

# HEALTHY

# You!

"Your Source For A Happy and Healthy Lifestyle."

January 2014

## THIS EDITION FEATURES

- **The CrossFit Craze**
- **Why Folic Acid is Key When Expecting**
- **How to Stick to your Weight Loss Goals**
- **The Importance of a Primary Care Provider**
- **Daily Affirmations for Well-being**

Brought to you by **Independence** 

# The CrossFit Craze

**It's not who  
you are that  
holds you  
back, it's who  
you think  
you're not.**

~Attributed to Hanoch McCarty



CrossFit is a high-intensity workout that's been embraced as the main strength-conditioning program at many police academies, elite athletic organizations, and by many members of the armed forces. This "training for the unknown and unknowable" has become a trendy exercise option with studios opening across the country. While the approach is intense, the philosophy welcomes all ages and fitness levels.

## Why the CrossFit craze?

- It's fun. Workouts, called WODs, or workouts of the day, are constantly varied to reduce boredom.
- You get fit faster. Interval training (higher efforts combined with active rest) is more effective than low- or moderate-intensity exercises.
- You build confidence. Participants are often surprised how quickly they gain strength, which allows them to do even more challenging routines they never thought they could.
- The welcoming feel. CrossFitters are all about community; they support each other and love helping new members reach their personal goals.

Are you over your current exercise routine or tired of going nowhere on a treadmill? Mix it up with the diversity and results of CrossFit!

**To learn more about CrossFit and  
view demo exercise videos,  
visit [crossfit.com](http://crossfit.com).**

## Expecting or Not: Folic Acid is Key

### What is folic acid?

Folic acid, also known as folate, is a B vitamin that helps the body make new cells. Rapid cell development is required for a developing baby. Women of childbearing age, even those who are not pregnant, should make an effort to get their daily dose of folic acid to prevent birth defects. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most birth defects occur very early after conception and nearly half of all pregnancies are unplanned. It is very important to take folic acid as a preemptive measure, even for women who aren't currently planning on becoming pregnant.



### Foods that are naturally high in folic acid are:

- green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, broccoli, and lettuce
- okra, asparagus, and mushrooms
- fruits like bananas, melons, and lemons
- beans and meats
- orange and tomato juices

Some enriched cereals and grains are also fortified with folic acids, but women will not get enough folic acid through fortified grains alone.

### Other benefits of folic acid

Folic acid is used to prevent birth defects of the spine and brain and to treat and prevent anemia, liver disease, and ulcerative colitis. A large study showed that women who consume more folate have a significantly reduced risk of developing high blood pressure, too. Folic acid supplements are inexpensive and readily available, but there is no substitute for eating vegetables.

# Stick To Your Weight Loss Goals with Self-compassion



Weight loss tops the list of New Year's resolutions. After a season of too many holiday parties, cookies, and heavy meals, it's only natural that many people will try to take off some extra weight in the New Year. Unfortunately, many of them will fail, and the success rate of New Year's diet resolutions, in general, can be discouraging.

Part of the problem is the impractical advice that's often offered to overweight people. One team of researchers believes that placing the emphasis on weight-loss, as opposed to overall healthfulness, sets dieters up to fail. Failed attempts at weight-loss or regaining weight can also lead to feelings of shame, helplessness, blame, and guilt.

Instead, attempt to balance your new self-discipline with a healthy dose of self-compassion. Self-compassion is treating yourself with kindness. If you over indulge one weekend or have a week without a weight change, don't beat yourself up, just use it as an incentive to try harder. Research shows that practicing self-compassion helps increase your chances of success at anything, including shedding extra pounds.

### More simple ways to help keep the weight off:

- Keep a food journal
- Drink plenty of water
- Get tempting foods out of your house
- Focus on fresh fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins
- Avoid sugar, starches, and fatty meats
- Exercise daily

**Want to know how self-compassionate you are?**

Take the quiz at [self-compassion.org/test-your-self-compassion-level.htm](https://self-compassion.org/test-your-self-compassion-level.htm).





# The Importance of a Primary Care Provider

Do you have a primary care provider (PCP)? Even if your health insurance plan doesn't require one, choosing and working with a PCP is an easy way to streamline and potentially improve your health care. Your PCP should be viewed as a trusted go-to health advisor who can coordinate all the aspects of your health care.

Your primary care doctor can treat temporary ailments, but even more importantly can help to keep you healthy or catch health issues before they become serious. Annual exams include everything from blood pressure and cholesterol to cancer and diabetes screenings. This is also a good time to discuss any changes in your health so your doctor can help you adjust.

