

Viva Health

ISSUE NO3

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SEPTEMBER 2020

Time with
Mary Got Fit

FITZONE
FITNESS · SPORTS · LEISURE

TACKLING
UNDERLYING
RISK FACTORS
FOR COVID-19

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EVERYTHING YOU
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DO I
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“EACH NEW DAY
IS A NEW
OPORTUNITY
TO IMPROVE
YOURSELF.
TAKE IT
AND MAKE THE
MOST OF IT”

THE
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VIVA HEALTH MAGAZINE TACKLES UNDERLYING RISK FACTORS FOR COVID-19 IN LATEST EDITION

VivaHealth Magazine, a health and lifestyle publication has announced the launch of its third edition in Accra. The latest edition delves deeper into the underlying illness and conditions that have emerged as high-risk factors for COVID-19 infections and related deaths in the country.

The editor-in-chief of the magazine, Dr Carl Nutsugah at the unveiling of the third edition said recent findings show that underlying diseases are more likely to accelerate the rate of death among infected COVID-19 patients. He said although the magazine features vital information on community health, pregnancy, childbirth education and assistance and infectious diseases, the priority of the current edition is to ensure a reduction in the risk of patients with certain lifestyle diseases and conditions. He noted that not enough attention has been paid to the man underlying conditions that could easily lead to the death of infected patients, adding that understanding the dynamics surrounding the virus is critical to curbing its spread and therefore strongly urged stakeholders of Ghana's healthcare system to not only recognize the causes and symptoms but to create more awareness of risk factors associated with COVID-19 infections. Additionally, Dr Nutsugah said while looking at root causes that trigger the severity of the disease, he suggested that hospitals should invest in health databases which will help in monitoring and identification of persons with underlying risk factors as well as make grounded decisions in addressing these challenges.



He said the country does not currently have a reliable data that could be used to track down such patients to administer preventative measures. He said although Ghana's death rate is minimal compared to the global scale, the magazine intends to raise as much awareness for the underlying diseases as the virus itself. "To educate people on diseases and conditions that are likely to push the numbers forward is an essential part of both inpatient and outpatient care and we have embarked on an extensive campaign to raise awareness about how patients can safeguard themselves during this pandemic," He stated.

Dr Nutsugah emphasized that as an Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) resident surgeon, preparing patients to accommodate and adjust their lifestyle is one of the best ways to serve the Ghanaian society. "It is important for health professionals to reach out to patients with these diseases with relevant and practical solutions on how to keep COVID-19 at bay," he said. According to him, the generic advice on prevention does little to curb the virus and that it is important to use innovative approaches to identify people at great risk and thoroughly look for links that could lead to fatal cases. "We aspire to be able to positively affect the lives of the population by bringing them content that matches their medical needs," he noted. VivaHealth magazine is available for free at hospitals, clinics, hotels, gyms and supermarkets across the country.

3 WAYS YOUR MIND SABOTAGES YOUR FITNESS GOALS

It's quite paradoxical to think that complying to a physical regimen is a mental endeavor. Allow me to bring a few of these to your attention. These are mental blocks that I've come to realize dissuade most fitness enthusiasts from sticking to a routine. Any form of physical training is every bit as mental as it is physical. The body won't go where the mind doesn't want to. As a matter of fact, I would submit to you that it is indeed much more mental when you consider the fact that most people rationalize skipping workouts for a myriad of reasons that their minds come up with in an attempt to circumvent a temporary discomfort i.e. working out.

