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ASK MH

Is white rice really so much worse than brown?

- DR

Not always. Sure, brown rice boasts more fibre, vitamins and minerals, but it does "reduce the digestibility of protein", says nutritionist Alex Ferentinos – meaning your beef burrito with brown rice may not be as effective a muscle-builder as you think. While black rice packs more antioxidants than white, it's actually the white stuff that wins out when you're hitting the gym, as it contains more protein. Just because it's processed doesn't mean it isn't beneficial. "Whey protein powder is processed too, and it's still good for you," says Ferentinos. Use our tables to compare the three:

| WHITE PER CUP | |
|------------------|--------|
| GI value | 64 |
| Fibre | 1.5g |
| Protein intake | 72% |
| Cook for | 10 min |

| BROWN PER CUP | |
|------------------|--------|
| GI value | 55 |
| Fibre | 3.5g |
| Protein intake | 66% |
| Cook for | 30 min |

| BLACK PER CUP | |
|------------------|--------|
| GI value | 55 |
| Fibre | 6g |
| Protein intake | 68% |
| Cook for | 20 min |

Do standing desks really improve your productivity?

- VT

Trust us, the back and forth with HR is worth it. Standing for an extra 90 minutes a day lowers your blood sugar and builds core strength. And while being sedentary shortens your life, you don't need to be on your feet all day; in fact it would probably put strain on your knees. Opt for a model that allows standing and sitting, such as the Varidesk Pro (\$385; au.varidesk.com), so you can keep a lower profile when you need to. "Build up gradually," says rehab expert Dr John Buckley. "Begin splitting 30 minutes over a day, then add 30 minutes each week." If building management stonewall you, try pitching to the corporates how the health benefits will improve your work. HR case closed.



Hangovers hit me harder these days. Do they worsen with age?

- PO

Sorry, but your liver isn't the alcohol-processing machine it used to be. As you age, it produces less alcohol dehydrogenase, a group of enzymes responsible for breaking down the two types of alcohol (ethanol and methanol) present in most drinks, according to researchers at the University of Hamburg. So when you down the same amount of booze you consumed a decade ago, it hangs around in your body longer, extending your morning agony. "When we get older, the recovery process for everything we do is harder, longer and slower," says gastroenterologist Dr Mark Welton. Want to avoid hellish mornings in the future? Um, drink less. But for those times when you do get, er, socially excited, give your liver a lift and stir a scoop of whey protein into a glass of milk. The milk and whey are stocked with cysteine, an amino acid that will help rid your body of toxins.

