



HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER MARCH 2021

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HIGHLIGHTS for the March 2021 Newsletter

Seeing is Believing: A New Way to Improve Heart Health

Can a visualization improve heart health? Sounds a little woo-woo, right? But if you could see what your arteries actually look like on the inside, you might change your mind. Here's what happened in a recent study when people got an up-close look...

Your Order is Ready: The Hidden Cost of Dining Out

Dine in or take out? Sometimes it's out of convenience. Maybe it's a habit. Or perhaps you've got a favorite restaurant you like to visit. Before you order...read this before dining out. You might be surprised by how much it really costs.

4 Simple Ways to Build Stronger Bones

"I have fallen, and I can't get up." That's a line from a commercial that was popular years ago. If you want to build stronger bones and lower your risk for a fracture, here are some things you can do.

Y-Axis: Time for an Afternoon Siesta

It's mid-afternoon. You're tired and groggy. Should you fight it, dose up on caffeine, or take a cold shower to stay awake? There's a better solution to recharge your batteries and improve heart health.

Recipe: Zucchini Lasagna Roll-Ups

Hungry for something simple, healthy and tasty? Give this recipe a try.

Take the March Health Challenge!

Be Mindful Daily: Create a daily mindfulness practice

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: What do those "healthy" food labels really mean?

NEWSLETTER

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THE Y AXIS



Time for an Afternoon Siesta



Kick back and close your eyes. It's a great way to recharge your batteries.

But it's not the only thing a nap can do for you.

A few extra Zzzs, can help lower blood pressure.

A recent study followed 212 adults with high blood pressure.⁴ When these adults napped an hour a day, it helped lower blood pressure by an average of three points.

That might not seem like much. But it's enough to lower the risk for heart problems by 10 percent!

Take a nap. A healthy weight, diet, and regular exercise can improve heart health, too.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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Seeing is Believing: A New Way to Improve Heart Health

Healthy lifestyle habits can help prevent heart disease

Are you a visual person? Sometimes seeing is believing. And that may be just what you need if you're at risk for heart disease, according to a recent study.¹

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. It claims the lives of about 659,000 people a year.

There are many causes. The most common things that lead to heart problems include:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Poor eating habits
- Lack of exercise
- Too much alcohol

Fortunately, about 80 percent of heart disease cases can be prevented. How? Eat healthy. Exercise. Don't smoke. And maintain a healthy weight. It's the best advice to keep your heart healthy.

But what if that advice isn't enough to change your behavior when you're at risk for heart disease?

Ask your doctor to see your arteries. Sounds a little weird, right?

If you could take a closer look at your arteries...

In a recent study, researchers showed patients pictures of their arteries.

They pointed out the spots that were narrow because of deposits on artery walls.

And many of the patients were changed. More than half of them quit smoking and began eating healthier after seeing their arteries.

"This may be the wake-up call patients need," says lead researcher Dr. Rikke Elmoose Mols. "It may help people take their medications and modify their behaviors to reduce heart disease."

Are you at risk for heart disease? About half of all Americans are, according to the American Heart Association.

If you want to protect your heart and live longer, talk to your doctor and change your ways. If that doesn't work, maybe a visual will convince you.

MORE

These 5 habits can save your heart
<https://tinyurl.com/dfpba943>

Your Order is Ready: The Hidden Cost of Dining Out

Restaurant meals packed with extra calories

When you're busy and you're hungry, how do you curb your cravings?

A lot of people hit the drive-thru for a burger, fries, and soda. With COVID-19 restrictions still in place in many areas, restaurant take-out is a popular option, too.

In fact, a recent survey found that about 58 percent of adults go out to eat at least once a week.

How often do you go out to eat?

If it's more than once in a while, the cost can start to add up. But there's another cost of dining out often. It could be the reason you weigh more than you should or have other health problems.

In a recent study, researchers looked at 364 meals at dine-in and fast-food restaurants.²



They found that 92 percent of dine-in or take-out meals contain more calories that you need in a single meal. And this didn't include drinks, appetizers or desserts.



