

FAB, FIT & HEALTHY

Simple steps to heal and
boost mind and body

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Page 3

EFFECTIVE EXERCISES FOR SENIORS

Page 5

FUEL FOODS

Page 9



2022



BSC grows work force in health care

As the demand for health-care careers grows work force grows in healthcare, Bismarck State College (BSC) is responding by bringing education to rural communities and partnering with industry to keep talent local.

With a cutting-edge, Health Science building complete with a virtual hospital on campus and two mobile simulation labs, BSC is training up students to meet the call of the high-demand jobs wherever they are.

"These sites state-of-the-art training facilities allow faculty to train educate students in a setting that simulates their future work environment," said says Mari Volk, BSC dean of Current and Emerging Technologies. "Students benefit by experiencing what it would be like to be in a real clinic before they get out into the real world."

In the past, students BSC Nursing and Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT) students at the BSC satellite locations had to travel to Bismarck to train with complete on-campus simulations. Now, the college's mobile simulation labs bring hands-on training to the

students.

BSC Nursing Program Director Annie Paulson, director of BSC's Nursing program, says this will ensure students at the BSC satellite sites are receiving the same quality of education as the on-campus students in Bismarck. It also helps the healthcare industry recruit students in rural areas where there are often workforce shortages.

The mobile Nursing simulation lab currently serves five towns in the North Dakota BSC satellite sites, including Hazen, Harvey, Ashley, Garrison and Hettinger. Additionally, the MLT program mobile lab offers provides experiential learning to BSC satellite classes at Miles City Community College in Miles City, Montana.

"The mobile simulation will allow us to take the mobile MLT classroom to rural communities, serve communities benefits" says Volk. "This education model allows us to take the classroom directly to the rural communities." "This keeps them from leaving rural America and moving to bigger metropolitan areas," said Volk.

While all the BSC health-care health science programs are at BSC are offered in response to meet industry needs, both the MLT and Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) programs are offered in partnership with Sanford Health.

Responding to an increasing demand for sonographers across the state, BSC launched a Diagnostic Medical Sonography DMS program in 2019 to train students for this high-wage, high-skill career. BSC will graduate the first class of sonographers in May 2022.

In addition to Nursing and MLT, BSC also is strong training students in a variety of healthcare fields such as Surgical Technology, Paramedic Technology, and Paramedic EMT programs.

"During COVID, we all learned that healthcare is even more crucial than we thought it was before. The demand for surgical technology, paramedic technology and paramedic EMT healthcare education and healthcare workforce has grown exponentially. As a polytechnic institution, BSC will always respond to those industry needs," said Volk.



Beware the threat of overuse injuries

Momentum can be a valuable asset as people pursue their fitness goals. Once a fitness routine picks up steam and begins to produce results, the resulting momentum can make it easier for individuals to fully commit to exercise and ultimately achieve, if not exceed, their initial goals.

A successful fitness regimen includes various components, not the least of which is sufficient rest. As individuals gain momentum and inch closer to their fitness goals, it can be tempting to skip off days. But rest is vital, allowing the body to recover and thus reducing athletes' risk for various injuries, including overuse injuries.

What is an overuse injury?

All physical activities carry a certain measure of risk. Athletes and fitness enthusiasts suffer injuries each day that have nothing to do with overuse. Such injuries often aren't preventable, but overuse injuries are. According to the Mayo Clinic, overuse injuries are caused by repetitive trauma. These injuries affect muscles or joints, and may be caused by training errors or mistakes with technique. Training errors include exercising for too long or doing too much of a certain activity. The resulting strain caused by overuse leads to injury. One common example of a technique error that can cause an overuse injury is improper form when performing strength training exercises. That's one reason why it's vital for anyone beginning a new fitness regimen to consult with a coach or personal trainer prior to starting. Coaches and personal trainers can illustrate proper techniques when using strength training equipment or lifting free weights.

Rest is vital, allowing the body to recover and thus reducing athletes' risk for various injuries

Such instruction can greatly reduce athletes' risk for overuse injuries.

Can other factors contribute to overuse injuries?

Athletes should know that overuse injuries are not always a result of errors with their training or technique. A 2014 study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine noted that certain intrinsic and extrinsic risk factors can increase athletes' risk for overuse injuries. Intrinsic risk factors for overuse injury include misalignment issues, leg length discrepancy, muscle imbalance, muscle weakness, and body composition. Adults and parents of young athletes should discuss fitness regimens with their physicians or children's pediatricians prior to beginning a routine. Such a discussion may uncover intrinsic risk factors athletes are unaware they have.

Extrinsic risk factors for overuse injuries include surfaces; equipment, including shoes; environmental conditions; and nutrition. Athletes can act as their own watchdogs to prevent overuse injuries caused by extrinsic factors, examining equipment and playing surfaces to ensure they're functional and safe, and eating a well-balanced, nutritious diet.

Overuse injuries are almost always preventable. Though it can be hard to take a break from an exercise routine that's producing results, rest is integral to a successful fitness regimen.

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Hurdling the obstacles of fitness

BY RALPH MANCINI

Living in a rural town with frequent brushes with sub-zero temperatures doesn't create the most conducive environment when it comes to staying in shape. But that shouldn't serve as an excuse for anyone to turn into a full-blown couch potato, explains Washburn-based fitness expert Megan Ronderos.

"I think sometimes we overcomplicate it. Sometimes we think we have to have a gym membership or have fancy equipment. And those things are great and beneficial, but really just by moving your body, there are so many things you can do."

The Certified Independent Revaluation Wellness Instructor adds that a pair of simple hand weights can go a long way when folks are stuck at home. Those dumbbells can help anyone breeze through a 20-minute session of lunges, squats, arm curls and triceps kickbacks.

The key, maintains Ronderos, is to prioritize those periods of physical activity rather than continually pushing them back — and ultimately putting exercise on the backburner.

