



7 tips for sustainable weight loss

Ways to shed pounds in the new year – and keep them off for good – from a UC Davis Health dietitian and specialist in weight management.

[Learn more](#)

News you can use – Wellness



A healthy 'Club Med'

A key to sustainable weight loss is finding and sticking to a meal pattern that includes healthy foods that you enjoy eating. The Mediterranean diet can be one.

[Mediterranean diet: How to get started](#) ›
[Replace unhealthy fats with olive oil](#) ›



Dry January: The why and how

One month is enough time for people to assess their drinking. And research shows even a brief break for moderate to heavy drinkers can produce immediate health benefits.

[How to stay alcohol-free for a month](#) ›



A heart-healthy exercise plan

Getting started with a workout plan can be challenging, especially if you're not someone who regularly exercises. Here are tips to help.

[8-week exercise plan for a healthy heart](#) ›
[Improve stretching and flexibility](#) ›
[More exercise and fitness tips](#) ›

Spotlight – Research and innovation



Do collagen, omega-3 and whey help bones?

Molecular exercise physiologist Keith Baar specializes in sports medicine and studies the effects of collagen, whey and omega-3 supplements on bone and tendon health. Here are findings from his work.

[Read about the research](#)



Two ways to avoid the procrastination loop

Of the four main factors that affect how much we procrastinate, two are actually in our control. Psychology professor and executive function researcher Yuko Munakata shares how to focus on them.

[Read about the research](#)

Updates – COVID-19

COVID data

COVID wastewater levels remain 'Low'

California's overall adjusted [wastewater COVID viral activity level](#) remained "Low" at 2.47 as of the week ending Dec. 28, the CDC's latest report as of press time. That's roughly half the national rate. For comparison, California levels were approximately:

- 1.90 or "Low" in mid-December, reported in the last edition of this newsletter
- 11.49 or "Very High" at this time last winter

COVID hospitalizations remain very low

California's preliminary [weekly hospitalization rates](#) of COVID-associated hospitalizations per 100,000 population were 1.2 as of the week ending Dec. 28, the CDC's latest report as of press time. For comparison, levels were approximately:

- 0.9 in mid-December, reported in the last edition of this newsletter
- 9 during the New Year's peak last winter

Respiratory illness

National respiratory illness outlook

"As of January 3, 2025, the amount of acute respiratory illness causing people to seek health care is at a high level and continues to increase nationally," the CDC wrote in its last national [Respiratory Virus Data Channel Weekly Snapshot](#) as of press time, dated Jan. 3. "COVID-19 activity is increasing in most areas of the country. Seasonal influenza activity continues to increase and is elevated across most of the country. RSV activity is very high in many areas of the country, particularly in young children."

"Based on CDC modeled estimates of epidemic growth, we predict COVID-19 illness will continue to increase in the coming weeks as it usually does in the winter. **There is still time to benefit from getting your recommended immunizations to reduce your risk of illness this season, especially severe illness and hospitalization.**"

[The same CDC page](#) also has tools for searching the current wastewater viral activity level for COVID, flu and RSV for individual states

More data sources

[Federal](#), [state](#) and [county](#) sites may continue to report various COVID data. Some data may be in transition, less relevant than before, and/or involve longer lag times.

Updated COVID vaccines available for patients

UC Davis Health has received updated 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccines and is offering limited self-scheduling for UC Davis Health patients.

Patients may contact their primary care provider's office to schedule an appointment, or self-schedule through [MyUCDavisHealth](#). (Note: not all UC Davis Health clinics offer the vaccines).

[According to the CDC](#), everyone ages 6 months and older should get the 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccine. This includes people who have received a COVID-19 vaccine before and people who have had COVID-19. **There are different recommendations based on your age – such as for people 65 and older – and other factors.** For more info, see [the CDC's COVID pages](#) or our [COVID pages](#).

Some other info sources about availability and scheduling are: consumer pharmacies/drug stores, the state [covid19.ca.gov website](#) and [MyTurn website](#), and the CDC's [Getting Your COVID-19 Vaccine page](#).

Free COVID tests

Last fall the federal government announced that U.S. households are eligible to order 4 free COVID-19 tests at [COVIDTests.gov](#).

The state [covid19.ca.gov website](#) also has information about groups that qualify for free tests, and about insurance coverage for tests.

Symptoms? Keep at-home COVID treatment in mind

Prescription antiviral pills like Paxlovid can be an easy-to-use COVID treatment for people with conditions that increase risk of severe disease – such as diabetes, extra weight, and high blood pressure. [Info: COVID treatments page](#)