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**In This Issue:** • Pack a Healthier School Lunch • Ex-smokers: Help for Staying Quit • Colon Cancer: Signs, Symptoms, and Screening

# HealthyLiving

## Penn State Basketball Coach Is Taking a Shot at Cancer

As head coach of the Penn State University Nittany Lions men's basketball team, Ed DeChellis is skilled at taking action when he sees an opportunity for his team to score. As chair of the university's Coaches vs. Cancer® program, he employs a similar tactic in the fight against cancer.

Coaches vs. Cancer unites basketball coaches, their teams, and communities around the country in the common cause to end cancer. Since the program's inception, participants have raised millions through year-round educational efforts and fundraising events.

DeChellis is a firm believer that increasing access to quality health care could save lives from cancer, and he saw an opportunity to speak out on the issue on Capitol Hill with other National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) coaches and hundreds of volunteers for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network<sup>SM</sup> (ACS CAN), the American Cancer Society's advocacy affiliate. DeChellis talked with state senators and members of Congress about the need to help families survive not only the physical battle with cancer, but the financial battle as well.

It's a topic close to his heart. His father died of cancer when DeChellis was in his early 20s, and he says he learned firsthand about the pain and anguish – mental, physical, and financial – that cancer can cause. DeChellis himself faced cancer in 2004, when doctors discovered a tumor in his bladder. He lost his mother to cancer on Christmas day in 2007.

"Whatever we can do to try to help fight this dreaded disease, I'm all for," he says.

DeChellis' all-volunteer Coaches vs. Cancer team works year-round to put on an impressive roster of events to raise funds to fight cancer. He credits teamwork and community support with the success of Penn State's program, which has raised more than \$1.3 million to help the American Cancer Society save lives and create a world with less cancer and more birthdays.

He's hoping to score even bigger wins in the fight against cancer with efforts like his recent visit to Washington, D.C. "We just need to do the right thing so that people who have cancer can get treatment and care," he says.

To find out how you can get involved in the Coaches vs. Cancer program, call 1-800-227-2345 or visit [coachesvscancer.org](http://coachesvscancer.org).

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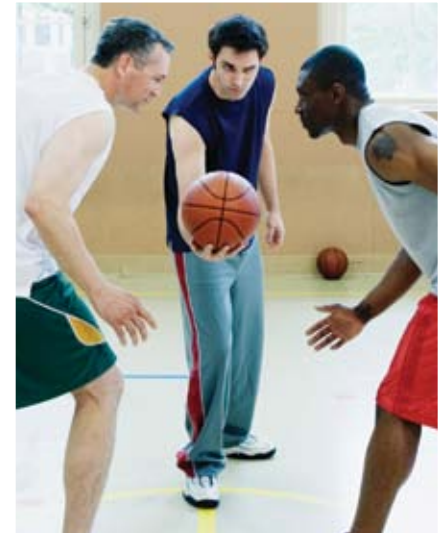
## Shooting to Get Fit? Try Basketball.

If your closest brush with basketball is picking brackets for March Madness, it may be time to get a little more hands-on with this calorie-burning game.

Whether you choose to play with a team on a court or with the family on the driveway, basketball requires little equipment beyond a basketball and a hoop. A 160-pound person can burn about 600 calories during a one-hour game, but the key is to stay active the entire time. Even if you're not personally dribbling the ball toward the hoop, try to keep moving and stay near the ball – either to accept a pass or

help block the opposing team from stealing the ball, or to steal it for your own team.

While basketball offers an action-packed workout, it is also one of the most injury-prone sports – primarily because it involves quick spurts of intense activity such as sprinting and jumping, which could lead to torn or sprained ligaments. It's important to warm up and stretch before and after games, and to play on an even, solid surface. As always, before starting any new exercise routine, it's a good idea to visit your doctor to talk about whether it's the right workout for you.



[CLICK HERE](#) for more fitness tips.

## Fight Cancer with Flowers!



We all know flowers can help brighten someone's day, but did you know that flowers can help save lives as well?

Each spring, the American Cancer Society runs its Daffodil Days® program. As the first flower of spring, the daffodil is the Society's symbol of hope for a world with less cancer and more birthdays. By sending bunches of fresh-cut daffodils, you can share a message of hope and raise funds to help

the Society continue to save lives from cancer.

Make someone's day with a Gift of Hope, a bouquet of fresh-cut daffodils in a vase delivered anonymously to a person in the community facing cancer. In certain areas, the Society is also offering Birthdays R. Hope – a Boyds™ Bear designed exclusively for the American Cancer Society Daffodil Days Bear and a Bunch™ (a special package that includes

the commemorative bear and a bouquet of daffodils).

Not all Daffodil Days programs are available in all areas, but to find out how you can take part, contact your American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 or visit [cancer.org/daffodils](http://cancer.org/daffodils).



[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about Daffodil Days.

## Colon Cancer: Signs, Symptoms, and Screening

The signs and symptoms of colon cancer typically only appear in more advanced disease. That's why screening is so important.