By hosting a weekly group fitness class for women, the married mother of four is paving the way for her friends and neighbors to establish a modicum of consistency as it pertains to boosting their health via regular workouts.

"One of the reasons why I have my classes on Monday nights is because what you do in the beginning of the week sets you up for success for the rest of the week. It's just like if the first meal you eat every day is a healthy one, it's more likely we'll eat healthy for the rest of the day," she observed.

Inviting a gathering of 20 or 30 women at the Washburn Baptist Church is a winning formula when it comes to holding each participant accountable, advises Ronderos, who isn't opposed to people carving out weight-loss goals. In order to reach those objectives, though, she recom-



Fitness guru Megan Ronderos has developed quite a following among women in Washburn who aspire to reach their fitness goals despite the drawbacks of long winters and living in a town devoid of big city amenities. (Photo courtesy of Megan Ronderos)

mends they take the proper action steps.

"You need to look at your schedule, and say, 'Ok, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, these are the times I'm penciling in [and] I'm going to move my body for 20 minutes,'" says the one-time kindergarten teacher, who further asks fellow fitness enthusiasts to embrace the concept of multitasking.

Those who find themselves submerged with daily tasks and house chores can, in fact, incorporate movement into their mundane routines by churning out 10 squats while they're cleaning the dishes or practice their one-legged yoga poses as they brush their teeth.

And while running and cardio can pay dividends for people of all ages, Ronderos is also a staunch advocate of strength training and dispels any concerns of health-minded adults encountering injury due to weightlifting (if kept within reason, of course).

Pumping iron on a consistent basis, she notes, is a sure-fire method of improving or maintaining one's bone den-

sity or balance at any age.

"My chiropractor says that it's not usually people lifting heavy things that causes them to get hurt, it's when they're reaching over to bend and grab something because they haven't strengthened those movements."

As for the current intermittent and long-term fasting craze sweeping the nation, Ronderos fully endorses foodless periods for males and menopausal/post-menopausal women, but maintains that the same might not hold true for younger females.

"I think fasting is super powerful, but fasting is not going to work for everybody. I get a little bit nervous about younger women fasting because you can really throw your hormones off," she cautions.

Moreover, Ronderos shares that fasting isn't as daunting as some may imagine if they think of it in the context of not eating past 7 p.m. and not consuming food until 7 a.m. the next morning, which can be considered a fasting period, even with eight or more hours of sleep in between.

Food for thought

Fitness expert Megan Ronderos sounds off on healthy eating

BY RALPH MANCINI

Cracking the code on a healthy diet may be quite a bit easier than most people imagine, according to fitness expert and soon-to-be nutrition coach Megan Ronderos.

The key, she says, lies in every individual answering two questions: "What is your protein?" and "What is your produce?"

Every meal should be built around consuming a high-quality protein (eggs, lean/grass-fed meats, fish, nuts, etc.), along with fruits and vegetables, she notes.

Many people, however, fall into the trap of purchasing brands with trendy descriptors, such as "fat-free," "gluten-free," or "keto friendly," when they're nothing more than processed goods.

"I always cringe when I walk through a store and see these food labels, and really it's just processed junk food. So, I always go back about 10 years ago, I met someone who said, 'Does it grow on a tree? Did it grow from the ground?' There are no pasta trees growing anywhere," reasons Ronderos, who plans on counseling clients once she obtains

her Performance Nutrition certificate.

Poor choices in everyday eating, she mentions, may not only lead to weight gain and poor health, but can also result in certain folks developing anxieties.

On that note, she challenges people who may be overcome by fear, nausea, palpitations and other symptoms of anxiety to self-assess every food type or beverage item they may have recently ingested. These often include, she explains, sugary foods/substances, caffeine, soda, alcohol or fruit juice. Other times, though, feelings of extreme stress or impending doom could be triggered by non-food related causes, including a lack of sleep.

"Now that doesn't mean that we can wave a magic wand and the anxiety just disappears. But we can take steps to make it better, how to make healthy choices that are going to make me feel the best I can possibly feel," adds Ronderos.

"Outside intervention is necessary at times to break us out of eating, sleeping, working, moving the same way that we think is good, but maybe really isn't."

Build an amazing wardrobe on a budget

Books should not be judged by their covers, but appearances do make a difference in people's perceptions of others. That is why job seekers wear professional attire to job interviews and why weddings are made even more special when they become black tie affairs.

Wardrobe influencers model an ongoing rotation of designer looks. The latest designer looks may not be within everyone's budget, even for those who routinely update their wardrobes. The average adult between the ages of 35 and 44 spends \$209 per month on clothing, according to Credit Donkey, and the average family spends \$1,800 per year on clothing. Style seekers can rest assured that it's possible to build stylish wardrobes without going broke.

- Make a list of essential pieces. Certain wardrobe items, particularly office essentials, are staples. A crisp white shirt, a well-fitted blazer, black trousers, a sheath dress, a tailored suit, and some classic jeans are all worthy of inclusion in your closet. When you know which items to update, you can shop sales until your list is checked off.

- Shop discount retailers. Certain stores sell discounted, overstocked items from department stores or other retailers. Others fill the racks with last season's finds. Even if these offerings are not completely current, many are still trendy. In addition,

such stores frequently feature popular manufacturers and designer items.

- Browse consignment shops. Consignment stores can be found in towns all over the country and online. For example, The Real is a luxury consignment sales outlet for preowned designer items that are authenticated by experts. Many of these items are very gently used and still have a lot of life in them.

- Invest in tailoring. Any piece can be made to look more expensive when properly fitted. Moderately priced items can be tailored to individuals' bodies can look like designer clothes.

- Purchase one or two statement pieces. When indulging on a statement piece, choose items that will stand the test of time. A quality handbag or pair of shoes can be a splurge, provided they are well made and durable.