Take charge of your health by keeping up with well-care visits, screenings, and immunizations. Together with your PCP, you can lead a healthier, happier life.

For tips on choosing a primary care provider that's right for you, visit [nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001939.htm](http://nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001939.htm).

*"Man may be the captain of his fate, but is also the victim of his blood sugar."*

*~Wilfrid G. Oakley*

## Foods Fit for Game Day

Football parties can easily become a feeding frenzy. Skip the super greasy foods and try these delicious, healthier alternatives while still enjoying game day.

### High-Calorie Food Frenzy

Chicken wings

Nachos

Potato chips

Cream-based or cheesy dips

Potato skins

Chili or sloppy joes

Sub sandwiches

Cupcakes and cookies

Burgers and hot dogs

### Fit for Game Day

Grilled chicken tenders coated in buffalo sauce with celery and carrots

Black bean quesadillas

Air-popped popcorn

Salsa, hummus, or bean dip

Baked sweet potato fries

Use extra lean ground beef or swap out for ground turkey

Opt for lean meats with whole grain bread and wraps

Low-fat brownies, chopped fruit

Fish tacos



## Recipe: Quinoa Pizza Bites\*

2 cups cooked quinoa  
2 eggs  
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese  
1 small onion, chopped  
½ cup chopped fresh basil  
2 cloves of garlic  
1 tsp dried oregano  
1 tsp paprika  
1 cup chopped turkey pepperoni  
Pizza sauce for dipping

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix together all ingredients except the pizza sauce in a medium bowl. Lightly grease a mini-muffin pan, then fill each cup with 1 table-spoon of the mixture and press down gently. Bake for 15-20 minutes. Serve with pizza sauce for dipping.

\*Adapted from So Very Blessed



**“If you don’t think every day is a good day, just try missing one.”**

~Cavett Robert

## Daily Affirmations for Well-being

Leading a healthy lifestyle, for most of us, is not an easy task and requires conscious effort. Changing the way you think through mental exercises such as daily affirmations can help you in your quest for health and longevity.

The following are some healthier choices to make every day and some affirmations to get you started on writing or saying your own:

- **Stay active.** A Harvard study showed that 75 minutes per week of moderate exercise, such as brisk walking, could add almost 2 years to your life.  
**“Every action I take moves me towards improved health.”**
- **Be positive.** Research suggests that optimism can fight cancer, as it is linked to the release of carotenoids, which are antioxidants.  
**“My choices are intelligent and life-enhancing.”**
- **Catch those zzzs.** Sufficient sleep can help you get through the day without fatigue and fight off heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure.  
**“I listen to my body and heed its needs.”**
- **Eat healthy.** Nutritious choices can protect you from a variety of diseases. Fill your plate with foods low in fat and calories and high in essential nutrients.  
**“I love taking care of myself.”**



- **Hang out with friends.** Strong, healthy relationships can keep disease and stress away. Positive relationships have also been shown to prevent dementia.  
“I am loved.”
- **Give up your bad vices.** This step can increase your lifespan. For example, stopping smoking can add 10 years, and giving up tanning can lower your risk of skin cancer.  
“I drop habits that no longer serve me.”
- **Handle stress.** Stress can affect cardiovascular health, digestion, insulin regulation, and immunity. Healthy methods to manage stress include spending time with positive people, writing in a journal, or taking a brisk walk.  
“I see each part of my life as a lesson.”

## Test Your Knowledge!

Did you pay attention this issue? Let's find out.

### 1. Which of the following are NOT true about CrossFit?

- a. It is a strength conditioning workout for many military groups, police academies, and athletes.
- b. It's fun because workouts are constantly varied.
- c. You won't feel good about yourself if you do this workout.

### 2. Which of these statements about folic acid are true?

- a. It's only important if you are pregnant.
- b. It can't be found naturally in foods.
- c. It helps the body make new cells.

### 3. Which of the below best finishes this statement? I overate cookies after promising myself I would eat better.

- a. I feel like I've failed.
- b. It's because I have no self-control.
- c. I messed up, but will get back on track now.

ANSWERS  
1.) C. You won't feel good about yourself if you do this workout.  
2.) C. It helps the body make new cells.  
3.) C. I messed up, but will get back on track now.

Brought to you by

**Independence** 

Independence Blue Cross is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. The information in this publication is meant to complement the advice of your health care providers, not replace it. Before making any major changes in your medications, diet or exercise, talk to your doctor.