

Q

## *Should I be sore after every workout?*

—Alice S., Pelham, NY

### **What risks come with cosigning a lease?**

—Sara L., Philadelphia, PA

You're putting major money on the line here. Cosigning guarantees that you'll foot the bill if the tenant doesn't, which includes rent, late fees, damaged property, or even a lawsuit, says Eric Dinnocenzo, a tenant attorney in New York City. Still willing to cosign? Read the contract carefully: Make sure the time frame is clearly stated and there aren't any sneaky lease extension or renewal rules, and confirm that you're not covering anyone else if there are other roommates on the lease.

### **I love fruit, but a friend said it's just nature's candy. Should I limit how much I eat?**

—Mary Fran G., Berwyn, IL

A large pear packs about 23 grams of sugar—about one gram more than a Kit Kat! But that's just a sliver of the story. In addition to fructose, a naturally occurring sugar, fruit also contains tons of disease-fighting compounds, minerals, and fiber. There's even evidence that eating fruit can help reduce heart attack, stroke, and some cancers. To reap the benefits without adding on pounds, aim for three portions a day—each with around 60 calories and 15 grams of carbs, says *Women's Health* advisor and author of *The F-Factor Diet*, Tanya Zuckerbrot, R.D. That's about half of a large apple;  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of blueberries; a medium peach; half of a grapefruit; or half of a large banana.

"No pain, no gain" shouldn't be taken literally. Muscles may ache a day or two after doing a new or more intense routine, says Carol Torgan, Ph.D., an exercise physiologist in Bethesda, Maryland. (The discomfort you feel is from microscopic tears in your muscle fibers, which rebuild to make muscles even stronger.) But feeling sore after every workout could mean you aren't giving your body enough time to recover, which puts muscles at risk for injury. Instead of skipping the gym, exercise parts of your body that don't hurt (if your hammies are tight, focus on your core or arm muscles), and if soreness lasts longer than 72 hours, give yourself a rest day or do a low-intensity activity like walking or yoga.

## **SAFE OR NOT?**

### **TAP WATER**

**NOT ALWAYS.** Although the U.S. has some of the safest drinking water in the world, it's still far from pure, says Nneka Leiba, a senior analyst at the Environmental Working Group, a nonprofit that advocates for public health. The Environmental Protection Agency tests annually for about 90 chemicals (including arsenic, lead, and copper); in 2009, about 28 percent of all water treatment systems in the U.S. had at least one significant violation. Many contaminants that aren't regulated (such as antibiotics and depression meds) end up in our taps too. Plus, hydraulic fracturing—or fracking (a process used to extract natural gas and oil from deep within the earth)—can leach chemicals like methanol and formaldehyde into the groundwater. Before buying bottled H<sub>2</sub>O, check your annual water report for any violations and consider getting a water filter (like the Brita Atlantis Pitcher, \$23, amazon.com), which can remove most contaminants. At restaurants, ask if they use a filtration system, such as Natura Water.

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