BEAT HOLIDAY BLOAT pg 80

Prevention

December 2025



PROTECT YOUR PEACE

Proven Ways to Stay Calm, Ease Stress + Let Stuff Go

NEED A RECHARGE? **EXPERT NAPPING SECRETS**

PHEW! ONE **"VICE"** YOU GET TO KEEP

NATURAL WAYS TO **BRING DOWN BLOOD PRESSURE**

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You’re Never Stuck

How one woman revamped her mindset—and life

Should You Quit Coffee?

The real deal on everyone’s favorite fix

Sneezing After You Eat

A curiosity called “snatiation”

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You’re Never Stuck

At 57, Wendy Ida became a competitive bodybuilder. Now 73, she believes MINDSET IS EVERYTHING.

AS TOLD TO SHANNEN ZITZ

How one woman revamped her mindset—and life

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Should You Quit Coffee?

More than 100 million American adults drink it every day, even as a vague sense that it’s bad for us percolates in the background.

BY BECCA MILLER AND STEPHANIE DOLGOFF

The real deal on everyone’s favorite fix


WELLNESS

THE UPSHOT

Should You Quit Coffee?

More than 100 million American adults drink it every day, even as a vague sense that it's bad for us percolates in the background.

BY BECCA MILLER AND STEPHANIE DOLGOFF

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Maybe it’s because so many of us love it and even depend on it and we’ve been conditioned to think that dependence on anything, especially a stimulant, is no good. Or perhaps you recall some negative buzz around the brew, or your heart hammers when you’ve had too much. There are reasons the “Coffee is bad” rumor won’t die.

But the science shows that for most people, coffee not only is not bad but actually has benefits beyond keeping you awake during snoozy meetings that could have been emails.

First, some basics: Most of the concerns folks have about coffee arise because of caffeine, which is also the reason so many of us appreciate it, especially in the morning. Caffeine acts as a stimulant by blocking adenosine, the neurotransmitter that promotes sleep, resulting in increased alertness and focus, explains Chester Wu, M.D., a psychiatrist and sleep specialist in Houston. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) says most people can safely take in up to 400 mg of caffeine a day—that's what's in two to three 12-oz cups—without adverse effects.

Your mileage may vary, of course, and if you drink more than that amount (or are extra sensitive to caffeine), you might have short-term issues such as mild anxiety, an upset stomach, or insomnia, especially if you have it late in the day. Caffeine can also cause a brief rise in blood pressure (even if you don't have high blood pressure), mainly if you drink it infrequently, according to the Mayo Clinic. As for longterm health problems, people have been drinking coffee for centuries, and for healthy adults there don't appear to be any.

Keep in mind that we're talking about adults here—for kids and adolescents, it might be a different story. Research

has found that young people may not tolerate caffeine well because they are often smaller and their brain physiology is changing. And adults in specific situations, such as being pregnant or having heart trouble, might want to ask their doctors how much caffeine is safe for them.

As for non-caffeine-related worries, those didn’t come out of nowhere either. In 1991, the beverage was classified as a “possible carcinogen” by the World Health Organization (WHO) because limited evidence linked it to bladder cancer. After a thorough review, however, WHO found “no conclusive evidence for a carcinogenic effect of drinking coffee.”



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Too good to be true?

A similar potential issue came up in 2018: A California law (Proposition 65) requires businesses to warn consumers if their products contain chemicals that could cause cancer, birth defects, or reproductive issues with significant exposure—and coffee, when roasted, produces acrylamide, a chemical classified as a probable carcinogen by the Environmental Protection Agency. But an evaluation of more than one thousand studies determined that the chemicals created in producing coffee did not pose a significant risk of causing cancer. Besides, “while large amounts of acrylamide have been shown to cause cancer in animal models, there’s no compelling evidence showing that it increases the risk of cancer in humans,” says Catherine Carpenter, Ph.D., M.P.H., an adjunct professor at the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition. (Also, she adds, the rodents studied were exposed to concentrations of acrylamide up to 60 times higher than what humans encounter.)

All that caution and research adds up to this: If you don’t experience negative effects such as the jitters or anxiety when you drink coffee and you sleep well, there’s no health-related reason you should quit—and you get some benefits from it. Coffee comes from plants, so it’s high in antioxidants and phytochemicals that have antioxidant elements, says Keri Glassman, M.S., R.D.N. (Antioxidants can help prevent the free-radical damage that may lead to cancer.)

In fact, coffee contains more than 1,000 compounds, many of which likely have anti-inflammatory properties as well as potentially anti-cancer ones, according to a BMJ research review. Coffee consumption is associated with a lower risk of melanoma and leukemia as well as prostate and endometrial cancers. And an older study found that coffee drinkers in general were 26% less likely to develop colorectal cancer than others who did not drink coffee; those who drank more than two and a half servings a day were 54% less likely to get it. Research also shows that drinking coffee may lengthen your life—or so concluded a 2022 study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine that found that people who drank one and a half to three and a half cups of coffee per day were up to 30% less likely to die of any cause during the study period than those who didn’t drink any.

A beneficial brew

You might want to pour yourself a cup right now, because the list of coffee’s benefits is a long one. It has also been found to support brain health—evidence shows that people who drink caffeinated beverages such as coffee daily (in moderation) have a lower risk of developing dementia than those who do not, says Brynna Connor, M.D., a family physician in Austin. Studies also suggest that

the caffeine in coffee may have neuroprotective benefits against Parkinson’s disease and that it may help with movement



symptoms in people who already have the disorder. And despite the fact that some people get heart palpitations when they drink coffee (and the fact that it can raise blood pressure temporarily), “one review found that moderate coffee consumption could reduce the risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other heart conditions,” says Edo Paz, M.D., a cardiologist in NewYork City. Finally, coffee consumption is linked to a lower likelihood of type 2 diabetes, depression, and other chronic illnesses.

So consider this permission to keep enjoying coffee—just don’t consume it as if it were water. And keep in mind that regardless of its benefits, if your sleep is affected by caffeine, that’s a sign that you need to cut down on coffee, switch to decaf, or quit altogether—sleep is critical to many bodily functions, including memory. “The stimulating effects of coffee can last for several hours,” says Dr. Wu, “meaning that even if you drink it early in the day, it might still be affecting your ability to relax and fall asleep at night.”

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Sneezing After You Eat

A curiosity called “snatiation”

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Manage Your Blood Pressure

Here’s how to keep or bring your numbers down.

BY GINA WAY

DIY ways to bring it down

It’s one of those conditions that sneak up on you—more than half of U.S. adults with uncontrolled high blood pressure don’t know they have it, recent research shows. When left untreated, high BP (also called hypertension) can raise the risk of cardiac events such as heart attack and stroke and other health problems like kidney damage, early cognitive decline, and dementia. “High blood pressure, in most cases, is asymptomatic,” says Lawrence Phillips, M.D., a cardiologist and an assistant professor of medicine at NYU Langone Health. “People don’t feel that they have it, which is why regular screening is so important.” Doctors check your blood pressure as a matter of course during most routine medical exams and urgent care visits because it’s a critical indicator of your overall health.

Blood pressure is the force of your blood against the walls of your arteries, and it is expressed as two numbers:

The top one (systolic blood pressure) represents the force against the artery walls when your heart beats; the bottom number (diastolic blood pressure) is that pressure between heartbeats. (A reading above 130/80 mmHg signals high blood pressure, according to the American Heart Association.) High BP forces the heart to work harder to pump blood throughout your body and can damage heart muscle and blood vessels over time.

Whether you develop hypertension depends on several factors, some within your control and others not so much. People with a family history of high BP are more prone to it, and your chances rise naturally as your age does. Also, adults in certain ethnic groups (including those who are Black,

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The pros of daytime dozing

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Take Back Your Space

Setting healthy boundaries

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Find Freedom From Stress

We’ll show you how.

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5 Myths About Autism

BY TULA KARRAS

No, it’s not an epidemic.

No, the condition is not an epidemic—but misunderstandings about it are. Here are a few, as well as the truth about what it means to be neurodivergent in this way.



1 MYTH : Autism is a mental disorder. MYTHBUSTER Autism spectrum disorder (or disability),

or ASD, is actually a developmental and neurological condition, not a mental illness or disease. People with



autism have brain differences that cause them to experience and interact with the world in atypical ways, which is why it is called a “neurodivergent” condition (as opposed to being “neurotypical”). A person may have some of its traits and not others, but many of the differences it leads to are communicationrelated (for example, being less able to interpret facial gestures than others are), atypical behaviors (such as repetitive movements, sensitivity to light and sound, and intensive focus on particular interests), and challenges mastering social skills. Though it is not a mental disorder, people with it have higher rates of depression, anxiety, and ADHD, in part because it’s stressful living in a world set up for neurotypical people.

2 MYTH : There’s an epidemic of autism. MYTHBUSTER

It may seem as if autism is on the rise—about one in 31 eight-year-olds was diagnosed with it in 2022, which amounts to an increase of more than 300% over the past 20 years—but much of the upward trend has to do with increased awareness and knowledge about autism and the fact that more professionals are able to diagnose it, says HelenTager-Flusberg, Ph.D., director of the Center for Autism Research Excellence (CARE) at Boston University. “There may be a small increase because people are delaying childbirth—we know that older parents, especially older fathers, contribute a small amount of additional risk,” she adds.

3 MYTH : People with autism are not successful in life and can’t have deep relationships. MYTHBUSTER



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This is a stereotype, and public figures with autism— including Greta Thunberg, Anthony Hopkins, and the singer and songwriter Sia, to name a few—blow it out of the water.

“There’s a view of what autism looks like—that people can’t hold conversations, have close friendships, go to college, or even have a sense of humor, and so often this is not the case,” says Vanessa Bal, Ph.D., director of the LifeSpan Autism Lab at Rutgers–New Brunswick Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology.

Depending on how much support an autistic person needs, they can hit standard societal milestones or even exceed them.

Lots of people with ASD proudly identify as autistic and view their neurodivergence as a gift. That said, the effort it takes for autistic people to function in a world with rules that aren’t intuitive to them, especially if they have profound difficulty communicating, often makes them feel depressed and isolated, says Tager-Flusberg. The bottom line: People with autism have a wide range of abilities and experiences.

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I Thought It Was Bad Heartburn. It Wasn’t.

This lawyer was awoken at night by sudden attacks of severe pain in her upper abdomen.

IT FELT AS IF THE WORLD’S TIGHTEST BRA WAS SQUEEZING ME RIGHT BELOW MY BREASTBONE.”

BY LAURA FEINER, AS TOLD TO MARISA COHEN

One woman’s scary story

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Your Dinner Cheat Sheet

Enjoying a delicious, nutritious meal doesn’t have to mean slogging through a sink full of dirty pots and skillets. Whip out this allpurpose baking pan to fix these crowd-pleasing recipes from the Prevention Test Kitchen.

BY TRISH CLASEN MARSANICO

Easy, healthy, and fast meals

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Eat to Beat Bloat

Retaining Lake Michigan? Try these foods to reduce water weight.

BY ALYSSA JUNG

These foods help deflate your belly.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We're a pro-vax family.

WE'RE ALSO BIG ON HISTORY. When I was melting down about getting my shots as a kid, my mother painted a picture for me of her circumscribed childhood before the polio vaccine became available in 1955. To my mom as a teen, the transcendent miracle of the vaccine (aside from its sparing countless children from paralysis) was that it meant my grandma Pauline could stop being a hypervigilant, panicked Jewish mother and go back to being merely an overprotective, catastrophizing Jewish mother.

As we know, though, catastrophes do happen. COVID-19 was one. Few of us in New York City will forget the freezer trucks that served as overflow morgues. When the vaccine became available, I swear we could physically feel our neighbors' gratitude for all the genius, money, effort, and love for humanity over the decades that had brought it to us. Who knew being able to ride the elevator together and mumble lame things about the weather could be so meaningful?

No medicine is perfect, of course, but whatever immunizations your doctor recommends, I hope you'll seek them out even if there are now obstacles where you live. The recent measles outbreaks are a reminder that when most people get vaccines, we're all safer.

Not gonna lie, I'm stressed these days, and I'm sure many of you are too. Have you heard the TikTok conversation about "cortisol face"? Visit **prevention.com/cortisol-face** for the science-backed take, and read "Find Freedom From Stress" (page 64). There's no vaccine against stress, but there *are* healthier ways to deal with it. Wishing you a low-stress-hormone holiday from Team *Prevention*!

I made it a double (flu and COVID shots) so I could sleep off the side effects in a single weekend.

STEVE COSGROVE

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TIME TOPLAY!

This winter, seek out your inner kid and have some fun. Make snow angels, build a snowman, or have a snowball fight with your little or notso-little pals. Don’t live...

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TIME TOPLAY!



This winter, seek out your inner kid and have some fun. Make snow angels, build a snowman, or have a snowball fight with your little or notso-little pals. Don’t live where it snows? Make a festive sandcastle (or a sand “snowman”), or break out a board game or a Twister set for some indoor silliness. The key is to be playful—adult playtime can be a boon for well-being, research shows, as it triggers the release of feel-good endorphins, fosters relaxation, and works the brain in a way that promotes cognitive flexibility, problem-solving, creativity, and more.

WRITE DOWN THREE PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES YOU HAVE ENGAGED IN (ORWANTTODO) THIS MONTH.

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YOUR DECEMBER TO-DO LIST

BRING THE BLING. Decorating does more than fill your home with holiday cheer. Engaging in nostalgic activities like making homemade ornaments and lighting candles can increase optimism and self-esteem and...

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YOUR DECEMBER TO-DO LIST

YOU'LL WANT TO CHECK THESE OFF ASAP

BRING THE BLING.



Decorating does more than fill your home with holiday cheer. Engaging in nostalgic activities like making homemade ornaments and lighting candles can increase optimism and self-esteem and foster social connections—all of which can give you a health boost. Adding festive outdoor touches like string lights and a pretty wreath can strengthen bonds with neighbors because it signals that you're social and approachable.

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PULSE

SIP SOME BLISS.

Hot cocoa isn't just a seasonal way to warm up. The flavanols in cocoa may improve blood flow, aid in cognitive function, and help lower blood pressure. To wield control over the sugar and maximize the goodness, skip premade packets and DIY a mug: Mix sweetener, unsweetened cocoa, and hot milk using a frother.

SLEEP WITH THE SHEEPIES. A good night's rest recharges you and supports your immune system—and you need it more than ever during the holiday rush. Try this twist on counting sheep to help yourself conk out: Search for "Baa Baa Land" (created by Calm) on YouTube, then cue up the eight-hour video featuring the soothing sound of bleating livestock.

JUST ENJOY. Don't deprive yourself of holiday faves, even if they're not the healthiest. It's totally fine to make Christmas cookies without adding chickpeas or to fry up latkes the traditional way instead of experimenting with an air fryer. "You don't have to healthify everything—when it comes to holiday eating, simply enjoy the foods you love," says Marisa Moore, R.D.N., author of *The Plant Love Kitchen*.