1) Instant gratification

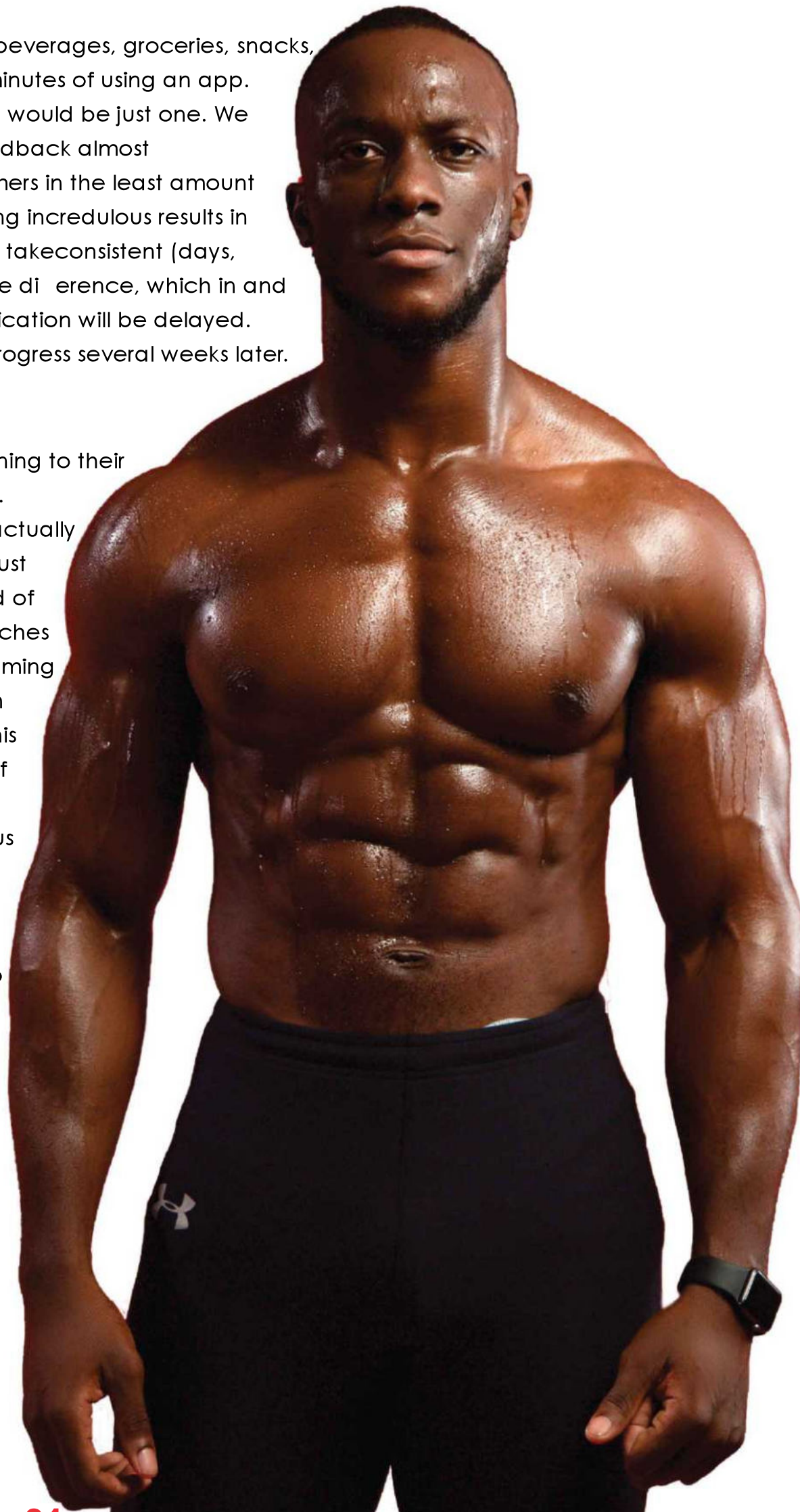
Realize that consistent, efficient and intelligent smart work is the difference between those who frequent the gym but make little to no progress to show for their efforts and those who morph into a more energetic, functional and overall optimized being in a reasonable time frame. In this social media age, people want results and they want it NOW! For example, the city I currently

(Dalian, China) live in affords me the luxury of having food, beverages, groceries, snacks, entertainment, water etc. delivered to my doorstep within minutes of using an app. I could decide not to leave my apartment for a month and I would be just one. We can take photos, share them with the world and receive feedback almost instantaneously. Services are built around catering to customers in the least amount of time practicable. Hell! You'd even find fitness ads promising incredulous results in 30 days. But I digress, I say all this to help you grasp that it will take consistent (days, weeks, several months to years') work to notice a remarkable difference, which in and of itself builds discipline and character. In other words, gratification will be delayed. Labor consistently and relish in continuous developmental progress several weeks later.

2) Analysis paralysis

Many people think that when faced with a situation threatening to their lives, the natural reaction is either a "fight or flight" response.

I disagree. It's been my observation that imminent threat is actually succeeded by paralysis. In extreme situations, most people just freeze up and do nothing than take action (fight/flight). Kind of like a 'deer in a headlight' situation. There are many approaches to fitness irrespective of your goals and this can be overwhelming to the novice. It is quite a daunting task to walk into the gym clueless about what to do or where to start. I experienced this firsthand. I'd start off with a workout program and find myself reading about a different approach that I would contemporaneously start implementing as I ditch my previous program. All programs work! But for how long? For the unadapted novice, a poorly designed program would still evoke substantial results. It is therefore of utmost importance that you see a program (hopefully well designed) through to the end while making adjustments along the way to better suit your goals. A clear plan made in advance, is the easiest way to remove barriers to focusing. Trust the process. Don't allow inertia to kick in. You must stay fluid and persistent.



3) Learning curve

A pragmatic view of life would reveal that not all things are created equal. Some people are simply more athletic, better looking, intelligent, faster, stronger, cunning, logical, rational, tougher etc. than others. Genetics do play a major role to this effect. However, there is a great equalizer which is Practice. 'Talent' is what people use to describe someone who has perhaps by design or circumstance, had more hours of practice than the average person. A popular example I refer to is Mozart. Incomparable in his own right as a classical music composer, Mozart began playing the piano as young as age 5 and let's not forget that his dad was also a renowned classical musical artist himself. These environmental circumstances exponentially propelled who we later came to know as a musical genius. It would be disingenuous on our part not to allude to the fact that there was perhaps a more musically intelligent child out there in the hinterlands who could outperform him, but didn't have the same situations Mozart did.

