How I found my dream home

BY THE ASIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Hello! I am Feng. In May 2013 my friend told me about an affordable housing program in Boston’s Chinatown. So I went to the Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC) and registered for their CHOP program’s First-time Homeowner Workshop in October 2013. The workshop is very useful and covers the basics about making an offer on a home, mortgage, home insurance, house inspection and most importantly, information about finding affordable housing. Through ACDC’s monthly updates, I found a house in the suburbs. The home-buying process went smoothly since I learned a lot of information from the workshop. The housing counselors at ACDC helped me through each step of the home-buying process. Whenever I had questions, I would call them or schedule appointments to see them.

In November, I just moved into my new house that I love so much. I know it sounds unbelievable, but it is true. I am very grateful for Lee Lin and May Lai who work at ACDC. I encourage you to speak with them if you are buying your first home or need to learn more about buying a home. I am certain you will find your dream house, like I did, and fulfill your dream of owning a nice home.

Top Bread opens second Harrison location

BY LING-MEI WONG

The Top Bread Bakery had a grand opening for its 77 Harrison Street location on Dec. 11. It has the same ownership as the Great Taste Bakery & Restaurant on 63 Beach Street. Governor-elect Charlie Baker attended the ribbon-cutting, along with state Sen. Anthony Petruccelli. The Wah Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy performed a lion dance.

Baker was asked about his upcoming tenure as governor. “I’m going to make the decisions that make the most sense to the people of Massachusetts,” he said.

Local residents enjoyed refreshments, while Baker paid for a box of baked treats.
Walsh visits Quincy School for Computer Science Education Week

BY LING-MEI WONG

Josiah Quincy Elementary School Principal Simon Ho (left) shows Mayor Marty Walsh programming work done by students in the school media lab. The visit was part of Computer Science Education Week, which ran from Dec. 8 to Dec. 14. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

Boston Mayor Marty Walsh visited the Josiah Quincy Elementary School for Computer Science Education Week on Dec. 10. Public officials were invited to observe students learning about computer science from Dec. 8 to Dec. 14.

Walsh observed fifth graders working on online programming courses offered by the Khan Academy. The Chinatown school participates in the Hour of Code, exposing children to computer programming for an hour each day. This includes coding for apps and games, along with drawing lessons in JavaScript.

“What they’re doing is so important, as today everything is about computers,” Walsh said. “These young people are so far ahead of us.”

Walsh also visited second graders and enjoyed a string performance from one of the Quincy School’s five orchestras. At the end of the visit, students received “I love computer science” buttons. More information on the Hour of Code can be found at www.code.org.

Walsh rings in ninth ‘We are Boston’ gala

BY LING-MEI WONG

The ninth We are Boston Gala took place Dec. 8 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. Nearly 700 people attended the event celebrating Boston’s diversity, immigrant heritage and contribution.

Mayor Marty Walsh hosted the gala, attending for the first time as mayor. “Everyone in Boston has a story of survival. I’m proud of the fact I’m the son of Irish immigrants,” he said.

Margaret Marshall, former chief justice of the Mass. Supreme Judicial Court, received the We are Boston Leadership Award. Marshall was born in South Africa, led anti-apartheid efforts as a student and came to the United States for law school in 1968.

“My absorption into the United States was demanding and exhausting,” Marshall said. “I would not have developed my career anywhere else besides this city.” Walsh named Alejandra St. Guillen director of the Office of New Bostonians.

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Walsh named Alejandra St. Guillen director of the Office of New Bostonians. Under her direction, the first Citizenship Day took place at Boston City Hall in September.

Goodwin Procter received the Community Contribution Award for 200 hours of free legal advice to 185 individuals seeking to become U.S. citizens on Citizenship Day.

Rafael Baez received the Youth Action Award. Baez is an 18-year-old student from the Dominican Republic, who has volunteered in Boston Center for Youth and Families programs since he was 12.