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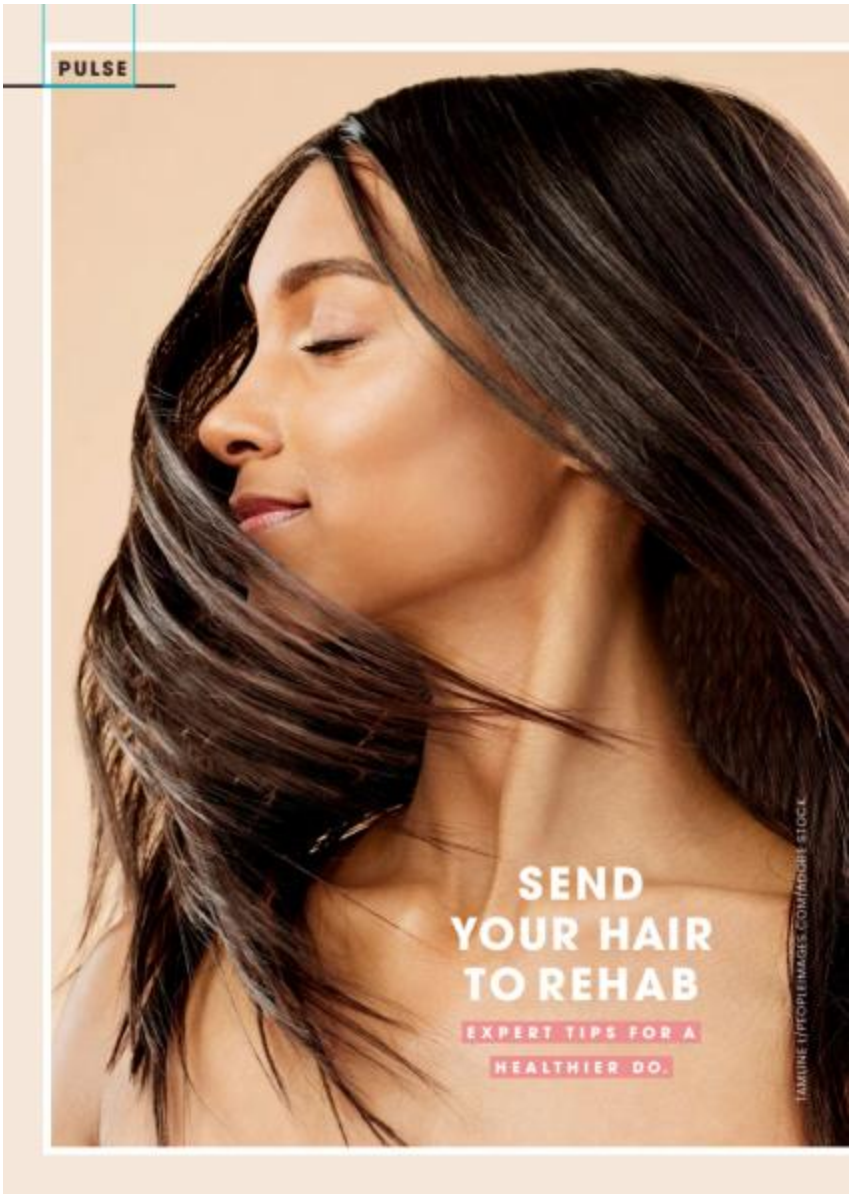

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Pulling a beanie over your head isn't the only way to deal with dull or damaged hair—your strands may just need some TLC. Follow these steps to achieve a stronger and healthier head of hair.

Get a trim

You don't have to lop it all off, but this will eliminate split ends that could break and cause your hair to lose length, shine, volume, and smoothness.

Wash it less often

It depends on hair type, but unless your scalp is super greasy, washing your hair only two to three times a week is a good rule; this allows natural oils to penetrate your hair so it can hydrate and repair itself. Coating strands regularly with a silky deep conditioner or hair mask can also help prevent damage.

Detangle right

Hair is especially susceptible to breakage when it's wet, so unknot it before shampooing. If you forget and have wet hair, use this method: Apply a leave-in conditioner from roots to ends and use a gentler wide-tooth comb or detangling brush to reduce friction, working from the ends up in small sections to prevent hair from tearing.

Avoid heat

Try to minimize your use of heat-styling tools, and when you must use a blowdryer, a curling iron, or a straightener, always use a heat-protectant product to help avoid breakage and frizz. And while there's no need to take a cold shower in the middle of winter (or ever, if that's not your thing), turning the water temp to warm while washing your hair may help it retain moisture better.

Sleep on silk

Switch to a silk pillowcase. "Silk is easier on hair, as it helps prevent tangles and breakage," says Jasleen Ahluwalia, M.D., an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai in New York City. The less breakage your hair experiences, the longer and healthier it will be.

SEND YOUR HAIR TO REHAB

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PULSE

YOUR GOOD-MORNING MEAL

MUNCH AND STAY FULL 'TIL LUNCH

CURRIED CHICKPEA EGG BAKE ON TOAST

ACTIVE 10 MIN. TOTAL 45 MIN. PLUS RESTING SERVES 4

Nonstick cooking spray
8 large eggs
½ cup low-fat cottage cheese
1 tsp curry powder
Kosher salt and pepper
1 15.5-oz can low-sodium chickpeas, rinsed
3 scallions, white and light green parts finely chopped, dark greens thinly sliced
2 cups watercress (tough stems discarded), roughly chopped and divided
2 Tbsp mango chutney
4 slices whole-grain bread, toasted
Olive oil, for drizzling

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Spray 8- by 8-in. baking pan with nonstick cooking spray and line bottom with parchment paper, leaving overhang on 2 opposite sides. Lightly spray parchment.
2. In large bowl, combine eggs, cottage cheese, curry powder, and ½ tsp each salt and pepper. Place immersion blender on bottom of bowl, then blend on high until incorporated. Stir in chickpeas, scallions, and two-thirds of watercress.
3. Pour into prepared pan and bake until eggs are set, 30 to 35 min. Let rest 10 min. before cutting into 4 pieces.
4. To serve, spread 1½ tsp chutney on each toast, top with 1 piece egg bake, remaining watercress, and a drizzle of olive oil if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO
PER SERVING About 301 cal, 13 g fat (3.5 g sat), 375 mg chol, 695 mg sodium, 41 g carb, 8 g fiber, 12.5 g sugar (6.5 g added sugar), 25 g pro

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CURRIED CHICKPEA EGG BAKE ON TOAST

ACTIVE 10 MIN. TOTAL 45 MIN. PLUS RESTING SERVES 4 Nonstick cooking spray 8 large eggs 1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese 1 tsp curry powder Kosher salt and pepper 1...

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ACTIVE 10 MIN. TOTAL 45 MIN. PLUS RESTING SERVES 4

Nonstick cooking spray

8 large eggs

1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese

1 tsp curry powder

Kosher salt and pepper

1 15.5-oz can low-sodium chickpeas, rinsed

3 scallions, white and light green parts finely chopped, dark greens thinly sliced

3 cups watercress (tough stems discarded), roughly chopped and divided

2 Tbsp mango chutney

4 slices whole-grain bread, toasted

Olive oil, for drizzling

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Spray 8- by 8-in. baking pan with nonstick cooking spray and line bottom with parchment paper, leaving overhang on

2 opposite sides.

Lightly spray parchment.

2. In large bowl, combine eggs, cottage cheese, curry powder, and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Place immersion blender on bottom of bowl, then blend on high until incorporated. Stir in chickpeas, scallions, and two-thirds of watercress.

3. Pour into prepared pan and bake until eggs are set, 30 to 35 min.

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The Goal

Cycle through each position once; that's one rep. Aim for five to 10 reps two to four days a week.

Y POSITION

1 Stand up straight, arms at your sides, then bend your knees slightly and hinge at your hips.

2 Slowly lift your arms to create a Y shape, squeezing your shoulder blades together as you do this, raising your arms as high as they'll go.

3 Hold for a few seconds; return to start.

T POSITION



1 Stand up straight with arms at your sides, then bend your knees slightly and hinge at your hips.

2 Slowly lift your arms out to each side to create a T shape, again squeezing your shoulder blades together.

3 Hold for a few seconds; return to start.

W POSITION

1 Stand up straight with arms at your sides, then bend your knees slightly and hinge at your hips.

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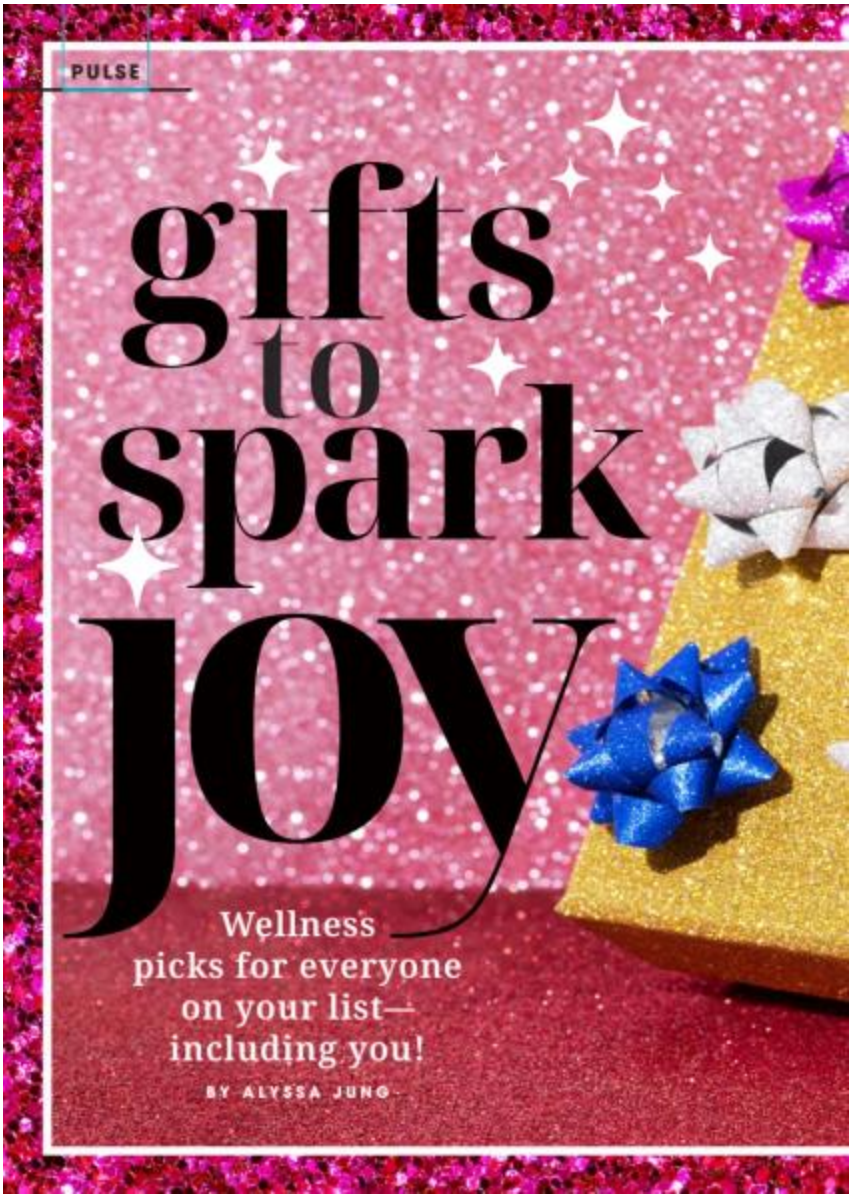

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Wellness picks for everyone on your list— including you!

BY ALYSSA JUNG

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10. GIADZY GIFT BOX

Visit prevention.com /prevention-picks for more monthly wellness inspo.



I grew up having Italian “Sunday supper.” Often featuring a nourishing pasta dish, the meal was always mindful and focused on connection. The home cook in your life can create their own soul-satisfying memories with G’s Go-To Italian

Gift Box. It’s filled with high-quality imported Italian staples just like those my mom uses, all selected by chef Giada De Laurentiis: organic pasta and extra virgin olive oil, heirloom cherry tomatoes, passata, and spicy seasoned sea salt. ($97, giadzy.com)

11. SUN BASIN SOAPS

These small-batch soaps smell delectable and make showering a spa-like experience. They’re made from natural ingredients like moisturizing coconut oil and shea butter and essential oils. Gift a single bar, build a bundle, or sign your giftee up for the monthly Soap Surprise Club. (From $9, good.store)

12. NODPOD SLEEP MASK

Give your gals their best beauty sleep by presenting them with this weighted sleep mask. Made of soft silk, it’s filled with slightly heavy material to offer the benefit of deep-pressure therapy, which studies suggest can help calm the nervous system to make nodding off easier. I struggle to shut off my brain at night, but this has me out like a light! ($68, nodpod.com)

WHEN USED WITH INHALERS,* DUPIXENT WAS PROVEN TO HELP REDUCE FLARE-UPS.



The most common side effects in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease include injection site reactions, common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis), high count of a certain white blood cell (eosinophilia), viral infection, back pain, inflammation inside the nose (rhinitis), diarrhea, stomach problems (gastritis), joint pain (arthralgia), toothache, headache, and urinary tract infection.

*COPD inhalers are considered standard of care (SOC), which refers to a typical treatment

approach prescribed by a healthcare professional for COPD.

INDICATION

DUPIXENT® is a prescription medicine used with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of adults with inadequately controlled chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and a high number of blood eosinophils (a type of white blood cell that may contribute to your COPD). DUPIXENT is used to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days) and can improve your breathing. DUPIXENT is not used to relieve sudden breathing problems and will not replace an inhaled rescue medicine. It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with COPD under 18 years of age.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Do not use if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT®.

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have eye problems.

- have a parasitic (helminth) infection.

- are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a “live vaccine” right before and during treatment with DUPIXENT.

• are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby. o A pregnancy registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy collects information about the health of you and your baby. To enroll or get more information call 1-877-311-8972 or go to https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/.

• are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines or have COPD and also have asthma. Do not change or stop your other medicines, including corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine, without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by those medicines to come back.



DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

• Allergic reactions. DUPIXENT can cause allergic reactions, including skin reactions, that can sometimes be severe. Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms:

breathing problems or wheezing, swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded, fast pulse, fever, hives, skin rash, including rash that looks like a bullseye or painful red or blue bumps under the skin, general ill feeling, itching, swollen lymph nodes, nausea or vomiting, joint pain, or cramps in your stomach area.

• Eye problems. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision, such as blurred vision. Your healthcare provider may send you to an ophthalmologist for an exam if needed.

• Joint aches and pain. Some people who use DUPIXENT have had trouble walking or moving due to their joint symptoms, and in some cases needed to be hospitalized. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or worsening joint symptoms. Your healthcare provider may stop DUPIXENT if you develop joint symptoms.

The most common side effects in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease include injection site reactions, common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis), high count of a certain white blood cell (eosinophilia), viral infection, back pain, inflammation inside the nose (rhinitis), diarrhea, stomach problems (gastritis), joint pain (arthralgia), toothache, headache, and urinary tract infection.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider. It’s an injection given under the skin (subcutaneous injection). Your healthcare provider will decide if you or your caregiver can inject DUPIXENT. Do not try to prepare and inject DUPIXENT until you or your caregiver have been trained by your healthcare provider.

Please see Brief Summary of Important Patient Information on the next page.

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Brief Summary of Important Patient Information about DUPIXENT® (dupilumab) (DU-pix-ent) injection, for subcutaneous use

Rx Only

What is DUPIXENT?

- DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used:
  - with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of adults with moderate-to-severe asthma with type 2 inflammation that is not adequately controlled with their asthma medicines.
  - with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of adults with inadequately controlled chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and a high number of blood eosinophils (a type of white blood cell that may contribute to your COPD). DUPIXENT is used to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days) and can improve your breathing.
- **DUPIXENT is not used** to relieve sudden breathing problems and will not replace an inhaled rescue medicine.
- DUPIXENT works by blocking two proteins that contribute to a type of inflammation that plays a major role in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with COPD under 18 years of age. COPD is most often seen in adults.

Who should not use DUPIXENT?

