

SAFE & SOUND

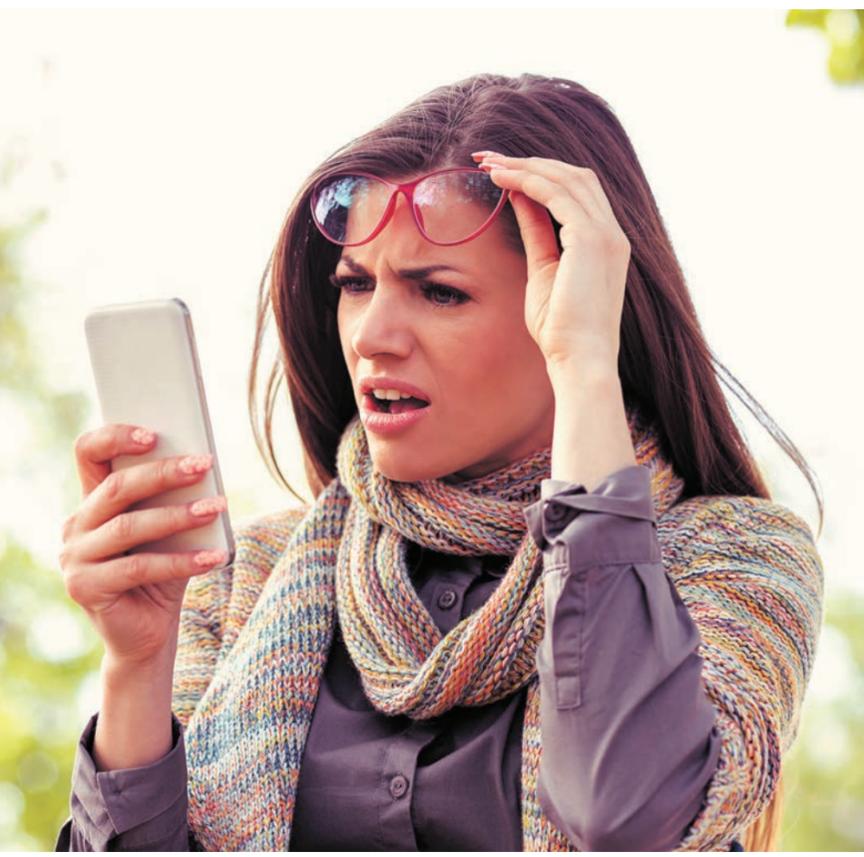
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Smell phishy? It likely is

BY WINTEK

On internet time, phishing has been around as long as ... well, actual fishing. Phishing is a fraudulent email sent from what appears to be a reputable source but that is actually sent by cybercriminals. They hope you'll click links in the email and give up personal information, passwords and / or credit card numbers – which they can sell or use for fraudulent purchases and / or identity theft.

The bad news? Phishing emails look more and more like the real deal every day. The good news? Many browsers have built-in security protocols. Plus, taking easy preventive steps – and a few extra seconds to look closely at potentially dangerous emails – can protect you from phish bait. Here are some ways to stay safe when you're online with Wintek's blazing-fast internet speeds or wherever you're connected.

Think before you click: Is the email or message from a rando? Is the URL suspicious? Are names and words misspelled? Are logos missing? Does the email ask for your password? Don't click anything. When in doubt, conduct business at a company's official, secure website.

Seek signs of safety: Secure website

URLs begin with "https" and include a closed lock icon in the address bar. You can also see if the site has a security certificate. Most browsers advise against visiting ones that don't. If you get such a message, don't visit the website.

Be wary of pop-ups: Use a pop-up blocker. If one still comes up, click the X in its upper corner to close the box. Don't click "cancel" or a similar word, which could link to the dangerous site anyway.

Update browsers and operating systems: Putting this off means missing out on security patches that close loopholes cybercriminals could exploit. Download and install them as they're available.

Keep up-to-date on accounts: Regularly check online accounts, bank statements and credit reports to ensure no one is making bogus transactions in your name.

Freeze your credit: Ice out identity thieves. Prevent them from opening new credit lines in your name without additional information only you can provide. Indiana residents can freeze their credit for free.

Use strong passwords or a password manager: This is one of the most common internet rules because it's one of the most important. Strong passwords and / or management services offer excellent security.

Five steps to safe and healthy weight loss

BY JILLIAN ELLISON

For Exponent Advertising Department

The excitement and fresh feeling of a new year brings on the ambitious desire for change in our lives and New Year's resolutions, frequently tied to weight loss.

But rather than resolve to achieve an unrealistic you, work toward developing a targeted weight loss goal that is strategic, and mindful of your health and wellbeing.

According to CDC.gov, losing weight takes more than the desire to lose it. It takes a well-thought plan and the commitment to see it through. Here are the CDC's five steps to achieving your weight loss goal.

Step One: Make a commitment.

Making the decision to alter your life in a healthy way is a big step. Start simply by making a commitment to yourself. According to the CDC, many people find it helpful to sign a written contract committing to the process. This contract may include things like the amount of weight you want to lose, the date you'd like to lose the weight by, the dietary changes you'll make to establish healthy eating habits, and a plan for getting regular physical activity.