The whole nature vs nurture debate has been done into the ground so I'm not even going to get into that. While genetic predispositions may give person 'A' a slight advantage over person 'B', person 'B' can achieve a similar level of competence by simply putting in more judicious hours of practice. It is what it is not what it could be. Life isn't fair but it sure is balanced. Work on your weakness and optimize your strengths. You can achieve 80% competency in any given activity within a year's time. That's what I believe. That being said, realize that it will be challenging sometimes and plateaus are almost inevitable but that shouldn't be the reason you give up. Understand that you may not exactly know what you're doing as you're doing it but it is part of the learning process. I have been lifting for quite some time now but it wasn't until recently that I determined the most efficient way to squat leveraging my anthropometry. One size does NOT at all, especially in this regard. I learnt by simply doing and adjusting; Practice!

A famous bodybuilder, Jay Cutler, once said 'it takes up to a 1000 reps to efficiently know how to correctly perform a given exercise.' I saw the wisdom in that statement when I trained the squat with a friend of mine. Initially being able to only squat 135lbs for 5 reps, he was eventually able to squat 225lbs in less than 4 weeks. Not because he got stronger even though he did indeed get stronger, but I had an epiphany that most of that progress was due to the fact that he had become more efficient in the way he squatted. His form improved drastically and most of that increased 'strength' was just because he was being more efficient and became adept at executing the movement. The videos I took of him squatting for the first time and later at week 4, corroborate my hypothesis and the validity of Jay Cutler's quote.

Your mind is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it wants to serve you for the greater good. On the other hand, it could be the root of your crippling fear, anxiety, action or lack thereof. But luckily for us humans, we possess the consciousness to recognize the latter and resultant disparities.

First name: Zack

Instagram: @zacksfever

10 DIETS & EXERCISE TIPS FOR PROSTATE HEALTH

"What can I eat to reduce my risk of developing prostate cancer?" This is one of the most common questions physicians hear from men concerned about prostate health. Undoubtedly, many hope that their doctor will rattle off a list of foods guaranteed to shield them from disease. Although some foods have been linked with reduced risk of prostate cancer, proof that they really work is lacking, at least for now.

Aim for a healthy eating pattern Instead of focusing on specific foods, dietitians, physicians, and researchers tout an overall pattern of healthy eating — and healthy eating is easier than you might think. In a nutshell, here's what experts recommend:

1. Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Go for those with deep, bright color.
2. Choose whole-grain bread instead of white bread and choose whole-grain pasta and cereals.
3. Limit your consumption of red meat, including beef, pork, lamb, and goat, and processed meats, such as bologna and hot dogs. Fish, skinless poultry, beans, and eggs are healthier sources of protein.
4. Choose healthful fats, such as olive oil, nuts (almonds, walnuts, pecans), and avocados. Limit saturated fats from dairy and other animal products. Avoid partially hydrogenated fats (trans fats), which are in many fast foods and packaged foods.
5. Avoid sugar-sweetened drinks, such as sodas and many fruit juices. Eat sweets as an occasional treat.
6. Cut down on salt. Choose foods low in sodium by reading and comparing food labels. Limit the use of canned, processed, and frozen foods.
7. Watch portion sizes. Eat slowly and stop eating when you are full.

Stay active to support prostate health In addition to eating a healthy diet, you should stay active. Regular exercise pares down your risk of developing some deadly problems, including heart disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer. And although relatively few studies have directly assessed the impact of exercise on prostate health, those that have been done have concluded, for the most part, that exercise is beneficial. For example:

1. Based on questionnaires completed by more than 30,000 men in the Health Professionals Follow-up Study, researchers found an inverse relationship between physical activity and BPH symptoms. Simply put, men who were more physically active were less likely to suffer from BPH. Even low- to moderate-intensity physical activity, such as walking regularly at a moderate pace, yielded benefits.

2. Using data from the Health Professionals Follow-up Study, researchers also examined the relationship between erectile dysfunction (ED) and exercise. They found that men who ran for an hour and a half or did three hours of rigorous outdoor work per week were 20% less likely to develop ED than those who didn't exercise at all. More physical activity conferred a greater benefit. Interestingly, regardless of the level of exercise, men who were overweight or obese had a greater risk of ED than men with an ideal body mass index, or BMI.

3. Italian researchers randomly assigned 231 sedentary men with chronic prostatitis to one of two exercise programs for 18 weeks: aerobic exercise, which included brisk walking, or nonaerobic exercise, which included leg lifts, sit-ups, and stretching. Each group exercised three times a week. At the end of the trial, men in both groups felt better, but those in the aerobic exercise group experienced significantly less discomfort, anxiety and depression, and improved quality of life.