Do not use DUPIXENT if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT. See the end of this summary of information for a complete list of ingredients in DUPIXENT.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DUPIXENT?

Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have eye problems.
- have a parasitic (helminth) infection.
- are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a "live vaccine" right before and during treatment with DUPIXENT.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby.
  - **Pregnancy Exposure Registry.** There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Your healthcare provider can enroll you or you may enroll yourself. To get more information about the registry call 1-877-311-8972 or go to https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you:

- are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines.
- have COPD and also have asthma.

Do not change or stop your other medicines, including corticosteroid medicines or other asthma medicine, without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by those medicines to come back.

How should I use DUPIXENT?

- **See the detailed "Instructions for Use" that comes with DUPIXENT for information on how to prepare and inject DUPIXENT and how to properly store and throw away (dispose of) used DUPIXENT pre-filled syringes and pre-filled pens.**
- Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it.
- DUPIXENT comes as a single-dose pre-filled syringe with needle shield or as a pre-filled pen.
- DUPIXENT is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give the injections of DUPIXENT, you or your caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. **Do not** try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider.
- **If your dose schedule is every 2 weeks and you miss a dose of DUPIXENT:** Give the DUPIXENT injection within 7 days from the missed dose. Then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, start a new every 2 week dose schedule from the time you remember to take your DUPIXENT injection.
- If you inject too much DUPIXENT, call your healthcare provider or Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe other medicines to use with DUPIXENT. Use the other prescribed medicines exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to.

What are the possible side effects of DUPIXENT?

DUPIXENT can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Allergic reactions. DUPIXENT can cause allergic reactions, including skin reactions, that can sometimes be severe.** Stop using DUPIXENT and tell your healthcare provider or get emergency help right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms: breathing problems or swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat, fainting, dizziness, feeling lightheaded, fast pulse, hives, rash, itching, neck pain, shoulder pain, a bump or patches across the skin, general ill feeling, itching, swollen lymph nodes, nausea or vomiting, joint pain, or cramps in your stomach area.
- **Eye problems.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new or worsening eye problems, including eye pain or changes in vision, such as blurred vision. Your healthcare provider may send you to an ophthalmologist for an exam if needed.
- **Joint aches and pain.** Joint aches and pain can happen in people who use DUPIXENT. Some people have had trouble walking or moving once-to-their joint symptoms, and in some cases needed to be hospitalized. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or worsening joint symptoms. Your healthcare provider may stop DUPIXENT if you develop joint symptoms.

The most common side effects of DUPIXENT in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease include: injection site reactions, common cold symptoms, laryngitis/flu, high count of a certain white blood cell (eosinophilia), viral infection, back pain, inflammation inside the nose (rhinitis), diarrhea, stomach problems (gastritis), joint pain (arthralgia), toothache, headache, and urinary tract infection.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all of the possible side effects of DUPIXENT. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

How should I store DUPIXENT?

- Store DUPIXENT in the refrigerator between 36°F to 46°F (2°C to 8°C).
- Store DUPIXENT in the original carton to protect from light.
- DUPIXENT can be stored at room temperature up to 77°F (25°C) up to 14 days. Throw away (dispose of) any DUPIXENT that has been left at room temperature for longer than 14 days.
- **Do not** heat or put DUPIXENT into direct sunlight.
- **Do not** freeze. **Do not** shake.

Keep DUPIXENT and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about the safe and effective use of DUPIXENT.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use DUPIXENT for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give DUPIXENT to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about DUPIXENT. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for more information about DUPIXENT that is written for healthcare professionals.

For more information about DUPIXENT, go to www.DUPIXENT.com or call 1-844-DUPIXENT (1-844-387-4936).

What are the ingredients in DUPIXENT?

Active ingredient: dupilumab

Inactive ingredients: L-arginine hydrochloride, L-histidine, polysorbate 80, sodium acetate, sucrose, and water for injection

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Issue Date: June 2025

Brief Summary of Important Patient Information about DUPIXENT® (dupilumab) (DU-pix-ent) injection, for subcutaneous use

What is DUPIXENT? • DUPIXENT is a prescription medicine used: – with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of adults with inadequately controlled chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and a...

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What is DUPIXENT?

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– with other medicines for the maintenance treatment of adults with inadequately controlled chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and a high number of blood eosinophils (a type of white blood cell that may contribute to your COPD). DUPIXENT is used to reduce the number of flare-ups (the worsening of your COPD symptoms for several days) and can improve your breathing.

• DUPIXENT is not used to relieve sudden breathing problems and will not replace an inhaled rescue medicine.

• DUPIXENT works by blocking two proteins that contribute to a type of inflammation that plays a major role in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

• It is not known if DUPIXENT is safe and effective in children with COPD under 18 years of age. COPD is most often seen in adults.

Who should not use DUPIXENT?

Do not use DUPIXENT if you are allergic to dupilumab or to any of the ingredients in DUPIXENT. See the end of this summary of information for a complete list of ingredients in DUPIXENT.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DUPIXENT? Before using DUPIXENT, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

• have eye problems.

• have a parasitic (helminth) infection.

• are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a "live vaccine" right before and during treatment with DUPIXENT. • are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known whether DUPIXENT will harm your unborn baby.

– Pregnancy Exposure Registry There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who take DUPIXENT during pregnancy to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Your healthcare provider can enroll you or you may enroll yourself. To get more information about the registry call 1-877-311-8972 or go to https://mothertobaby.org/ongoing-study/dupixent/. • are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known whether DUPIXENT passes into your breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take including prescription and over-the-counter

medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you:

- are taking oral, topical, or inhaled corticosteroid medicines
- have COPD and also have asthma

Do not change or stop your other medicines, including corticosteroid medicine or other asthma medicine, without talking to your healthcare provider. This may cause other symptoms that were controlled by those medicines to come back.

How should I use DUPIXENT?

- See the detailed “Instructions for Use” that comes with DUPIXENT for information on how to prepare and inject DUPIXENT and how to properly store and throw away (dispose of) used DUPIXENT pre-filled syringes and pre-filled pens.
- Use DUPIXENT exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you how much DUPIXENT to inject and how often to inject it.
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- DUPIXENT is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- If your healthcare provider decides that you or a caregiver can give the injections of DUPIXENT, you or your

caregiver should receive training on the right way to prepare and inject DUPIXENT. Do not try to inject DUPIXENT until you have been shown the right way by your healthcare provider.

• If your dose schedule is every 2 weeks and you miss a dose of DUPIXENT: Give the DUPIXENT injection within 7 days from the missed dose, then continue with your original schedule. If the missed dose is not given within 7 days, start a new every 2-week dose schedule from the time you remember to take your DUPIXENT injection.

• If you inject too much DUPIXENT, call your healthcare provider or Poison

Help line at 1-800-222-1222 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away. • Your healthcare provider may prescribe other medicines to use with DUPIXENT. Use the other prescribed medicines exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to.

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• Joint aches and pain. Joint aches and pain can happen in people who use DUPIXENT. Some people have had trouble walking or moving due to their joint symptoms, and in some cases needed to be hospitalized. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or worsening joint symptoms. Your healthcare provider may stop DUPIXENT if you develop joint symptoms.

The most common side effects of DUPIXENT in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease include: injection sites reactions, common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis), high count of a certain white blood cell (eosinophilia), viral infection, back pain, inflammation inside the nose (rhinitis), diarrhea, stomach problems (gastritis), joint pain (arthralgia), toothache, headache, and urinary tract infection.

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General information about the safe and effective use of DUPIXENT. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use DUPIXENT for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give DUPIXENT to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them.

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2 Sprays a Day: Xlear Nasal Spray

Feel the difference with two sprays a day. Xlear Nasal Spray’s fast-acting formula—powered by xylitol—helps open your airway, soothe irritation, and keep your sinuses clear. Whether it’s morning or night,...

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XLEAR.COM

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5 MYTHS ABOUT AUTISM

No, the condition is not an epidemic—but misunderstandings about it are. Here are a few, as well as the truth about what it means to be neurodivergent in this way.

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5 MYTHS ABOUT AUTISM

BY TULA KARRAS

No, it’s not an epidemic.

No, the condition is not an epidemic—but misunderstandings about it are. Here are a few, as well as the truth about what it means to be neurodivergent in this way.



1 MYTH : Autism is a mental disorder. MYTHBUSTER Autism spectrum disorder (or disability),

or ASD, is actually a developmental and neurological condition, not a mental illness or disease. People with



autism have brain differences that cause them to experience and interact with the world in atypical ways, which is why it is called a “neurodivergent” condition (as opposed to being “neurotypical”). A person may have some of its traits and not others, but many of the differences it leads to are communicationrelated (for example, being less able to interpret facial gestures than others are), atypical behaviors (such as repetitive movements, sensitivity to light and sound, and intensive focus on particular interests), and challenges mastering social skills. Though it is not a mental disorder, people with it have higher rates of depression, anxiety, and ADHD, in part because it’s stressful living in a world set up for neurotypical people.

2 MYTH : There’s an epidemic of autism. MYTHBUSTER

It may seem as if autism is on the rise—about one in 31 eight-year-olds was diagnosed with it in 2022, which amounts to an increase of more than 300% over the past 20 years—but much of the upward trend has to do with increased awareness and knowledge about autism and the fact that more professionals are able to diagnose it, says HelenTager-Flusberg, Ph.D., director of the Center for Autism Research Excellence (CARE) at Boston University. “There may be a small increase because people are delaying childbirth—we know that older parents, especially older fathers, contribute a small amount of additional risk,” she adds.

3 MYTH : People with autism are not successful in life and can’t have deep relationships. MYTHBUSTER

This is a stereotype, and public figures with autism— including Greta Thunberg, Anthony Hopkins, and the singer and songwriter Sia, to name a few—blow it out of the water.



"There's a view of what autism looks like—that people can't hold conversations, have close friendships, go to college, or even have a sense of humor, and so often this is not the case," says Vanessa Bal, Ph.D., director of the LifeSpan Autism Lab at Rutgers–New Brunswick Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology.

Depending on how much support an autistic person needs, they can hit standard societal milestones or even exceed them.

Lots of people with ASD proudly identify as autistic and view their neurodivergence as a gift. That said, the effort it takes for autistic people to function in a world with rules that aren't intuitive to them, especially if they have profound difficulty communicating, often makes them feel depressed and isolated, says Tager-Flusberg. The bottom line: People with autism have a wide range of abilities and experiences.

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1

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5 Myths About Autism

BY TULA KARRAS

No, it’s not an epidemic.

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No, the condition is not an epidemic—but misunderstandings about it are. Here are a few, as well as the truth about what it means to be neurodivergent in this way.



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1 MYTH : Autism is a mental disorder. MYTHBUSTER Autism spectrum disorder (or disability),

or ASD, is actually a developmental and neurological condition, not a mental illness or disease. People with



autism have brain differences that cause them to experience and interact with the world in atypical ways, which is why it is called a “neurodivergent” condition (as opposed to being “neurotypical”). A person may have some of its traits and not others, but many of the differences it leads to are communicationrelated (for example, being less able to interpret facial gestures than others are), atypical behaviors (such as repetitive movements, sensitivity to light and sound, and intensive focus on particular interests), and challenges mastering social skills. Though it is not a mental disorder, people with it have higher rates of depression, anxiety, and ADHD, in part because it’s stressful living in a world set up for neurotypical people.

2 MYTH : There’s an epidemic of autism. MYTHBUSTER

It may seem as if autism is on the rise—about one in 31 eight-year-olds was diagnosed with it in 2022, which amounts to an increase of more than 300% over the past 20 years—but much of the upward trend has to do with increased awareness and knowledge about autism and the fact that more professionals are able to diagnose it, says HelenTager-Flusberg, Ph.D., director of the Center for Autism Research Excellence (CARE) at Boston University. “There may be a small increase because people are delaying childbirth—we know that older parents, especially older fathers, contribute a small amount of additional risk,” she adds.

3 MYTH : People with autism are not successful in life and can’t have deep relationships. MYTHBUSTER

This is a stereotype, and public figures with autism— including Greta Thunberg, Anthony Hopkins, and the singer and songwriter Sia, to name a few—blow it out of the water.



"There's a view of what autism looks like—that people can't hold conversations, have close friendships, go to college, or even have a sense of humor, and so often this is not the case," says Vanessa Bal, Ph.D., director of the LifeSpan Autism Lab at Rutgers–New Brunswick Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology.

Depending on how much support an autistic person needs, they can hit standard societal milestones or even exceed them.

Lots of people with ASD proudly identify as autistic and view their neurodivergence as a gift. That said, the effort it takes for autistic people to function in a world with rules that aren't intuitive to them, especially if they have profound difficulty communicating, often makes them feel depressed and isolated, says Tager-Flusberg. The bottom line: People with autism have a wide range of abilities and experiences.

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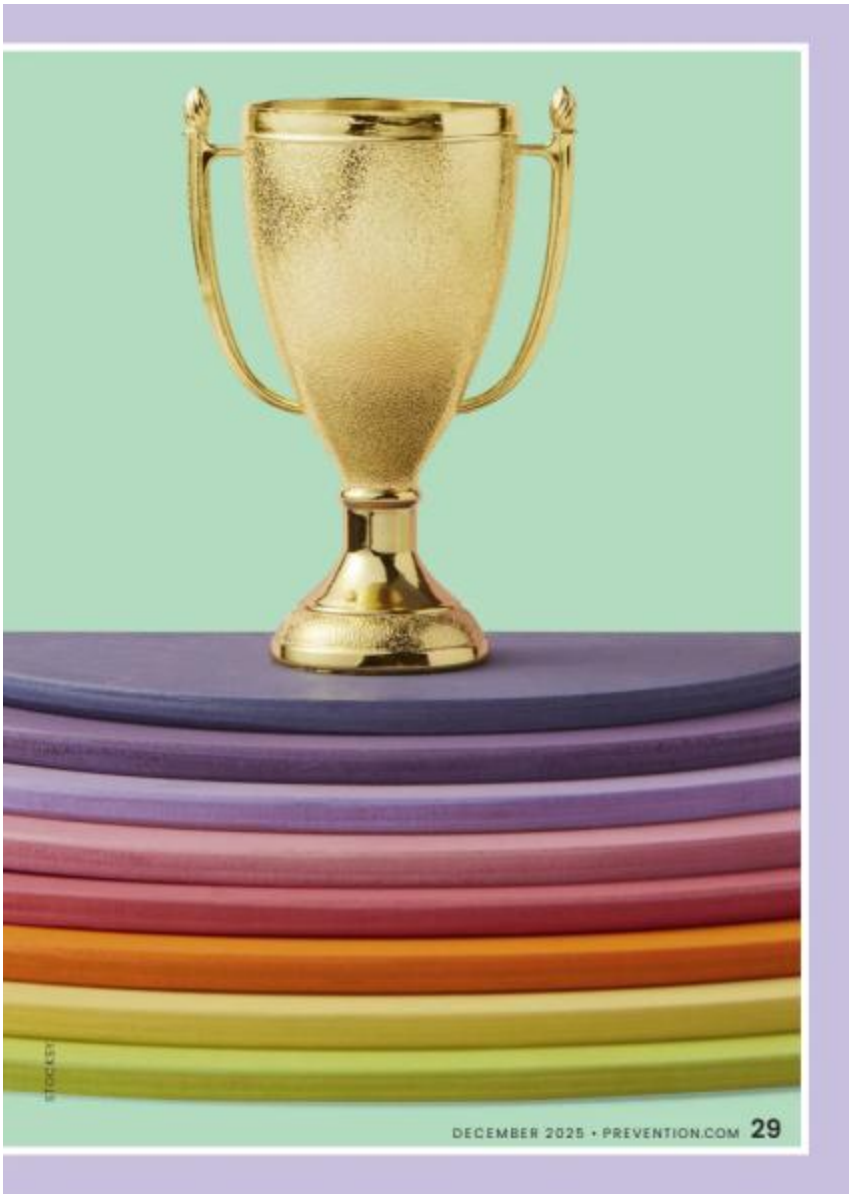