Regular screening is the best way to find colon cancer early. Some screening tests may even be able to prevent colorectal cancer entirely, by finding certain types of growths in the colon that could become cancerous.

The American Cancer Society recommends regular colorectal cancer screening for all men and women starting at age 50. People with a family history of the disease are encouraged to talk with their health professional about beginning screening at a younger age. Ask your doctor which tests are available where you live and which option is best for you.

If you notice a change in bowel habits, dark stools, rectal bleeding, cramping/abdominal pain, or persistent weakness and fatigue, see your doctor right away. Although most of these symptoms are likely to be caused by conditions other than colorectal cancer, you should get checked out. Don't wait – you have a much better chance of fighting colon cancer and staying well if it's found early.



[CLICK HERE](#) for more information about colon cancer signs, symptoms, and screening options.

## Think Inside the Box for Healthier Lunches

With a bit of planning, you can make sure your kids get midday meals that are healthy and delicious. Try these handy tips to be sure your child's lunch box makes the grade:

**Build a better sandwich:** Start with whole-grain breads. If your kids don't like these fiber-rich choices, look for white-wheat options and eventually work up to whole grains. Between the slices, opt for lean protein and low-fat cheeses. Add fresh lettuce and tomato, or be creative by adding sprouts or avocado.

**Smarter sides:** Pre-packaged apple slices or veggies with pre-portioned dips

make convenient and healthy sides. Or boost dairy intake with a kid-friendly yogurt or low-fat pudding. If chips are a must, try a baked version or pita chips for a healthier twist.

**Drink up:** Fruit juices are often loaded with sugar, which can contribute to cavities, weight gain, and other issues. Pack a water bottle instead, or send along some change for a carton of low-fat milk.

**Set the example:** Pack your own nutritional meal along with your kids', and be a great role model for staying well.



## Ex-smokers: Help for Staying Quit

Many smokers will attest: Quitting smoking is easy; staying quit is hard. The unexpected strong desire to smoke can happen sometimes months or even years after you've quit.

If you're having trouble staying quit, these tips can help you deal with cravings and triggers.

- Take stock of the times when you are tempted to smoke, and plan an alternative activity. For example, if you crave a cigarette after dinner, talk a walk instead.
- When you're tempted to light up, review your reasons for quitting and think of all the benefits to your health, your finances, and your family.
- Ride out the desire to smoke. It will go away, but do not fool yourself into thinking you can have just one.
- Avoid alcohol. Drinking lowers your willpower.
- If you are worried about gaining weight, put some energy into eating a healthy diet and staying active with exercise.

What if you do smoke? Try not to get too discouraged. It takes most people many attempts before quitting for good. What's important is figuring out what helped you when you tried to quit and what worked against you. You can then use this information to make a stronger attempt at quitting the next time.

And remember, it's never too late to stop smoking. The American Cancer Society is here to help. Call us anytime at 1-800-227-2345.

## Nuts for Nuts!

Nuts and seeds, long banished to the back of kitchen cupboards, deserve a little more respect. Packed with protein, vitamin E, and heart-healthy monounsaturated fat (aka the “healthy” fat), they make excellent salad toppers, additions to rice and other side dishes (see recipe in this issue), and are good all by themselves as a filling snack.

Toss walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pumpkin seeds, or sunflower seeds in a

salad to add some crunch and nutritional punch. Incorporate flaxseed or other nuts into baked goods. Try roasting or toasting nuts and seeds in the oven first – it brings out their flavor.

While nuts and seeds are good for you, keep in mind they're high in fat and calories, so keep portion sizes small.



## Wheat Berry Salad with Almonds and Dried Cherries

- 1 cup dried wheat berries, rinsed
- 3 cups water
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- ½ cucumber, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- ⅓ cup dried cherries
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 ½ tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian parsley
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- ⅓ cup sliced almonds, toasted



[CLICK HERE](#) to order *The American Cancer Society's Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*.

Nutty, wholesome wheat berries – the whole-wheat kernel, minus the inedible outer hull – taste delicious year-round, but seem especially hardy on winter days.

While wheat berries, sold in bulk in health food stores, might not be that familiar, once you try them you may find them surprisingly addictive. This salad, with nuts, cucumber, and dried cherries, is just one combination. You can substitute apples or oranges for the cherries and celery or fennel for the cucumbers.

Before cooking, rinse the wheat berries under cold water. Cooking time can vary depending on the variety, so begin checking for doneness after 1 hour. They should still have some chew to them after cooking.

In a medium saucepan, combine wheat berries and water and bring to a boil, stirring to combine. Reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 1 to 1-1/2 hours, or until wheat berries are tender and all or most of the liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat, drain if necessary, and cool to room temperature.

Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine scallions, cucumber, cherries, vinegar, oil, parsley, salt, and pepper. Stir in cooled wheat berries and almonds.

*Serves 6. Approximate per serving: 200 calories; 8.0 grams of fat.*

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All content for *HealthyLiving* is provided by the American Cancer Society.

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