- Consider "cost per wear." The wardrobe resource What to Wear suggests asking yourself questions like: "Will I wear this multiple times?" or "Is this item driven by a fleeting trend?" or "Will this go with items in my closet?" These considerations will make it easier to determine if a particular item is worthy of your hard-earned dollars.

A great closet is not built overnight, but a budget-friendly wardrobe can be built by shopping the right stores and making a list of priorities.

Power Protein Smoothie



- 2 bananas
- 1/3 cup whole milk Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons nut butter
- 2 1/2 cups baby kale or spinach
- 2 cups assorted frozen fruit
- 2 scoops vanilla protein powder
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 1/2 cups unsweetened vanilla almond milk

Blend it until smooth



Moving every 30 minutes is one way to reduce the harmful effects of a sedentary lifestyle.

The risks of an overly sedentary lifestyle

Health experts call it "sitting disease." It refers to when people spend more of their time behind a desk or steering wheel of a car or planted in front of a television than they do engaging in physical activity. According to the American Heart Association, sedentary jobs have increased by 83 percent since 1950, and technology has reduced many people's need to get up and move. Inactivity is taking a considerable toll on public health.

A study from the University of Cambridge equated inactivity with being obese. The Mayo Clinic advises that research has linked sedentary behavior to a host of health concerns, and found those who sat for more than eight hours a day with no physical activity had a risk of dying similar to the risks of fatality linked to obesity and smoking. Increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, abnormal cholesterol levels, and excess body fat all can be attributed to inactivity.

Mental health can be adversely affected by a sedentary lifestyle as well. Australian researchers surveyed

A sedentary lifestyle can significantly increase a person's risk for various types of cancer.

more than 3,300 government employees and found men who sat for more than six hours a day at work were 90 percent more likely to feel moderate psychological distress, such as restlessness, nervousness or hopelessness, than those who sat for less than three hours a day.

In addition, a sedentary lifestyle can significantly increase a person's risk for various types of cancer. A German meta-analysis of 43 studies involving four million people indicated those who sit the most have higher propensities to develop colon cancer, endometrial cancer and lung cancer.

Johns Hopkins Medical Center says research shows that high levels of exercise at some point in the day can lessen some risk, but it's not entirely effective if most of the rest of the day a person is inactive. Risk for cardiovas-

cular disease increases significantly for people who spend 10 hours or more sitting each day.

Various medical organizations recommend individuals get up and move at any opportunity to help reduce risks of inactivity. Erin Michos, M.D., M.H.S., associate director of preventive cardiology at the Ciccarone Center for the Prevention of Heart Disease, advises people who are very sedentary to aim for 4,000 steps per day. Such individuals can then build up to a target of 10,000 steps daily.

The Mayo Clinic recommends these strategies to reduce the amount of time you spend sitting.

- Stand while talking on the phone or watching television
- Invest in a standing desk
- Get up from sitting every 30 minutes
- Walk at lunch or during meetings

Sedentary lifestyles can affect health in many negative ways. But there are various ways to get up and go over the course of a typical day.

Taco Lettuce Wraps



serves: 4



prep: 20 mins

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 3/4 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 lb 95% lean ground turkey
- 2 cloves garlic
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbsp chili powder (preferably 2 tsp regular chili powder and 1 tsp ancho chili powder)
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- Iceberg or Romain lettuce leaves, doubled up, for serving
- Shredded Mexican cheese, diced Roma tomatoes, diced red onion, diced avocado, chopped cilantro, light sour cream, for serving

Heat olive oil in a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat.

Add onion and saute 2 minutes. Add turkey and garlic, season with salt and pepper, and cook, tossing and breaking up turkey occasionally, until cooked through, about 5 minutes.

Add chili powder, cumin, paprika, tomato sauce and chicken broth. Reduce to a simmer and cook about 5 minutes until sauce has reduced.

Serve mixture over lettuce leaves with desired toppings.

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Peanut Butter Oatmeal Smoothie



- 2 Bananas, frozen ripe
- 1 tbsp Maple syrup
- 2 tbsp Peanut butter
- 1/2 cup Rolled oats or quick oats
- 1 tsp Cinnamon, ground
- 1/8 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp Flaxseed, ground
- 1 cup Oat milk

Blend it until smooth

Effective exercises for seniors

Losing interest in an exercise regimen is a situation many fitness enthusiasts have confronted at one point or another. Overcoming a stale workout routine can be simple for young athletes, whose bodies can typically handle a wide range of physical activities. That flexibility allows younger athletes the chance to pursue any number of physical activities when their existing fitness regimens grow stale. But what about seniors who have grown tired of their workouts?

Even seniors who have lived active lifestyles since they were youngsters are likely to encounter certain physical limitations associated with aging. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the likelihood of dealing with one or more physical limitations increases with age. CDC data indicates that 8 percent of adults between the ages of 50 and 59 have three or more physical limitations. That figure rises to 27 percent among adults age 80 and over.

Physical limitations may be a part of aging for many people, but such obstacles need not limit seniors looking to banish boredom from their workout routines. In



Physical limitations are a part of aging. But seniors need not let such limitations relegate them to repetitive, boring workouts.

fact, many seniors can successfully engage in a variety of exercises that benefit their bodies and are unlikely to grow stale.

• **Water aerobics:** Sometimes referred to as "aqua aerobics," water aerobics may involve jogging in the water, leg lifts, arm curls, and other activities that can safely be performed in a pool. The

YMCA notes that water aerobics exercises are low impact, which can make them ideal for seniors with bone and joint issues like arthritis.

• **Resistance band workouts:** Resistance band workouts can be especially useful for seniors who spend a lot of time at home. Resistance bands are inexpensive and don't take up a lot of space,

making them ideal for people who like to exercise at home but don't have much space. Resistance bands can be used to strengthen muscles in various parts of the body, including the legs, arms and back. Resistance bands can be pulled or pushed in any direction, which allows for more versatility in a workout than weight machines and dumbbells. That versatility allows

seniors to spice up their workout regimens when things get a little stale.