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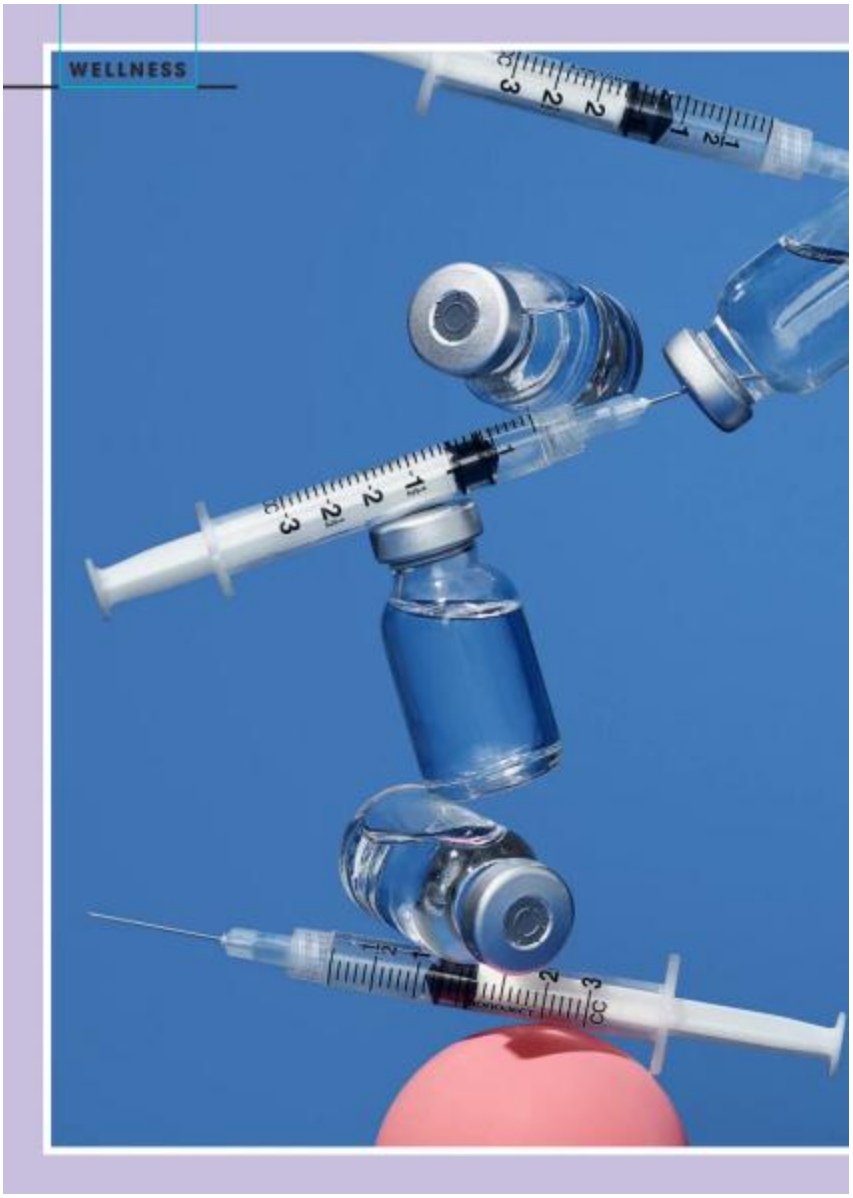

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Not everyone with autism exhibits the behaviors commonly associated with it (such as hand-flapping and difficulty making eye contact) during their childhood. This is why many who have it reach adulthood without a diagnosis—especially if they are bright and have good verbal skills. “Commonly adults will ask for an evaluation after they see a TikTok or a TV show about autism and say, ‘That sounds like my life,’” notes Bal. For some, it’s only when they’re starting college or entering the workforce—transitional periods when they may have more independence or interaction with new people than before—that their challenges become apparent, and this can lead them to getting a diagnosis. Finding out that they have ASD is often a relief, she says, as it helps them understand themselves and why they find certain aspects of life especially challenging. 4 MYTH : Vaccines cause autism. MYTHBUSTER Absolutely not—reputable studies around the globe have assessed this idea, and not a single one has found a link between vaccines (or

additives to them) and autism, says Tager-Flusberg. “This myth started because of a fraudulent 1998 study in which the author faked data and had a financial interest in discrediting the MMR vaccine,” she adds. (The fact that the MMR vaccine is given to kids when they are around the age at which autism is often first diagnosed has fueled the myth.) So what does cause autism? “We know for sure that genetics are the main contributor,” says Tager-Flusberg, “but there are likely other things—such as having older parents— that can increase the probability of it.”

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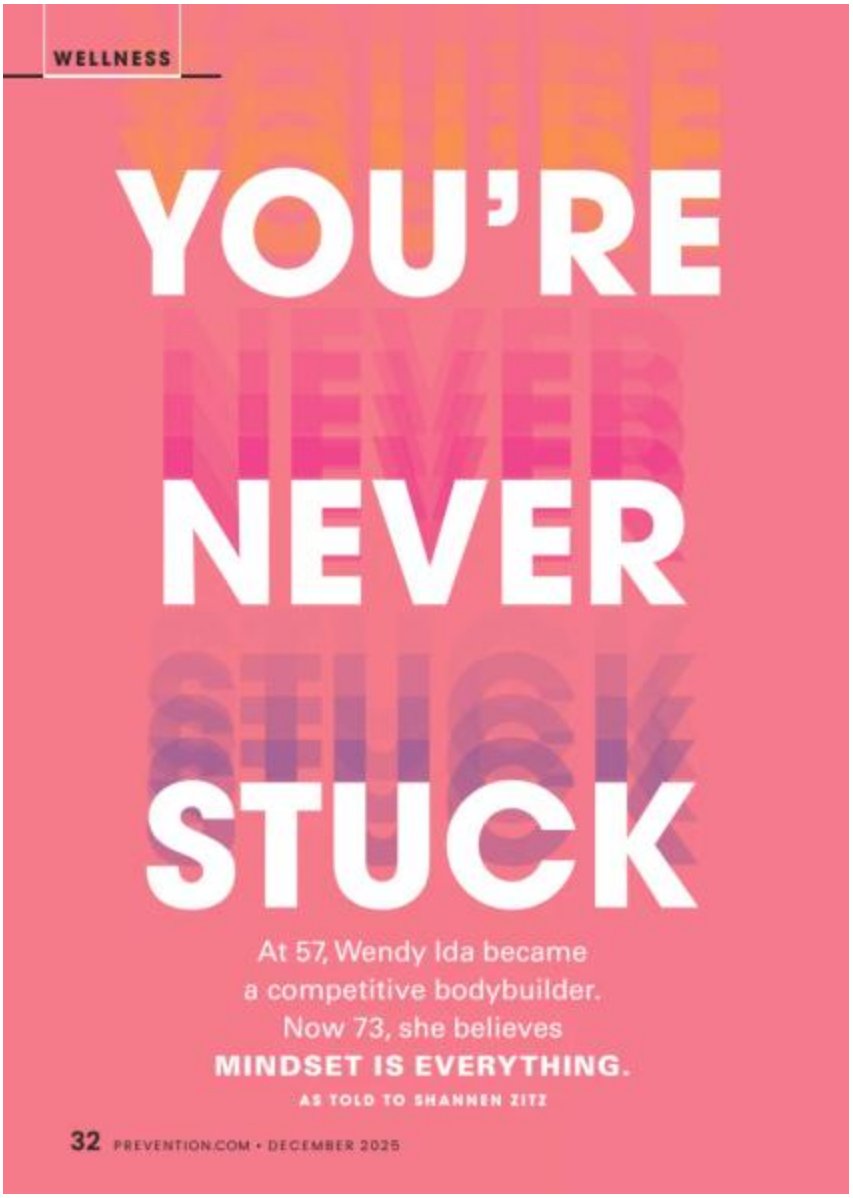

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WELLNESS

When I was in my early 30s,

I decided I needed a change in my life. I had gotten out of a toxic relationship and moved across the country, from New Jersey to California, but in many ways I still felt like the version of myself I had wanted to leave behind.

I was fearful of everything—of my ex, of starting over with two young children. I had no confidence, was 80 pounds overweight, and felt as if it was too late, like I'd been cheated out of the life I could have had.

The generation of relatives who had come before me had struggled with their weight and their physical health, and I thought that was my destiny in life. But in California I decided to start going to the gym before heading to my new job as a corporate accountant, because that was just what people did there.

I kept at it for a few years, but I was just doing what I saw other people do, and I didn't really see any changes, physical or mental. Then one day when I was in my early 40s, I met an amazing gentleman and fitness professional, Jim Kelly, who changed my life forever. He became my personal trainer and introduced me to the power of weight training. My body started changing, and it felt like magic—but more important, my mind started changing too. I began to see that I wasn't stuck, I wasn't old. It inspired me to make shifts in other parts of my life too. It cleared the clutter in my brain, and I felt creative ideas start to flow. I had a new attitude and a new sense of confidence.

First I went back to school and learned about nutrition, and that helped me lose weight and keep it off. I also lost the mentality of settling for how things were. At 43, I became a part-time fitness trainer while still working in accounting, because I wanted to help other women like me.

I was growing so much and becoming more inspired by the day as I learned more about the power of the body, of working out and eating right—how that could transform not just your body but your whole life. At around 48, I decided to leave my accounting job and pursue fitness training exclusively. That

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grew into helping people one on one, and then doing public speaking and writing books.

I learned that pushing my limits gave me purpose and excitement, and when I was 57, I wanted to see how much further I could go: I entered my first bodybuilding competition. Over the next five or six years I won three top trophies and went on to become an eight-time national champion. I was so proud of myself. All of this built my confidence even further—my age was not a factor and didn't hold me back. I felt so alive. I was moving forward and in control.

My 60th birthday felt like a real milestone. Aside from the relationship hardships I had gone through in my 20s, my mom had passed away when I was 28, when she was just 42, and part of me had never really seen myself living to 43. So when I reached 60, I thought, *I am so excited that I am here. I'm excited that I'm alive, and that I am helping other people change their lives.*

I decided to make it a big event: I put on a red carpet–style gala in Beverly Hills as a celebration of life and of helping other women overcome their struggles. There, I was awarded a Guinness World Record for doing 37 burpees in a minute—I had recently set out to break that record and had done it! Guinness also surprised me with another world record, for being the oldest active fitness instructor in multiple disciplines. It was a really high point in my life.

I'm 73 now, and I continue speaking and opening up to others—not only about fitness but also about the moments of grief in my life. When I realized how many people I was affecting, I felt blessed. Giving other people courage gave me the courage to keep going.

If I could give advice to my younger self, it would be trust yourself, and trust your gut. Know that you have more control and power than you think. Don't be afraid to speak out, to keep moving forward—do what is right regardless of what other people say.

In my opinion, you are as old as you think you are, and chronological age shouldn't limit you. Mindset is everything. It's key to treat your body and your mind with respect: Keep stress low, stay active, and eat in a healthy way. You stay young when you remain relevant, so be sure to laugh often, and engage with others. Don't live in the past—the rearview mirror is small for a reason. Your future is ahead of you. Stay positive and keep learning, and blessings will follow.



Wendy Ida is a fitness professional and the author of *Unbreak Me*. Learn more at her website, wendyida.com.

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WELLNESS

THE UPSHOT

Should You Quit Coffee?

More than 100 million American adults drink it every day, even as a vague sense that it's bad for us percolates in the background

BY BECCA MILLER AND STEPHANIE DOLGOFF

Maybe it's because so many of us love it and even depend on it and we've been conditioned to think that dependence on anything, especially a stimulant, is no good. Or perhaps you recall some negative buzz around the brew, or your heart hammers when you've had too much. There are reasons the "Coffee is bad" rumor won't die.

But the science shows that for most people, coffee not only is *not* bad but actually has benefits beyond keeping you awake during snoozy meetings that could have been emails.

First, some basics: Most of the concerns folks have about coffee arise because of caffeine, which is also the reason so many of us appreciate it, especially in the morning. Caffeine acts as a stimulant by blocking adenosine, the neurotransmitter that promotes sleep, resulting in increased alertness and focus, explains Chester Wu, M.D., a psychiatrist and sleep specialist in Houston. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) says most people can safely take in up to 400 mg of caffeine a day—that's what's in two to three 12-oz cups—without adverse effects.

Your mileage may vary, of course, and if you drink more than that amount (or are extra sensitive to caffeine), you might have short-term issues such as mild anxiety, an upset stomach, or insomnia, especially if you have it late in the day. Caffeine can also cause a brief rise in blood pressure (even if you don't have high blood pressure), mainly if you drink it infrequently, according to the Mayo Clinic. As for long-term health problems, people have been drinking coffee for centuries, and for healthy adults there don't appear to be any.

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has found that young people may not tolerate caffeine well because they are often smaller and their brain physiology is changing. And adults in specific situations, such as being pregnant or having heart trouble, might want to ask their doctors how much caffeine is safe for them.

As for non-caffeine-related worries, those didn’t come out of nowhere either. In 1991, the beverage was classified as a “possible carcinogen” by the World Health Organization (WHO) because limited evidence linked it to bladder cancer. After a thorough review, however, WHO found “no conclusive evidence for a carcinogenic effect of drinking coffee.”



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All that caution and research adds up to this: If you don’t experience negative effects such as the jitters or anxiety when you drink coffee and you sleep well, there’s no health-related reason you should quit—and you get some benefits from it. Coffee comes from plants, so it’s high in antioxidants and phytochemicals that have antioxidant elements, says Keri Glassman, M.S., R.D.N. (Antioxidants can help prevent the free-radical damage that may lead to cancer.)

In fact, coffee contains more than 1,000 compounds, many of which likely have anti-inflammatory properties as well as potentially anti-cancer ones, according to a BMJ research review. Coffee consumption is associated with a lower risk of melanoma and leukemia as well as prostate and endometrial cancers. And an older study found that coffee drinkers in general were 26% less likely to develop colorectal cancer than others who did not drink coffee; those who drank more than two and a half servings a day were 54% less likely to get it. Research also shows that drinking coffee may lengthen your life—or so concluded a 2022 study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine that found that people who drank one and a half to three and a half cups of coffee per day were up to 30% less likely to die of any cause during the study period than those who didn’t drink any.

A beneficial brew

You might want to pour yourself a cup right now, because the list of coffee’s benefits is a long one. It has also been found to support brain health—evidence shows that people who drink caffeinated beverages such as coffee daily (in moderation) have a lower risk of developing dementia than those who do not, says Brynna Connor, M.D., a family physician in Austin. Studies also suggest that

the caffeine in coffee may have neuroprotective benefits against Parkinson’s disease and that it may help with movement



symptoms in people who already have the disorder. And despite the fact that some people get heart palpitations when they drink coffee (and the fact that it can raise blood pressure temporarily), “one review found that moderate coffee consumption could reduce the risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other heart conditions,” says Edo Paz, M.D., a cardiologist in NewYork City. Finally, coffee consumption is linked to a lower likelihood of type 2 diabetes, depression, and other chronic illnesses.

