

# HEALTHY *You!*

Your Source for a Happy and Healthy Lifestyle

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## THIS EDITION FEATURES:

Earth-friendly health habits

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Small seeds, big benefits

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Plant-powered made simple

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Screen smarts

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Limiting information overload

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Backyard balance

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We often think of Earth Day as a time to plant trees or recommit to recycling more. But did you know that eco-friendly habits can also boost your personal health?

When you care for the planet, you are often caring for your body and mind as well. For example, walking or biking instead of driving decreases pollution, but it also gets your heart pumping, which supports cardiovascular health. Choosing locally grown, seasonal produce helps reduce transportation emissions, but it also fuels your body with fresh, nutrient-rich foods. Even cutting back on single-use plastics has health benefits, since many plastics contain chemicals that can disrupt hormones over time.

Spending time in nature — especially while volunteering to beautify a park — has been shown to reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and elevate your mood. Cleaner air and water benefit everyone, especially individuals with asthma, allergies, or other respiratory conditions.

Eco-conscious habits can also support your mental well-being. Gardening, composting, or growing herbs in a windowsill planter encourages mindfulness and builds a stronger connection to the natural world. These small acts can also lower anxiety and increase your sense of purpose.

Even your workday can include simple, sustainable choices. Bringing lunch in reusable containers, printing less, switching to digital notes, or keeping a plant at your desk are practical ways to create a greener, more uplifting workspace.

Shifting toward plant-based meals, reducing fast-fashion purchases, and taking public transportation can simplify your life and save you money. These changes benefit both your personal well-being and the world around you.

This Earth Day, consider how your daily habits impact not only the environment, but also your own health and happiness. A healthier planet creates space for a healthier, more balanced you.



*Small*



*seeds,*



*big*



*benefits*

Tiny but mighty, edible seeds like chia, flax, pumpkin, sunflower, and hemp are packed with powerful nutrients. These small superfoods can be added to your meals easily, offering impressive health benefits with minimal effort.



### *Chia seeds*

are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and fiber, which can help support digestion and keep you full longer.



### *Flaxseeds*

contain fiber, heart-healthy fats, and plant compounds known to lower cholesterol.



### *Pumpkin seeds*

also called pepitas, are a great source of magnesium, zinc, and iron — nutrients important for energy, immune function, and muscle health.



### *Sunflower seeds*

are high in vitamin E, which protects your cells and supports healthy skin.



### *Hemp seeds*

contain all nine essential amino acids, making them a rare plant-based source of complete protein.

Incorporating seeds into your meals is simple. Add a spoonful to yogurt or smoothies, sprinkle them over salads or grain bowls, or mix them into baked goods or homemade granola. Since they are shelf-stable and full of energy, seeds are also great for on-the-go snacks.

These nutrient-dense additions support heart health, digestion, and even brain function. Best of all, they fit into nearly any diet, whether you're plant-based, gluten-free, or just trying to eat more whole foods.

# Plant- powered made simple



You don't have to go fully vegetarian or vegan to enjoy the health benefits of eating more plant-based foods. Simple swaps, like choosing beans over beef once a week, can support heart health, improve digestion, and even lower your grocery bill. These changes are easy to make and family approved.

Start with familiar meals. Try meatless tacos using black beans or lentils instead of ground beef. Swap regular pasta for whole grain or lentil-based versions to add more fiber and protein. Use oat milk in cereal or coffee, or blend frozen bananas to make creamy, dairy-free "nice cream."

For breakfast, choose oatmeal with chia seeds or flaxseeds instead of a side dish of bacon or sausage. At dinner, grill portobello mushrooms or top a pizza with extra veggies in place of pepperoni. Even simple changes like using hummus instead of ranch dip can boost nutrition and cut down on saturated fat.

Kids can help by prepping colorful veggies or building their own grain bowls. When meals are fun and hands-on, kids are more likely to try and enjoy new flavors.

Regardless of age, focus on what you are adding rather than what you are removing. Appreciate the new colors, textures, and tastes of a healthier plate.



