



Probably not, but if you pay attention to your health, it's not that bad.

BY RON FURLONG

Although not the case with everyone, many of us go through (or went through) the first 40 years of life without too many thoughts about such crazy things like saturated fat, trans fat, calorie intake, high fructose corn syrup, LDL levels, HDL levels, triglyceride levels or any of that alien mumbo jumbo. But, as you near that magic mark of age 40, you begin to learn and understand that strange, far-away dialect that previously

never made any sense. You start to speak the alien language of health.

Ask a 20-year-old what three foods are richest in omega 3 fatty acids and they are bound to give you a strange look before answering, "Was that the planet in 'Avatar?'" A 40-year-old is more apt to answer directly, "Salmon, flaxseeds and walnuts."

Three things are destined to happen as you hit 40. You cannot avoid them.

1) You will know your cholesterol numbers as well as you know your social security number.

2) You may never have had to watch your weight your entire life, but you will now.

3) Lastly, you are going to turn 40. There is nothing you can do or inject or swallow or rub over your body to stop it from happening (probably it will happen with a big 4-oh surprise party thrown by loved ones who were perhaps afraid the whole world wasn't aware of just how old you were getting).

There is something you can take heart in, though. The fact that you are reading this magazine means that you are in the golf business in some capacity and, more than likely, at some level, you are a golfer. Golfing, if nothing else, is good exercise. Frustrating as it can be at times, it is a healthy endeavor; that is assuming you don't let your stress level rise too high during the round, which would be counterproductive to your health.

And speaking of stress, superintendents, as a whole, are a group who tend to suffer from this "ailment" perhaps more than many other professions. It comes with the job. I won't get into all of the causes of this stress, because we all know what they are, but safe to assume there are more than a handful of things on a daily basis that makes life stressful for the average super.

So, how can the superintendent who is approaching or at that magical age of

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Healthy at 40

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40 stay healthy? Can they? Well, because I'm a wise old man who has gone through the "transition" into the 40s a few years ago, I can sit back now and bestow my vast wisdom to those approaching the dreaded 4-0 number.


Keep Old Tom alive

Let's create a hypothetical superintendent. We'll call him Old Tom.

Old Tom is about to turn 40. He is the new superintendent of a private club with high expectations and no time to wait for results. The superintendent he replaced was only there three years before he was shown the door. Let's give Old Tom high cholesterol, high LDL numbers and low HDL. Maybe a little high blood pressure, too. Heart disease runs in his family. He has three young children and owns a home that has plummeted in value since he bought it a few years ago. Old Tom does play basketball with the boys on Thursday nights, but other than that isn't too active. He can't stay on the court too long before needing a blow. He just can't seem to stay out there like he did in years past. He plays golf twice a week in the summer, but finds himself taking a cart more and more.

Old Tom has always weighed about 185 as an adult, a good weight for his 5'10" frame. His weight is now at 202.

What can we do to make Old Tom healthier? Heck, what can we do to keep



Why is this man frowning? Because now that he's turned 40, he can't seem to keep the weight off.

Old Tom alive? Here are a few things that might mean Old Tom truly turns into “Old” Tom.

■ **Annual well visit.** Old Tom needs to go to the doctor every year from now on, and he needs to ask questions. He should do his blood work for the cholesterol numbers before he visits the doc, so he can discuss those numbers at the physical. If the numbers can’t be lowered through exercise and diet, a medication might be in order.

Old Tom may have been too macho for an annual well visit when he was still Young Tom, but now that he’s Old Tom, it’s actually macho to commit to an annual well visit.

■ **Reduce “bad” food.** Old Tom needs to reduce the foods that contribute to the high cholesterol. Red meats. Pastas, potatoes and bread. Fried food. Soda and junk food. Eggs and dairy.

■ **Consume “good” food.** In addition to reducing the foods that contribute to the high cholesterol, Old Tom needs to replace these with foods that can actually lower his cholesterol numbers. Fish, vegetables and fruits. Raw nuts. He needs to consume the omega 3s.