So consider this permission to keep enjoying coffee—just don’t consume it as if it were water. And keep in mind that regardless of its benefits, if your sleep is affected by caffeine, that’s a sign that you need to cut down on coffee, switch to decaf, or quit altogether—sleep is critical to many bodily functions, including memory. “The stimulating effects of coffee can last for several hours,” says Dr. Wu, “meaning that even if you drink it early in the day, it might still be affecting your ability to relax and fall asleep at night.”

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BY BECCA MILLER AND STEPHANIE DOLGOFF

The real deal on everyone’s favorite fix

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WELLNESS

THE UPSHOT

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Maybe it’s because so many of us love it and even depend on it and we’ve been conditioned to think that dependence on anything, especially a stimulant, is no good. Or perhaps you recall some negative buzz around the brew, or your heart hammers when you’ve had too much. There are reasons the “Coffee is bad” rumor won’t die.

But the science shows that for most people, coffee not only is not bad but actually has benefits beyond keeping you awake during snoozy meetings that could have been emails.

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First, some basics: Most of the concerns folks have about coffee arise because of caffeine, which is also the reason so many of us appreciate it, especially in the morning. Caffeine acts as a stimulant by blocking adenosine, the neurotransmitter that promotes sleep, resulting in increased alertness and focus, explains Chester Wu, M.D., a psychiatrist and sleep specialist in Houston. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) says most people can safely take in up to 400 mg of caffeine a day—that's what's in two to three 12-oz cups—without adverse effects.

Your mileage may vary, of course, and if you drink more than that amount (or are extra sensitive to caffeine), you might have short-term issues such as mild anxiety, an upset stomach, or insomnia, especially if you have it late in the day. Caffeine can also cause a brief rise in blood pressure (even if you don't have high blood pressure), mainly if you drink it infrequently, according to the Mayo Clinic. As for longterm health problems, people have been drinking coffee for centuries, and for healthy adults there don't appear to be any.

Keep in mind that we're talking about adults here—for kids and adolescents, it might be a different story. Research

has found that young people may not tolerate caffeine well because they are often smaller and their brain physiology is changing. And adults in specific situations, such as being pregnant or having heart trouble, might want to ask their doctors how much caffeine is safe for them.

As for non-caffeine-related worries, those didn’t come out of nowhere either. In 1991, the beverage was classified as a “possible carcinogen” by the World Health Organization (WHO) because limited evidence linked it to bladder cancer. After a thorough review, however, WHO found “no conclusive evidence for a carcinogenic effect of drinking coffee.”



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A similar potential issue came up in 2018: A California law (Proposition 65) requires businesses to warn consumers if their products contain chemicals that could cause cancer, birth defects, or reproductive issues with significant exposure—and coffee, when roasted, produces acrylamide, a chemical classified as a probable carcinogen by the Environmental Protection Agency. But an evaluation of more than one thousand studies determined that the chemicals created in producing coffee did not pose a significant risk of causing cancer. Besides, “while large amounts of acrylamide have been shown to cause cancer in animal models, there’s no compelling evidence showing that it increases the risk of cancer in humans,” says Catherine Carpenter, Ph.D., M.P.H., an adjunct professor at the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition. (Also, she adds, the rodents studied were exposed to concentrations of acrylamide up to 60 times higher than what humans encounter.)

All that caution and research adds up to this: If you don’t experience negative effects such as the jitters or anxiety when you drink coffee and you sleep well, there’s no health-related reason you should quit—and you get some benefits from it. Coffee comes from plants, so it’s high in antioxidants and phytochemicals that have antioxidant elements, says Keri Glassman, M.S., R.D.N. (Antioxidants can help prevent the free-radical damage that may lead to cancer.)

In fact, coffee contains more than 1,000 compounds, many of which likely have anti-inflammatory properties as well as potentially anti-cancer ones, according to a BMJ research review. Coffee consumption is associated with a lower risk of melanoma and leukemia as well as prostate and endometrial cancers. And an older study found that coffee drinkers in general were 26% less likely to develop colorectal cancer than others who did not drink coffee; those who drank more than two and a half servings a day were 54% less likely to get it. Research also shows that drinking coffee may lengthen your life—or so concluded a 2022 study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine that found that people who drank one and a half to three and a half cups of coffee per day were up to 30% less likely to die of any cause during the study period than those who didn’t drink any.

A beneficial brew

You might want to pour yourself a cup right now, because the list of coffee’s benefits is a long one. It has also been found to support brain health—evidence shows that people who drink caffeinated beverages such as coffee daily (in moderation) have a lower risk of developing dementia than those who do not, says Brynna Connor, M.D., a family physician in Austin. Studies also suggest that

the caffeine in coffee may have neuroprotective benefits against Parkinson’s disease and that it may help with movement



symptoms in people who already have the disorder. And despite the fact that some people get heart palpitations when they drink coffee (and the fact that it can raise blood pressure temporarily), “one review found that moderate coffee consumption could reduce the risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other heart conditions,” says Edo Paz, M.D., a cardiologist in NewYork City. Finally, coffee consumption is linked to a lower likelihood of type 2 diabetes, depression, and other chronic illnesses.

So consider this permission to keep enjoying coffee—just don’t consume it as if it were water. And keep in mind that regardless of its benefits, if your sleep is affected by caffeine, that’s a sign that you need to cut down on coffee, switch to decaf, or quit altogether—sleep is critical to many bodily functions, including memory. “The stimulating effects of coffee can last for several hours,” says Dr. Wu, “meaning that even if you drink it early in the day, it might still be affecting your ability to relax and fall asleep at night.”

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"In your late 40s or 50s you realize,

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says Emmy-winning television journalist Tamsen Fadal, author of How to Menopause. "When I was younger, friends would always want to come stay at my apartment in New York City, and I would always accommodate them, even if it meant I couldn't go to the gym or eat what I wanted or keep my own schedule," she says. At work, the pressure to agree was even more intense: "I felt that if I didn't say yes to everything, I wouldn't have a job.

But you get to a point where you realize if you don't take the time now to focus on yourself, you're not going to get

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Boundary setting is about more than protecting your time, she says. “When you’re in a situation you don’t want to be in, your body knows it, and it causes havoc,” says Fadal. “Saying no, however, can help keep your blood pressure in check, reduce stress, and help you feel a little more satisfied in life.” If you’ve had a hard time holding the line in the past, one theory is that it may get easier after menopause, when levels of hormones associated with caring for others such as estrogen and oxytocin have declined.

Though toddlers have mastered the art of saying no (and refusing to do what they’re asked again and again),

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Fadal admits, “but I’ve learned to deal with the fact that some people are not going to be happy with that and I’m going to be OK. In the end, saying no gives you more confidence.” Not to mention mental energy for what’s important to you.

Here, in an excerpt adapted from How to Menopause, Fadal shares her advice for setting boundaries that will allow you to focus on what you want. —Marisa Cohen

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BOUNDARIES ARE VITAL



FOR WOMEN, because we live in a society where we are asked to do too much. We're supposed to keep the peace, tend to everyone's emotional needs, remember what foods and household goods we're out of, manage all the schedules and appointments, maintain our looks, keep the house clean, be nice, smile...I could go on, but I won't, because I'm exhausted just thinking about it.

If you don't get clear on what you will and will not do and then communicate and maintain those limits, you will spend too much of your precious time and energy on things that aren't yours to carry. As tumultuous and bewildering as the decline of estrogen can be in menopause, it also means we may lose a little (or a lot) of the hormonal drive to tend to others' needs. Capitalize on that momentum by drawing a bubble around yourself to delineate what is and is not an acceptable way for you to feel or be treated.

"Setting boundaries simply means being clear about your preferences, desires, limits, and deal-breakers and having the ability to communicate them to others transparently," says Terri Cole, a psychotherapist and the author of Boundary Boss. "If a friendship or relationship is taxing or has become toxic, it's OK to give yourself permission to change your mind, protect your peace, and honor how you authentically feel."

When we lose sight of who we really are and what we need to feel whole, other people, commitments, and obligations can make us feel smothered. It can become impossible to see the possibilities life offers all around you, especially when menopause symptoms hijack your body and your mind.

Simply put, boundaries determine what is and is not OK in any relationship. Here is my four-part strategy for protecting your schedule and your peace of mind so you'll have the bandwidth and energy for the people and things that really count in your life.

Ask yourself, What. Do. I. Want?

This first step is the most important one. When my husband, Ira, and I were first dating and I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do next in my life, he would say, very slowly and deliberately, "What. Do.

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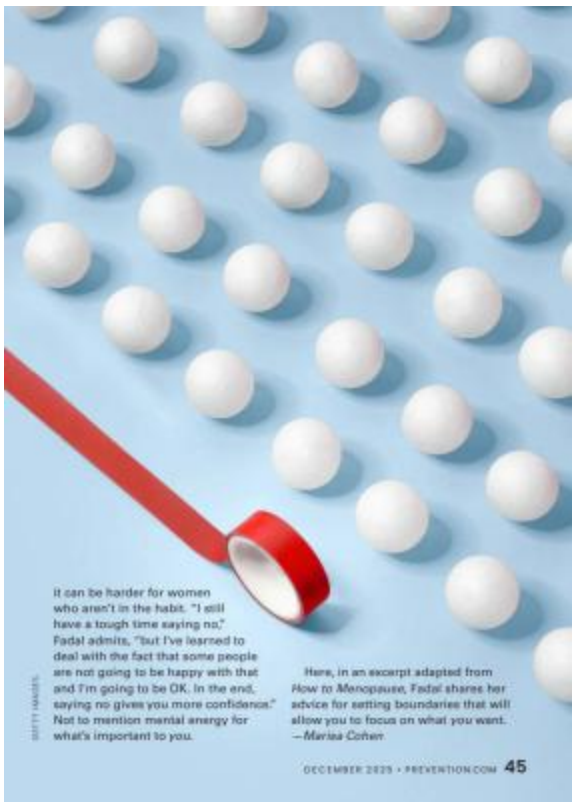

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trying to say. *How do you want to spend your time? What will renew your mind? What do you value?* I think when we are girls, we're not often asked what we want—we're encouraged to do what's expected of us. And in our first stages of adulthood, we're often thinking about what others want—our employers, our spouses, our kids. It really felt radical to consider what I wanted. What I wanted was to stop just going through the motions. I wanted time to spend on what gave me a sense of peace and added depth and meaning to my life.

2 Block out your personal time

Next, I had to figure out how to take back my time. I would spend days going from one appointment to another without a real sense of purpose. I finally had to take pen to paper and plan out hours in the day when I would not schedule anything. Aside from a true emergency, these time blocks were my sacred space, my time to do what I wanted. If I wanted to stare at the computer, go for a walk, talk to a friend, or just sit, I did it, guilt free. I forgave myself in advance, and it has changed my life. I feel free to think. I don't feel anxious going from one task to the next. And those time blocks (I use purple in my calendar to denote them) have allowed me to come up with some of my best ideas and brought me back to where I am supposed to be.

3 Really understand the power of "No"

For a word with two little letters, this one has a lot of power. I used to be the woman who would say yes to everything so I wouldn't hurt people's feelings. Then, when an event or a meeting or a lunch would arrive, I would dread it, because I had said yes in the moment just to make someone else happy. So I have a trick to make sure I can say yes and mean it. I look at my current schedule and imagine that the obligation is happening this week. Then I ask myself, *Would I say yes?* I use my answer to make the decision.

Here are a couple of polite ways to decline things you don't want to do:

- **Thank you, I would love to, but I won't be able to at this time.**
- **That sounds amazing, but I just can't.**

You don't have to explain why. Remember that "No" is a complete sentence. It is not easy for people pleasers to understand this, but wow, is it crucial. Otherwise, you fill up your day satisfying everyone else while depleting yourself and end up wondering where the time went. We all have obligations, and it's a privilege to be needed in life, but it's also important to have our priorities straight. It can be pretty refreshing

So many women

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Midlife is a time when obligations come hurtling toward us like asteroids, and we can't attend to them all at once. Allow yourself to come first as often as you can.There is no prize at the end for how much you gave of yourself and how often everyone else took precedence over you. Midlife is your time to examine what's important and finally take center stage in your own life.

Excerpted from How to Menopause by Tamsen Fadal. Copyright

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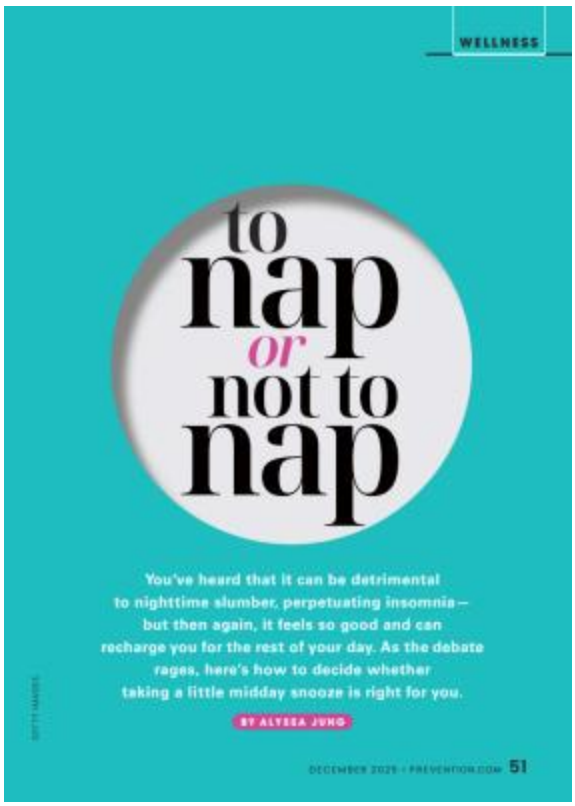

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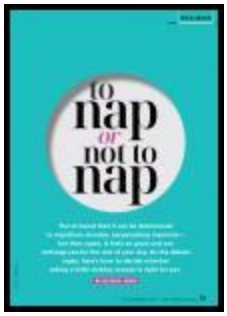

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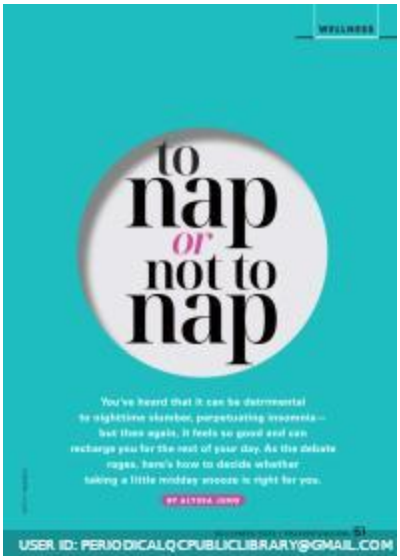

iIt's officially food coma season, and there is a nonzero chance that one of the people you share the holiday with will poke the napper on the couch and claim that they should power through the rest of the day. Why? Because napping is a destroyer of nighttime sleep, leading to health problems connected with not getting enough shut-eye including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, depression, and many other issues. Also, daytime napping itself, some studies have suggested, could be associated with problems like high blood pressure, though the science isn't

conclusive— these studies had limitations involving comorbidities and often unreliable data.



Napping in fact has proven benefits, as research points to a connection between taking naps and having better overall brain health whether or not one gets adequate sleep at night— and this holds true for both those who nap regularly and those who do so more sporadically. “The same types of cognitive benefits you see with a full night of sleep, you see with a nap,” says Sara Mednick, Ph.D., a professor of cognitive science at the University of California, Irvine, and the author of The Power of the Downstate: RechargeYour

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Systems. “People show better verbal, spatial, and working memory; better creativity; better perception; and better attentional processing after a nap.”