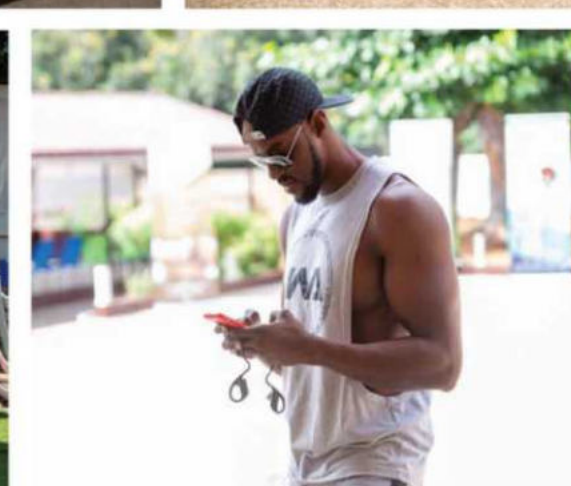


By Major Dr. Carl Nutsugah

1
YEAR

ANNIVERSARY

VivaHealth
M A G A Z I N E



Please introduce yourself to us?

My name is Mary Nyarko Omale, popularly known as "Mary Got Fit". I am a female body builder, a fitness enthusiasts, fitness model, brand ambassador for Fitzone Gh, first female to compete in the "Female Figure" category Man Ghana 2019 held by the Ghana Bodybuilding and Fitness Association (GBFA), a personal trainer, I am obsessed with improving myself, and I am an entrepreneur.

Tell us about your fitness journey ? When did u start actively working out? How far have you come?

I started working out in late 2014, but I trained at home till early 2016 before signing up for a gym. I got into fitness because I wanted to gain weight and my strength level back then was really uncomfortable though I've always had an athletic body type and back in High School I tried to do some sports (running, football, and basketball) but I didn't really find interest in them. After much research, I found out I could put on size with weight training alongside a healthy eating habit. But I was scared to use the gym cause I had a misconception of me looking like a guy if I touched weights. But with time, I got convinced and realized weight training will tone and strengthen my muscles, and since I don't have enough testosterone like guys, I won't look like them. I wanted to gain weight, but now I am more focused on a healthier version of me and till date, I am enjoying every bit of it.

What was your attraction to Fitness?

Fitness to me is a journey, it taught me a whole lot and has molded me to be the WOMAN I am today. Fitness involves a lot more than just lifting weights or exercising, it entails a healthy eating habit, having enough rest, maintaining a positive attitude, and your entire wellbeing. The fact that I have to be disciplined, determined, consistent, challenging myself to do better, and to have the will power in working hard to achieve my goals and much more is why I fell in love with this journey and there's no looking back.

What are the benefits you derive from fitness? Can one make a living out of fitness?

Absolutely YES! there's so many opportunities in this industry. I found my passion and it's now my profession (pays my rent, my bills, clothes, food, etc).

Helping others feel good about themselves especially WOMEN is something I've always had passion for. If you love to help others, and you have a strong passion for it, then make it happen with fitness. All you need to do is invest in yourself by acquiring more knowledge and experience, and it doesn't end there! you will keep learning because every day there's something new out there and you will be dealing with humans which is a very delicate thing. Aside personal training, there are many business opportunities in fitness, you can set up a gym or studio, sell gym accessories, gym wears, and many more. ALLOW YOUR PASSION TO BECOME YOUR PURPOSE, AND IT WILL ONE DAY BECOME YOUR PROFESSION.

How are females in the fitness industry fairing ? Are there any special challenges you face because you are a female ?

We are doing great, looking strong and beautiful always. I am very glad to see more women embracing this fitness journey as a lifestyle and they are doing great. Personally, I would say I look different from most females who are into fitness and that's because I am a body builder, my body type, personal goals, and my competition career. I've been stereotyped as "a man" because of my visible muscle definitions. Body building here in Ghana for females is very difficult, because a lot of people don't understand what you do or have little or no idea about fitness so they feel it's a deformity. I get harassed publicly with people calling me names but I have grown to accept it because there's nothing I can do to stop them and they can't stop me either. My heart is made up and I am chasing my dreams regardless of what other people think of it.

How do u think fitness is catching up with Ghanaians in general?

Ghanaians are beginning to understand the importance of fitness compared to previous years and if not for COVID - 19, some people didn't know anything about fitness or it's benefits to human health. But then, I strongly think it's high time Ghanaians get educated more on the benefits of exercising and staying healthy. However, it shouldn't be a "one time" thing, it should be done regularly through our various media platforms so as to create the awareness.

What's your advice to all reading on fitness ?

My advice to you is, you can achieve anything that you set your mind to do, you just have to start. I understand we all have different body goals





but your ultimate goal should be a "healthier version of you". If you are healthy, all those other goals will be a plus. Don't picture fitness as something difficult or something you just want to do for a period of time to look a certain way for a particular purpose, embrace it and keep working on getting the best out of it.

There's no short cut to "a healthier you" but discipline, consistency, dedication, and focus.

How can we make fitness more attractive to Ghanaians and ladies in general ?

First of all, I'll say a good music. When the music is good, the exercise, boot camp, the aerobics session and others will be fun. And Ghanaians we like fun stuff, this will make them be active by dancing or doing moderate movements if they can't perform certain exercises.