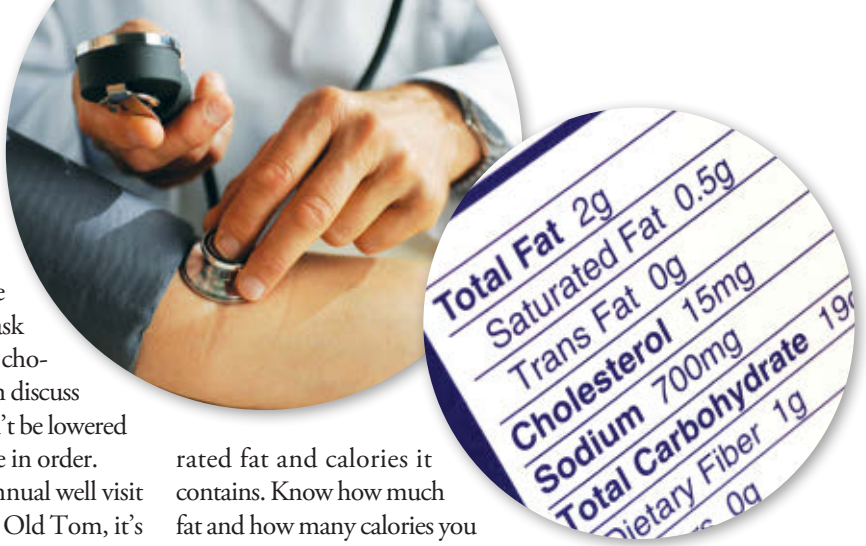
■ **Check the numbers.** Ten years ago I never thought about — let alone checked — the fat intake of a particular food. Now I rarely put anything into my body without knowing the satu-

rated fat and calories it contains. Know how much fat and how many calories you are getting each day. Set a goal. It’s ok to go over it from time to time, but keep it in check.

■ **Reduce stress.** Again, sounds easy, but how? Well, Old Tom needs to dedicate himself to his new job, that’s for sure, but not at the expense of his health. He must make sure he allows time for his family and his kids. Some stress is actually good for you. But it must be kept in moderation. Dedicate yourself to your job, but make sure your job does not become your life. Hopefully any employer would want this for their employees.

■ **Exercise.** It’s an easy thing to say, but a much harder thing to actually do on a regular basis. We all have to find the thing

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it is we like to do. For myself it was purchasing a good quality treadmill. I hate to run outside for some reason, but I actually enjoy pushing myself on the treadmill. I put on the iPod and turn some sports on TV with the sound turned down and have at it. It works for me. Find what works for you. For Old Tom it might be playing basketball twice a week instead of once, and walking when he plays golf instead of climbing into the cart.

Turning 40 doesn't have to be so bad. With a little care Old Tom can have his big 5-0 party in ten years, his big 6-0 party in twenty, and... Well, you get the idea. Eat well, exercise and don't work till you drop. There are too many other things that are more important. ■

Furlong, a contributing editor to Golfdom, is superintendent of Avalon Golf Club in Burlington, Wash.



On-line assistance

Just like shopping, dating and chatting, the Internet has made staying healthy both easier and more complicated at the same time. But here are a few resources we like the best:

www.LiveStrong.com This site is hosted by Lance Armstrong but don't let the Yellow Jersey scare you away — the site allows users to make their own goals, whether that's losing 5 pounds or 50, quitting smoking or logging your exercise to calculate calories burned. Our favorite part of the site is their food diary, which reveals the stark reality of how bad that What-a-Burger drive-thru trip was for us.

www.MyGoals.com There aren't any sites out there that are going to include such goals as "walk-mow greens myself at least once a week," or "walk instead of riding at least every other round." But the beauty of this site is you can make goals as specific as you want, and it'll help you stay on track by sending you the occasional e-mail reminder at the appropriate time. Have trouble remembering important dates? This site can help. Here's a hint: Put your wife's birthday in there and the site will remind you. Do it now and avoid the doghouse later.

www.EatingWell.com For a minute, we had "add more butter to everything" on our New Year's resolutions. Turns out that's bad, even though it tastes good. This site will give you simple tips on how to keep your food tasty while saving yourself some of those unnecessary fats, carbs, sodium, etc. It can also help out by telling you things that should be in your regular diet that aren't already there. Yeah, the drive-thru isn't one of them.

www.MensHealth.com It used to be we read this magazine back in college because we dreamed of getting six-pack abs. That dream has set sail, but this magazine still is packed with useful information for staying in shape. The workouts are the best, as they're simple to follow and track, and they make us feel macho. Plus, they still have the racy articles in there, like "your guide to making her melt." Too bad the answer involves the six-pack abs...

www.DumbLittleMan.com This one is the opposite of **www.menshealth.com** — it's for those of us who are starting out, let's say, *lower* on the expectation scale. Like, if you're not so interested in the six-pack abs, but you'd like some ideas on how to just get off the couch. This site is written with a humorous tone, so even if you don't get off the couch, at least it'll entertain. An example of some advice from the site: "Start really small." — *Golfdom staff*



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