So what’s a tired person (who is maybe also full of turkey) to do? Here’s the 411 on napping, as well as how to make it work for you.

THE SCIENCE OF DAY DOZING

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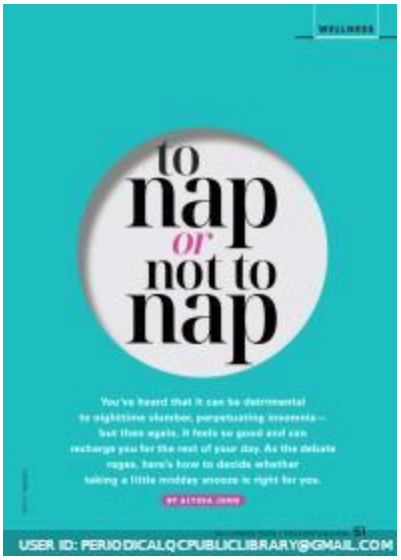

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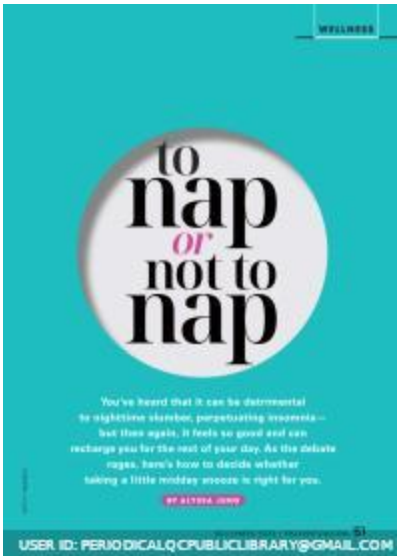

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WELLNESS

Cedars-Sinai in California. But a nap can help with immediate needs if you're wiped out: "Staying in these light sleep stages can clear out some mental clutter to help sharpen focus and short-term memory and improve mood," adds Dr. Dasgupta. "The right kind of nap is like a tune-up for your brain."

Snoozing for short periods also helps lower levels of adenosine, a chemical that builds up in your brain when you're awake and contributes to feelings of fatigue, Dr. Dasgupta notes. "A short, well-timed nap can really allow your body and mind to relax and recharge so you can conquer the rest of your day."

But taking a nap that is too long or at the wrong time of day may, aside from messing up your regular sleep schedule, cause you to wake up feeling fatigued and out of it, worsen insomnia if you are prone to it, or mask underlying sleep disorders (such as obstructive sleep apnea) that could be causing fatigue.

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To recharge without then being up all night, follow these best practices:

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Choose your window wisely

The ideal time is early afternoon, ideally between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., when most people's energy naturally starts to dip.

Avoid your bed

Getting into bed can blur the line between a nap and nighttime sleep, particularly if you struggle with insomnia. Look for a quiet, cool place such as a couch.

Whether or not you're in the nap club, the most important thing is getting enough quality sleep to keep your body and mind working optimally—that's about eight to nine hours daily.

When naps GO VIRAL

Recently, specific sleeping styles—from the "NASA nap" to the "Navy SEAL nap" to something super science-y-sounding called "biphasic sleeping"—have been making the rounds on social media and online. Could one of these be your secret to feeling alert? Here's the scoop.

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minute snooze with his feet elevated above his heart (picture lying on the ground with your legs on a couch).

SHOULD YOU TRY IT?

Eight minutes keeps you below the 30-minute limit, and positioning your legs this way will increase blood flow throughout your body, including to your heart and brain, which may make you feel more alert when you awaken.

BIPHASIC SLEEPING

It sounds technical, but this is your basic siesta. In countries such as Spain and Italy, it’s common for people to take a 30- to 90-minute nap in the afternoon and then sleep for fewer than eight hours at night. In this scenario, individuals still get eight or nine hours of total sleep daily, but instead of clocking it all in one stretch, they break it into two chunks.This is believed to be how most people slept until we were able to control our work and leisure

time by using electric lights and started opting for one long snooze.There are other ways to divide your sleeping time, too, such as splitting it into two even sessions.

SHOULD YOU TRY IT?

Maybe. Waking from a long nap, which is what each chunk of biphasic sleep essentially is, can be disorienting. “One challenge with this strategy is that you can wake up groggy if you awaken from a nap in the middle of a deep sleep pattern,” says Bruce Bassi, M.D., a psychiatrist and the founder of Telepsych Health. But if it works for you and you’re getting enough overall zzz’s, keep on siesta-ing.

No rest for THE BUSY

On days when you need an energy boost but can’t squeeze in a snooze—or if you’re simply one of those folks who can’t fall asleep during the day—try these tricks to shake off the midday slump.

Drink water in case you’re dehydrated—when your tissues have less of the fluid they need to function, it can make you feel tired.

Try sipping a glass of green tea for a caffeine hit without the jitters; it also delivers L-theanine for alertness.

Step outside for a dose of daylight and rejuvenating fresh air.The exposure to light will also help regulate your circadian rhythm to encourage a consistent sleep schedule.

Take a break. Sometimes all your brain needs is a little respite from what it has been doing, and then it can come back sharper.

Move your body: Take a walk, do a few stretches, or listen to upbeat music—all three prompt the release of mood-lifting endorphins, which can help you feel more energized.

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What if you CAN'T NAP?

There are two types of people in the world: those who love to doze and those who simply can't nap. "The ability to nap is a little bit of biology...

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There are two types of people in the world: those who love to doze and those who simply can’t nap. “The ability to nap is a little bit of biology mixed with human habit. Some people’s body clocks give them a strong afternoon dip in alertness, but others just don’t ever feel sleepy during the day, and research suggests that genetics play a role in how quickly your ‘sleep pressure’ builds,” says Dr. Dasgupta. “Plenty of people have active or anxious minds that make a midday nap nearly impossible no matter how tired they are.”

If you’re not a napper, make sure you protect your nighttime sleep (wind down an hour before bedtime) so you get enough hours.

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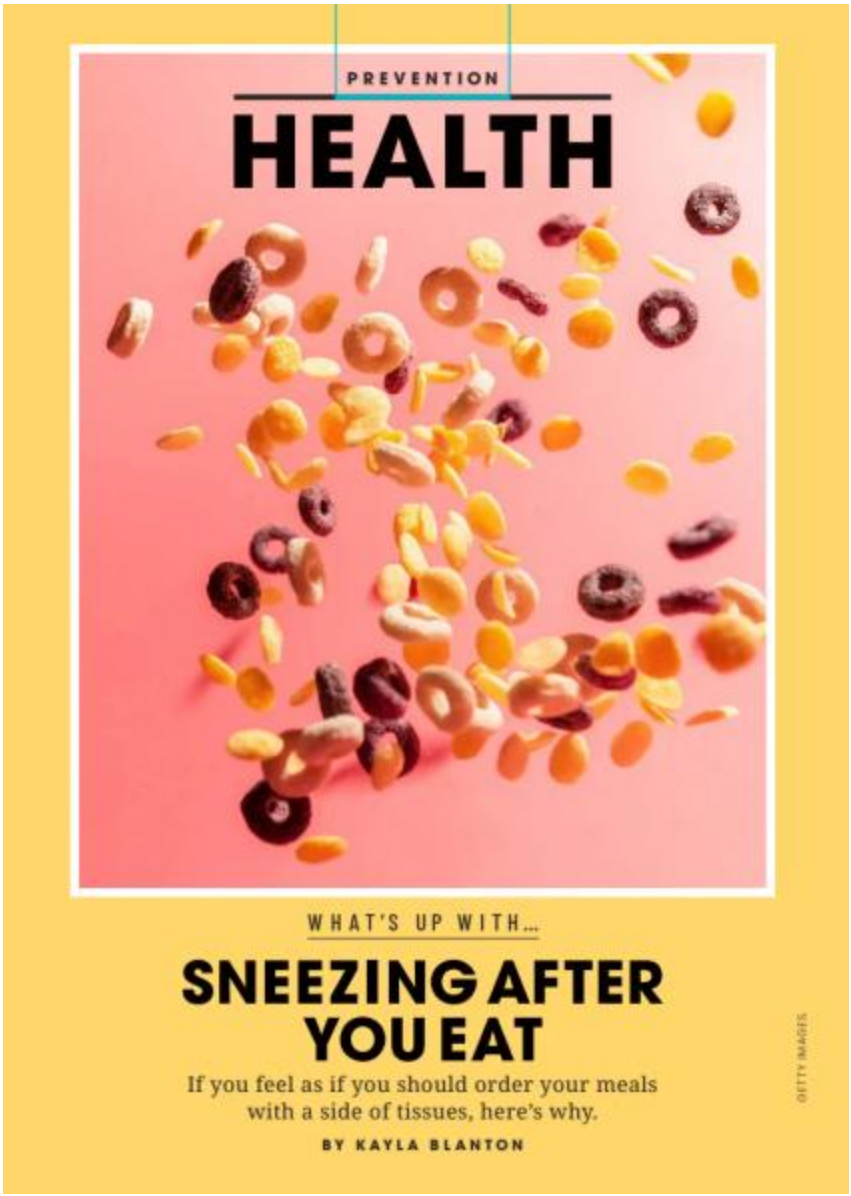

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MOST OF US HAVE COUGHED a little after we've eaten because of allergies, reflux, or simply having chowed down too quickly. But having a big "Achoo!" moment after you finish a meal seems more mysterious. Actually, this phenomenon is so common that there's a name for it: "snatiation."

WHY THE NOSE MAY EXPLODE AFTER EATING

Snatiation (a mash-up of "sneeze" and "satiation") was coined to describe post-meal sneezing, "particularly after consuming a large meal," explains Arturo Bravo, M.D., a gastroenterologist with Houston Methodist Willowbrook and Cypress hospitals. The exact reason you sneeze is unknown, but some theorize that it's linked to the stretching of the stomach when you're full, which might trigger the nerve responsible for the sneezing reflex, he notes. Snatiation is believed to be an autosomal dominant trait, "meaning it runs in families and you have about a 50% chance of inheriting it from one of your parents," says Kara Wada, M.D., an allergist and immunologist based in Ohio.

The Food Connection

Your post-meal sneezing might also have to do with what's on your plate: Spicy or pungent foods such as garlic, mustard, wasabi, hot peppers, and cinnamon can cause gustatory rhinitis, which can lead to a runny nose or sneezing, says Dr. Bravo. Even foods that are hot in temperature, such as that steaming bowl of soup, can make you sneeze. "It's not an allergic reaction but rather an overstimulation of the nasal nerves by environmental triggers," he explains. The symptoms can also be triggered by irritants such as smoke and strong odors.

HOW TO STOP SNATIATION

While there's no surefire way to avoid it, eating smaller meals and taking more time to chew can help, says Dr. Wada, and staying away from trigger foods can also be beneficial. If you consistently experience a runny nose, sniffles, or sneezing after you eat, ask your doctor about ipratropium nasal spray, which is used to treat runny noses brought on by allergies and colds, adds Dr. Wada.

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SNEEZING AFTER YOU EAT

If you feel as if you should order your meals with a side of tissues, here’s why.

BY KAYLA BLANTON

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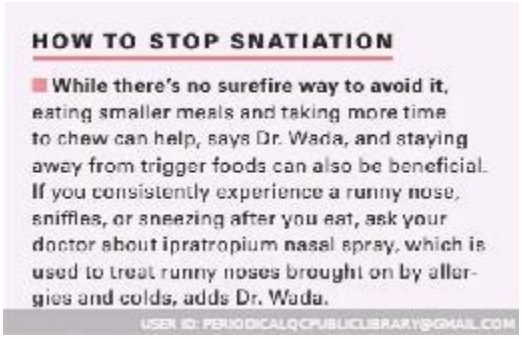

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HEALTH

NATURAL SOLUTIONS

Manage Your Blood Pressure

Here's how to keep or bring your numbers down.

BY GINA WAY

It's one of those conditions that sneak up on you—more than half of U.S. adults with uncontrolled high blood pressure don't know they have it, recent research shows. When left untreated, high BP (also called hypertension) can raise the risk of cardiac events such as heart attack and stroke and other health problems like kidney damage, early cognitive decline, and dementia. "High blood pressure, in most cases, is asymptomatic," says Lawrence Phillips, M.D., a cardiologist and an assistant professor of medicine at NYU Langone Health. "People don't feel that they have it, which is why regular screening is so important." Doctors check your blood pressure as a matter of course during most routine medical exams and urgent care visits because it's a critical indicator of your overall health.

Blood pressure is the force of your blood against the walls of your arteries, and it is expressed as two numbers: The top one (systolic blood pressure) represents the force against the artery walls when your heart beats; the bottom number (diastolic blood pressure) is that pressure between heartbeats. (A reading above 130/80 mmHg signals high blood pressure, according to the American Heart Association.) High BP forces the heart to work harder to pump blood throughout your body and can damage heart muscle and blood vessels over time.

Whether you develop hypertension depends on several factors, some within your control and others not so much. People with a family history of high BP are more prone to it, and your chances rise naturally as your age does. Also, adults in certain ethnic groups (including those who are Black,

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DIY ways to bring it down

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HEALTH

Hispanic, and Asian) have higher rates of hypertension than others, and for women the chances of having elevated BP go up considerably after menopause, possibly because of a drop in heart-protective estrogen.

Fortunately, making healthy lifestyle changes can help many people control their BP, sometimes even without medication. For instance, you can cut back on salt and processed foods, as getting too much sodium causes your body to retain water, increasing blood volume and thus the pressure in your arteries. And go easy on alcohol—booze can constrict blood vessels, meaning all that blood has to squeeze through a smaller space, also putting pressure on the arteries. Smoking is a big problem too—for many reasons, including that nicotine triggers the release of the hormones epinephrine and norepinephrine, which increase blood pressure (even e-cigarettes and nicotine patches raise BP, studies show). Getting inadequate sleep, constantly being stressed, and being sedentary can also up your odds.

Follow the flow chart on the next page to learn more about the lifestyle tweaks that may assist you in avoiding or controlling this condition. »

HOW TO GET A GOOD READING

Use these tips at your next doctor's appointment to get the most accurate numbers.

1 PLAN AHEAD. Skip the double cappuccino and the workout before you go in to get your blood pressure measured, and try to stay as calm as possible that day—doing otherwise can lead to a temporary increase in heart rate and blood pressure.

2 HIT THE LOO. Having a full bladder sends a signal to your brain that stimulates the nervous system, and that can increase blood pressure temporarily.

3 TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS. This can relax your nervous system and help ease white coat syndrome, which is high BP caused by the anxiety of being in a doctor's office.

4 GET YOUR POSTURE RIGHT. Sit with both feet flat on the floor and your arm resting on a surface level with your heart. Studies show that having your arm supported (as opposed to resting your hand in your lap) leads to greater accuracy. Health care providers won't always ask you to adjust your arm position, so don't be afraid to speak up.

