alcohol:

• Have you ever felt you should Cut down on your drinking?
• Have people Annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
• Have you felt bad or Guilty about your drinking?
• Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover (Eye-opener)?

For more information on this topic is available in the book Understanding the High-Functioning Alcoholic: Professional Views and Personal Insights (www.highfunctioningalcoholic.com).

1. Do not walk behind me, for I may not lead. Do not walk ahead of me, for I may not follow. Do not walk beside me either. Just pretty much leave me alone.
2. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a broken fan belt and leaky tires.
3. It’s always darkest just before the dawn. So if you’re going to steal your neighbor’s newspaper, that’s the time to do it.
4. Don’t be irreplaceable. If you can’t be replaced, you can’t be promoted.
5. Always remember that you’re unique. Just like everyone else.
6. Never test the depth of the water with both feet.
7. If you think nobody cares if you’re alive or dead, try missing a couple of car payments.
8. Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you’re a mile away and you have their shoes.
9. If at first you don’t succeed, skydiving is not for you.
10. Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.
11. If you lend someone $20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.
12. If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember anything.
13. Some days you're the bug; some days you're the windshield.
14. Everyone seems normal until you get to know them.
15. The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it back in your pocket.
16. A closed mouth gathers no foot.
17. Duct tape is like 'The Force'. It has a light side and a dark side, and it holds the universe together.
18. There are two theories to arguing with women. Neither one works.
19. Generally speaking, you aren’t learning much when your lips are moving.
20. Experience is something you don’t get until just after you need it.
21. Never miss a good chance to shut up.
22. Never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.