Second one is moderate exercises with less complicated moves. Already they don't see why they should exercise, now you want them to do exercises that are difficult to coordinate and has a very high risk of causing them injuries. When the music is good and the exercises are moderate, it makes it attractive for many people to join in. And with time their bodies will ask for more as they

progress. Third one is Incorporating challenges. This is a great way to make fitness more attractive to Ghanaians since it will put them to test their strengths and weaknesses and this will make the winner feel good about themselves which will make them want to do better while encouraging the other person to work harder next time. Challenges can be between couples, buddies, co-workers, etc. It can be a push up challenge, beep test, plank challenge, and many others.

Before my last point, I personally think it would be a great idea to start more shows that are fitness related, we already have the Man Ghana, Ghana Strongest, and some few others. Similar shows like this that will be done for a period of time to educate Ghanaians on fitness and healthy lifestyle would be a great way to inspire Ghanaians to embrace fitness as a lifestyle.

Last one is communication. All of the points stated above will work if we communicate with each. This will make them feel involved and not just participating in a fitness event.

Ask them what their goals are, test their strength levels before giving them any exercise to do so they don't feel discouraged if they can't perform certain exercises. Everyone has their preferred way of working out, but you can only know this when you ask them questions.

Mary Nyarko Omale
"Mary Got Fit"



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REDUCING COVID 19 STIGMA IN GHANA

Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear or anger toward ordinary people instead of focusing on the disease that is causing the problem. Stigma can also make people more likely to hide symptoms or illness, keep them from seeking health care immediately, and prevent individuals from adopting healthy behaviors. This means that stigma can make it more difficult to control the spread of an outbreak.

Groups who experience stigma may also experience discrimination. This discrimination can take the form of:

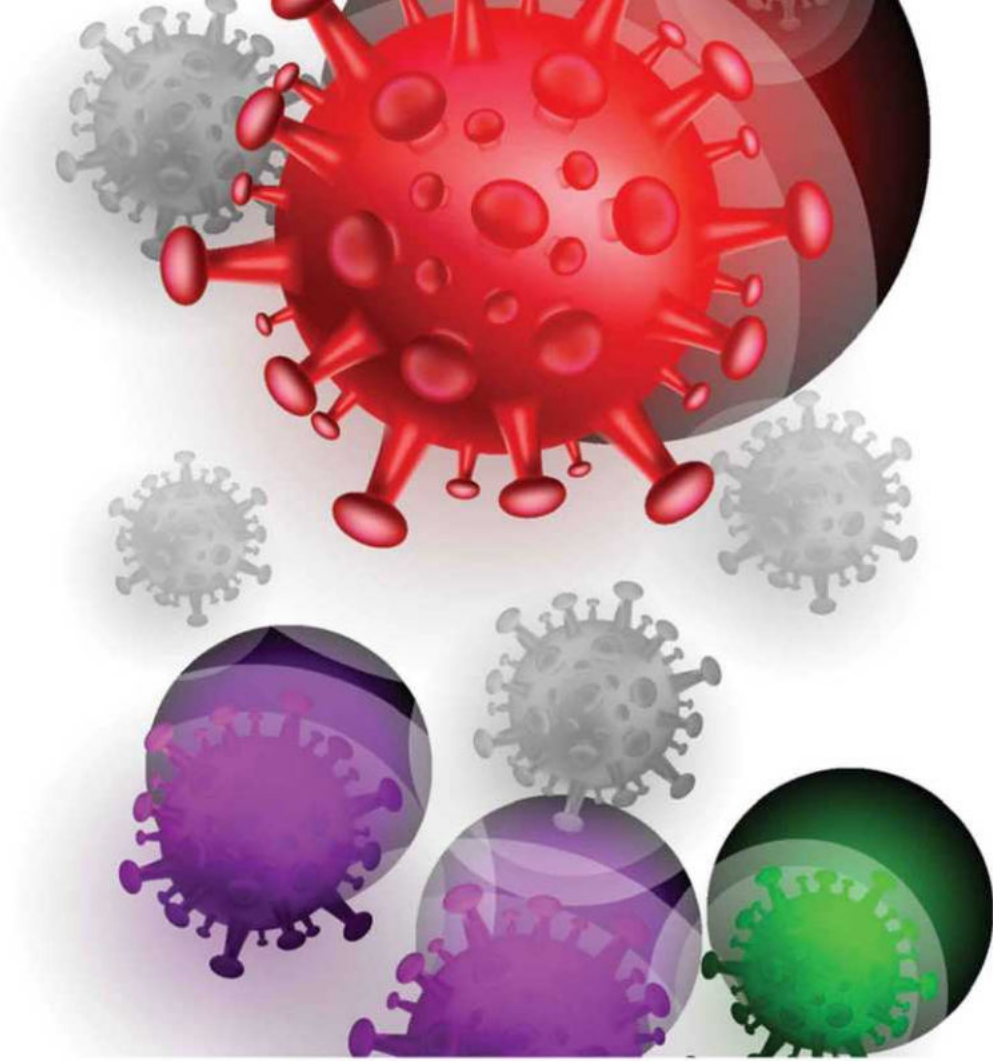
- Other people avoiding or rejecting them;
- Getting denied healthcare, education, housing, or employment;
- Verbal abuse; or
- Physical violence.

