



The Aorta Reporter



A pool may be the best gym for painful joints

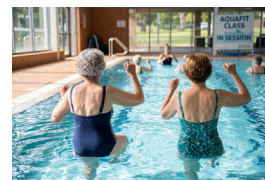
Water does something no treadmill can: it makes the body lighter and the workout harder at the same time. Step into a pool and buoyancy lifts the load off sore knees and hips -- the American Physical Therapy Association notes water can support up to 90 percent of body weight -- while the water pushes back against every movement, building strength without the pounding.

That mix is why aquatic exercise is a favorite for stiff or arthritic joints. The Arthritis Foundation reports that water workouts ease pain and improve movement in people with osteoarthritis, in some studies easing pain better than land exercise, partly because warm water relaxes the muscles.

The best part is that no class or gear is required. The simplest, most effective move is water walking: stride across the shallow end, posture tall and arms swinging, and let the water set the resistance. Add marching in place to warm up, then leg lifts to the front and side while holding the wall, calf raises, and gentle flutter kicks at the edge. Because the water steadies you, the pool is also a safe place to practice standing on one leg, a proven guard against falls.

A session of 20 to 40 minutes, two or three times a week, makes a solid start, and it counts toward the 150 minutes of moderate activity a week that health agencies recommend.

Two cautions. Never exercise in the water entirely alone -- a cramp or a wave of dizziness is more dangerous in a pool than on land, so keep someone within sight or earshot. And because water removes impact, it does little to build bone, so anyone managing osteoporosis still needs some weight-bearing exercise on land.



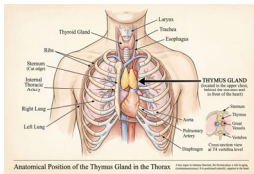
A short walk or stretch can head off a workplace strain

Stress does not stay in your head. When the pressure climbs, muscles tighten and posture slips, and that tension sets the stage for the sprains, back pain, and other musculoskeletal injuries that sideline workers.

According to Safety and Health Magazine, a National Safety Council publication, one of the simplest defenses is to move. A brief walk, a few stretches, or some light exercise loosens tight muscles and resets posture. Stepping away from a workstation to talk with a coworker gives both the mind and the body a break.

The desk set-up matters, though. According to OSHA's computer workstation guidance, the top of the monitor should sit at or just below eye level and about an arm's length away, squarely in front of you. Keep elbows close to the body and bent near 90 degrees, wrists straight, and forearms roughly level. Feet should rest flat on the floor, or on a footrest, with the lower back supported.





A small gland may hint at how you are aging

Tucked behind the breastbone sits a gland most people never think about -- the thymus. New research suggests it may reveal something about how well a person is aging.

The thymus helps train the immune system early in life, then slowly shrinks and fills with fat as the years pass, until by late adulthood only a small patch of working tissue may remain. According to a study reported by Science Daily in June 2026, researchers at Mass General Brigham used artificial intelligence to examine routine CT scans from tens of thousands of adults, scoring how healthy each person's thymus appeared.

People whose thymus stayed in better shape tended to fare better over time, the researchers reported, with links to healthier aging and to surviving cancer. Two people of the same age, the scans suggested, can have thymus glands that look decades apart, one youthful and the other worn. The scans were ones patients already had on file, taken for other reasons, which made the study large without any new tests.

More work is needed before a thymus "score" could ever guide an individual's care.

Harbor Sights

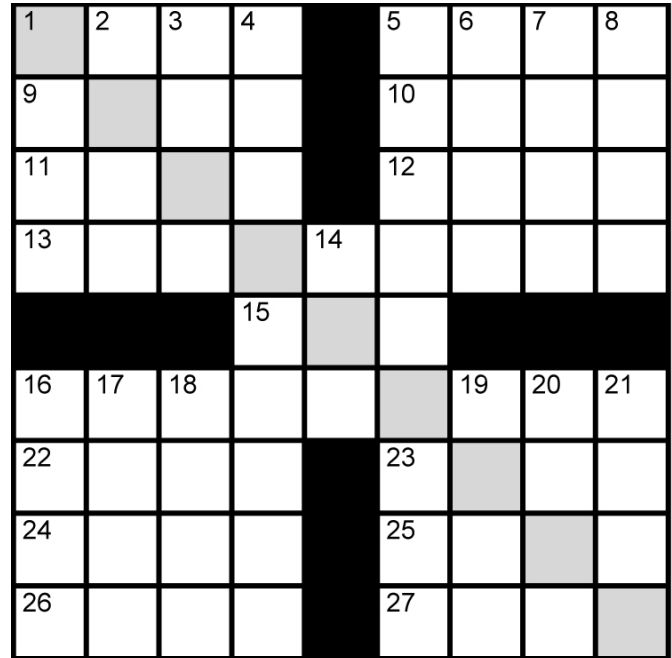
The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

