HEALTHY You!

Your Source for a Happy and Healthy Lifestyle

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THIS EDITION FEATURES:

- Self-care for caregivers
- At the root of good nutrition
- Finding healthy processed foods
- Embracing seasonal rituals
- Preparing for colder days
- No gym? No problem!



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Self-care for caregivers



Caregiving looks different for everyone. You might be taking an aging parent to doctors' appointments, supporting a spouse through an illness, caring for a child with complex health needs, or regularly checking in on a friend or loved one. Whatever caregiving looks like for you, it can bring meaningful moments — but it can also require a lot of time, energy, and patience.

Make self-care part of your plan

When someone depends on you, you might feel like your needs have to drop to the bottom of the to-do list. But taking care of yourself isn't separate from caregiving. Supporting your physical and emotional well-being can help you maintain the energy you need to manage all your responsibilities.

Regular breaks can help. Even small pockets of time to unwind can make self-care feel more manageable.

Start small

Self-care doesn't need to be extravagant. Look for simple ways to recharge throughout your week. Take a short walk, listen to music, enjoy a favorite hobby, connect with a friend, stretch, or spend a few quiet minutes doing something just for you.

And remember to eat regular meals, get enough sleep, stay physically active, and keep up with your own health needs.

Share the care

You don't have to handle every responsibility yourself. Family members, friends, neighbors, and community resources can all be part of the care team.

A simple care plan can also make life easier. Organize important information — such as medications, appointments, health care providers, emergency numbers, and caregiving tasks — in one place. This can help others step in when you need support or time away.

Check in with yourself

Every so often, ask yourself: *How am I doing? What do I need right now?*

Maybe the answer is rest, movement, connection, or help. Caring for someone you love matters. Having time and space to care for yourself matters, too.

Sources:
cdc.gov
nia.nih.gov



At the root of good nutrition

Colorful, versatile, and packed with nutrients, root vegetables are an easy way to add variety to your meals. These vegetables grow underground and include familiar favorites such as carrots, beets, turnips, parsnips, sweet potatoes, and potatoes.

A smart

Different root vegetables offer different nutrients, so variety is key. Vegetables can provide important nutrients such as fiber, potassium, folate, and vitamins A and C. Fiber supports digestive health, while potassium plays an important role in maintaining healthy blood pressure. Orange vegetables, such as carrots and sweet potatoes, contain beta-carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A.

Easy to enjoy

Root vegetables don't have to be complicated. Chop carrots, parsnips, beets, or sweet potatoes, toss them with a little olive oil and your favorite herbs, and roast until tender.

You can also add diced root vegetables to soups, stews, grain bowls, or salads. Try mashed sweet potatoes as a colorful side dish, shredded carrots or beets in salads, or roasted vegetables mixed with whole grains like farro for a hearty, cold-weather dish.

Mix up your colors

Instead of sticking with one favorite, experiment with different colors and varieties. A colorful mix helps provide a broader range of nutrients — and keeps meals interesting.

Source:
hsph.harvard.edu



Finding healthy processed foods

"Processed" can sound like a nutritional red flag, but food processing isn't automatically a bad thing. Understanding the difference between whole and processed foods can help you make choices that work for your lifestyle.

What are whole foods?

Whole foods are foods that are unprocessed or minimally processed and remain close to their natural form. Think fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, eggs, and whole grains. These foods can provide valuable nutrients, including fiber, vitamins, minerals, protein, and healthy fats.

Not all processing is equal

Processing simply means a food has been changed from its original form. Washing, chopping, cooking, and canning are all forms of processing. That means convenient choices like canned beans, plain yogurt, and whole-grain bread can still fit into a healthy food plan.

Ultra-processed foods, however, tend to contain more added sugars, sodium, or saturated fat and may also contain dyes or preservatives.

Aim for balance

Instead of trying to eliminate processed foods, focus on more nutrient-dense food choices. Read nutrition labels, compare products, and look for options lower in added sugars, sodium, and saturated fat.

Sources:
fda.gov
heart.org



RECIPE

Sweet potato casserole

Ingredients

3 cups mashed sweet potatoes (skin removed)

½ cup milk

1 tsp. cinnamon

½ tsp. nutmeg

½ cup oats

¼ cup chopped pecans

Directions

1. In a bowl, mix mashed sweet potatoes, milk, cinnamon, and nutmeg until smooth.
2. Spread mixture evenly in a greased baking dish.
3. Sprinkle oats and pecans over the top.
4. Bake at 375°F for 25 minutes until heated through and topping is lightly toasted.