• **Pilates:** Pilates is another low-impact exercise that can be ideal for seniors with bone and joint issues. According to SilverSneakers®, a community fitness program for seniors that promotes living through physical and social engagement, Pilates can help seniors build overall strength, stability and coordination. SilverSneakers® even notes that seniors can experience improvements in strength and stability by committing to as little as 10 to 15 minutes of daily Pilates exercises.

• **Strength training:** Seniors on the lookout for something more challenging than a daily walk around the neighborhood should not overlook the benefits of strength training. The CDC notes that seniors who participate in strength training can stimulate the growth of muscle and bone, thereby reducing their risk for osteoporosis and frailty. In fact, the CDC notes that people with health concerns like arthritis or heart disease often benefit the most from exercise regimens that include lifting weights a few times each week.



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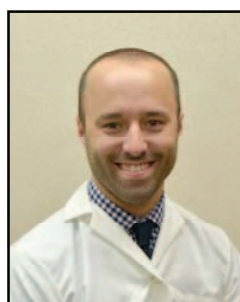
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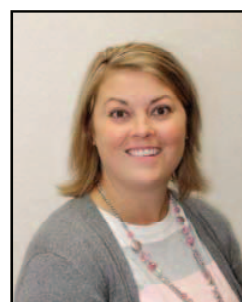
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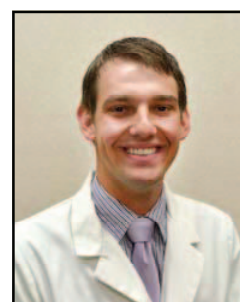
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Tranquility on the mat

BY JAMES C. FALCON

Arlene Gehring was 65 years old when she realized she needed to do something about her knees.

They began to feel weak and she was having trouble maneuvering around.

"I just made a decision right then," she said. "I needed to do something right then to stop that."

Thinking back to years before, she used to do yoga, "but that went by the wayside," she added.

However, when friends started talking about wanting to get back into shape, the suggestion of yoga – as a way to help her with her knees and to help her friends with weight loss – was favorably met.

Sixteen years ago, Gehring orchestrated a yoga class on the ground floor of First Congregational Church in Garrison. At first, the class was held five times a week.

"Some of the ladies got to say 'that's too much,'" Gehring said. "So we settled on three times a week. It seems to be ideal."

The class meets every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8 a.m.

"A lot to be said about getting together and doing (yoga)," Gehring said. "It just takes camaraderie, the fellowship of doing something together and keeping each other honest."

And Gehring is still going strong.

"By gosh, I never quit," she said, adding that the only exceptions were when she had shoulder and knee replacements. "It has to become a lifestyle, if you're going to make any exercise program work."

Now 80, Gehring recognizes



Linda Heer, Nancy Fields and Fran Beierle stretch during the Feb. 28 class. The size of the group has fluctuated over the years, with four currently attending. "We're few, but we're mighty," class organizer Arlene Gehring said with a laugh. (James C. Falcon)

its benefits.

"It's been nothing but helpful, as we age, especially," she said. "We have to keep up our strength, or we'll go the other way."

While the group started as a way to lose weight and maintain strength, Gehring said it has become much more than that. It is now "a lifestyle of learning to be in touch with our bodies through mind and spirit, as well," she said.

And laying down on a yoga

mat in the church's basement stretching never felt so good.

On Feb. 28, there were four women in the group. The size of the group has changed over the years, with the church basement once lined with yoga mats and participants, Gehring said. There are some that move away or quit for health reasons, but there are still some "originals" – people who have participated in the group since it began.

"We're few, but we're

First Congregational Church hosts Arlene Gehring's yoga class every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, starting at 8 a.m. "We are grateful for this wonderful space available to us through our church," Gehring said. For more information, call Gehring at 701-337-6761.

mighty," she added with a laugh.

Yoga is simple in the fact that it doesn't take a lot of fancy equipment or "props," as Gehring refers to them. These include DVDs, which the group uses to guide them through yoga exercises, as well as blocks, straps, wedges, weights and chairs – and, of course, the traditional yoga mat – which helps aid them on their quest for tranquility.

And for those wanting to join the class, there is only one thing Gehring said people need to bring with them.

"Just bring a commitment to stay with it," she said. "Once isn't going to do it."

Extra mats are also on hand for newcomers.

YOGA
continued on page 7



Linda Heer and Nancy Fields reach for the ceiling during a yoga class held at First Congregational Church on Feb. 28.

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Anyone, regardless of age or gender, is welcome to attend the group. Gehring noted that at one time, a husband accompanied his wife. The group considered starting a men's group, but the idea never came into fruition, at least yet.

"Men can do yoga, too," she added. "If they would like to start a group, I'm sure our space would be available for them, too."

Gehring reiterated that age is not a factor when it comes to yoga.

"Yoga is a gentle way that we can practice, at any age, movements to maintain muscle strength, balance and a healthy, positive attitude toward our bodies' health and well-being," Gehring said.

Noting her future plans, including her desire to go kayaking this summer, Gehring said she won't plan on stopping yoga anytime soon.

"I'm not going to (quit). I'm going to do yoga until the end of my time," she said. "I know it's helpful for me to stay strong and do what I want to do. I want to keep my body strong so I can enjoy life."

"It's been nothing but helpful, as we age, especially. We have to keep up our strength, or we'll go the other way."

- Arlene Gehring,
who maintains a yoga class she started 16 years ago at First Congregational Church



Arlene Gehring stretches during a yoga session at First Congregational Church in Garrison on Feb. 28. Gehring, 80, started the yoga group at the church almost 16 years ago as a way to help others maintain strength and lose weight.