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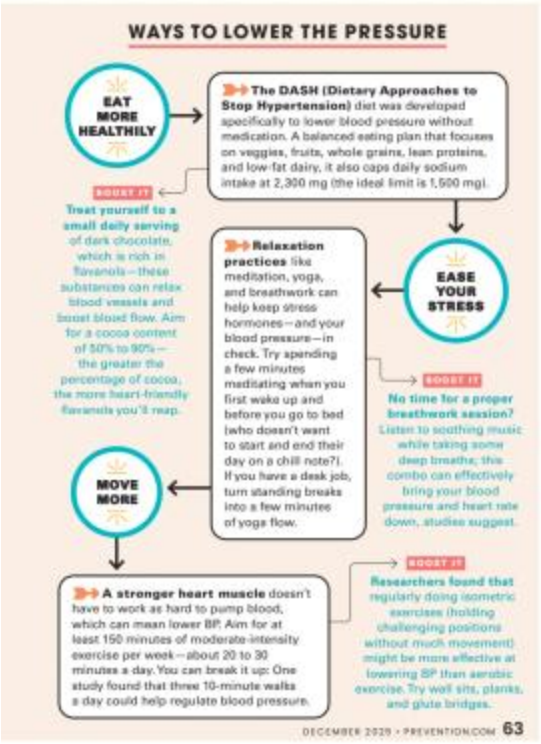

Relaxation practices

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Treat yourself to a small daily serving

of dark chocolate, which is rich in flavanols—these substances can relax blood vessels and boost blood flow. Aim for a cocoa content of 50% to 90%— the greater the percentage...

A stronger heart muscle

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The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension)

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BOOST IT Researchers found that

regularly doing isometric exercises (holding challenging positions without much movement) might be more effective at lowering BP than aerobic exercise.Try wall sits, planks, and glute bridges.

BOOST IT

No time for a proper breathwork session? Listen to soothing music while taking some deep breaths; this combo can effectively bring your blood pressure and heart rate down, studies suggest.

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like meditation, yoga, and breathwork can help keep stress hormones—and your blood pressure—in check. Try spending a few minutes meditating when you first wake up and before you go to bed (who doesn’t want to start and end their day on a chill note?). If you have a desk job, turn standing breaks into a few minutes of yoga flow.

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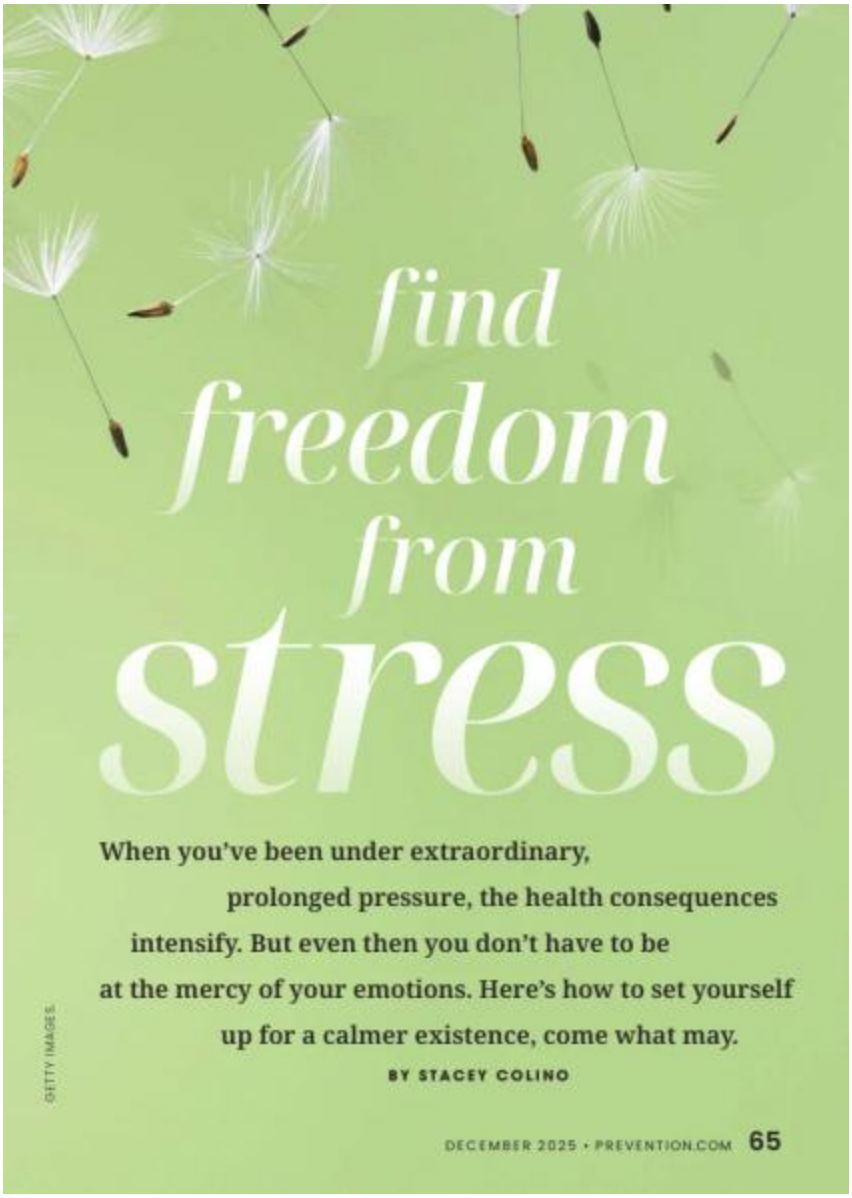

find freedom from stress

When you've been under extraordinary, prolonged pressure, the health consequences intensify. But even then you don't have to be at the mercy of your emotions. Here's how to set yourself up for a calmer existence, come what may.

BY STACEY COLINO

GETTY IMAGES

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HEALTH

Over a two-year period, Arlin Cuncic was hit with a tsunami of stressful events. Early in the chaotic COVID lockdown her mother died of cancer, and the following year her brother passed away suddenly. Soon after that her husband's best friend died. Cuncic and her husband were thrust into the unfamiliar role of estate executor, and while they were dealing with this overwhelming responsibility, her father had some health issues. All this hit them on top of their usual responsibilities at work and raising their two children.

The result of this intense period of relentless overload was that Cuncic ended up in a state of high alert day and night. "I'd always been a calm person, but it got to the point where I couldn't deal with even minor problems," says Cuncic, now 51, who is an author and the founder of aboutsocialanxiety.com and lives near London, Ontario, Canada. "I was overreacting to things that wouldn't have bothered me in the past and arguing with my daughter and my husband more than I should have."

This state of mind started taking a toll on her health, causing gastrointestinal problems, heart palpitations, and sleep difficulties. It had an impact on her emotions as well, making her feel angry and edgy and unable to think straight.

There's a term for what Cuncic was experiencing, "high stress reactivity," and it is a fairly common phenomenon. Stress reactivity, defined as "the capacity or tendency to respond to a stressor," is in itself a good thing. It simply means that when problems or threats arise, this physical and emotional response readies you to take action. Without some stress reactivity, you'd stand with your mouth open, hands at your sides, unable to cope. But when your stress reactivity level spikes, you're vigilant (*What fresh hell is this?*) and too quick to react, and these reactions are overly intense or prolonged. That's when it becomes problematic for your health and well-being.

CLOSE to a BOIL

High stress reactivity relates to increased or prolonged activation of the body's fight-or-flight response, says Richard Davidson, Ph.D., founder and director of the Center for Healthy Minds at the

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University of Wisconsin–Madison and founder of the affiliated nonprofit Healthy Minds Innovations. When someone is highly reactive to stress, he adds, it takes less to activate all those physiological and psychological reactions in them than it does in most people. In a lab, reactivity is measured by changes in heart rate and blood pressure as well as levels of stress hormones such as cortisol. In real life, a highly reactive person might feel their mind race and notice heart palpitations or muscle tension. They may start sweating or feel antsy, anxious, or hypervigilant.

One reason high stress reactivity is so sticky is that once you're in that state of intense alertness, you may be even *more* reactive to any new stressor, however minor. "When stressful events occur, the amygdala deep inside the brain gets activated and recruits other regions of the brain to deal with the stress," Davidson explains. Once the amygdala is buzzing, he adds, "it doesn't take as much stress the next time to activate it, and then it recovers more slowly."

High stress reactivity often plays out something like this: You've been dealing with stressors all day for days or weeks in a row and then your spouse asks you if you've fed the dog and you snap. "When it feels like too much is coming at you and you don't have a chance to regroup or recalibrate, it makes you more vulnerable to reacting intensely to the next stressor," says Jenny Taitz, Psy.D., ABPP, an assistant clinical professor in psychiatry at UCLA and the author of *Stress Resets: How to Soothe Your Body and Mind in Minutes*. "It's almost as if your ability to cope has been compromised."

And the longer you live in this heightened state, the harder it gets for you to return to being able to take things in stride, says Joshua Wiley, Ph.D., a senior research fellow in psychology at Monash University in Australia: "People may feel more negative emotions and fewer positive emotions. Over time, it can wear down their ability to cope."

Who's HIT HARDEST

People with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are prone to high stress reactivity, says Taitz. "Those with untreated PTSD are especially highly reactive and have a rapid startle response," she notes. Early exposure to stress, such as experiencing abuse or neglect as a child, is also associated with greater stress reactivity throughout life.

Depression can be a contributing factor too. "People who are clinically depressed or who have a history of depression often have disproportionately greater reactivity to stressors compared with others," says Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, Ph.D., an academy professor at the Institute for Behavioral Medicine Research at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. And people with depression tend to ruminate, or engage in repetitive thinking

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about negative events and distressing feelings, which can contribute. “When we’re actively anticipating a stressful event, reactivity is often heightened, and the same is true if we keep ruminating about the event afterward,” KiecoltGlaser says. “The stressor isn’t present, but our thoughts keep it alive and kicking us beforehand and afterward.”

That said, just about anyone can experience high stress reactivity under certain circumstances, such as when life just throws too much at them or they are hit with something abnormally traumatic or upsetting.

It’s not “JUST”stress

Stress is inevitable, of course, but what makes high stress reactivity different is that unless you find a way to get back to baseline levels of calmness and respond to stress in a measured way, it continues to build on itself.The health consequences are many: Besides being utterly depleting, chronic heightened stress reactivity can up your risk for chronic diseases, insomnia and other sleep disturbances, and chronic pain, research shows. It can also lead to inflammation, which contributes to medical

conditions including heart disease, diabetes, certain forms of cancer, and respiratory diseases.

“And it can exacerbate any inflammatory disease, including asthma and arthritis,” Davidson says.

It can also accelerate the aging process. “If you are highly reactive to stress and have long-lasting stress reactivity, it can increase wear and tear on the body, accelerating biological aging,” says Annelise Madison, Ph.D., an assistant professor of clinical psychology at the University of Michigan. In a 2023 study of 955 adults, researchers found that people who had more perceived stress and more stressful life events experienced faster biological aging based on 19 biomarkers including waist-hip ratio, cholesterol levels, lung function, and cardiorespiratory fitness.

It’s a huge factor in burnout too.

Katie Fitts, 43, says she’s always been sensitive and prone to anxiety, but during the COVID pandemic, when she worked at a NewYork City hospital as a travel nurse, her stress response kicked into overdrive. “It was like wartime medicine—we didn’t have all the resources we should have had, and it was a pretty toxic environment for nurses,” she recalls. “I was a ball of nerves every day—I’d take things personally and overreact to things people said to me. Anything could set me off.” Fitts had trouble sleeping—

“I’d wake up with racing thoughts during the night,” she says—and developed chronic digestive symptoms like cramping and bloating.

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HEALTH

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BY STACEY COLINO

University of Wisconsin–Madison and founder of the affiliated nonprofit Healthy Minds Innovations. When someone is highly reactive to stress, he adds, it takes less to activate all those physiological and psychological reactions in them than it does in most people. In a lab, reactivity is measured by changes in heart rate and blood pressure as well as levels of stress hormones such as cortisol. In real life, a highly reactive person might feel their mind race and notice heart palpitations or muscle tension. They may start sweating or feel antsy, anxious, or hypervigilant.

One reason high stress reactivity is so sticky is that once you're in that state of intense alertness, you may be even more reactive to any new stressor, however minor. "When

stressful events occur, the amygdala deep inside the brain gets activated and recruits other regions of the brain to deal with the stress," Davidson explains. Once the amygdala is buzzing, he adds, "it doesn't take as much stress the next time to activate it, and then it recovers more slowly."

High stress reactivity often plays out something like this: You've been dealing with stressors all day for days or weeks in a row and then your spouse asks you if you've fed the dog and you snap. "When it feels like too much is coming at you and you don't have a chance to regroup or recalibrate, it makes you more vulnerable to reacting intensely to the next stressor," says JennyTaitz, Psy.D., ABPP, an assistant clinical professor in psychiatry at UCLA and the author of Stress Resets: How to Soothe Your Body and Mind in Minutes. "It's almost as if your ability to cope has been compromised."

And the longer you live in this heightened state, the harder it gets for you to return to being able to take things in stride, says Joshua Wiley, Ph.D., a senior research fellow in psychology at Monash University in Australia: "People may feel more negative emotions and fewer positive emotions. Over time, it can wear down their ability to cope."

Who's HIT HARDEST

People with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are prone to high stress reactivity, says Taitz. "Those with untreated PTSD are especially highly reactive and have a rapid startle response," she notes. Early exposure to stress, such as experiencing abuse or neglect as a child, is also associated with greater stress reactivity throughout life.

Depression can be a contributing factor too. “People who are clinically depressed or who have a history of depression often have disproportionately greater reactivity to stressors compared with others,” says Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, Ph.D., an academy professor at the Institute for Behavioral Medicine Research atThe Ohio State University College of Medicine. And people with depression tend to ruminate, or engage in repetitive thinking

about negative events and distressing feelings, which can contribute. “When we’re actively anticipating a stressful event, reactivity is often heightened, and the same is true if we keep ruminating about the event afterward,” KiecoltGlaser says. “The stressor isn’t present, but our thoughts keep it alive and kicking us beforehand and afterward.”

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REACTIVITY rescue plan

To bring reactivity levels down, it's important to eat a healthy diet, get lots of sleep, and make sure you have social support. Other useful ideas:

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MODIFY YOUR BREATHING

Regularly engaging in slow breathing exercises can reduce various measures of stress reactivity including cortisol levels and blood pressure, research shows. Wiley suggests paying attention to your breathing pattern and focusing on breathing slowly and deeply.

The use of controlled-breathing techniques in yoga is one reason a single yoga session has been shown to reduce stress reactivity significantly.

CALM YOUR MIND

Long-term practitioners of meditation have faster cortisol recovery after stress and also healthier emotionregulation strategies, studies have found. Plus, says Wiley, “by building a practice of mindfulness you can

recenter yourself in the moment, and that can interrupt the cycle of stress reactivity."

ACCEPT THAT STRESS IS INEVITABLE

Yes, stress can be debilitating, but it's also part of life! Still, "for a lot of people, the anticipation and the replaying of a past upset are so much worse than the stressful event itself," saysTaitz.That's why it helps to remind yourself that stressors come and go and emotions ebb and flow. "If you learn to accept emotions without judging them, it lets you bounce back more easily," she adds. Think of your physiological responses to stress as tools to help you respond more effectively to it rather than viewing them as a bad thing.

TAKE ACTION

Intentionally cultivate a sense of well-being. Download the Healthy Minds Program, a free evidencebased app developed by Davidson and his colleagues at Healthy Minds Innovations; it features training in mindfulness as well as practices designed to cultivate positive social connections, insights into oneself, and a sense of purpose in life.

"Our research has shown that when people use the app for five minutes a day for a month, it dials down their stress reactivity," he says. "A lot of it is about harnessing small moments in your day to nurture your mind."

Try a few of these options, either on your own or with professional help, and see what works for you. "Wellbeing is a skill," Davidson says. "If you practice it, you will get better at it."