Across

1. Box
5. 'Hey ... over here!'
9. '___ on Down the Road'
10. Cosmetic additive
11. Author Bagnold
12. Film part
13. Made buoyant again
15. Flow's partner
16. Type of sofa
22. Connive
23. Narrow street
24. Capri, for one
25. Song and dance, e.g.
26. Drop from the eye
27. Slaloms

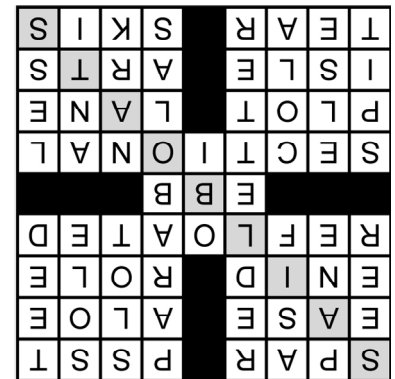
Down

1. Clairvoyant
2. Piece of glass
3. '___ I care!'
4. Memorable, special
5. Conic sections



(Geom.)

6. Coin opening
7. Exclusive
8. Angry, with 'off'
14. ___-Wan Kenobi
16. Fast-moving card game
17. '... or ___!'
18. Fizzy drink



A frog rode the salad to the store

Talk about farm fresh. A shopper in Australia opened a bag of grocery-store salad in May and found an unexpected extra ingredient -- a live frog, tucked among the lettuce leaves.

According to The Associated Press, the little stowaway had apparently been scooped up with the greens back at the farm and rode all the way to the store shelf, none the worse for the trip.

Consider it a good reason to give those pre-washed greens one more look before dinner.

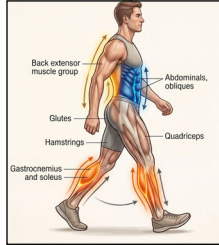


"I don't think reading place mats at fast food places is considered 'doing your own research.'"

The muscles that keep you walking aren't only in your legs

Ask someone which muscles keep them walking and most will point to their thighs. The real workhorse sits lower down -- and some of the muscles that keep people walking well into old age are ones you would never suspect, starting with the back.

The biggest single contributor to each step is the calf. Those muscles drive the push-off that propels the body forward, and their gradual weakening is the hallmark change in how older people walk. As calf strength fades, steps grow shorter and pace slows, according to the Merck Manual.



When the calves can no longer do the job alone, the body recruits the hip muscles -- the glutes and hip flexors -- to keep the legs swinging through. Older walkers lean on these muscles far more than younger ones do, according to the Merck Manual, which is why keeping the hips strong matters more with age, not less.

Staying upright is itself a muscle job. The back extensors and the core hold the trunk tall. When they weaken, the upper body drifts forward, the center of gravity shifts, the stride shortens, and a steady walk turns into a shuffle. Back-extensor strength turns out to be one of the most reliable predictors of overall physical function in older adults, according to research in the journal *Heliyon* -- a better marker, in many tests, than the strength of the muscles across the front of the trunk.

Building that strength is only part of the answer. Studies have found that stronger calves alone do not automatically produce a springier step, so physical therapists often pair the strengthening with practice at walking itself, cueing people to push off firmly and stand tall.

What to do when dehydration becomes an emergency

When someone has already fallen behind on fluids, the fastest fix is an oral rehydration solution, the same salt-and-sugar mix the World Health Organization uses against severe dehydration. The sugar paired with sodium switches on the gut's absorption pumps and pulls water in quickly. Store-bought packets and drinks work well, or a basic version is about half a teaspoon of salt and six teaspoons of sugar stirred into a liter of clean water. If the person shows confusion, slurred speech, or fainting, that can be heat stroke. No drink alone can fix that. According to OSHA, that is a 911 emergency. Move the person into shade, cool them with water or ice, and stay until help arrives.

Why plain water isn't always the best drink in the heat

For workers sweating through a shift outdoors or in a hot plant, the most surprising hydration advice is that plain water is not the drink that keeps the body hydrated longest. A University of St. Andrews study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* tested



13 common beverages and found that milk and an oral rehydration solution held fluid in the body far better than water, producing roughly 25 percent less urine. The reason is sodium and a little sugar, which slow how quickly fluid leaves the stomach.