Source:
ramphealth.com



Embracing seasonal rituals

A seasonal ritual is simply an activity you intentionally repeat to mark a particular time of year. It doesn't have to be formal or complicated. Think Sunday afternoon walks, a favorite weekly meal, an evening cup of tea or cocoa, or writing down something you're grateful for each morning.

Rituals can bring structure and predictability to everyday life, and when others join you, those connections can support everyone's emotional well-being.

Create something to look forward to

Choose a ritual that feels enjoyable — not another task on your to-do list. Start a weekly soup night, visit a local park to notice the changing season, schedule a monthly game night, bake a family recipe, or spend a screen-free evening reading or creating something.

November is a great time to start, as it's typically a time for reflection. Try ending each week by writing down a favorite moment, something you've learned, or someone who made your week better.

There's no "right" seasonal ritual. The best one is something that's simple enough for you to do regularly and meaningful enough to look forward to.

This November, consider creating a new ritual that helps you **slow down, connect, and enjoy the season you're in**.

Sources:
nih.gov
nimh.nih.gov

Preparing for colder days

Winter weather can bring freezing temperatures, snow, ice, and unexpected disruptions. A little preparation before severe weather arrives can make chilly days safer and less stressful. Cold temperatures and winter storms can lead to power outages or make travel difficult. Take time now to check your supplies and prepare your home.

- **Stock essentials.** Keep water, shelf-stable foods, medications, flashlights, batteries, and other necessities available.
- **Prepare for power outages.** Charge backup batteries and know where flashlights and emergency supplies are stored.
- **Check your heat.** Have heating systems inspected as needed and make sure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- **Protect against the cold.** Gather warm clothing, blankets, hats, gloves, and other layers in an easy-to-find location.

Don't forget your car

Winter preparedness extends beyond your front door. Keep your vehicle ready for cold-weather travel.

- **Build a winter car kit.** Include blankets, water, snacks, a flashlight, phone charger, first-aid supplies, and an ice scraper.
- **Check your vehicle.** Pay attention to tires, battery, antifreeze, windshield washer fluid, and fuel levels.
- **Consult the current forecast.** Weather can change quickly. Before heading out, review weather and road conditions. Reconsider unnecessary travel during severe weather.



Sources:
ready.gov
weather.gov

NO GYM? NO PROBLEM!



You don't need a gym membership or a room full of equipment to work out. Bodyweight exercises use your own body as resistance, making them an easy and convenient way to add movement to your day — right at home.

Try a bodyweight circuit

Strengthening activities can support muscle strength, bone health, and everyday function. And because bodyweight workouts require little or no equipment, they're easy to fit into a busy schedule.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week, along with muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days.

Try this simple circuit

Clear a comfortable space, start at your own pace, and try:

- **10 squats.** Sit back as though you're lowering into a chair.
- **8 – 10 wall or counter push-ups.** Choose a surface that feels comfortable.
- **10 alternating reverse lunges.** Hold onto a sturdy chair for balance if needed.
- **10 glute bridges.** Lie on your back with knees bent and gently lift your hips.
- **20 – 30 seconds of marching in place.** Swing your arms and keep moving comfortably.

Rest as needed, then repeat the circuit 1 – 3 times.

Make it work for you

A workout doesn't need to leave you exhausted or in pain. Focus on controlled movements and good form. Hydrate before and during your workout, modify exercises, reduce repetitions, and take longer breaks if needed.

Sources:
cdc.gov
health.gov

MONTHLY QUIZ

1. Which of the following habits can help support caregiver well-being?

A. Giving up hobbies and social activities

B. Handling every responsibility yourself

C. Taking regular breaks and asking others for help

D. Waiting until you feel overwhelmed to rest

2. Which of the following demonstrates a healthy approach to processed foods?

A. Avoid all processed foods

B. Avoid canned and frozen foods

C. Focus on nutrient-dense choices while comparing food labels for sugar, sodium, and saturated fat

D. Ignore food labels

3. Which of the following items should you keep in a winter vehicle emergency kit?

A. Blanket and warm clothing

B. Flashlight and phone charger

C. Water and non-perishable snacks

D. All of the above

4. Which of the following is required for a basic bodyweight workout?

A. Dumbbells

B. Exercise bike

C. Treadmill

D. Your own body

Answers: 1. C, 2. C, 3. D, 4. D

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