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THIS EDITION FEATURES:

Exercise Trends —

Are They Worth It?

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Exercise Trends— Are They Worth It?

Fitness trends come and go, but only a precious few have staying power. Here are some fitness trends from 2014 that are sticking around:

High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

What is it? Short bursts of high-intensity training with a short period of rest. One example is alternating running as fast you can for one minute, then walking for three minutes over a 15-minute period.

Is it worth trying? The upside is that HIIT elevates your metabolic rate post-exercise so you continue burning fat and calories after you've finished your workout. However, experts warn that HIIT could cause musculoskeletal injuries and cardiac issues.

Body Weight Training

What is it? Using your own body weight — think pushups, pull-ups, and lunges.

Is it worth trying? Not only is body weight training cost-effective and convenient, it also incorporates cardio and weight training, increases flexibility, and burns fat fast.

Yoga

What is it? A series of poses that incorporate the mind and body for overall wellness.

Is it worth trying? Yoga can improve health and flexibility while relieving pain. There's a reason yoga remains a top fitness trend year after year! If you sit at a desk all day, yoga poses can help to alleviate back and neck pain while toning muscles. This year, anti-gravity (or aerial) yoga, where you hang suspended in the air, is the big trend.

Foods that Cause and Fight Inflammation

If inflammation is the body's attempt to protect and repair itself, why eat anti-inflammatory foods? Sending immune cells and key nutrients to a small cut that needs to heal via increased blood flow is a healthy response to an injury or infection. However, inflammation can become dangerous when the immune response isn't shut off. According to the Mayo Clinic, a constant state of inflammation can cause damage leading to arthritis, cardiovascular disease, and even cancer, among other health concerns.¹

Chronic inflammation can be caused by stress, lack of exercise, being overweight, and even by the food we eat. Foods that are high in sugar and saturated fats can cause over-activity in the immune system. The following chart shows a few of the foods that cause and fight inflammation.



Foods that CAUSE inflammation

TRANS FATS – Linked to an inflammatory response with the heart. Look at the label and leave processed foods with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils on the shelf.

TOO MUCH SUGAR – The body is designed to handle only small amounts of sugar.

WHITE BREADS AND STARCHES – Refined white breads and starches can irritate our bodies.

OMEGA-6 OILS – Corn, safflower, peanut, and soybean oil. Often found in margarine, mayonnaise, and processed foods.

DEEP FRIED FOODS – Associated with chronic inflammation and oxidative stress.

SATURATED FATS – From animal products like processed meats and dairy.

Foods that FIGHT inflammation

BROCCOLI – Experts say broccoli helps the body cleanse itself of cancer-causing compounds and inflammation-fighting flavonoids.

EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL – Inhibits inflammation in a way that is similar to ibuprofen.

TEA – White, oolong, and green teas are all full of antioxidant compounds that reduce inflammation.

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS – Foods like oily fish, such as sardines or tuna, and walnuts, contain inflammation-reducing substances.

GRAPES – The skins contain resveratrol, which inhibits inflammation and adds fiber.

RED WINE AND DARK CHOCOLATE – In moderation.



¹Bauer, B. Buzzed on inflammation. Mayo Clinic Health Letter Online Edition. Available at: <http://healthletter.mayoclinic.com/editorial/editorial.cfm/i/163/t/Buzzed%20on%20inflammation/>. Accessed October 13, 2014.



Click [here](#) to search an extensive list of delicious pumpkin recipes.

Pumpkins: Not Just for Carving

Every year it is estimated that more than 28 million pumpkins are carved into jack-o-lanterns for Halloween. The vast majority of people who carve pumpkins throw away the pulp and the seeds. What they may not know is that pumpkins are a superfood. These gourds are one of the most nutritious fruits. (Really! Pumpkins are a fruit!) Their bright orange color is a clue that they are full of beta-carotene that the body converts to vitamin A for eye health, immune system boosting, and heart disease prevention.

Get scooping! Pumpkin seeds are a treasure. They are delicious to munch, either roasted or sprinkled on salads. Benefits include lowering the risk of bladder stones, helping to prevent depression, and helping to reduce cholesterol.

Uncanny! Canned pumpkin is packed with vitamins A, C, and K, as well as fiber. It's easy to use and makes almost anything even more delicious. Try adding canned pumpkin to smoothies, soups, oatmeal, pancakes, and baked goods, or add some cinnamon and spread it on toast. You can even add it to dog food to soothe your pet's upset tummy.