Writing down the reasons you want to lose weight can also help, the CDC says. It might be because you have a family history of heart disease, or because you want to see your kids get married, or simply because you want to feel better in your clothes. Post these reasons where they serve as a daily reminder of why you want to make this change.

Step Two: Take stock of where you are.



Before you begin your health journey, the CDC says to consider talking to your health care provider. They can evaluate your height, weight and explore other weight-related risk factors you may have.

Keep a daily food diary on your phone or in a written journal, documenting everything you eat and drink. Doing so helps you be more aware of what you're eating, and when you're eating it.

Examine your current lifestyle and identify things that may pose challenges to your weight loss efforts. Part-time jobs, heavy class loads, and extra full social calendars can make finding time for exercise difficult, but not impossible.

Step Three: Set realistic goals.

Understand you will not see dramatic results in just a few weeks. Small changes every day can lead to big results in the long run. Also remember that realistic goals are achievable. By achieving your short-term goals day-by-day, you'll feel good about your progress and be motivated to continue. Setting unrealistic goals, such as losing 20 pounds in 2 weeks, can leave you feeling defeated and frustrated. Initially, your goals might not be to lose any weight at all, but to drink more water, eat more fruits and vegetables, and reduce screen time at night.

Step Four: Identify resources for info and support it.

Having a buddy who is willing to commit to a daily activity routine will help you both be more accountable for your goals. Another option can be joining a weight loss group or visiting a health care professional, such as a registered dietician, according to the CDC. Research fitness apps or online programs as well. Some are affordable and designed to get to the root of your eating and exercise behaviors.

Step Five: Continually check in with yourself to monitor progress.

Revisit the goals you set for yourself in step three and evaluate where you are in your progress. If you've set a goal to walk each morning but are having trouble fitting it in before work, see if you can shift the time frame for your daily walk. Maybe a regular office meeting becomes a walking meeting. Evaluate which parts of your plan are working well and where the plan needs tweaking, then rewrite your goals and plan accordingly.

Don't forget to reward your successes! Recognize when you're meeting your goals and be proud of your progress.

Is your back giving you grief?

Tips to calm your aching back

BY STACEY KELLOGG
Exponent Advertising
Department

Winter is a popular time for back injuries. If you're not being too sluggish and lying around too much (not good for your back!), you might be tweaking your back muscles while trying not to fall on the ice, or shoveling snow, if we ever get any. Here are some home relief methods for an aching back, and info on when to seek medical help.

According to the article "Help Your Back Work for You" from the Franciscan Health online health library, back pain can be caused by so many different things: poor muscle tone, being overweight, incorrect twisting or lifting, falling or trying to catch yourself from falling, aging, and sometimes, unknown reasons. The article pulls information from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS).

Of course, before you

try home relief methods, consider why your back hurts to help determine if you need medical help first.

The article advises you call your medical provider if:

- Your back pain started after you fell or were struck.
- Your pain is so severe that you cannot get up, move from side to side, or walk.
- You feel weakness, numbness, or tingling in your legs.
- You have bladder or bowel problems.
- Your pain is getting worse and doesn't go away after a few weeks of home care.

If you're confident that your back pain doesn't require immediate medical attention, try these tips first.

"Simple home remedies can relieve most back pain. It will take some patience, but if you care for your back correctly, you should feel better within six weeks after an injury," the article says.

For the first two days after you notice back pain, or

after you know you've likely injured your back, use ice or cold compresses, the article advises.

"Wrap a towel around a bag of ice and place it against the painful area for up to 20 minutes. You can also use a bag of frozen vegetables. This will change to fit the shape of your body."

If you still have pain after two days, switch to heat, which can soothe muscles. Start with a heating pad at the lowest setting, and increase the heat gradually if needed. The article also suggests a warm shower or soaking in a warm bath.

Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen (popular names Motrin or Tylenol) also may help. They are typically effective in reducing muscle pain and joint inflammation, and relieving pain in general, the article says.

Keeping your back strong goes a long way toward preventing injuries and back pain. Here's what the article

suggests:

• **Maintain good posture.** When standing, keep your weight balanced on your feet, and refrain from slouching when standing and sitting.

• **Sit in a chair that supports your lower back.** If you don't have a supportive chair, place a small pillow or rolled-up towel against the curve in your lower back.

• **Exercise.** Low-impact aerobic exercise, such as walking or stationary biking, increases the flow of blood and oxygen to your back muscles. Choose your exercises carefully. For example, running may not be good for a weak back. Swimming and water aerobics support your back while you exercise. Walking is also a good choice. If you've had a serious back injury, talk with your healthcare provider before you start exercising regularly.

• **Stay at a healthy weight.** This will lessen the strain on your back. Your



healthcare provider can tell you if you need to lose weight.

• **Learn how to lift correctly.** When you bend to pick something up—even a child—bend at your knees and keep your back straight. You may have to squat or kneel. This puts the stress on your legs, which are stronger than your back. When you pick up an object and carry it, hold it close to your body. The farther it is from the middle of your body, the more it strains your back.

• **Pay attention to pain or twinges.** If you feel back pain during an activity, stop and rest. Your body may be trying to prevent you from harming your back.