Added sugars and their effects on weight loss efforts

Added sugars could be compromising people's effort to lose weight and get fit.

A 2009 report from researchers with the American Heart Association urged people to limit their intake of added sugars while noting that Americans get most of their added sugars from sugar-sweetened beverages, including sodas. A 2010 study led by a researcher from the Harvard School of Public Health noted that consumption of such beverages has increased considerably in recent decades, which has tracked positively with rising rates of obesity over that time.

But pinning the bulk of the blame for rising obesity rates on sugar-sweetened beverages would be a mistake, as such drinks are not the only popular source of added sugars. Candy, baked goods, sugary cereals, and even some dried fruits contain significant amounts of added sugars.

Added sugars are considered empty calories, which means they're high in calories but not in vitamins, minerals and nutrients. Anyone attempting to lose weight and keep lost weight off should examine the foods and beverages they consume to determine if these items, which may be marketed as healthy or at least considered so by

unsuspecting consumers, are high in added sugars. Simply checking ingredients labels for the term "added sugars" may not be enough, as the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion notes that added sugars go by many different names, including:

- brown sugar
- corn sweetener
- corn syrup
- dextrose
- fructose
- glucose
- high-fructose corn syrup
- honey
- invert sugar
- lactose
- malt syrup
- maltose
- molasses,
- raw sugar
- sucrose
- trehalose
- turbinado sugar

The ODPHP notes that these sugars may be found in foods people wouldn't otherwise see as potentially unhealthy, such as pasta sauces. That only underscores the importance of reading labels carefully and learning what to look for on such labels.

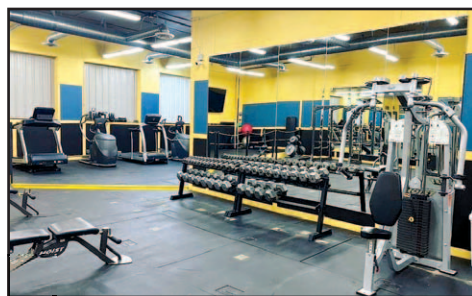
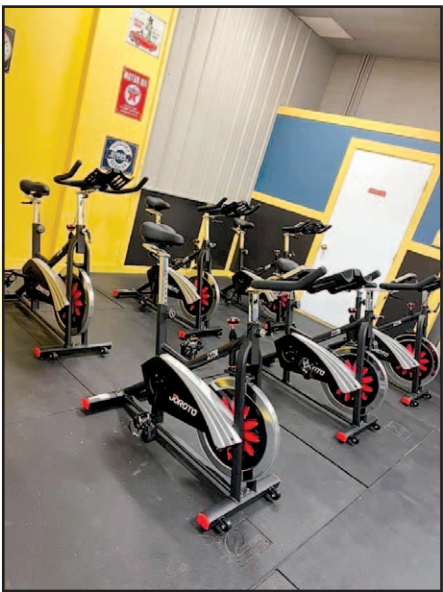
Losing weight and keeping weight off is no small task. And that task becomes considerably taller when people consume significant amounts of added sugars.

According to the American Osteopathic Association, yoga has many physical benefits. These include:

- Increased flexibility
- Increased muscle strength and tone
- Improved respiration, energy & vitality
- Maintaining a balanced metabolism
- Weight reduction
- Cardio and circulatory health
- Improved athletic performance
- Protection from injury

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The right habits can help people live healthier lives, and such habits need not require any major life changes.

Healthy habits that can become part of your daily routine

A person's habits can have a strong impact on his or her overall health. Unhealthy habits like smoking and living a sedentary lifestyle can increase a person's risk for various conditions and diseases. On the flip side, healthy habits like eating a nutritious diet and getting enough sleep can bolster a person's immune system and reduce his or her risk for various ailments.

Some healthy habits, like daily exercise, can be time-consuming. Busy adults may not have time to exercise vigorously each day, though the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services urges men and women to find time for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. But not all healthy habits take up time. In fact, adults can incorporate various healthy practices into their daily routines without skipping a beat.

• **Take the stairs.** Taking the stairs instead of the elevator can have a profound effect on overall health. According to Duke University, climbing just two flights of stairs combined per day can contribute to six pounds of weight loss over the course of a single year. In addition, a study from the North American Menopause Society found that stair climbing can help postmenopausal women reduce their risk for osteoporosis and help them lower their blood pressure.

• **Drink more water.** The

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that water helps the body maintain a normal temperature, lubricates and cushions joints, protects the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and helps to rid the body of waste through urination, perspiration and bowel movements. Adults who are thirsty can choose water over soda or other sugary beverages. The CDC notes that sugary beverages like soda and sports drinks contain calories but little nutritional value, making water a healthier way for individuals to quench their thirst.

• **Go for daily walks.** Walking benefits the body in myriad ways. For example, the Harvard School of Public Health notes that women who walk 30 minutes per day can reduce their risk of stroke by 20 percent and potentially by 40 percent if they walk briskly. In addition, researchers at the University of Virginia Health System found that men between the ages of 71 and 93 who walked more than a quarter mile per day had half the incidence of dementia and Alzheimer's disease as men who walked less. A 15-minute walk around the neighborhood each morning coupled with a 15-minute walk after dinner can help adults dramatically improve their overall health.

• **Eat more greens.** Eating more greens is another healthy habit that doesn't require a major overhaul of an individual's lifestyle. The U.S.

Department of Agriculture notes that dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, are rich in vitamins A, C, E, and K. The Mayo Clinic notes that vitamin E alone can help people maintain their vision and promote a healthy reproductive system while also improving the health of the blood, brain and skin. The USDA also notes that green vegetables contain very little carbohydrates, sodium and cholesterol. Adults won't have to reinvent the dietary wheel to incorporate more greens into their diets, and the results of doing so can have a significant, positive effect on their overall health.

