

CONTACT: SARAH GRIESEMER :: 732-643-4204 ::
SGRIESEMER@NJPRESSMEDIA.COM :: APP.COM/HEALTH

healthy living



Rob Cavanaugh of West Long Branch, who created Cool Runners Fitness Camp for kids, works with Grace Matier, 13, and her sister, Madeline, 9, also of West Long Branch, at the borough's Franklin Lake. The girls train for an hour each week. BOB BIELK/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

People's Pharmacy

By Joe Graedon & Teresa Graedon

Can Lipitor use lead to ALS?

Q. My wife took Lipitor to lower her cholesterol. When her legs began to hurt, she quit taking it.

She was diagnosed with ALS and passed away less than a year later. I lost the most precious person in my life after 31 years of marriage.

I am convinced that the drug she took led to her ALS. I lost my job and our home because I was taking care of her full time before she died. I am concerned that others may not realize some of these statin drugs can be deadly.

A. We are so sorry for your loss. The possible connection between statin cholesterol-lowering drugs and ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) is extremely controversial (Drug Safety, August 2009). Although the Food and Drug Administration received reports of statin-associated ALS in its Adverse Event Reporting System, the agency determined that clinical trials of statin drugs did not show an excess of ALS cases (Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety, November 2008).

Nonetheless, physicians are becoming more cautious about prescribing these medications. Dr. Steven Nissen, chairman of cardiovascular medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, told us these drugs should be reserved for patients with heart disease or those at high risk because of diabetes, hypertension or other conditions.

Q. I control my symptoms of enlarged prostate with medication. The trouble with prostate problems is that you can't take decongestants with a cold, because they can make it hard to urinate.

I usually rely on a vaporizer when I catch a cold, but with the last one I had horrible chest congestion. In desperation, I took Mucinex DM for the congestion, and then realized that I might be in for difficulties urinating.

To my great surprise, I was able to urinate normally. In addition, I found that it opened my nasal passages. I'm so glad to have found something I can use for a cold.

A. Decongestants can indeed cause urinary difficulty for men with enlarged prostates. Mucinex DM contains the expectorant guaifenesin and the cough suppressant dextromethorphan. These compounds are unlikely to cause prostate problems.

Contact the Graedons via their website, www.PeoplesPharmacy.com.

LIFE LESSONS

Running camp helps kids develop discipline, respect and self-esteem

By Susan Bloom :: For NJ Press Media

Birds were singing and trees were blooming all around them, but West Long Branch sisters Grace Matier, 13, and Madeline, 9, were totally focused on the road ahead.

While other kids their age might have been spending their after-school hours watching TV, playing on the computer or chatting with friends, these girls were on a mission as they ran around West Long Branch's Franklin Lake.

"We want to improve our skills and learn how to breathe properly and pace ourselves," Grace explained.

With the help of RTC Training, these motivated seventh- and third-graders are one step closer to their goals.

The brainchild of West Long Branch resident Rob Cavanaugh, 34, RTC Training was launched earlier this year to fill a void. Though an estimated 25 million to 35 million Americans reportedly run on a regular basis, "it seemed like there were an abundance of kids' camps for every sport but running," said Cavanaugh, a health care network public affairs manager.

"I wanted to be able to share my love of running with kids who are interested in the sport and help teach them what I know," he said.

An accomplished half-marathoner who plans to run this fall's New York Marathon, Cavanaugh broke track records as a student at both Red Bank Catholic High School and Monmouth University and has won a variety of 3- to 5-mile races throughout the Shore area.