Recipe of the Month:

Pumpkin-y Baked Pasta

Ingredients:

15 oz. can of pure pumpkin	1 onion chopped
1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese	2 cloves minced garlic
½ cup low-fat milk	2 cups sliced zucchini
½ cup shredded parmesan cheese	1 tsp dried sage
12 oz. uncooked whole wheat pasta (penne works great)	½ tsp dried thyme
2 tsp olive oil	

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cook pasta in large pot according to directions. In a large skillet, sauté onions and garlic in olive oil until softened, stir in zucchini and herbs, and sauté for 4 – 5 minutes. Stir in canned pumpkin, milk, and ricotta cheese. Add drained pasta into skillet and mix well. Spoon into a baking dish and sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top. Bake for 15 minutes.



Caregivers:

Don't Forget to Take Care of Yourself

Caring for a child or elderly parent is rewarding, but it can take a toll on your personal health. It's important to care for yourself as well. Here are a few tips to decrease stress and improve your well-being:

- **Join a support group and seek resources.** Organizations such as the Red Cross offer caregiver training and important resources for family caregivers. You can also find guidance for all stages of caregiving at www.caregiver.org.
- **Ask for help.** Guilt and the need to be in control sometimes make us decline offers of assistance. However, try to make a habit of accepting help when it is offered and asking for help when you need it. Sometimes having someone else take care of small tasks, such as picking up medications or groceries, can alleviate a lot of stress.
- **Set aside some “me” time.** It's important to stay connected to friends and other family members. Be sure to set aside at least one day a week to spend with friends and family. Getting out of the house will help to relieve stress and increase feelings of connectedness.
- **Set up respite care.** Whether you care for a child or an adult, there are options for respite care. For children there are babysitters, day care, and more. For elders, there are adult day care centers, in-home nurses, and other options. Although you may feel uncomfortable leaving the cared-for in the hands of another, it's an important step. Visit www.eldercare.gov to locate an adult day care center.



The Power of Journaling

The idea of journaling or keeping a diary may remind you of middle school — sketching, scribbling hearts, and rambling about your deepest secrets. But, there could be something to journaling besides fights with mom or middle-school drama.

Scientific evidence shows that journaling stimulates both sides of the brain and allows us to use our brainpower in positive ways. In fact, journaling is great for:

Stress relief. Writing down daily frustrations provides a safe place to express feelings.

Self-esteem. Writing consistently can help you recognize patterns in your life. If one person keeps coming up in a negative way, you may realize this person is toxic and may seek out relationships that make you happier. On the other hand, if you write about the great things that happen, it can remind you of your positive qualities.

Creativity. Because journaling requires use of the right side of the brain, creativity is spiked! But journaling can also be great for the left, more analytical side — helping to marry the two sides and solve problems more effectively.

How to start:

Set aside 15 – 20 minutes a day to journal. Morning can be a great time to get the creative juices flowing and set your intentions for the day, but any time will work! Remember, there are no rules. This is your time to be totally free with your thoughts.

Quick tip:

Try journaling to help manage stress, understand emotions, and make decisions and changes in your life. The key is to write regularly, every day if possible. Here are a few questions to use as thought-starters:

- Did I feel anxious, frustrated, or angry today?
- Did I have a positive or negative interaction with a person today?
- Did someone make me smile or laugh today?
- Is there a decision I am trying to make?

Smoking: Isn't It About Time to Quit?

Bad habits are hard to break. That's why people get hooked! If breaking bad habits were as easy as just saying no, nobody would smoke, take drugs, or overindulge.

Sometimes, what you need is an extra reason to make that extra effort. November is a month to be thankful — for health, family, friends, and everything good in your life. Why not try letting the blessings life has to offer inspire you in breaking the smoking habit?

The Great American Smokeout is November 20, 2014, or the third Thursday of November each year. The American Cancer Society encourages tobacco users to make a plan in advance to quit by that day. Whether it's you or someone you care about who needs to quit, realize that quitting is hard, but you can increase your chances of success with help.



Visit www.smokefree.gov for free resources and support that can help you quit for good.



Monthly Quiz:

How much did you learn in this month's issue?

1. Which of the following is a good example of a food that fights inflammation?

- a. Sugar
- b. Tea
- c. Onion rings
- d. Tacos

2. What superfood is sold every fall and likely thrown away without being eaten?

- a. Apples
- b. Oranges
- c. Pumpkins
- d. Sweet potatoes

3. Choose the answer that best finishes the following sentence. Journaling helps to:

- a. Relieve stress
- b. Plan dinner
- c. Make friends

ANSWERS 1.) b 2.) c 3.) a

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