Stigma can negatively affect the emotional, mental, and physical health of stigmatized groups and the communities they live in. Stigmatized individuals may experience isolation, depression, anxiety, or public embarrassment. Stopping stigma is important to making all communities and community members safer and healthier. Everyone can help stop stigma related to COVID-19 by knowing the facts and sharing them with others in their communities.

Community leaders and public health officials can help prevent stigma by:

- Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of those seeking healthcare and those who may be part of any contact investigation.
- Quickly communicating the risk, or lack of risk, from contact with products, people, and places.
- Correcting negative language that can cause stigma by sharing accurate
- Speaking out against negative behaviors and statements, including those on social media.
- Making sure that images used in communications show diverse communities and do not reinforce stereotypes.
- Using media channels, including news media and social media, to speak out against stereotyping groups of people who experience stigma because of COVID-19.
- Thanking healthcare workers, responders, and others working on the front lines.
- Suggesting virtual resources for mental health or other social support services for people who have experienced stigma or discrimination.

By Major Dr. Eunice Osei Mensah



Stigma is discrimination against an identifiable group of people, a place, or a nation. Stigma is associated with a lack of knowledge about how COVID-19 spreads, a need to blame someone, fears about disease and death, and gossip that spreads rumors and myths.

No single person or group of people are more likely than others to spread COVID-19. Public health emergencies, such as this pandemic, are stressful times for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can lead to social stigma, which is negative attitudes and beliefs toward people, places, or things. Stigma can lead to labeling, stereotyping, discrimination, and other negative behaviors toward others. For example, stigma and discrimination can occur when people link a disease, such as COVID-19, with a population, community, or nationality. Stigma can also happen after a person has recovered from COVID-19 or been released from home isolation or quarantine.

Some groups of people who may experience stigma during the COVID-19 pandemic include:

- Certain racial and ethnic minority groups, including Chinese and Asians in general
- People who tested positive for COVID-19, have recovered from being sick with COVID-19, or were released from COVID-19 quarantine;
- Emergency responders or healthcare providers;
- Other frontline workers, such as grocery store clerks, delivery drivers, or farm and food processing plant workers;
- People who have disabilities or developmental or behavioral disorders who may have difficulty following recommendations;
- People who have underlying health conditions that cause a cough;
- People living in congregate (group) settings, such as people experiencing homelessness.

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SCREENTIME

Do you have a screen addiction? Your eyes could be paying the price. According to the Ophthalmological Society of Ghana (OSG), 50 percent of teens admit that they feel addicted to their mobile device, and 27 percent of their parents admit they can't put down their smartphone either.

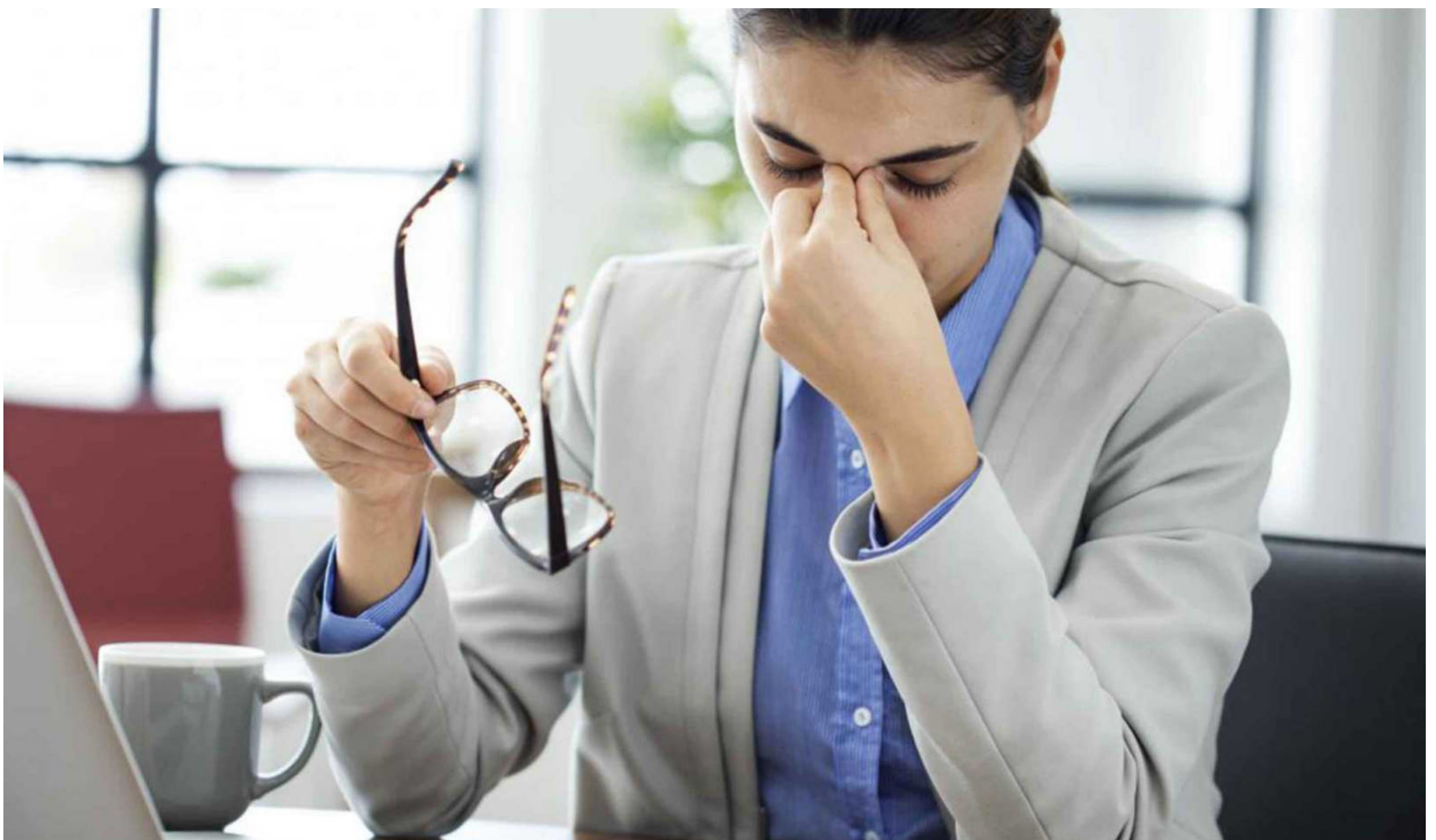
You may not think that you spend too much time on your phone, but think about all the screens you view daily: smartphone, desktop computer, laptop, tablet, game system, and LED TV. Many of us spend more time looking at screens than sleeping. The average Ghanaian clocks several minutes of screen time (touted to be in the region of 7.4 hours). It's easy to see that dependence on digital devices is a worldwide problem.

