HEALTHY You!

“Your Source For A Happy and Healthy Lifestyle.”

February 2017

THIS EDITION FEATURES:

PHYSICAL EXERCISE FOR EMOTIONAL STRENGTH

KEEPING YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY

ESSENTIAL HEALTHY COOKING TOOLS

DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS

HEART-HEALTHY CHOCOLATE CHOICES

Brought to you by Independence
Physical Exercise for Emotional Strength

We all know that regular exercise can make us physically strong. However, regular exercise may also help us become more emotionally solid. If you have ever worked out when in a bad mood, you have probably seen this in action. Here are some other ways that exercise can make us feel better:

**Improve your mood.** Just a 30-minute walk around your neighborhood can release feel-good chemicals in your brain.

**Boost confidence.** Exercise makes us feel better about ourselves, and not just how we look. You may notice a boost in your self-esteem.

**Increase energy.** With oxygen flowing through your body, your heart and lungs work more efficiently. This makes you feel better and helps you to get through the day.

**Promote better sleep.** Regular exercise has been shown to help us fall asleep faster and deeper. Who among us can't benefit from a good night's sleep?

If you've been feeling the winter blues, a new exercise routine might help. Try for 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week.

*Source: mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/exercise/art-20048389*

Heart-healthy Chocolate Choices

If you consider yourself a “chocoholic,” you probably know that certain kinds of chocolate have benefits outside of being extremely tasty. Dark chocolate, in moderation, can positively impact your health if you follow a few guidelines:

**Choose wisely.** Choosing the right chocolate is important — otherwise, eating it can do more harm than good. Opt for organic dark chocolate with a high cocoa content. Avoid those that include caramel, nougat, or other additions.

**Follow your heart.** Dark chocolate contains heart-healthy flavanols. These particular antioxidants can help lower blood pressure and improve blood flow to the brain.

**Keep it in moderation.** Using food or drink for comfort can be an unhealthy habit. Eat only a small amount of dark chocolate, about one ounce, every few days.

The next time you think of reaching for a cocktail after a tough day, consider treating yourself to a small amount of dark chocolate instead. Who knew self-care could taste so good?

*Source: my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/benefits-of-chocolate-heart-health*
Essential Healthy Cooking Tools

Having some essential equipment can make healthy home cooking easier, faster, and more fun. Here are our top picks:

**Basic knives.** Make quick work of fruits and vegetables with a serrated knife, a 9- to 10-inch chef’s knife, and a paring knife.

**Cutting boards.** Avoid cross-contamination by keeping two, one for raw proteins and one for cooked foods and produce.

**Measuring spoons and cups.** Help control portions.

**Nonstick pots and pans.** These allow you to cook with less fat.

**Slow cooker.** Use everyday ingredients to create soups, stews, chili, and other easy meals that almost make themselves.

**Storage containers.** These help to make leftovers a simple next-day lunch.

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**Recipe of the Month:**

**Mexican Guacamole**

**Ingredients:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced (fresh or pickled)</th>
<th>2 ripe avocados, halved, pit removed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro</td>
<td>½ cup coarsely chopped tomato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 teaspoon of fresh lime juice</td>
<td>½ cup finely chopped sweet onion</td>
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</tbody>
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**Instructions:**

Combine half the onion, half the jalapeño, and half the cilantro in a mortar or food processor, then grind or pulse into a smooth paste. Transfer to a serving bowl. Scoop out the avocado with a spoon, combine with the onion mixture. Stir in remaining onion, jalapeño, cilantro, and lime juice. Gently mix in tomatoes.

*Try dipping with low-fat, multigrain chips, sliced cucumbers, carrot sticks, or red peppers.*
Discover Your **Strengths**

If you’ve already broken at least one New Year’s resolution, you’re not alone! Maybe it’s time to try a new self-improvement tactic: Focusing on your talents rather than dwelling on areas you need to improve. You will see a gradual change, and so will everyone else.

**Start with what’s easy.** Instead of attempting to change something that you don’t like about yourself, build on the good things you have going for you. If you already jog three days a week, add in a few additional exercises like yoga or weight training. If you sleep six to seven hours a night, try a few minor adjustments to your routine to make it a full eight hours.

**Recognize what you’re good at.** Do you always remember to floss? Do you call your parents regularly? Figure out why these tasks come easily and see if you can apply the same principles to other areas.

**Don’t target weaknesses.** Want to lose five pounds? Instead of subtracting unhealthy foods from your diet, try adding more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and water. There will be less room in your stomach for fattening foods.
Decide Together

Decisions, decisions... modern humans make hundreds of them a day. This can become difficult when it’s not just you making the decision. No two people see a situation the same way. Whether it’s a group of co-workers solving a tough problem or a family trying to make weekend plans, these tips will help everyone come to a consensus:

- Identify the problem and agree on the common goal.
- Stay focused on the matter at hand.
- Avoid being attached to one outcome. Discuss all options.
- Encourage the expression of thoughts, feelings, and opinions.
- Review the pros and cons.
- Don’t make demands, dominate the discussion, or criticize.
- Maintain a calm tone of voice.
- Come to a decision that respects everyone involved.

Monthly Quiz:

1. Which of the following can be a potential benefit of exercise?
   - a. Strengthen muscles.
   - b. Burn calories.
   - d. All of the above.

2. Which type of chocolate is the healthiest choice?
   - a. 60% organic dark chocolate bar
   - b. Black forest cake
   - c. Milk chocolate peanut butter cups

3. What isn’t a recommended tactic for making shared decisions?
   - a. Discuss all options.
   - b. Dominate the discussion.
   - c. Don’t raise your voice.

ANSWERS: 1)d 2)a 3)c

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