Shake up a stale workout

Eating less and moving more are the hallmarks of many fitness regimens, especially those designed for people who want to lose weight. Maintaining a healthy weight can help reduce risk factors for many illnesses, making weight loss a worthy goal for those who can afford to shed a few pounds.

While people have good intentions when designing their exercise regimens, over time hitting the treadmill or doing a weight circuit can lose its appeal. When exercise routines become stale, people may be put off from doing something that is essential to their overall health. Routinely switching things up can keep workouts fresh and exciting.

• **Try a trendy workout:** Experiment with a new fitness trend to see if you like it. Start by talking with a personal trainer or group exercise captain at your fitness center. Chances are they've already implemented novel workouts for their clients and they can walk you through some of the offerings. So whether it's barre classes that make you feel like a prima ballerina or renegade rowing to emulate a crew team, new exercises can help to banish boredom.



Altering a workout regimen from time to time can help people overcome stale routines.

• **Cut down on workout time:** It's easy to lose interest in a lengthy workout. High-intensity workouts can streamline exercise to 30 minutes or less and produce the same results as longer, less intense regimens. High intensity interval training, or HIIT, is a popular regimen that pairs bursts of maximum-output moves with short recoveries to streamline efforts.

• **Bring a friend along:** A buddy to exercise alongside can make a regimen fun even if you've done the same things over and over. Plus, a healthy dose of lighthearted competition may motivate you to keep going.

• **Change small components:** Apart from preventing boredom, changes to a routine also benefit your body. If exercise regimens are never altered, and you keep doing the same number of reps and sets, your body can adapt to these workouts and make it difficult to break plateaus. Lack of variation also may decrease focus, which can make it hard to achieve your fitness goals. A consultation with a personal trainer can help you adapt your routine or find an entirely new one.

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Health & Wellness

5 ways to pamper yourself more often

The COVID-19 pandemic has left many people scrambling for ways to unwind without risking their health or the health of others. For more than a year, opportunities to let loose and have fun have been stymied by the cancellation of concerts, theater shows, sporting events, family holidays, and so much more in the name of public safety. Individuals can look to coping strategies to find silver linings. Pampering oneself can be a healthy and enjoyable endeavor to explore.

Pampering means different things to different people. Pampering involves indulging in self-care strategies to improve mental, physical and emotional health. Pampering can provide a respite from stress, enabling one to switch off his or her brain for a bit. Rest assured that pampering doesn't have to involve big expenses, and many pampering sessions can take place right at home. The following are five pampering ideas to explore.

1. Take a nap

Getting enough restful sleep is essential for your overall health. The Sleep Foundation says people who work multiple jobs or for extended hours may not have enough time for sufficient sleep, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates one in three American adults do not get enough sleep. Getting seven or more hours of sleep per night is important, but you also can add to your sleep bank by taking short naps in the early afternoon. A nap can reduce stress and elevate the mood. Stick to a snooze of 30 minutes or less.

2. Indulge in a luxurious practical item

Instead of splurging on something that is whimsical or unnecessary, allocate some



Pampering comes in many shapes and forms and is an effective way to reduce stress.

disposable dollars to something functional — but put a luxurious spin on it. Think of buying a set of silk bedsheets or indulge on a high-end cut of meat for a family dinner. You'll feel rewarded without feeling guilty that you were wasteful.

3. Schedule a salon service

Hair, nail or skin services enable you to get away from home for an hour or more and devote time all to yourself. Plus, you'll have the benefit of walking out of the salon looking like the best version of yourself.

4. Take a hot bath

People may be pressed for time when engaging in their

daily beauty and grooming routines. A 10-minute shower before work might not provide the relaxation and sense of escape you need. Set aside a time in the evening to soak in the tub and let stress as well as aches and pains melt away in the water. Scent the water with essential oils for a relaxing aromatherapy session.

5. Find a simple pleasure

Display fresh flowers on the table, listen to some favorite music while cleaning the house or plan a homemade meal for yourself accompanied by a fine wine. Planning for a simple pleasure once or twice a week gives you something to look forward to.



How to eat to improve your energy levels

A little extra energy during the day could benefit just about anyone. Late morning mental fatigue and the post-lunch yawns may seem unavoidable, but there are plenty of ways to improve energy levels throughout the day. One such means to getting an extra hop in your step involves utilizing food.

The health care experts at Kaiser Permanente® note that every part of the body, including the brain and heart, require energy to work. The body gets that energy from food. According to the National Health Service, the publicly funded health care system of the United Kingdom, a healthy, balanced diet is the best way to maintain sufficient energy levels throughout the day. A dietary approach rooted in eating to energize can change the way people eat, potentially helping them avoid unhealthy foods that won't give them the boost they need.

The American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics echoes the sentiments of the NHS, noting that eating better is an effective way to improve energy levels. The AAND also recommends additional strategies for people looking to foods to provide an energy boost.

• **Eat every three to four hours.** Eating every three to four hours helps to fuel a healthy metabolism. This approach also can prevent the between-meal hunger pangs that compel many people to reach for whatever food is readily available, even if it's unhealthy. When eating every three to four hours, remember to prepare smaller portions than you would if you were eating three meals per

day. The AAND points out that feeling comfortably full but not stuffed is a good indicator that you've eaten enough.

• **Aim for balance.** A balanced plate should include foods from multiple food groups. The AAND notes that even a small amount of fat can find its way onto your plate, which should include a combination of whole grains, lean protein, fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, and fat-free or low-fat dairy. If that's too much for a single sitting, ensure these food groups are represented on your plate at some point during the day.