Zucchini Lasagna Roll-Ups

Hungry for something simple, healthy and tasty? Give this recipe a try.⁵

Ingredients

- 6 oz. low-fat ricotta cheese
- 3 oz. parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 egg
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 6 oz. low-fat mozzarella cheese, grated
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 6 oz. marinara sauce
- 2 large zucchini (sliced lengthwise 1/8-inch thick)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Make ricotta mixture: In a bowl, combine ricotta, Parmesan, egg, and garlic powder, salt, pepper, and half the mozzarella.
2. Spread a thin layer of marinara into bottom of a 9-inch by 9-inch baking dish.
3. On each slice of zucchini, spoon a layer of ricotta mixture.
4. Roll up zucchini slices. Place in baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining mozzarella cheese.
5. Bake until zucchini is tender and cheese is melted. Approximately 30 minutes.

72 calories xper roll-up.
Makes 15 roll-ups.

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4 Simple Ways to Build Stronger Bones

Poor bone health impacts 54 million adults in the U.S.

"I have fallen, and I can't get up." Remember this made-for-TV-product catchphrase?

It raised awareness about seniors and the risk of falling. It also became an icon of pop culture spoofed in movies, TV shows, and comic strips. But it really isn't a laughing matter.

An estimated 54 million people in the United States have poor bone health, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation.³

Poor bone health leaves bones depleted of tissues and minerals that keep your bones strong. If your bones are weak, they're more likely to break if you fall.

Older people are more likely to have poor bone health. But prevention starts when you're younger.

Here's what you can do to strengthen your bones:



1. Improve nutrition.

Your bones need calcium and vitamin D to stay strong. Leafy greens like kale and spinach, and low-fat dairy products are good sources of calcium. Milk, eggs, fish, and fortified cereals contain vitamin D. Your skin also makes vitamin D when you're in the sun.



2. Exercise.

Weight-bearing exercise helps make your bones stronger. Try jogging, walking or playing tennis. Basic bodyweight exercises like squats, pushups and lunges strengthen your bones, too.



3. Don't smoke.

Smoking prevents your bones from absorbing important nutrients. If you do smoke, get help to quit.



4. See your doctor.

A simple blood test can measure calcium and vitamin D levels. X-rays and other screenings can also help your doctor evaluate the health of your bones.

MORE

25 more ways to improve bone health
<https://tinyurl.com/1in1upp>

Your Order is Ready: The Hidden Cost of Dining Out (continued from page 1)

- **Restaurant meals with the most calories...**American, Chinese, and Italian meals averaged 1,495 calories per entrée.

Cook at home to improve your diet

If you want to keep your weight under control and improve your health, make

an effort to prepare your own meals more often.

It might take a little planning. But you'll be able to choose healthier options and serve smaller portions than a restaurant. If you don't have time to cook at home, make smarter food choices when you order.

MORE

Calories on the menu
<https://tinyurl.com/3phv9mxx>

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Take the March Health Challenge!
Be Mindful Daily: Create a daily mindfulness practice

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question:
What do those "healthy" food labels really mean?

WELLNESS CHALLENGE

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Be Mindful Daily

CHALLENGE

Create a daily mindfulness practice

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Be Mindful Daily.”
2. Create a plan to practice medication daily.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When stress reached an all-time high for Rachael Kable, it felt like everything was falling apart.

She was worried and anxious. She didn't sleep well. Even driving made her heart race.

Going to work pretending everything was fine, only made things worse.

“It felt like no matter what I did, I was constantly pushing myself up a never-ending mountain,” says Rachael.

When someone suggested she try meditation, she didn't think it would help.

“How could being mindful really change someone's life?” she thought.

But she decided to stick with it and make mindfulness a regular part of her day.

When she wakes up in the morning, she spends the first few minutes in bed. But she's not thinking about a big to-do list, errands, or work. Instead she focuses on being present. She notices sounds, the view from a window, and pays attention to how she feels.