Water is still important, though. For short jobs, cool water is plenty, and the first rule is to drink before thirst hits. According to OSHA, workers in the heat should sip about one cup every 15 to 20 minutes, up to 32 ounces an hour during hard, sweaty work. The water should be cool, near 50 to 60 degrees, and kept close enough to reach easily.

The longer the work runs, the more electrolytes matter. OSHA advises adding electrolyte drinks for jobs lasting more than two hours, because heavy sweating strips out sodium and potassium. Losing too much can bring on muscle cramps or worse.

Shingles shot may protect the brain

The shingles vaccine, recommended for adults 50 and older, may do more than prevent a painful rash -- it appears to protect the brain.

Taking advantage of a vaccine rollout in Wales that worked like a natural experiment, Stanford researchers found that people who received the shot were about 20 percent less likely to develop dementia over the following seven years. A December 2025 follow-up published in the journal *Cell* went further, suggesting the vaccine may even slow decline in people who already have dementia. Researchers are not yet sure why. One theory is that the vaccine quiets reactivation of the chickenpox virus, which lingers in the nerves for life and may stir up inflammation in the brain. The protective effect has shown up more strongly in women than in men.



Allergies don't retire

Allergies are supposed to be a childhood problem you eventually outgrow. For a lot of people, it works the other way around. While most allergies begin early in life, adults can develop them at any age, even in their 60s and 70s, according to the Cleveland Clinic. Allergies you have lived with for years can also grow worse, not better, with age.

Part of the reason is something researchers call inflamm-aging, the low-grade inflammation that builds in the body over the years, leaving the immune system quicker to overreact. Drier, thinner nasal passages and longer pollen seasons pile on. Ragweed, the main late-summer trigger, begins releasing pollen in August.

One caution matters especially for older adults. The old standby antihistamines like Benadryl (diphenhydramine) can bring on confusion, drowsiness, and falls in seniors, and the American Geriatrics Society lists them among the medications older adults should generally avoid.



Rosemary-Peach Chicken Kebabs with Orange Glaze - Delicious Decisions

Ingredients

Chicken

Cooking spray

1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 16 1 1/2-inch pieces, all visible fat discarded

2 large ripe but firm peaches, cut into 16 1-inch wedges

1 large green bell pepper, cut into 16 1 1/2-inch squares

1/4 tsp. pepper

1/8 tsp. salt

Glaze

3/4 tsp. grated orange zest

3 Tbsp. fresh orange juice

3 Tbsp. chopped, fresh rosemary

1 1/2 tsp. honey

1 1/2 tsp. canola oil

OR

1 1/2 teaspoon corn oil



Recipe borrowed <https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/rosemary-peach-chicken-kebabs-with-orange-glaze---delicious-decisions>

Directions

1. Lightly spray the grill rack with cooking spray. Preheat the grill on medium.
2. Meanwhile, thread the chicken, peaches, and bell pepper alternately onto four 14- to 16-inch metal skewers. Sprinkle the pepper and salt over the kebabs.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the glaze ingredients. Set aside half the glaze (about 2 tablespoons). Brush both sides of the kebabs with the remaining glaze.
4. Grill the kebabs for 6 to 8 minutes, or until the chicken is no longer pink in the center and the vegetables are almost tender, turning once halfway through and brushing with the reserved 2 tablespoons of glaze, using a clean basting brush. Reduce the heat or move the kebabs to a cooler area of the grill if they are cooking too fast.

August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Heart Failure Support Group 5PM ET	12	13 Zoom Meeting Chapter 81 7PM ET	14	15
16	17	18 Empower Transplant Meeting 4PM ET	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

HUMOR CAN BE the BEST MEDICINE

If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?

I told a joke in a zoom meeting and nobody laughed. I guess I'm not remotely funny.

What's the difference between a kleptomaniac and a literalist?

The literalist takes things literally.

The kleptomaniac takes things, literally.

Borrow money from pessimists -- they don't expect it back.

I almost had a psychic girlfriend, But she left me before we met.

If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.

Submit your "funnies" for inclusion in our next **HUMOR CAN BE the BEST MEDICINE!**



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Leesburg, GA 31763
Phone: 1-888-HEART99 Email: info@mendedhearts.org

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Spouse ___ Child ___ Heart Patient ___

Spouse ___ Child ___ Heart Patient ___

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