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Boston held a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Day to assist students in pursuing education and launched an Immigrant Integration and empowerment Initiative. The City Council passed the Trust Act on August 20, with local police no longer participating in a federal program to turn undocumented individuals to Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers.

Chinatown welcomes Santa and Mayor Walsh to Christmas tree lighting

Mayor Marty Walsh had an enchanted trolley tour stop to light the Christmas tree in Chinatown on Dec. 5. Santa and his helpers passed out gifts to neighborhood children, including Tao Cen (center). (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

Chinese American Citizens Alliance recharter Boston lodge

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance had a charter and inauguration ceremony on Dec. 13 at Tufts Medical Center, followed by an inaugural gala at Hei La Moon. President Esther Lee and her husband Wilson Lee hold the Boston lodge’s flag on Dec. 3. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance had a charter and inauguration ceremony on Dec. 13 at Tufts Medical Center, followed by an inaugural gala at Hei La Moon. President Esther Lee and her husband Wilson Lee hold the Boston lodge’s flag on Dec. 3. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

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### Event Calendar

#### Free health care service
Every Tuesday 6 to 8 p.m.
First Church in Malden 184 Pleasant Street Malden, MA 02148

The Sharewood Project offers free, unscheduled health care to the medically underserved populations of the greater Boston area. More information please contact (781) 324-8991 or e-mail sharewood.director@gmail.com.

#### The Dream Project
Saturday, Dec. 20
8 p.m.
185 Green Street Cambridge, MA 02139


#### Chinatown Resident Association meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 7
6:30 p.m.
885 Washington Street Boston MA 02111

The Chinatown Resident Association meeting will take place at the Double-Tree Hotel. The public is welcome to attend.

#### Chinatown Safety Committee meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 14
10:30 a.m.
821 Washington Street Boston, MA 02116

The Chinatown Safety Committee meeting will take place at the Double-Tree Hotel. The public is welcome to attend.

#### TransformASIANS: Controlling and Preventing Diabetes conference
Saturday, Jan. 10, 2015
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
1750 Mt. Vernon Street Dorchester, MA 02125

The TransformASIANS: Controlling and Preventing Diabetes conference will be hosted by Asian Women for Health and the American Diabetes Association. Registration is $15 for community members, $30 for professionals and free for students, seniors and volunteers. To register, please visit http://2015diabetes.eventbrite.com.

#### Citizenship program
Tuesdays and Thursdays
Jan. 12 to April 2, 2015
2 to 4 p.m.
1 Milk Street, 4F

The Chinatown/South Cove Neighborhood Committee will take place at the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. The public is welcome to attend.
Tufts Institutional Biosafety Committee reviews safety at public meeting

By Ling-Mei Wong

The Tufts Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) met on Dec. 10 at 150 Harrison Avenue for a community meeting. IBC is a joint committee for Tufts University and Tufts Medical Center, a teaching facility for Tufts University’s School of Medicine.

The committee must approve research projects conducted at Tufts facilities on campus. All members have equal voting rights. No new research projects were approved.

"If someone proposes a research project, the committee must approve it before the research can begin," said Julien Farland, director of biological safety at the Commission on Environmental, Health, and Safety.

Su Taffe, associate professor of medicine at Tufts University, said, "The IBC is a mechanism for ensuring that research conducted at Tufts is safe. The committee ensures that all projects are reviewed and approved before they begin."

The committee discussed a number of projects on the (Medford) campus and the bulk of our work is there." Tufts University houses a biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) lab at the medical school in Chinatown, one of 11 such labs in Boston. BSL-3 labs study infectious diseases which are curable, while BSL-4 labs work with incurable infectious agents.

Tufts stated it would not pursue a BSL-4 lab. The Chinatown BSL-3 lab will begin construction in January 2015.


The Chinatown Coalition meets at 150 Harrison Avenue. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

Chleste Thorpe spoke at the Tufts Institutional Biosafety Committee meeting on Dec. 10 at 150 Harrison Avenue. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

Chinatown December meeting roundup: CUCC, TCC, CNC

By Ling-Mei Wong

Three community organizations in Chinatown met in December for their monthly meetings.

