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Editor's note

An ounce of prevention

In my family's home, we have two different brands of toothpaste, three kinds of dental floss, two flavors of mouthwash, and a Waterpik. A little obsessive about our dental care? Perhaps. But we believe the adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

My family's obsession was validated recently as I reviewed the career of Irwin Mandel, D.D.S., Consumer Reports on Health's longtime dental adviser, who died in late May.

Mandel, an expert in dental science and practice, is credited with shifting dentistry's emphasis from repair to prevention, and was founding director of the division of preventive dentistry at Columbia University's College of Dental Medicine in New York City. His first article for CONSUMER REPORTS was published in 1949, and he became the newsletter's chief dental consultant when it started in 1989.

As Marvin M. Lipman, M.D., CR's chief medical adviser, said recently, Mandel was "a scientist, a meticulous researcher, a peer-revered academic, an inspiring teacher, a humble humanitarian, and above all, a mensch." We hope you benefited from Mandel's advice as much as we did.

In this issue, we take a look at a problem that troubles many of us: sensitive teeth. Turn to page 7 to find out what causes the condition and to learn some key strategies to help cope with it.

GAYLE WILLIAMS, EDITOR

health wire health wire health wire

Can olive oil help prevent a stroke? Possibly, according to a study of 7,625 older adults in France published recently in the journal Neurology. Those who reported that they regularly cooked with olive oil or consumed it in other ways (such as on salads) were 41 percent less likely to have a stroke over a five-year period than those who said they never used olive oil.

Morning sweats. In a small study presented at the American College of Sports Medicine's annual meeting in June 2011, 15 adults worked out for 30 minutes on a treadmill at 7 a.m., 1 p.m., or 7 p.m., then had their sleep and blood pressure monitored. The morning sessions correlated with better and longer sleep and lower blood pressure compared with the afternoon or evening workouts.

To screen or not to screen? Ovarian-cancer screening doesn't save lives, according to a study of 78,216 women ages 55 to 74. Half of them received annual screenings with a pelvic ultrasound and blood test to detect tumor markers; the others got regular gynecologic care. After 13 years, the rate of death from ovarian cancer didn't differ significantly between the two groups—though the tests might still have the potential to benefit certain women, the study noted.

Walking to slow prostate cancer. A study of 1,455 men with prostate cancer found that those who walked briskly—3 miles per hour or faster—for three hours