

Q When should I start taking a prenatal vitamin?

A The most crucial nutrient during pregnancy—really, the main reason to take a prenatal vitamin—is folic acid, which has been shown to help prevent neural-tube defects such as spina bifida. “Start supplementing with this B vitamin one to two months before you conceive,” suggests Mary Jane Minkin, M.D., an ob-gyn at the Yale School of Medicine. If the pregnancy takes you by surprise, begin ASAP. Prenatal multivitamins make some women queasy (especially problematic if you’re already experiencing morning sickness). If that’s you, skip it and just pop 400 micrograms of folic acid a day.



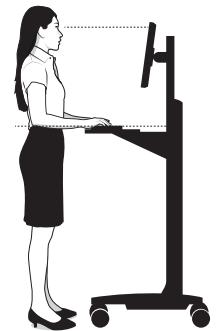
Trainer Tip

Fitness and nutrition expert Harley Pasternak, a member of the FITNESS advisory board, is the author of *The Body Reset Diet*. His celebrity clients include Jessica Simpson, Katy Perry and Megan Fox.

Q What’s the main thing I can do to stay injury-free?

A Chill out! In a recent survey, nearly half of adults with injuries got them while exercising. I’m not surprised—everyone tries to go from couch potato to Ironman in no time. If you’re sedentary one day and lifting heavy weights to the point of exhaustion the next, that’s dangerous. It’s a common scenario in classes: You’re out of shape, but the instructor is yelling and everyone around you is doing crazy moves. So you push too hard, increasing your chances of injury. Do yourself a favor and listen to your body.

Q Can I hack a standing desk?



A We get it: You don’t want to shell out \$200, \$800 or even \$1,700, but you do want to reap the benefits of being on your feet. In one study, workers who stood burned 0.83 calories per minute more than those who sat. Over an eight-hour day, that’s an extra 398 calories! DIY using the guide above. “A three-drawer filing cabinet is about the right height for many people,” says David Rempel, M.D., a professor in the division of occupational medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. Your keyboard should be approximately elbow-height (so when you’re typing, your forearms are parallel to the floor), with the top of your monitor at eye level (stack it on a few books if necessary).

Q What the heck is maple water?

A The buzzy new beverage, which is sap from maple trees that is sipped instead of boiled down into syrup, is being touted as the next coconut water. It contains trace amounts of some good-for-you nutrients, but unlike regular water, maple water has calories and natural sugars (15 calories and 3 grams per 8 ounces). "If you like the taste, this beverage is probably fine in moderate amounts, but there's no research to show that it hydrates you any better than plain old H₂O," says Shilpi Agarwal, M.D., a family- and integrative-medicine physician in Los Angeles. Plus, it's pricey at \$3 a pop.

Q What's the deal with gluten-free beauty products—do I need them?

A Save g-free for your bread, not your bronzer. Even for the 1 percent of Americans who have celiac disease and can't digest gluten (a protein found in wheat, barley and rye), there's no reason to stress about makeup, moisturizer and other pampering products. "Gluten becomes problematic only after digestion," explains Heidi Waldorf, M.D., director of the department of laser and cosmetic dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center. "Even if a topical product is absorbed through the skin, it would be transported via the bloodstream and would not pass through the GI tract."

Fit Face-Off



Doughnut

or

Bagel?



A Do the doughnut. A typical bagel-shop offering packs 300 to 400 calories and is the equivalent of five slices of bread. And that's without cream cheese; many stores slather on four tablespoons, which contain nearly 200 calories and 11 grams of saturated fat. A French cruller will satisfy your sweet tooth for 220 calories. Add a pear and string cheese, and you've got a decent breakfast.

Source: FITNESS advisory board member Lisa Young, Ph.D., R.D., an adjunct professor of nutrition at New York University