Clean Up Chinatown Committee
The Clean Up Chinatown Committee met on Dec. 9 at the Asian American Civic Association.

Committee members discussed the effectiveness of the Block by Block program, which covered six blocks on proper trash disposal and street cleaning. Leo Boucher, assistant commissioner for Boston’s Inspectors’ Service Department, said he would schedule more Block by Block programs for business owners and residents living on Tyler, Harvard, and Hudson streets and revisit all previous blocks to check on compliance.

People who leave food out for birds and cats will be subject to fines, as feeding feral animals is a sanitary code violation. The leftover food ultimately feeds rats. Public Works Department liaison Frank O’Brien will install more street barrels in locations designated by the committee.

Volunteers from Project Place manually sweep streets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for more than two hours. O’Brien will supplement with city cleaners on days and locations not covered by Project Place.

The committee is asking for a meeting with Boston Police Department Capt. Ken Fong of District A-1 to fine people for littering. They will also discuss with police about issuing tickets and towing cars illegally parked during no-parking times, so street sweepers can sweep.

The Chinatown Coalition
The Chinatown Coalition met on Dec. 11 at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center.

A presentation on potential Silver Line improvements was given by Eric Bourassa of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The upgrade would expand public transit, but would reduce the number of parking spaces along the Silver Line’s routes.

The Rose F. Kennedy Greenway Conservancy will renew its lease with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, as the Greenway is on top of the I-93 tunnel. This new lease will give the Greenway $50,000 a year for capital repairs, along with 13 new sites for the Conservancy to maintain. Most of the 13 sites are crossing islands or medians, but one of them is the Mary Soo Hoo Park next to the Greenway.

“IT’S one of highest used areas in this area and on the new Greenway,” said Michael Nichols, community affairs and strategic projects manager for the Conservancy. “We don’t want to disrupt its uses, but we hope the quality of park matches the rest of Chinatown Park and the Greenway.”

South Cove/Chinatown Neighborhood Council
The South Cove/Chinatown Neighborhood Council met Dec. 15 at the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.

The 2014 election took place Nov. 30, with no contested races. Elections take place each year, with council members serving two-year terms.

Man Ho Chan and Paul Lee were reelected as the two agency representatives. Ruth Moy and Richard Chin were reelected as the two agency representatives. Bill Moy was reelected in the other category representative, while the business representatives were Patty Moy and Ricky Chan.

Its next meeting will take place on Jan. 20, rather than the third Monday, which will be Martin Luther King Day.

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Boston City Council President Bill Linehan named James Chan his chief of staff on Dec. 9. (Image courtesy of the Office of Bill Linehan.)

**Boston Council President Linehan appoints James Chan chief of staff**

BY THE OFFICE OF BILL LINEHAN

Boston City Councilor Bill Linehan named James Chan his chief of staff on Dec. 9. Chan has worked for Linehan since he took office in 2007, most recently as chief neighborhood liaison for the South end.

In his new position, Chan will take on a larger role in advising Linehan on policy issues. He will also handle Licensing Board matters for the office, giving him an opportunity to help shape the neighborhood he represents. With a background in hospitality and business management, Chan is a great fit for a neighborhood and district that is daily welcoming more and more new businesses.

Chan grew up in the South End, so he is well positioned to understand both the needs of newcomers and the needs of long-term residents. Chan said, “I am excited about the prospect of taking on a larger role in shaping District 2.”

Linehan said, “James was a natural choice for chief of staff: He's very smart, is a life-long resident of the district. He will handle Li-

**Chinatown crime blotter for Dec. 6 to 19**

**BY THE BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

All reports are submitted by the Boston Police Department. The time period is from Dec. 6 to 19, for District A-1, which includes Chinatown.

To report a crime or suspicious activity, call 911. Interpreters are available for Chinese speakers.

