

Marta's Newstand

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Office stretches

When working at your computer in the office, it's a good idea to take breaks. These yoga poses, by the Cleveland Clinic, are a good choice and can be done while sitting in your chair.

Neck rolls: Gently drop your head forward and roll from side to side. The weight of your head will gently stretch your neck. Avoid letting your head drop back to protect your spine.

Shoulder rolls: Gently lift your shoulders and rotate them backwards in slow circular motions. Repeat a few times, then reverse the motions. This loosens and lubricates joints and opens

Doodling helps people stay focused

Hardly realizing they're doing it, uncountable individuals are using a simple activity to help them stay focused during long speeches, meetings or seminars. It helps them grasp new concepts and retain information so it can be accessed later.

They are doodling.

Research in neuroscience and psychology shows that, far from being a waste of time, it's like a playing field for the brain that also allows them to review and improve their insights.

The marks and drawings may be patterns, designs or images, landscapes or people. Some doodlers use words or letters that end up being intricately lined.

Historically, doodlers are in good company. Einstein, JFK, Marie Curie and Henry Ford were prolific doodlers. Their minds instinctively knew that doodling is deep thinking in disguise, a simple and accessible way of innovating.

Doodling has led to countless breakthroughs in science, technology, medicine, architecture, literature and art, say amazon.com reviewers.

"It's a thinking tool," says Sunni Brown of Austin, Texas, author of, *The Doodle Revolution*. One of her projects includes training company managers to translate concepts and into sketches and drawings in order to spark ideas.

Researchers suspect doodling keeps the brain active by engaging its "default networks," regions that maintain a baseline of activity in the cerebral cortex when outside stimuli are lacking, says the *Lancet*.

Keep it fresh

Every retail operation is different, but whether you sell appliances, tools or women's clothing, one of the strategies by TJX might work for you.

American-based TJX is an international retailer with stores such as Marshalls and TJ Maxx, selling off-price fashion and home items. One of the company's most important secrets, revealed by former executives of the company to *Fortune*, is making the shopping hunt

the chest for better breathing.

Yoga fan pose: Sitting forward in your chair, gently move your arms behind you until you can hold onto the back of your chair. Keep your elbows there and adjust the height of your hands until you feel a good stretch in your chest, arms and shoulders.

Recipe of The Month

Lobster lovers rejoice!

For those of us who have bypassed the live lobster tanks in grocery store meat departments, now's the time to buy and try. Abundant supplies and lower prices mean we can indulge without breaking our budgets.

In the past, most of us have stuck to frozen lobster tails for special occasions. Nothing inspiring, like lobster pasta, pot pie, bisque, chowder, or mini lobster rolls to impress dinner guests. And nothing to please our kids like mac and cheese or lobster pizza!

For purists, who prefer the fresh-from-the-sea taste, here's a simple recipe for preparing lobster tails. Lots of them. No muss. No fuss. But yummy served "as is" or to cut up for inclusion in your personal masterpiece.

Baked Lobster Tails in Foil

Buy fresh or frozen lobster

exciting. They put real treasures in the treasure hunt -- Discounting a \$1,250 Stella McCartney dress to just \$499, for example.

Shoppers trumpet their scores on the Pinterest: A discounted Hermes watch hiding among other brands; Christian Louboutin heels hidden in racks of shoes; denim for under \$20.

Most important for the concrete and highway retailer, you have to come to the store to score the big finds.

TJX doesn't lose money on these secret treasures. As a giant retailer they can buy low. And they don't have to buy seconds or discontinued items.

The company specializes in moving merchandise fast. Stores take delivery of a product and put it out on the floor the same day. The "door to floor" plan cuts down the need for storage.

Quick turns keep the merchandise fresh.

The theory is: People love new and they know there are many items, but maybe just one dress in a particular size. That makes the purchase special and shoppers know it.

Health in the News

Time to get a flu shot

The CDC does not recommend one flu vaccine over another. The important thing is to get a flu vaccine every year. Everyone who is at least 6 months of age should be immunized this season.

They include the following:

- * People who are at high risk of serious complications if they get the flu.
- * Those who have certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease.
- * Pregnant women.
- * People younger than 5 years old and people 65 years old and older.
- * Individuals who live with or care for others who are at high risk of developing serious complications.
- * Household contacts and caregivers of people with certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease.
- * Household contacts and caregivers of infants less than 6 months old.
- * Health care personnel.

Note that a standard dose quadrivalent flu vaccine, given as a nasal spray, is approved for healthy people 2 through 49 years of age.

I struggle with the decision to get the flu vaccine. As a healthcare worker I am mandated by law to take it. However, for many years I have taken the homeopathic flu remedy each month from my naturopathic doctor. It has served my family and I well for many years. Hard decisions for some. The bottom line, do SOMETHING to avoid getting the flu. It can be a

tails, two for each diner if small and one if large.

Thaw, if frozen, and pat dry with a paper towel. Remove the membrane with a scissors and loosen meat from shell with your fingers.

Place 1 or 2 tails on a square piece of foil large enough to enfold generously. Sprinkle each with salt, pepper, lemon or lime juice and top with a pat of butter.

Fold foil to create sealed packages and place them on a cookie sheet.

Bake in a 450-degree oven: 25 minutes for 4-8 oz. tails, 30 minutes for 9-12 oz. tails, and 35 minutes for 13-16 oz. tails. Save the juice.

Remove from oven, fold back foil, and brown lobster for 1 minute under the broiler.

Place tails on a hot platter, pour juice from foil over them, and serve with hot drawn butter.

Thanks for all of your Referrals!

I succeed when people like you refer to me your friends, neighbors and colleagues.

It's the best kind of compliment I can receive. Recycle this Newsletter by forwarding it to a friend!

Marta Ranaldo

devastating illness for some.

The best hand sanitizers

The CDC says the best way to clean your hands is with soap and running water. Wash for 20 seconds if your hands are visibly dirty.

Without access to soap and water, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer is the best choice. It should have a minimum of 60 percent alcohol in order to kill most bacteria and viruses.

A study by BMC Infectious Diseases, reported by UC Berkeley, showed that office workers who used the sanitizer five times a day were about two-thirds less likely to get sick than others.

Hormone therapy OK for women ages 42 to 58

Hormone replacement therapy started after menopause seems safe and lowers most markers for heart disease risk while reducing hot flashes.

According to a multicenter trial published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, use of hormone-replacement therapy fell sharply after 2002 when the Women's Health Initiative found that it raised the risk of heart attack and stroke in older women, most of whom were 10 years or more past menopause.

The new study, funded by Kronos Longevity Research Institute, shows that in healthy women aged 42 to 58, and no more than three years past menopause, heart attacks and strokes were rare, including in those who were on the therapy for four years.

Dramatic: All running helps in the long run

Researchers have found that running, no matter the duration or speed, will reduce your mortality risk by about 30 percent.

A study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that people who run less than an hour a week have the same health benefits as people who run more, regardless of sex, age, body mass index, health conditions or smoking status.

Running consistently can even balance out other things that raise your risk of early death, including obesity, high blood pressure and smoking, said Carl Lavie, a cardiologist and co-author of the study.

"Fitness may be the strongest predictor of survival," Lavie said. And the exercise benefits could be translated to other activities, such as biking or walking.

"The study tells us that doing some exercise is clearly better than doing none at all," said Clyde Yancy, a professor at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine as reported in USA Today.

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**Marta was the recipient
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