"I love running for the freedom it offers, the discipline it requires and the sense of reward and achievement it inspires," he said. "But like so many individual sports that rely on self-motivation and hard work to achieve success, running also teaches respect, commitment, confidence and self-esteem, all of which are



Madeline and Grace stretch their hamstrings during a warm-up routine. BOB BIELK/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

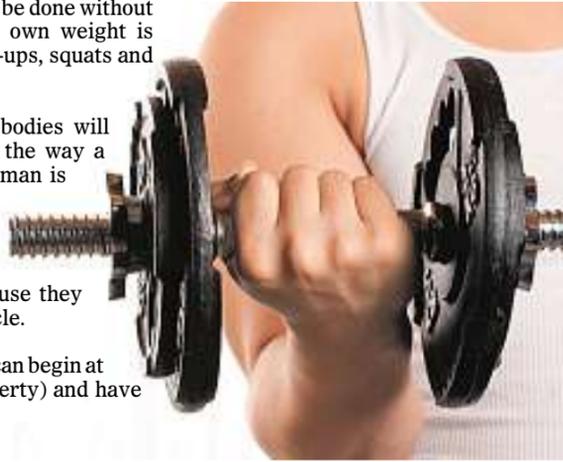
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GET IN SHAPE

How does strength training help you lose weight?

- Strength training creates muscle.
- The more muscle you create by strength training, the more calories you burn daily — even at rest.
- Strength training strengthens the muscles around joints like the knees and hips, which are stressed by carrying additional weight.
- Strength training equals bone density. Strong bones equal a strong body.
- Strength training creates muscle fitness, which is the second most important factor in maintaining a healthy weight. Diet is No. 1.
- Muscle helps keep our bodies firm as we age, fighting gravity.

- Strength training can be done without weights. Your body's own weight is sufficient — sit-ups, push-ups, squats and lunges.
- Very few women's bodies will build bulky muscles the way a man's will (unless the woman is using steroids).
- Men typically lose weight more easily than women simply because they naturally have more muscle.
- Strength training can begin at any age (after puberty) and have beneficial effects.



Joy Solliday is the owner/director of FOODFIT Ultimate Weight Management in Ocean Township. Call 855-693-6633 or visit www.myfoodfit.com.

CPR AWARENESS

Survivors unite

Men and women who have survived an incident of cardiac arrest are invited to the third annual CPR/AED Awareness Day, taking place June 3 at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson.

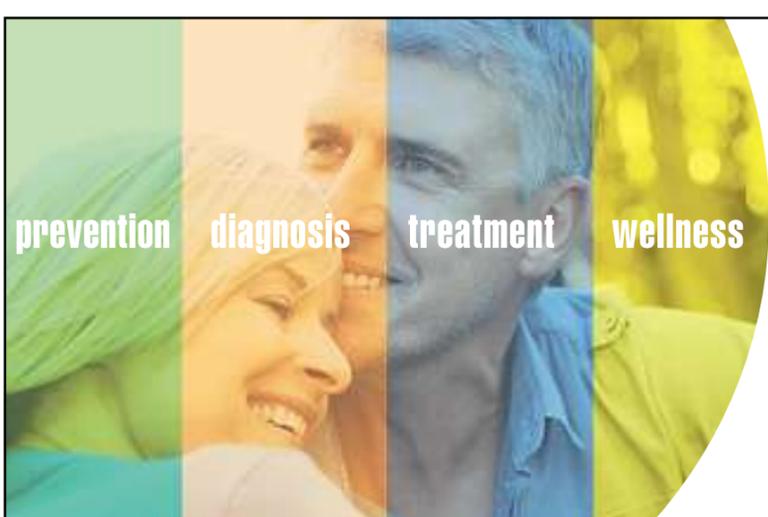
According to event sponsor LifeForce, a Howell-based health and safety training company, the event "is meant to show that anyone can save a life."

The day will consist of an awards ceremony at 12:30 p.m., followed by a buffet lunch at 1 p.m., as well as a raffle of sports memorabilia, game tickets, and gifts certificates to restaurants, stores and spas.

The event's \$45 admission also includes entrance to the amusement park and safari. For season-pass holders, the cost is \$16.50.

All proceeds will go toward the purchase of AEDs — automated external defibrillators — for places that cannot afford one.

To nominate a survivor for a Hero Award, contact Mathew T. Giachetti, event chairman, at 732-919-6070 or mat@lifeforceusainc.com.



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