## RECIPE

# Roasted veggie flatbread

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### Ingredients

|                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2 whole wheat flatbreads    | 1 tbsp. olive oil                |
| 1 cup bell peppers, chopped | ½ tsp. oregano                   |
| 1 cup zucchini, chopped     | ½ cup fresh mozzarella, shredded |
| ½ cup onion, sliced         |                                  |

### Directions

1. Toss peppers, zucchini, and onion with olive oil and oregano. Roast at 400°F for 10 minutes.
2. Sprinkle roasted veggies over flatbreads; top with mozzarella.
3. Bake 8 – 10 minutes at 400°F until cheese is melted and crust is crisp.



From work emails to social media, many of us spend hours each day looking at screens. While technology is convenient, too much screen time can strain your eyes. The good news? A few simple habits can help protect your vision.

Digital eye strain (also called computer vision syndrome) can cause:

- Tired, dry, or blurry eyes
- Headaches and difficulty focusing
- Neck and shoulder tension

### Tips to reduce eye strain

- Follow the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Adjust screen brightness to match your room's lighting.
- Use a matte screen filter to reduce glare.
- Position your screen about an arm's length away and slightly below eye level.
- Blink often to keep eyes moist.
- Use artificial tears if your eyes feel dry.
- Ask your eye doctor about blue light-blocking lenses if you wear glasses.

### Beyond the screen

- Reduce unnecessary screen time when not working.
- Spend more time outdoors in natural light.
- Limit screen use before bed to support better sleep.

# LIMITING INFORMATION OVERLOAD!



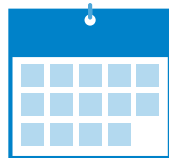
Between nonstop emails, breaking news alerts, and the constant pull of social media, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the steady flow of information in our daily lives. This can lead to mental fatigue, trouble focusing, and higher stress levels — a common condition known as information overload.

Our brains are not meant to take in everything at once. Trying to multitask or absorb too much at once can hurt our productivity, mood, and memory. These simple strategies can help create more mental space:



## Turn off non-essential notifications.

Check email or news at scheduled times instead of constantly throughout the day. Limiting screen use before bed can also support better rest.



## Do a weekly digital declutter.

Unsubscribe from emails you no longer read, delete unused apps, and organize your digital workspace. Even a few minutes each week can reduce mental clutter.



## Take screen-free breaks.

Go for a walk, stretch, or sit quietly and breathe. Protecting your attention is not about disconnecting completely — it's about making space for what matters most.



# BACKYARD

# BALANCE

Looking to get into yoga but not sure where to start? You don't need a fancy studio or complicated poses to enjoy the benefits of yoga — just step outside. Practicing yoga in your backyard or a nearby flat green space can be a simple, refreshing way to move your body, calm your mind, and reconnect with nature.

Outdoor yoga combines gentle movement, mindful breathing, and the natural benefits of fresh air and sunlight. Studies show that time in nature can lower stress, reduce blood pressure, and improve mood. Adding a few yoga stretches to your morning or evening routine is a low-impact way to support physical and mental health. Even ten minutes can make a difference.

You can begin with simple positions like Child's Pose, Cat-Cow, or a standing Forward Fold. Flow through a few rounds of Sun Salutation or just focus on breathing deeply while lying on your back. No prior experience is needed. You can find a variety of free videos online to support any level of yoga, from beginner to advanced.

Try it barefoot in the grass or with a towel or yoga mat. Listen to birds instead of a playlist and let your gaze rest on the trees or sky.

Outdoor yoga is not about perfect form — it is about slowing down and feeling grounded. Your backyard can become your peaceful retreat, one breath at a time.

# MONTHLY QUIZ

**1. Which of the following habits supports both personal health and environmental sustainability?**

- A. Buying fast fashion frequently
- B. Driving alone in your car regularly
- C. Eating locally grown, plant-based meals
- D. Using disposable plastic water bottles

**3. Which of the following is a simple way to reduce information overload?**

- A. Check email every five minutes
- B. Multitask constantly
- C. Stay on social media all day
- D. Turn off non-essential notifications

**2. Which of the following edible seeds is a complete plant-based protein?**

- A. Chia seeds
- B. Flaxseeds
- C. Hemp seeds
- D. Pumpkin seeds

**4. Which of the following is associated with practicing yoga outdoors?**

- A. Higher heart rate
- B. Lots of expensive equipment
- C. Lower stress levels
- D. More intense poses

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

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