



It's Playtime!

Play isn't just for kids. It's good for grown-ups, too. Sports, bike riding, hide-and-seek and a host of other games and activities in childhood were fun and let your imagination soar. You could enjoy time alone, too, with crayons, puzzles or building blocks.

But in adulthood, work and family commitments can make playtime for adults seem impossible and silly. However, research shows grown-up playtime can boost mental and physical health.



Benefits of adult play:

- Play triggers the release of endorphins. These natural, feel-good chemicals boost your mood.
- The social interaction of playing games with family and friends can relieve stress and depression.
- Play stimulates imagination and that can improve problem-solving abilities.
- Playing any type of sports as an adult can benefit physical and mental health.
- Research shows taking time for adult play can promote a sense of humor and a positive outlook on life.
- Play can boost social skills, improving relationships.

Ready to play? Stuart Brown, MD, psychiatrist, researcher and founder of the non-profit National Institute for Play, defines play as a "state of mind that one has when absorbed in an activity that provides enjoyment and a suspension of sense of time."

Be open to exploring different ways to play. Ask neighbors if they'd like to shoot some baskets at a local park, or play an impromptu ball game just for the fun of it. Enjoy painting or playing with clay as a kid? Devote time to making art just for the fun of it; join a local art group. Loved playing make-believe once upon a time? Visit local theatre productions and act out make-believe scenes with your children or grandchildren.

If you're allergic to pollen, you know you can't completely avoid it, but these strategies can reduce exposure and symptoms:

- **Keep** home and car windows closed. Use air conditioning, if available.
- **Stay** inside in the morning when pollen levels are higher.
- **Wear** a face mask outside on high-pollen days; shower and put on clean clothes when you go back inside.
- **Use** a saline nasal wash to help clear pollen from your nose.
- **Still** sneezing? Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist about treatment options.
- **Change** your furnace's air filter as recommended by the manufacturer to avoid buildup of dust, dirt and debris.
- **Wipe** pets with a damp paper towel when they come inside to remove pollen.

If you believe you have pollen allergies but haven't been diagnosed, contact your provider about getting tested. You may be referred to an allergist/immunologist.



Ultra-processed foods can be as addictive as smoking. They are manufactured with preservatives, hydrogenated fats, starches, sugars, and other additives to give them a long shelf life and extra

flavor. According to research from an international team of scientists, eating these foods regularly can cause brain changes associated with addiction, which can explain why many people keep eating

these foods despite health problems, including obesity. The findings are another reason to focus on diets rich in fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and minimally processed foods.

STUDY: Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer

Non-melanoma skin cancers cause more global deaths than melanoma. Researchers found that 1.2 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer occurred worldwide each year compared with 300,000 cases of melanoma. Of the two cancer categories, non-melanoma skin cancers, such as basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma, are easier to treat and less likely to metastasize. But since non-melanoma skin cancers occur more often — comprising 78% of skin cancer cases — they result in more deaths than melanoma. Nearly 64,000 deaths from non-melanoma skin cancer occur globally each year compared to 57,000 deaths from melanoma.

The researchers encouraged skin cancer screening performed by health care providers. They also recommended educating the public about reducing sun exposure. Increased public awareness is especially important for high-risk populations, such as those who work outdoors or are fair-skinned, elderly or immunosuppressed. Screening populations with lower rates of skin cancer was encouraged, too.



Things can happen on the road. Passports get stolen or lost. Unforeseen events or circumstances derail travel plans. Medical problems surface at the most inconvenient times. Travel Assistance can help you navigate these issues and more at any time of the day or night.¹

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- Help replacing prescription medication or lost corrective lenses and advancing funds for hospital admission
- Emergency evacuation to the nearest adequate medical facility and medically necessary repatriation to the employee's home, including repatriation of remains³
- Connection to medical care providers, interpreter services, local attorneys and assistance in coordinating a bail bond
- Return travel companion if travel is disrupted due to emergency transportation services or care of minor children if left unattended due to prolonged hospitalization
- Assistance with the return of your personal vehicle if your emergency transportation services leave it stranded
- Evacuation arrangements in the event of a natural disaster, political unrest and social instability

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