• **Avoid added sugars.** Added sugars can adversely affect energy levels. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that consuming too many added sugars, which are found in sugar-sweetened beverages like soda and iced tea and sweet snacks like candy, increases a person's risk for obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. The AAND notes that the energy provided by foods with added sugars is typically misleading, as it wears off quickly and ultimately leads to an energy crash. If you're looking to eat and drink for energy, then choose water or low-fat milk instead of coffee and soda and replace sweet snacks with fruit.

• **Choose the right snacks.** The AAND recommends snacks have lean protein and fiber-rich carbohydrates. Low-fat Greek yogurt, apples, a handful of unsalted nuts, and carrots are some examples of healthy snacks that will provide an energy boost between meals.

FUEL FOODS

Keep fuel all day with these healthy snacks & meals

- Protein Shakes
- Fruit
- Cottage Cheese
- Greek Yogurt with Granola
- Lean Protein: Boiled Eggs, Chicken or Fish
- Vegetables with Quinoa
- Sliced Veggies with Guacamole
- Nut Butters
- Granola Bars
- Dried Fruit
- Whole Grain Toast
- Nuts
- Baked Zucchini Chips with Salsa
- Salad with healthy dressings
- DIY Fruit Roll-ups
- Smoothies
- Celery Sticks with Nut Butter
- DIY Fruit Popsicle
- Raw Veggies with Hummus

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Exercising safely after recovering from COVID-19

The number of people who have been infected by the novel coronavirus COVID-19 is difficult to determine, as millions of people may have had the virus but been asymptomatic. But as of April 2021, the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University reported that more than 31 million people in the United States have had confirmed coronavirus infections, and Canada reported 1,087,158 confirmed cases with 80,204 considered active at that time. Thousands of new cases are reported daily nationwide, and many others have occurred around the world.

Even though COVID-19 is widespread and highly contagious, the silver lining is that a very high percentage of people recover from the disease. WebMD says that recovery rates fluctuate between 97 and 99.75 percent. However, COVID-19 can affect various parts of the body and produce long-lasting side effects.

A study from the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency found that 91 percent of people who recovered from COVID-19 reported at least one long-lasting symptom, and fatigue and trouble concentrating were the most common. With this in mind, individuals who have recov-

Health experts recommend a slow, phased approach to resuming exercise after recovering from COVID-19.

ered from the illness and want to get back to their daily activities — including exercising — may need to be especially careful.

Health experts recommend a slow, phased approach to resuming exercise after recovering from COVID-19. It's also worth noting that it may take some time to regain pre-illness fitness levels, so individuals are urged to go easy on themselves if they cannot meet certain milestones.

David Salman, Ph.D., a clinical fellow in primary care at the Imperial College London, was lead author of a report published in the British Medical Journal that aimed to answer questions about returning to exercise. One of his recommendations is to wait for seven days after major symptoms have stopped before beginning to slowly build up physical activity. One should start with light-intensity exercises, such as walking or yoga. Gradually, more challenging activities, including brisk walking, swimming or light

resistance training, can be introduced. Each phase should be maintained for at least seven days.

People should be mindful of getting out of breath or feeling too fatigued by exercise. If this occurs, they should move back a phase until exercise feels comfortable. Pay attention to body cues while doing normal daily activities, as these can help determine if you need to rest.

The University of Colorado Boulder Health and Wellness Services says exercise should not continue if people experience chest pain, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, abnormal heartbeats, or lightheadedness. Individuals are urged to consult with their doctors if these symptoms appear.

Within a few weeks of infection, many people with mild cases of COVID-19 can typically be back to their normal fitness routines, says Anthony S. Lubinsky, MD, clinical associate professor at New York University Grossman School of Medicine. But slow and steady is the key to getting there.

COVID-19 has affected millions of people. With time and guidance, most people who contracted COVID-19 can return to their pre-illness levels of physical activity.



Mental health is important, and protecting it should be part of everyone's health care regimen.

Three strategies to protect mental health

Improving one's overall health and maintaining that health over the long haul can have a profound impact on quality of life. For example, the Harvard Medical School notes that regular exercise can slow the natural decline in physical performance that occurs as people age. That means routine exercise can serve as something like a fountain of youth that allows people to keep their cardiovascular fitness, metabolism and muscle function on par with their younger counterparts.

When attempting to improve long-term health, it's important that people emphasize mental health as much as they do their physical health. The Anxiety & Depression Association of America notes the importance and effectiveness of preventive efforts in relation to depression and anxiety. In regard to mental health, prevention efforts can function in much the same way that exercise serves physical health. Routine exercise helps people to maintain healthy weights, reducing their risk for various conditions and diseases. Preventive efforts designed to improve mental health can significantly reduce a person's risk for anxiety and depression.

Various techniques and strategies can be utilized to promote mental health, and these three are simple and highly effective.

1. Get enough sleep.

According to the Primary Care Collaborative, a not-for-profit member organization dedicated to advancing an effective and efficient health system, sleep and mental health are intimately related. Sleep loss can contribute to emotion-

al instability. The amygdala is the part of the brain responsible for humans' emotional responses. When an individual does not get enough sleep, his or her amygdala goes into overdrive, leading to more intense emotional reactions. The prefrontal cortex is another part of the brain that needs sufficient sleep to function properly. Without it, the prefrontal cortex, which is integral to impulse control, cannot function properly. Adults can speak with their physicians about how much sleep they should be getting each night. Those needs change as individuals age.

2. Eat a balanced diet.

A balanced, healthy diet doesn't just benefit the waistline. According to the ADAA, a balanced diet that includes protein, healthy non-saturated fats, fiber, and some simple carbohydrates can reduce the likelihood that mental health issues like fatigue, difficulty concentrating and irritability will arise during the day.

3. Volunteer in your community.

A 2020 study published in the Journal of Happiness Studies found that people who volunteered in the past were more satisfied with their lives and rated their overall health as much better than people who didn't volunteer. Perhaps the most noteworthy finding in the study was that people who began volunteering with lower levels of well-being tended to get the biggest boost from volunteering. Volunteering provides opportunities to socialize, which can help ward off the loneliness that can sometimes contribute to anxiety and depression.