**Trespassing**

Dec. 6, 5:49 p.m.: The three suspects were arrested on Avenue De Lafayette for trespassing. They were in an area where a “No Trespassing” sign was clearly posted.

**Breaking and entering**

Dec. 8, 1 a.m.: The suspect walked down the street swing a metal pipe aimlessly. After speaking with several witnesses, the suspect was placed under arrest and transported to the district.

**Drug possession**

Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m.: The officers responded to Essex and Washington streets on a report of a group of males fighting. Upon arrival, the officers observed the suspect walking down the street swing a metal pipe aimlessly. After speaking with several witnesses, the suspect was placed under arrest and transported to the district.

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Visit EricksonLiving.com/facts or call 1-800-975-9861.

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine

Free Dental Screening Offered

January 14, 2015

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Senior Dental Students Seeking Patients for Licensure Exam

Who might qualify? People with one or all of the following:

- Small Cavities
- Tartar (Calculus)
- Periodontal (Gum) Disease

People who have not been to the dentist in several years or more

Please contact Chris Brown at 627-636-6791 to schedule an appointment

Space is limited

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine is located at 1 Kneeland Street Boston, MA 02111

Interactive Readings: Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

“Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” was read to children in the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center’s Red Oak after-school program on Dec. 11 at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. The Education Department of the Citi Performing Arts Center brings a variety of free arts education programs to the community as part of Citi Center’s nonprofit mission. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)
Factors that impact a home’s value

BY STATEPOINT

It may seem like the size of your home is the be-all and end-all of your home’s value. But there are many other factors that come into play when determining the listing value of a particular property.

A new report offers some insights. The Coldwell Banker Home Listing Report, the most extensive home price comparison tool currently available in the country, ranks the average listing price of four-bedroom, two-bathroom homes in nearly 2,000 markets across the country. Analyzing more than 51,000 similar-sized listings, it addresses how much a home in one market would cost if the same home were located somewhere else in the United States.

For example, the report reveals that for the price of the average home in Los Altos, California, you could purchase 30 similar-sized homes in Cleveland, Ohio, nine homes in Carolina, eight homes in Chicago, Illinois, five homes in Miami, or two homes in Seattle, Washington.

But why are there such discrepancies?

“It’s amazing how much location impacts a home’s value,” said Coldwell Banker real estate consumer specialist Edwards. “Typically, urban markets are more expensive, while suburban and rural areas tend to be more affordable. However, many factors contribute to the average price of a home, such as commute time or proximity to the waterfront. The Home Listing Report is a helpful reference, so you can gauge how your area compares to other parts of the country.”

Ten things to consider when deciding whether to sell your home

BY STATEPOINT

As the economy continues to strengthen, you may wonder whether to stay in your current home or sell while the timing seems perfect.

Since there are many things to sort out, the experts at Homes.com have put together a comprehensive overview of things to consider:

• Size: If your home is too small, moving may be a more affordable, less stressful option than additions, which can be costly and overwhelming. You can expect to recoup anywhere from 45 to 75 percent in additional home appreciation, depending on the project, according to Remodeling.com. However, the return on investment is not always immediate, which is something to consider if you’re planning to sell immediately.

• Renovations: If the necessary renovations to stay in your current home seem overwhelming, it may be time to move. For example, a new roof can cost anything from $5,000 to $30,000 or more, according to Choice Roofing Group. Large-scale home issues may decrease a home’s market value, but conversely, many home-seekers love the opportunity to customize their dream home.

• Competition: Do your research. On-line tools such as Homes.com Home Values Channel can help determine your home’s worth. The work you did as a real estate professional to determine a competitive price point, and let the bidding begin.

• Lifestyle change: Just as growing families need more room, a shrinking family might mean it’s time to downsize.

• Updates: Home updates are an opportunity to add value to a home and make it feel brand new.

• Location: Consider your neighbors, school zone, proximity to work and daily life activities. Are you happy where you are?

• Availability: Keep an eye on the market by signing up for free email alerts on Homes.com; receive notifications when new homes meeting your specific criteria become available. Take your time and wait for the perfect home.

