

# WELLNESS MINUTE

February 2020



VAPING:  
WHAT WE KNOW  
AND DON'T KNOW

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YOGA FOR A  
HEALTHY HEART

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GARLIC ROASTED  
SALMON &  
BRUSSELS SPROUTS

# VAPING: WHAT WE KNOW AND DON'T KNOW

With all the recent attention on vaping and its growing popularity, you may be wondering just how safe or risky it is. While there is still a lot that we don't know, there are a few facts that have become clear. Before diving into that, let's discuss exactly what vaping is and how it's done.

E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that heat a liquid solution, also called juice, so that it produces an aerosol that is inhaled. Most of the solutions include nicotine, a flavoring, and other chemicals. They are also used for marijuana. While many of the flavorings and other chemicals have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for oral use, they haven't been approved for inhalation. So, the health consequences of inhaling them are still not fully known.

## THE BENEFITS

- Vaping helps some people stop smoking by gradually reducing the amount of nicotine in the solution. The position of the Centers for Disease Control is that "E-cigarettes have the potential to benefit adult smokers who are not pregnant if used as a complete substitute for regular cigarettes and other smoked tobacco products."
- Regular cigarettes contain about 7,000 chemicals, many of which are toxic. E-cigarettes expose people to fewer chemicals, but it's still too early to know the full effects and many people have suffered serious health effects.





## THE RISKS

- As of December 2019, there were 54 confirmed deaths from vaping due to lung injury and about 200 or more cases of severe lung disease.
- Teens who vape are more likely to also start smoking cigarettes. Vaping has grown in popularity among teens with about 3.6 million using e-cigarettes in 2018.
- Vaping during pregnancy could harm the developing baby.
- Nicotine is highly addictive and toxic, raising blood pressure and increasing the risk of heart attack.
- Some chemicals in e-cigarettes have been linked to cancer risk.
- Explosions and burns have occurred while recharging the devices.

### The bottom line:

Although vaping may be considered “the lesser of two evils” for current cigarette smokers, there is still a lot that we don’t know. It took many years to confirm the harms caused by cigarette smoking so it may be similar with vaping. Experts recommend that people avoid it until more is known. For those who are already vaping, it’s best to stick to brand name e-cigarette products and avoid buying devices or solutions “off the street” or those that have been modified since many of the lung injuries and deaths may be associated with these products.

Reference:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-vaping-damage-your-lungs-what-we-do-and-dont-know-2019090417734>



# Yoga for a Healthy Heart

When it comes to exercising for heart health, most people think of cardio or even strength training. Did you know that yoga can promote heart health too?

Studies are starting to recognize that yoga can benefit cardiovascular health in several ways.

**Stress reducer.** Stress causes the fight or flight response in the body and over time, chronic stress can increase the risk of many diseases, including heart disease. Yoga relaxes the body and mind through deep breathing and mental focus.

**Heart booster.** Practicing yoga can lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose levels. One study showed that people with heart disease who went through an 8-week yoga program had lower markers for inflammation, which is an underlying cause of heart disease.

**Physical activity.** Yoga can also improve flexibility, muscle strength, and balance. However, since yoga does not significantly raise your heart rate, aerobic exercise should also be part of your routine.



Reference:  
[hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-yoga-heart-connection](https://hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-yoga-heart-connection)



# Garlic Roasted Salmon & Brussels Sprouts

Serves 6

This heart-healthy one pan meal is as easy as it is delicious!

## Ingredients:

- 14 cloves of garlic, divided
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh oregano, divided
- 1 tsp salt, divided
- ¾ tsp freshly ground pepper, divided
- 6 cups Brussels sprouts, trimmed and sliced
- ¾ cup white wine, preferably Chardonnay
- 2 pounds wild-caught salmon fillet, skinned, cut into 6 portions
- Lemon wedges

## Directions

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.

Mince 2 garlic cloves and combine in a small bowl with oil, 1 tbsp oregano, ½ tsp salt, and ¼ tsp pepper. Halve the remaining garlic and toss with Brussels sprouts and 3 tbsp of the seasoned oil in the roasting pan. Roast, stirring once, for 15 minutes.

Add wine to the remaining oil mixture. Remove the pan from the oven, stir the vegetables and place salmon on top. Drizzle with the wine mixture and sprinkle with the remaining 1 tbsp oregano and ½ tsp each salt and pepper.

Bake until the salmon is just cooked through, 5 to 10 minutes more. Serve with lemon wedges.

Reference:

<http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/252493/garlic-roasted-salmon-brussels-sprouts/>

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# HEART HEALTH TIPS

February is Heart Health Month, but taking steps to keep your heart healthy is something you can do every day of the year with these five habits.

**Eat healthy fats and avoid trans fats.** Trans fats in the form of partially hydrogenated oils clog arteries and raise LDL ("bad") cholesterol levels. These are in packaged baked goods, margarines, and fried fast food. Instead choose healthy fats that raise your HDL ("good") cholesterol like olives, olive oil, wild salmon or other fatty fish, avocados, nuts, and seeds.

**Floss and brush daily.** If you're wondering what oral hygiene has to do with heart health, it's that bacteria from gum disease can move into the bloodstream and lead to inflammation in the blood vessels that may increase risk of heart disease and stroke.

**Get enough sleep.** Lack of sleep can also lead to inflammation and increase blood pressure. One study found that people who slept less than six hours per night were twice as likely to have a stroke or heart attack.

**Move more.** Spending too much time sitting is bad for overall health and fitness, including your heart. Even if you exercise for 30-60 minutes a day, prolonged sitting still can increase the risk of disease so park farther away, take walking breaks, and find other ways to move more.

**Stop smoking and/or avoid secondhand smoke.** Smoking contributes to heart disease not only for the smoker, but also anyone else exposed to the smoke. Chemicals in cigarette smoke promote plaque development in the arteries.