Where does lost weight go?

Obesity is a significant threat to public health. The World Health Organization says global obesity rates have nearly tripled since 1975. There are now more than one billion overweight adults across the globe, and at least 300 million people are classified as clinically obese.

Many people want to lose weight and unhealthy fat for personal reasons or at the suggestions of their doctors. Weight loss often involves a combination of increasing exercise and decreasing calorie consumption. As excess weight starts being shed, it becomes evident that a biological process is taking place. Many people refer to it as burning calories. But fat loss is a complicated process that's spawned various misconceptions.

Breathing to lose weight?

Many people may not know that a lot of the fat lost during weight loss efforts occurs through simple breathing. According to Live Science and a 2014 study from researchers at the University of New South Wales, the body stores excess protein or carbohydrates in a person's diet in the form of fat, specifically triglycerides, which consist elementally of hydrogen, carbon and oxygen. When people lose weight, triglycerides are breaking up into these building block elements through



Weight is commonly lost by expelling carbon dioxide through breathing. Moderate exercise facilitates such weight loss.

oxidation.

The researchers found that, during oxidation, triglycerides are used up in a process that consumes many molecules of oxygen while producing carbon dioxide and water as waste products. The study found that, during weight loss, 84 percent of the triglyceride fat that is lost turns into carbon dioxide and leaves the body through the lungs. The remaining water may be excreted as sweat, breath or tears, or come out in urine — water excretion is the lesser-known component of the biological process.

Researchers who authored the University of New South Wales study determined that, when 22 pounds of fat are oxi-

dized, 18.5 pounds of it leaves the body as exhaled carbon. The amount of carbon that is lost can be increased through exercise, according to Medical News Today. By substituting one hour of moderate exercise (like jogging) for one hour of rest, a person can increase his or her metabolic rate of triglyceride usage sevenfold.

Carbon excretion also occurs during sleep, while sitting and doing daily activities. However, the amount excreted during these activities is minimal and can be offset by eating too much food. Simply breathing more and faster during regular activities is not recommended, either, as doing so increases the risk for hyperventilation.

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What if going to work every day made you healthier?

BY CAMMIE WRIGHT

Stacie Adams, owner of J Arthur's Flowers and Gifts in Turtle Lake, believes her job does.

Surrounded by oxygen-emitting plants, Adams literally breathes in the benefits associated with introducing more oxygen to the body.

Inhaling brings oxygen into the body, while exhaling releases carbon dioxide. During photosynthesis, plants do the opposite, releasing oxygen back into the air. Increased oxygen levels have been shown to ease stress, calm muscle aches, increase energy and focus, and even slow the aging process.

"Working with and around plants all day is a great environment to be in," Adams said. "I believe plants provide many health benefits, from better breathing to reducing stress. And the flowers smell great, of course."

Not everyone works in a flower store, however. Studies have also shown incorporating plants into office spaces provides employees with similar benefits.

An American Society for Horticultural Science found that workers in an office with plants reported less incidences of cough and fatigue versus one without plants.

Additionally, the study found that "The responses from the participants also indicate that green plants in the office were regarded as a positive element for feelings of well-being, with 82 percent of the participants agreeing to the statement 'I feel more comfortable if I have plants in my office.'"

But what if you work from home? House plants are equally beneficial for all the above physical health reasons, but also provide what is sometimes called "Plant Parenthood." It's the accomplished feeling that comes along with watching something grow, keeping it alive and seeing it thrive (like a pet or a kid, essentially). Millennials are becoming more interested in raising house plants. Partly because of isolation during COVID, and also fueled by social media posts showcasing indoor sanctuaries and "plant babies have become popular."

Plants improve oxygen levels, clean the air, can improve mood and increase happiness – all while being budget friendly (especially when compared to other remedies).

"Plants bring people joy," Adams said. "They really do make a difference in people's health and happiness, as our customers would tell you."



Plants are more than pretty, they can change your health.

Go green with personal grooming

Cycling to work, bringing a reusable grocery tote to the store and choosing organic products are a few of the many ways people have accepted the mission to reduce the impact their daily living has on the planet. Great initiatives have been borne out of a desire to be more eco-friendly. Indeed, eco-friendly living can extend to all parts of one's lifestyle, including personal grooming.

Small changes in daily grooming habits can benefit the planet in myriad ways. And keeping clean and looking good while protecting the planet is simpler than one may think.

Save water: Water is an essential component of many grooming techniques, so making an effort to conserve water is a good place to begin making some eco-friendly changes. Invest in a low-flow showerhead and make a concerted effort to take shorter showers. Water and energy can be wasted when taking a bath, so limit those in favor of showers. If you choose to take a bath, don't fill the tub and consider using old bath water for other purposes, such as watering houseplants or the garden. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that Americans use approximately nine billion gallons of water every day to take care of their yards. Using old bathwater can reduce that

number. When washing your face or brushing your teeth, turn off the faucet in between scrubbing and rinsing.

Reduce reliance on single-use plastics: Replace single-use items with others that are more environmentally friendly. Instead of disposable razors, purchase an electric razor or one that has changeable head inserts on a reusable handle. Eco-friendly toothbrushes made of bamboo can help reduce reliance on plastics.

Buy locally made products: Opt for soaps and shampoos made from natural ingredients by local companies. The further the country of production, the more fuel and other resources necessary to get the product into your home. Scour local farmer's markets and niche retailers in town, which often stock soaps and grooming materials made by community residents.

Read product labels: Avoid products that are made with chemicals in favor of those made from ingredients you understand. Such a decision can reduce harmful, potentially dangerous runoff that ultimately ends up in waterways. Select products that are sold in containers made from recycled materials or those that limit excessive packaging.







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