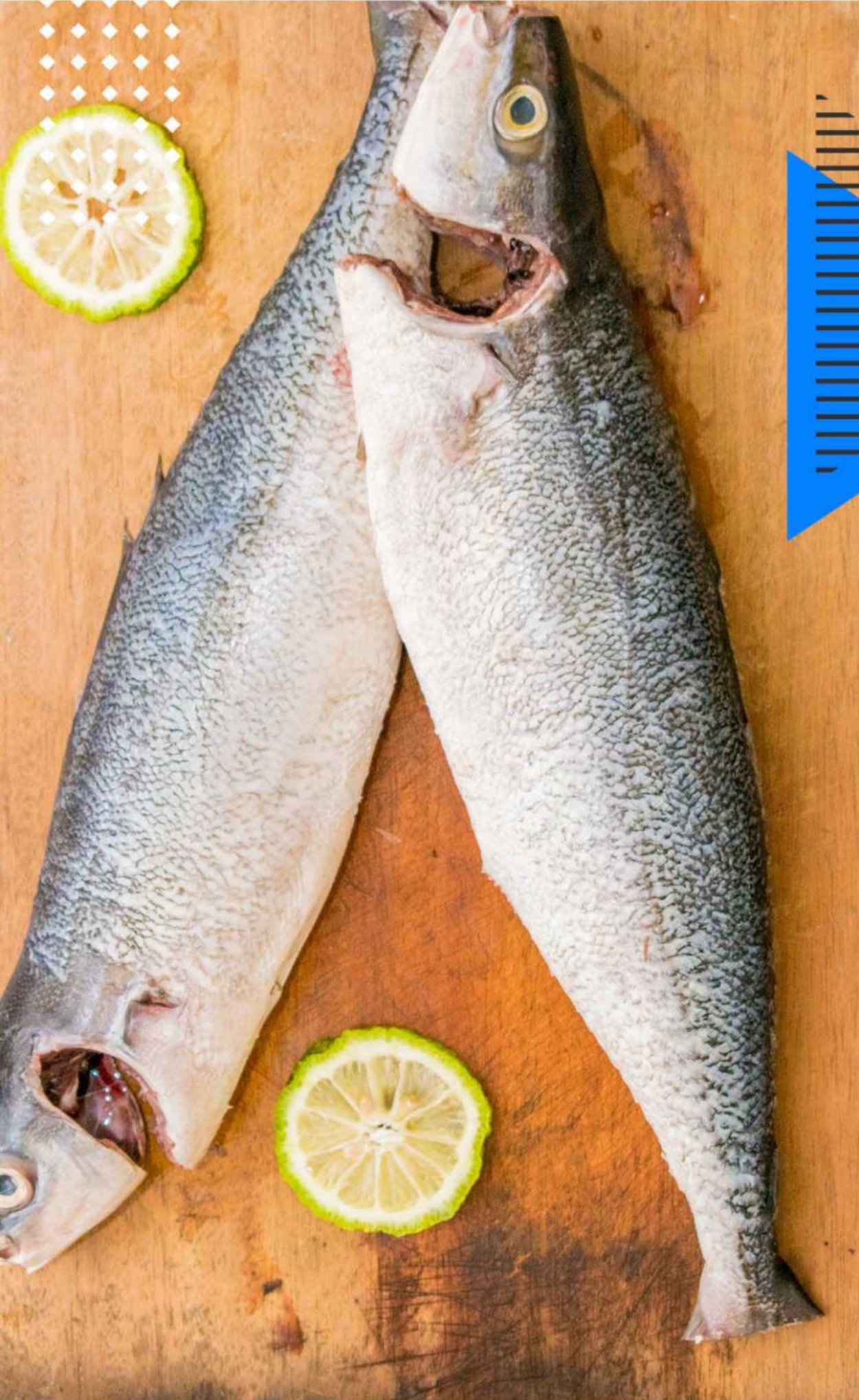
Over 50 percent of people who work in front of a computer screen experience a condition called digital eye strain. Common symptoms of digital eye strain include eye fatigue, dry eye, irritated or itchy eyes, red eyes, and headaches. These symptoms are thought to be caused by overexposure to high-energy visible light or "blue light" emitted by digital devices. Blue light has a wavelength of 380 nm to 500 nm, which means it is one of the shortest, highest-energy wavelengths that humans can perceive. These waves penetrate deep into the eyes and create a glaring effect, which results in irritation and strain.