Deciding whether to stay or sell is an important decision that shouldn’t be made lightly. Weigh all of the options to determine what’s best before taking action.

Local industry plays a role as well. In the case of Los Altos, which is ranked as the most expensive market in America, the continued success of many tech companies contributes to the boom. This information can be useful, whether you’re planning to put your property on the market or you’re looking to relocate. For example, if you are scouting out a neighborhood where home prices are on the verge of increasing, area features to look out for include cultural institutions — such as art galleries and performance spaces — as well as such factors as unique architecture and proximity to mass transit and other trendy areas.

Edward also recommended doing some quantitative research, including talking to your realtor about how fast properties are selling in your area and whether business owners are investing in the neighborhood.

“Buying or selling a home is a huge emotional and financial decision,” said Edwards. “Before you buy, you will be able to take some of the uncertainty out of the process.”

Remember, while this information is useful for homeowners and prospective home buyers, it’s by no means a replacement for a professional real estate agent who understands local conditions.

For more details about the report, or to see how your area stacks up, visit hlr.coldwellbanker.com.

For many people, a home is their biggest investment and largest asset. Be sure to stay informed about the ins and outs of its value.

Five quick fixes for big improvements around your home

BY STATEPOINT

When it comes to home improvement, you don’t need to do a complete overhaul to make a big impact. A “less is more” approach may serve you better, say experts.

“Sometimes quick fixes are the ones you need most,” said Lou Manfredini, host of “HouseSmarts TV” and home improvement contributor on NBC’s “The Today Show.”

According to Manfredini, there are five small projects you can do yourself that can make a huge difference in your home:

• Clean the disposal: Your kitchen sink and disposal work hard, but sometimes they can stink. Every few months, eliminate odor and freshen things up by pouring half a cup of general purpose disinfectant cleaner down the drain.

• Patch the wall: Keep an eye on the market by signing up for free email alerts on Homes.com; receive notifications when new homes meeting your specific criteria become available. Take your time and wait for the perfect home.

• Location: Consider your neighbors, school zone, proximity to work and daily life activities. Are you happy where you are?

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• Light it up: To save money and help the environment, switch to LED light bulbs. With all the improvements in color, they can now mimic the warm light associated with incandescent bulbs, using two-thirds less electricity.

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Leah Wu was heartbroken when doctors said her son had autism. “I couldn’t accept it,” Wu said, whose son was 2 when diagnosed. “You really can’t understand this until you experience it.”

She was referred to the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCnC), where she found a supportive group of parents. Together with social worker Zhong Ruan, Wu navigated resources for her son’s health, education and support. “In the beginning, I would meet with Zhong and cry every time,” Wu said. “We don’t know what autism is. We didn’t know anything, we don’t know how to teach children with autism.

Today, Wu’s son is 5 and attending kindergarten at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. Wu fought for her son to be in an integrated classroom, made up of five students with special needs and 10 children without development delays. Her son was almost moved to a segregated classroom. “I didn’t know anything, I didn’t know how to teach children with autism.”

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Wu said she received help from BCnC’s Family Connector program, which enabled her to understand her son’s development and find an integrated class that was the best match for her son’s needs. The Family Connector program is part of BCnC’s family-centered approach. The center believes individuals come from families, which make up a community. It is important to service the entire family. Family connectors empower the entire family, especially parents, with knowledge and skills to support their children and youth’s growth and teaches them strategies to cope with stresses. The program is funded through Tufts Medical Center’s Asian Health Initiative. Clients are referred to Family Connector from BCnC’s programs internally or community externally. The social workers offer support with education for the client’s children, along with short-term counseling and services. All BCnC clients and people in community are eligible for Family Connector services.

“Each program in BCnC provides great and high quality services for different populations and Family Connector connects all the dots together to better serve the entire family,” said Wenjun Zhai, Family Services manager. “We can be connected to each program and support each person as a family, both in BCnC and the community.”

What is liver cancer?