At first, it seemed like a waste of time. But spending a few minutes each morning being mindful changed everything.

“For me, it has truly become a way of living and thinking,” says Rachael, author of the book *The Mindful Kind*. “Rather than waking up too early and immediately feeling bombarded by my to-do lists, I wake up feeling refreshed and energized.”

Only have a few minutes a day? Great. Tap into the power of mindfulness to improve your life and your health. Take the month-long health challenge to Be Mindful Daily.

Mindful Matters:

How much do you know about mindfulness? Take this quiz to find out.



T F

1. Paying attention to the texture and taste of food and how you feel when you're eating is an example of mindfulness.
2. Multi-tasking is a great way to get more things done and maximize your time.
3. You typically don't think about any one thing for more than 3 to 4 seconds at a time, without being interrupted by other thoughts.
4. Practicing mindfulness can improve the area of the brain used for memory and learning.
5. A daily meditation or mindfulness habit can help you sleep better, reduce stress, prevent heart disease, and lower blood pressure.

How did you do? Mindfulness isn't just a feel-good activity. Research shows a daily mindfulness practice can actually help you feel better and make healthier choices.¹ What about multi-tasking? There's nothing wrong with being efficient. But trying to do too many things at once can increase stress, impair learning, and make you less productive. Take a deep breath. Mindfulness is a skill you can learn.

Answers: 1. True. 2. False. 3. True. 4. True. 5. True.

Let's Get Clear About Mindfulness

Even though mindfulness is gaining popularity, it's still a bit of a misunderstood activity.

- Do you sit cross-legged on a pillow and hum quietly to yourself? You don't have to.
- When you meditate, do you try and solve all your problems? No.
- Is it just for people who have an interest in spirituality? No.
- Does it require long periods of silence for hours a day? No.
- If you do it once to try it out, will it work? It takes practice.

Mindfulness is a way of paying attention to your thoughts, feelings, sensations, and environment.² But instead of trying to problem-solve, mindfulness is simply being aware of what's happening in the present moment.

5 ways
mindfulness
is good for your
health
<https://tinyurl.com/1mi8i74w>

Try This 4-Week Plan to Practice Mindfulness

Want to tap into the benefits of mindfulness? It takes practice. But you can do it, even if you're busy. This mindfulness practice only takes 9 minutes a day. Here's what you'll need to know:

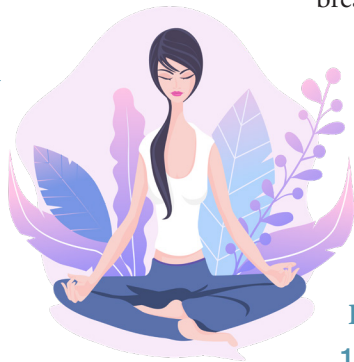
Where? A quiet place where you can be alone without distractions

When? Morning, afternoon, and before bed.

How long? 3 minutes per session.

Be Mindful – Week 1

1. Set a timer for 3 minutes.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Pay attention to all the thoughts in your head about work, family, and other things. Notice how you're feeling.
4. Focus on your breath as you inhale and exhale.



Be Mindful – Week 2

1. Set a timer for 3 minutes.
2. Close your eyes. Try not to think about anything for the first minute.
3. After a minute, think about your day, what you have planned, or what you accomplished for the day.
4. After two minutes, focus on your breathing.
5. Breathe in deeply through your nose. Hold the breath for 5 seconds. Exhale slowly through your mouth for 7 seconds.

Be Mindful – Week 3

1. Set a timer for 3 minutes.
2. Close your eyes. Sit in silence, and try not to think about anything for the first minute.
3. Place a hand on your stomach. Breathe in through your nose for 5 seconds. Exhale through your mouth for 7 seconds. Repeat.
4. Focus your thoughts on your breathing, and feel the rise and fall of your stomach.
5. Pay attention to your thoughts and feelings. Think about what you have planned, or what you accomplished for the day.