Eye care specialists can treat the symptoms of digital eye strain, but there are no studies yet that can prove long-term damage. Some laboratory studies suggest that increased exposure to blue light can damage retinal tissue, but many researchers refute this assertion and claim that electronic devices emit only small amounts of energy. Interestingly, rates of nearsightedness have increased worldwide. Is this a coincidence, or could it be a direct result of our growing screen addiction? In the UK, for example, 16.4 percent of children are nearsighted today compared to only 7.2 percent in the 1960s.

Until we have more evidence from longitudinal studies, there will be more questions than answers regarding the specific effects of screens and blue light on our vision. In the meantime, perhaps a simple principle of moderation can lead to wisdom in how we use electronics in our careers, personal communication and hobbies

Capt Dr C Aborbie





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FLOSSING

And you knew you were doing a great job when your dentist congratulated you at your annual checkup. But what happens if you have not been following this advice?

The Ghana Dental Association stress the importance of flossing in removing plaque from between your teeth that brushing can't.

A toothbrush helps you physically brush plaque off your teeth, while toothpaste helps cut down on bacteria in your mouth.

However, flossing still carries big benefits that brushing and toothpaste do not.

A toothbrush's bristles cannot adequately clean between your teeth, or under your gums. This is where flossing comes in to save the day.

In fact, flossing does about 40% of the heavy lifting needed to remove sticky plaque from your teeth.

From cleaning between your teeth to boosting gum health, here's how flossing every day helps keep your gums and smile healthy.

Is flossing really necessary?

Plaque is the mighty enemy of your oral health. Brushing your teeth twice a day for two minutes each time is the most effective way to get rid of it.

So, is flossing really necessary? Yes, flossing before you brush can help make brushing more effective.⁴ With less plaque caught between your teeth, the fluoride in your toothpaste can access more surfaces of your teeth and gums. This means a healthier, shinier smile, and less money spent on fillings at your next trip to the dentist.

Floss cleans between teeth and under the gum

You've probably brushed your teeth after a meal before and still had particles of food stuck between molars or other teeth.

Floss is specially designed to remove plaque from the tight spaces between your teeth and under your gums that brushing can't always access.

Plaque between your teeth and gum area can harden over time and create tartar, which your dentist will need to remove with a scraper. And unaddressed tartar buildup can lead to gingivitis, which is the first stage of gum disease.

Nothing's fun about red, swollen gums, so in order to protect yourself from gum disease don't ditch your flossing routine.

Flossing protects against bone loss

Gum disease is scary for your oral health, as it can lead to periodontal disease. And the inflammation from periodontal disease can spread to other parts of your body, like your heart.

But gum disease has another drawback — it can age you! It attacks the bones that support your teeth and the lower third of your face. Aesthetically speaking, you tend to look younger even as you age if this part of your facial structure remains strong. Flossing can help you preserve the strength of these bones by protecting your teeth and gums from decay.

How to floss correctly

Even if you floss once a day, it won't necessarily be effective without the right technique.

Follow these steps to become a pro-flosser in no time:

- Using around 18 inches of floss, wrap the ends around your fingertips.
- Slide the floss gently between your teeth.
- Curve the floss around your tooth and rub it up and down to scrape away plaque.
- Rinse with mouthwash and brush your teeth.
- Don't use the same piece of floss again — it can fray and collect bacteria.

Should I stop flossing if my gums bleed?

If your gums bleed when you floss, you could either be flossing too hard, or your gums aren't used to a flossing routine yet.

Flossing at least once a day will help your gums build up a tolerance.

By Capt Dr Akuamoah Boateng





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