• Tumors or lesions that occur in the liver
• Also known as hepatocellular carcinoma
• 250,000 to 1 million people worldwide die each year from liver cancer complications.

What puts you at risk for liver cancer?

• Being of Asian American or Pacific Islander ethnicity
• Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have the highest rate of liver cancer in the United States.
• A hepatitis B virus infection, even if you are on hepatitis B medicine
• A hepatitis C virus infection
• Hereditary hemochromatosis/iron overload disease
• Cirrhosis of the liver
• Smoking and alcohol use
• Obesity
• Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease
• Diabetes mellitus
• Male gender

Where can I go to get screened and for treatment?

You can make an appointment to visit the Center for Liver Disease at Tufts Medical Center by calling (617) 636-5883, or visiting us at: Division of Gastroenterology 800 Washington Street Tufts Medical Center Boston, MA 02111

About the authors

Kathleen Coleman is a nurse practitioner in the gastroenterology department at Tufts Medical Center. Kendra Demakis is a registered nurse and school nurse practitioner at the MGH Institute of Health Professions.

Tufts Medical Center

World Famous Mary Dixon

Come to the psychic that every one knows and trust Mary Dixon for 55 years. I have been helping people like you to find happiness. My name is Mary and I can give you true advice on love-marriage-business-health and personal problems. I can tell who is your friends or enemies. I can call them out by name and tell you who to keep away from. I will give you lucky number, lucky astrology days, I can tell you how to find lost articles bring lose love back, I can tell if the one you love is true false, I will tell you if bad luck is natural or if some made it for you if you are sick and don’t know why I can find out tell, and if it is natural or influenced by others.

I guarantee to help you in 10 days! So stop suffering!

Come see me today! Call 774-225-4611. My office is in Quincy mass.
Eight strategies to prevent and manage diabetes

BY KA HEI KAREN LAU

The prevalence of type 2 diabetes is increasing worldwide. In the United States alone, 25.8 million individuals are affected by the disease, with an additional 80 million adults and children diagnosed with pre-diabetes. Some of the risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes include a family history of diabetes, inactivity, obesity and being of a certain ethnicity. In fact, Asian Americans are twice more likely to develop diabetes than non-Hispanic whites. According to a study conducted in New York City in 2004, one out of two adults of Asian descent had diabetes or were at risk.

Despite the alarming increase in type 2 diabetes cases, there is good news. Type 2 diabetes is preventable and manageable. In his new book, “The Diabetes Solution: What You Have to Know to Live Well,” Dr. George King shares eight strategies that can help you and your loved ones prevent or manage diabetes.

1. Follow the traditional Asian diet:
Cut the fat intake in half and double the fiber intake.
The Asian Diabetes Initiative at Joslin Diabetes Center completed a clinical trial that showed how a traditional Asian diet helped participants who were at risk of developing diabetes to lose weight and increase their sensitivity to insulin, an important hormone that is responsible for lowering the blood sugar. Different from a typical Western diet, the traditional Asian diet is higher in fiber (15 grams of fiber for each 1,000 calories you consume) and lower in fat (15 percent of the calories you need). This diet also encourages you to have more plant-based protein rather than protein that comes from animals.

2. Reduce your body weight by 5 to 7 percent.
A prominent national clinical study, the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) study has shown that for those who are overweight, reducing their body weight by 5 to 7 percent will help delay and even prevent the development of diabetes. In this study, overweight is defined as having a body mass index (BMI) at 25 to 29.9, which will help in your weight loss plan. Conducting moderately intensive exercises, such as brisk walking or biking for 150 minutes each week, is important in the prevention of diabetes. If you do not have a regular exercise plan, you can begin by increasing your number of daily steps by 500 steps for every two weeks. In general, it is important to exercise at least three times per week.