Be Mindful – Week 4

1. Set a timer for 3 minutes.
2. Close your eyes. Sit in silence, and try not to think about anything for the first minute.
3. Breathe in through your nose for 5 seconds. Exhale through your mouth for 7 seconds.
4. Place a hand on your stomach. Now breathe in through your mouth, and exhale through your nose.
5. Focus your thoughts on your breath. Feel the rise and fall of your stomach. And notice how it's different.
6. Pay attention to your thoughts and feelings. Think about what you have planned, or what you accomplished for the day.

8 Health Benefits of Mindfulness



Try this out. Stop and pay attention to your thoughts for just a minute.

Is your mind racing from one thought to the next? That's typical. Mindfulness can help you learn to focus your thoughts and be more aware of what's really happening. It takes consistent effort. But anyone can learn to practice mindfulness. It doesn't cost anything. And you can tap into the benefits of mindfulness in just a few minutes a day.

Research shows mindfulness can help.³

1. Improve mood
2. Lower blood pressure
3. Reduce depression and anxiety
4. Improve sleep
5. Reduce stress
6. Lower heart rate
7. Control breathing
8. Reduce pain

3 guided mindfulness practices
<https://tinyurl.com/ffxjl3iw>

When you learn to practice mindfulness, it changes the way you think and feel. You can use mindfulness to improve your mood, develop healthy habits, and be healthier.

How to practice mindfulness at work
<https://tinyurl.com/zv49wasj>

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Be Mindful Daily

CHALLENGE

Create a daily mindfulness practice

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days practice mindfulness.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to create a daily mindfulness practice.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you take steps to Be Mindful Daily. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health. .

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
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_____ Number of days this month I practiced mindfulness
 _____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes



Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____



ASK THE DOCTOR

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Q.

What do those “healthy” food labels really mean?

A.

If you’ve ever wondered what those “healthy” food labels mean at the grocery store, you’re not alone.

There’s lots of buzzwords and branding on food labels designed to get your attention. If it looks healthy, maybe you’ll toss it in your cart and be on your way. That’s what food manufacturers want you to think. But before you head to the checkout line, read the labels. You might be surprised to learn what they really mean.¹

Natural

Foods labeled “natural” don’t use man-made ingredients or preservatives.

- They don’t have added color.
- They don’t have fillers.
- And they aren’t processed much (if at all).

This means they are pretty close to the way they were when they were picked or prepared.

But “natural” can still be used on food labels even if antibiotics, growth hormones, or other chemicals are used.

All-Natural

Before you pay a little more money for something labeled “all-natural,” check the food label.



“All-Natural” isn’t a term used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Food companies made it up to help them sell more of their food to you. Foods labeled “natural” and “all-natural” may be the same.

Organic

Shopping for “organic” foods may help you find healthy choices.

Foods labeled “organic,” must have at least 95 percent organic ingredients, according to the USDA.

- Food producers that use “organic” on labels must meet federal laws.
- They must keep detailed records of what they do to a product and the steps they take to make it.
- They must also pass an inspection.

100% Organic

If a label says “100% organic,” it’s really more of a game plan to help a product sell.

ASK THE *Wellness* DOCTOR

The rules for a “100% organic” label are the same as foods labeled “organic.”

- Five percent of the ingredients may not be organic.
- But the 5 percent does have to come from an approved list.

Made with Organic Ingredients

There are USDA rules for this label. Foods marked “made with organic ingredients” must be:

- Made up of at least 70 percent organic ingredients.

And here’s something that should give you comfort. Foods with this label can’t be made with “sewage sludge-based products or ionizing radiation.”

Sewage-sludge is often used to fertilize growing crops. Ionizing radiation is used to extend the shelf life of foods. Foods treated with this process must say so on the label.

If you want the best foods for your body, eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and legumes. When you shop for foods – whether fresh, frozen, canned, or boxed, read the label to make sure you’re making a healthy choice.

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STAYIN' ALIVE

Talking about safety isn't enough.



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