Have you ever gone out to eat and ordered a meal without realizing how much food would be brought out to you? If so, you might have thought at the time, “Oh, my! How can I eat all of that?” You probably managed, though. Maybe you immediately divided the portions and asked for a to-go box. Then you began eating, one bite at a time. Eventually, you finished your task.

This approach works for other tasks, such as big school assignments or home projects, the same way. It might feel overwhelming to know that you have to write a major multi-page paper for a class or that you need to clean house for a family gathering. Some people feel very lost and shut down emotionally because they just don’t know how they will get through the activity. The key is to “divide and conquer” by breaking the task up into smaller pieces that can be handled more easily.

First, identify and define what the task is. Too often, we try to problem-solve before we have really identified what the problem is. It’s no surprise, then, that we don’t get the kind of result we would like. If you have a large assignment, for example, identify what the final result should look like. Then look for ways to break that up into sections. What does “clean the house” mean? Do you need to put fresh linens in the guest room and mop the kitchen floor, or do you need to complete a major Martha Stewart-like renovation?

Once you have defined your task clearly, look at the calendar to see how much time is available between now and the date when everything must be done. Break the task up into steps and set due-dates for each step to be completed. By the time the whole activity needs to be done, it can be with less stress and worry on your part.

It is also important for you to let go of any delusions of perfection during this process. Perfection is a trap that no one can achieve. Be realistic and eat your meal one bite at a time.

In only days, the fourth annual Health and Wellness Fair will take place in CU 1, 2, and 3. Forty-two vendors are scheduled for the event which will be held from 10 until 2 on Thursday, February 9. We encourage everyone to come out and browse through the information and to talk to the vendors. Students who show their OCCC student ID cards will have chances to win prizes each hour (Who doesn’t love prizes?). Make plans to join us on February 9. We hope to see you there!
Random Factoids
For Your Health

There is a website that targets teens to provide support to help them break the smoking habit: teen.smokefree.gov. One feature of the site is a free message cessation service (smokefreeTXT) that provides tips and support 24/7.

Coca-Cola might be a refreshing drink that gives you a good feeling and starts your day off right, but it’s also highly acidic. With a pH of 2.8, this “soft” beverage falls somewhere between lemon juice and vinegar in acidity. Drinking Coke can soften the enamel on your teeth and it weakens your bones. A better option is plain filtered water.

The less processed a food is, the more nutrient rich it tends to be. Whole foods, those that are consumed in their natural state, provide the nutrition our bodies need without the preservatives and additives that they don’t. Examples include raw or minimally cooked fruits and vegetables, whole grains, herbs, and poultry, seafood, and lean meats.

The glycemic index (GI) ranks foods based on how much they raise the blood glucose level in the 2 or 3 hours after eating. Contrary to popular belief, simple sugars don’t raise blood glucose levels any more rapidly than more complex carbohydrates, but they should still be used sparingly because of their low nutritional values. Fats and proteins raise these levels very little. Know how certain foods affect you and eat a variety of foods.

The Risks of Staying on Your Toes (Literally)

Are you a sucker for cute shoes? By cute, I mean outrageously high and sexy. Many of us love this type of shoe because it makes us look taller and shapelier. It also attracts the attention of many men which makes us endure the pain and discomfort more often and for longer periods of time. While occasionally wearing high, high heels may not be problematic, frequent wearers can suffer long-term problems from them.

Research has shown that wearing high heels frequently changes the way women walk, not just in heels, but also in flats or bare feet. Wearing high heels forces women to walk in shorter strides and to use muscles only to walk as opposed to a muscle/tendon combination. Even in bare feet, frequent wearers walk in the same manner which puts excess strain on the muscles.

Heels also shift the weight distribution absorbed by the foot. Instead of having your weight balanced over the entire foot, higher heel heights shift the pressure to the toes. A 3” heel increases toe pressure by about 76%. With today’s extreme styles, 3 inches might be a modest height!

Keeping the foot in a pointed position for long periods of time also causes the calf muscle and Achilles tendon to contract and shorten. In extreme cases, surgery may be required to lengthen the Achilles tendon.

Changes in posture and balance can lead to instability. This instability increases the risk of ankle sprains or even an occasional break.

High heels also tend to be narrower and fit more tightly. They make the foot look smaller, but this forces the foot to conform to the shape of the shoe, resulting in bunions, hammertoes, and corns. Over time, nerve damage can occur because of the constant pressure on the toes.
Feel Confident: Be Successful

Sometimes, the difference between our successes and failures is all in the way we view ourselves. Having confidence in ourselves moves us toward investing the time we need to build skills and trusting ourselves to use them. This link is so strong that Ruby Taylor, an entrepreneur, author, and social worker in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, has created a program to help urban teen girls become more confident in themselves.

We put our energy toward those things in life that we view as important. If we don’t view ourselves as having worth, we lack the confidence to make good choices for ourselves. The result is a cycle that can lead us into a downward spiral.

Regardless of your sex or age, it is important to be as confident as you can be.

Know the Signs for your Heart’s Sake

The heart is an amazing little organ roughly the size of your clenched fist. Its function is to squeeze blood throughout our bodies, sending oxygen, nutrients, and the like out to our tissues and carting toxins, debris, and so forth back to be discarded. Our hearts are made to last a lifetime if they are treated well.

However, our genetics, lifestyle, and certain diseases can put our hearts at serious risk. Taking steps to reduce our risk factors is important in living a long, healthy life, but so is recognizing the signs of a heart attack and seeking help immediately.

The typical signs and symptoms are more common in men than in women although women may experience these, too. A tight squeezing pressure that causes severe chest pain is one of the classic symptoms of a heart attack. There may also be pain in other areas of the body, most notably, radiating down the left arm.

Other symptoms include shortness of breath, sweating, nausea and vomiting, and sudden panic or elevated anxiety.

A majority of women and some men experience very different symptoms. Because they are often not associated with heart attack, the person may wait too long before seeking medical attention. These symptoms include:

- Flu like symptoms such as fever, chills, body ache, and headache;
- Mild burning sensation in the upper abdomen or indigestion that may be accompanied by nausea and vomiting;
- Upper body pain that affects both arms or between the shoulder blades;
- Sleep disturbances;
- Feeling overly full;
- Fatigue;
- Jaw, neck, or shoulder pain

Often, these atypical symptoms cause concern, but since they tend to come and go for a period of time, most people don’t take them as seriously as they should. It is always better to err on the side of caution and seek medical help than to assume your symptoms are not serious until it’s too late.

Be proactive in preserving your health by maintaining a healthy weight, eating a healthful diet, exercising, controlling diabetes, and giving up tobacco products.

In the event of an attack, call 9-1-1 immediately. You cannot cough or breathe your way out of a heart attack as suggested by an email that circulates the Web periodically. Getting help as quickly as possible increases your chances of survival. So, have a heart and take care of yours.

Is it only a toothache? Jaw pain, especially in women, can signal something much more serious.

Do you have ideas for a story or recipe? Please send them to Mary Turner at mturner@occc.edu or to Alta Price at aprice@occc.edu.

Believing that we are worthy and competent helps us exude confidence.
Season the scallops on one side with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add the scallops seasoned-side down and sear until golden, 4 to 5 minutes. Flip and cook until golden on the other side, 2 to 3 minutes.

Fluff the quinoa with a fork and divide among 4 plates. Top with the scallops, drizzle with citrus sauce and sprinkle with parsley.