3. Increase your muscles’ glucose-absorbing ability through aerobic exercises and strength training.
Muscles are responsible for consuming glucose in the body as well as increasing sensitivity to insulin. Building more muscle mass (either through body weight training or weight lifting) will help in your weight loss plan. Conducting moderately intensive exercises, such as brisk walking or biking for 150 minutes each week, is important in the prevention of diabetes. If you do not have a regular exercise plan, you can begin by increasing your number of daily steps by 500 steps for every two weeks. In general, it is important to exercise at least three times per week.

4. Activate your brown fat.
Not all kinds of body fat are bad! There is a particular kind of fat, “brown fat,” that is beneficial to the body. Found in small amounts in the body, brown fat is mainly activated by cold temperatures, though there are other triggers. Once activated, it can burn as much as several hundred calories a day. You can try lowering the thermostat of your home to the mid-60s range to help stimulate some brown fat activity in your body.

5. Become an inflammation fighter.
Inflammation is an important defense and regeneration system in our body, which is essential for good health. The inflammatory process is usually rapid; however, when exposed to inciting agents for an extended period of time, the process will become chronic. Ongoing chronic inflammation can have a damaging effect by contributing to insulin resistance, a condition in which your body becomes less sensitive to insulin. Being overweight is one of the causes of this chronic, low-grade inflammation. Losing weight, quitting smoking and consuming foods that have anti-inflammatory effects (e.g. many fruits and vegetables, and some spices) are helpful in preventing chronic inflammation.

6. Get seven to eight hours of quality sleep every night.
There is growing evidence that lack of sufficient sleep will increase insulin resistance. The average hours of sleep that city people get have been declining in recent years. Some people might also have poor-quality sleep due to various medical conditions such as sleep apnea. Building a sleep-friendly environment in your bedroom (e.g. avoiding bright light stimulation from television or computer monitors before bedtime and keeping the room as dark as possible) and seeking medical help are some of the ways to help you get a better night’s sleep.

7. Reduce stress and manage your mental health.
Acute and chronic stress, depression and anxiety have all been found to increase insulin resistance. It is important to identify your stress factors and then adopt strategies to help cope with your stress, such as meditation or seeking social support.

8. Boost your own natural antioxidants.
Oxidative stress can increase insulin insensitivity and can even damage the beta cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. Antioxidants can be found in phytonutrients that are present in different plant-based foods. Adapting the traditional Asian diet, which promotes high plant-based protein intake and therefore more phytonutrients-rich vegetables, will help you to increase the level of antioxidants in your body.

If you are interested in trying out some of the traditional Asian diet recipes, finding out ways to incorporate exercise into your daily life or looking for more information on diabetes management, visit www.aadi.joslin.org (available in English and Chinese).

About the author
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Dealing with urges to smoke

BY THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

As an ex-smoker, you’ll have urges to smoke. Sometimes the urges are physical, as if your body needs a cigarette. At other times, they’ll be mental — feeling like you deserve a cigarette. Sometimes you may want to smoke out of habit.

Physical urges
As a smoker, you became addicted to the nicotine in cigarettes. Nicotine can create good feelings that make you want to smoke more. But it also creates bad feelings when you try to cut back. Physical urges are one way your body tells you it wants nicotine. This “craving” for nicotine is part of the withdrawal process, along with symptoms such as headaches and feeling tired or lightheaded. These symptoms go away after one or two weeks, but the urges may keep coming for a while. At time passes, you’ll have fewer physical urges to smoke.

Mental urges
Did you used to reach for a cigarette when you were nervous? Or to help you relax? Or as a reward? If so, you may still want a cigarette at those times.

Habit
Smoking is a habit you can change. You learned to use cigarettes to feel “normal.” Now you must retrain yourself. In time, you’ll feel normal without cigarettes.

Put your plan into action. Review the plan, practice and be ready to act when you feel an urge to smoke.

Put your plan into action
• Do you need to stock up on anything such as gum, hard candies, healthy snacks, books, videos or projects?• Is there anyone you want to talk with about your plans?• Do you need to stock up on anything such as gum, hard candies, healthy snacks, books, videos or projects?• Is there anyone you want to talk with about your plans?
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