

Men's Health

The magazine men live by™



FITNESS

I hear the phrase all the time: What is mobility training?

Eremett, Galveston, TX
It's maintenance for your chassis, as necessary as an oil change and lube. Mobility training—stretches like deep lunges and warmups like body-weight squats—helps you move across a full range of motion. Results: fluid joints, flexibility, and nervous system control, says Kirk Warner, running and strength coach for The Run Experience. That helps prevent injury and boost performance. "Pain is like a check-engine light," he says. "The car may work, but not for long."

A classic hip opener for desk jockeys is the couch stretch. Face away from a couch; put one knee on the floor with the top of your foot on the couch, and your other foot flat on the floor. Push your hips forward, squeeze your glutes, and keep your torso upright and chest up. Hold, change legs. Voilà! You're more mobile, and your squat will be better than ever.

ME TWITTER POLL

Do you know what mobility training is?



20% Sure: I read Men's Health

Do you include mobility training in your workouts?



Men's Health Twitter poll of 1,145 people

FOOD



I LOVE SRIRACHA. MY PAL SAYS "TOO HOT." WHY?

Jay, York, PA

Similar tongues, different backgrounds. Capsaicin, the chemical that brings the heat, triggers pain receptors on the tongue and in the body, says Penn State food scientist John Hayes, Ph.D. These sensors activate at about 107.6°F (your body temp is 98.6° or so). It's a warning signal to your brain: "Let's cool down and release some sweat." Heat lovers are often sensation seekers. But your buddy can train. In one study, Hayes found that after twice-daily exposure to capsaicin for two weeks, people reported less burn. Keep milk handy; it cuts the burn in half immediately, and to one-seventh of its original intensity in two minutes, his lab found.

AM I DYING?

Whenever I get out of a hot tub, my heart races.

Bill, Lyons, CO
Most likely you're not in trouble. (We'll assume it's not a cute tubmate making your heart pound.) That experience is typical of a normal physiological reaction to heat, which causes blood vessels to dilate, says Adam Splaver, MD, a Florida cardiologist. Wider blood vessels means your blood pressure drops, "and your heart rate picks up to compensate." That



could explain your racing-heart feeling. But be careful if you have an arrhythmia (use low-heat tubs), peripheral vascular disease (a narrowing of the arteries), chronically low blood pressure, or a hormonal imbalance (involving adrenaline or your thyroid, for example). And if you're hitting the tub after a workout or a day of skiing,

you're probably dehydrated, and the heat is making it worse. Lower the water temp and sip water as you soak. When you're ready to exit the tub, stand up slowly so you don't faint. If you're still worried, see a cardiologist.

FACT-CHECK MOM

Sick? I have some soup.

She's right! But you knew that. Soup is a simple way to pack nutrients into one bowl, says Caroline Cederquist, M.D., author of *The MD Factor Diet*. Sodium in the broth keeps you hydrated, while noodles can lift low blood sugar and your energy. Choose broth-based varieties with 350 mg sodium or less per serving.



GROOMING

Does drinking coffee or soda through a straw help prevent teeth staining?

Rick, Lubbock, TX
It actually can—but straw positioning is everything. Like Bill Burr, teeth stainers are acidic and dark: Think coffee, soda, berry smoothies. The idea is to limit the amount of time your teeth are exposed to them. And positioning the straw toward the back of your mouth helps with that, says Beverly Hills dentist Neil Hadaegh, D.D.S. Still, if you swish your drink around before swallowing, you defeat the purpose. Plus, drinking through a straw makes you look like you're 10. The best way to reduce tooth staining is with a water chaser—and 99 of 100 dentists agree. (There's always one contrarian!) "Water dilutes acids and sugars and washes them away before they have a chance to stain," says Benjamin Lawlor, D.D.S., of Maine Cosmetic Dentistry. Bigger question: Why are you drinking soda?