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HEALTH

Follow your curiosity to *CALMNESS*

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We all have things that endlessly fascinate us, that are as fresh and compelling to us as squirrels were to Griffin. If we follow these topics far enough, we begin to encounter moments that fill us with awe, that give our existence more meaning. This is how creativity spirals work: Once we've activated our curious right hemispheres, they go to work learning more about the topics that interest us most and finding innovative, unexpected ways to link them.

In connecting with a genuine "squirrel passion"—it could be crocheting, playing tennis, making art, or almost anything—we become more able to regulate our nervous system. It powers a gradual increase in calmness, confidence, compassion, courage, and creativity.

How to find your squirrel

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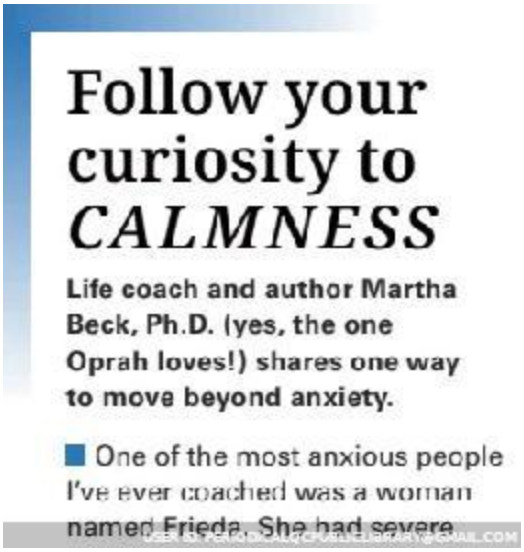

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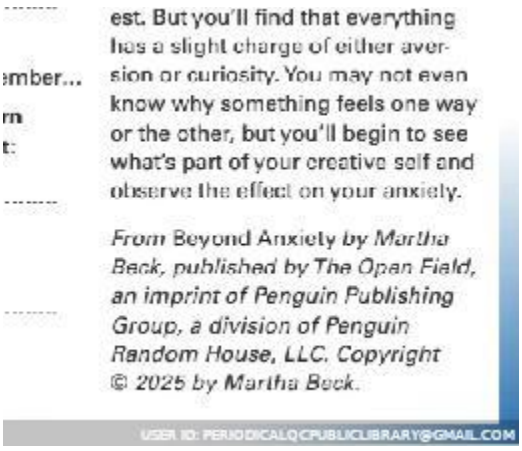
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How you felt when you saw it was time to learn more about the boring thing:

How it felt to enter the room where you encountered it:

How it felt when you forced yourself to pay attention to it:

2 MOVE ON TO A POTENTIAL SQUIRREL

Think of something you did enjoy learning about back then: a subject, sport, person, or song. Write it here:

Notice the feeling in your body, especially your eyes, as you remember...

How it felt when you got to learn more about the squirrel interest:

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3 TRY SWITCHING BETWEEN THE TWO

Do you notice that paying attention to something unappealing feels like being pushed uphill, whereas going toward something that piques your curiosity feels more like being pulled downhill with the wind at your back? Get familiar with how each sensation feels. Then, as you go through your days, notice what feels like a “push” and what

“pulls” you. Notice when something makes you want to lean in and learn more, and when you want to look away and do something—anything—else.

This exercise can give you steadier access to your curiosities. You won’t always be able to skip your “push” activities, like answering emails, making dental appointments, or soothing a sick baby. And you may not decide to follow every squirrelly thing that pulls your interest. But you’ll find that everything has a slight charge of either aversion or curiosity. You may not even know why something feels one way or the other, but you’ll begin to see what’s part of your creative self and observe the effect on your anxiety.

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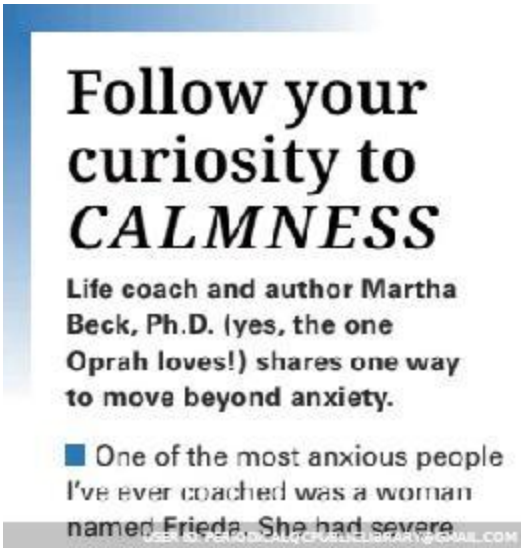

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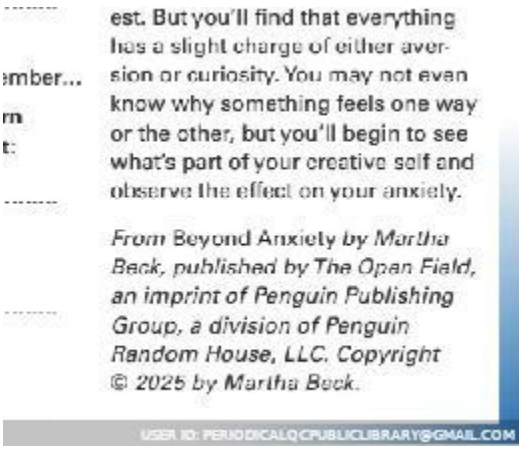
est. But you'll find that everything has a slight charge of either aversion or curiosity. You may not even know why something feels one way or the other, but you'll begin to see what's part of your creative self and observe the effect on your anxiety.

From Beyond Anxiety *by Martha Beck, published by The Open Field, an imprint of Penguin Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House, LLC. Copyright © 2025 by Martha Beck.*

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How you felt when you saw it was time to learn more about the boring thing:

How it felt to enter the room where you encountered it:

How it felt when you forced yourself to pay attention to it:

2 MOVE ON TO A POTENTIAL SQUIRREL

Think of something you did enjoy learning about back then: a subject, sport, person, or song. Write it here:

Notice the feeling in your body, especially your eyes, as you remember...

How it felt when you got to learn more about the squirrel interest:

How it felt to enter the room where you encountered it:

How it felt when you paid full attention to it:

3 TRY SWITCHING BETWEEN THE TWO

Do you notice that paying attention to something unappealing feels like being pushed uphill, whereas going toward something that piques your curiosity feels more like being pulled downhill with the wind at your back? Get familiar with how each sensation feels. Then, as you go through your days, notice what feels like a “push” and what

“pulls” you. Notice when something makes you want to lean in and learn more, and when you want to look away and do something—anything—else.

This exercise can give you steadier access to your curiosities. You won’t always be able to skip your “push” activities, like answering emails, making dental appointments, or soothing a sick baby. And you may not decide to follow every squirrelly thing that pulls your interest. But you’ll find that everything has a slight charge of either aversion or curiosity. You may not even know why something feels one way or the other, but you’ll begin to see what’s part of your creative self and observe the effect on your anxiety.

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MY DIAGNOSIS

I Thought It Was Bad Heartburn. It Wasn't.

This lawyer was awoken at night by sudden attacks of severe pain in her upper abdomen.

BY LAURA FEINER, AS TOLD TO MARISA COHEN

MONICA BUCK

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IT DIDN'T STOP

Over the next year, I started having bouts of what I thought was terrible heartburn—it felt as if I were wearing the world's tightest bra and it was squeezing me right below my breastbone. I would take Tums and Prilosec and lie on the floor on a foam roller, trying to release the air bubbles or whatever was causing me so much pain. None of it worked. Thankfully, my sons were away in college and I was able to work remotely as a contract lawyer, and my husband was very supportive, so I could stay home and take care of myself, but sometimes it was really hard even to get on a phone call. I couldn't go out with friends as much as I had, and since the worst attacks came in the middle of the night, when I was lying down, I was very sleep-deprived.

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MUNCH + RICK

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Gallstones, explained

Located in the upper right side of your abdomen, the gallbladder is an organ that stores bile produced in the liver. "When you eat, the gallbladder squeezes bile into the small intestine, and it helps you digest your food by breaking up fats," explains Austin Chiang, M.D., author of *Gut: An Owner's Guide*. Sometimes that process can be complicated by gallstones, which are clumps of cholesterol, blood cells, and other materials that can get stuck in the gallbladder or the bile ducts leading into and out of it. Around 6% of adults develop them.

Certain traits can put you at higher risk:

- Being female
- Being over 40
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Eating a high-fat and/or high-cholesterol diet

Rapid weight loss is also associated with a higher risk of gallstones, especially in those who have undergone bariatric surgery, says Dr. Chiang. Recent research has connected the use of GLP-1s for weight loss to an increased risk of gallstones as well. Many people have no symptoms, but some may experience the following:

- Pain in the upper right side of the abdomen
- Pain in the shoulders and back
- Pain after eating fatty foods
- Nausea, vomiting
- Fever and chills

Treatment

Some gallstones may make their way out on their own through the small intestine, but gallstones that get stuck and cause pain need to be removed surgically. To prevent more gallstones from forming, many patients will also need to have their gallbladders removed via a common procedure called a cholecystectomy.

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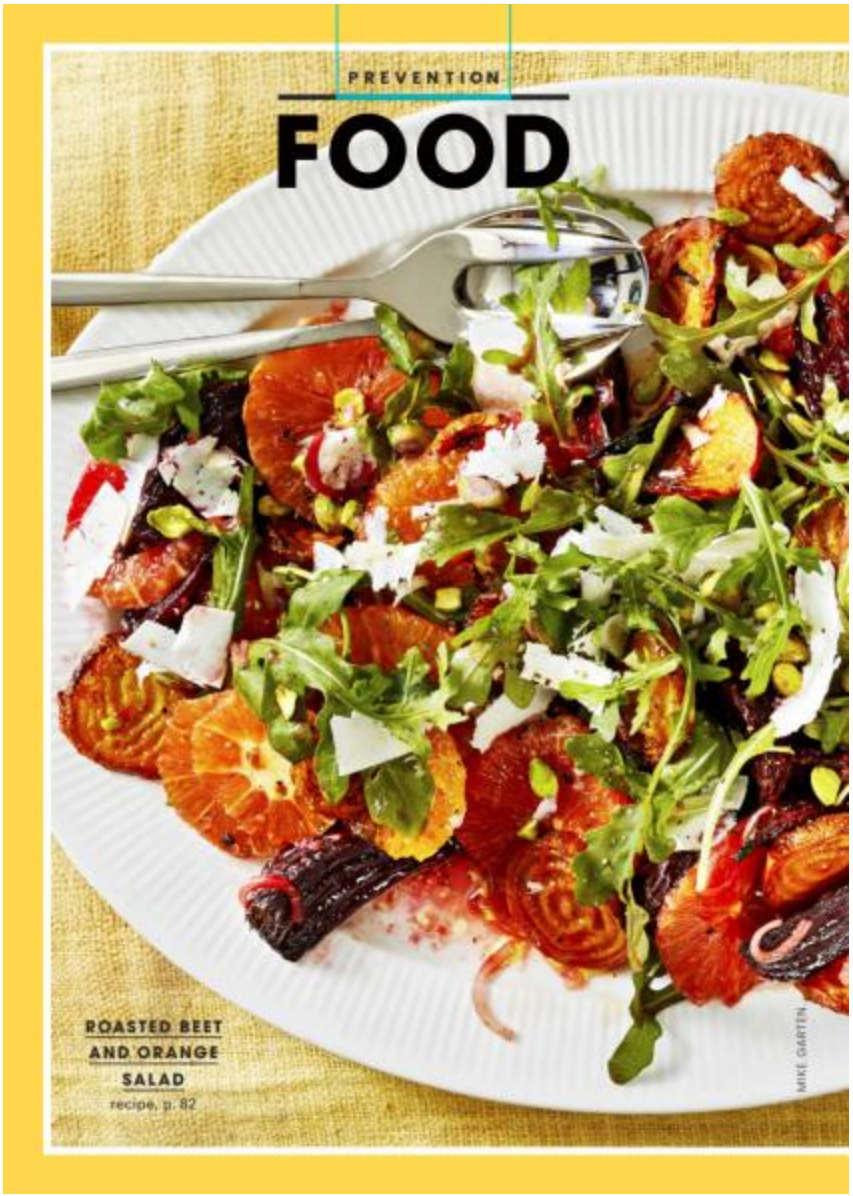

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NUTRITION

EAT TO BEAT BLOAT

Retaining Lake Michigan? Try these foods to reduce water weight.

BY ALYSSA JUNG

FEELING PUFFY after enjoying a delicious meal or during times of hormonal fluctuation is no fun. Bloating, a common complaint, can be caused by gas but can also happen when the body holds on to excess water, whether because of a salty meal, hormone levels, or medications such as some for hypertension that have fluid retention as a side effect.

One healthy quick fix for non-gas-related discomfort is eating foods that are natural diuretics. These help the kidneys make more urine to flush excess salt and water from the body, leading to frequent trips to pee and eventually a less bloated belly, says Laura Iu, R.D.N., an intuitive-eating counselor in New York City.

You can find over-the-counter diuretic pills, but foods that are natural diuretics are a better bet. Water follows sodium in the body, which is why salty foods can make you retain water. Potassium and other electrolytes help balance things out by prompting your kidneys to flush out more sodium and

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the bloating water that accompanies it.

Give the meal below and the foods at right a try—after weeks of delicious but salty holiday treats, it may help you feel less balloon-like.

One note: If you have diabetes, kidney disease, or heart failure or you take prescription meds, ask your doctor whether the diuretic foods you want to eat will interact with any of them (grapefruit, for instance, may affect blood levels of some drugs for cholesterol or high blood pressure).

ROASTED BEET AND ORANGE SALAD

ACTIVE 25 MIN. TOTAL 40 MIN. SERVES 6

Heat oven to 425°F with racks in upper and lower thirds of oven. On rimmed baking sheet, toss 1 lb golden beets (4 small; scrubbed and sliced into rounds 1/4 in. thick) with 1/2Tbsp olive oil and 1/8 tsp kosher salt; arrange in single layer. On second sheet, repeat with 1 lb

red beets (4 small; scrubbed and cut into wedges 1/2 in. thick), 1/2Tbsp oil, and 1/8 tsp salt. Roast, rotating positions of pans halfway through, until tender, 22 to 24 min. Meanwhile, in large bowl, stir 1 small

shallot (thinly sliced into half-moons), 1/4 tsp

Meyer lemon zest,

11/2 Tbsp Meyer lemon juice, and a pinch of salt. Let sit until beets are ready, then stir in

1/2 tsp honey and

1 Tbsp oil. Add 2 cups

baby arugula and toss. Gently fold in beets along with 1 navel orange and 1 Cara

Cara orange (both peeled and sliced into rounds 1/4 in. thick).Top with 2 Tbsp roasted and salted pistachios (chopped), a pinch of

flaky salt, and 2 oz

ricotta salata (shaved).

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 243 cal, 13.5 g fat (3 g sat), 15 mg chol, 517 mg sodium, 28 g carb, 7 g fiber, 19 g sugar

(0.5 g added sugar), 7 g pro

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FOOD

the bloating water that accompanies it.

Give the meal below and the foods at right a try—after weeks of delicious but salty holiday treats, it may help you feel less balloon-like.

One note: If you have diabetes, kidney disease, or heart failure or you take prescription meds, ask your doctor whether the diuretic foods you want to eat will interact with any of them (grapefruit, for instance, may affect blood levels of some drugs for cholesterol or high blood pressure).

ROASTED BEET AND ORANGE SALAD

ACTIVE **25 MIN.**
TOTAL **40 MIN.**
SERVES **8**

Heat oven to 425°F with racks in upper and lower thirds of oven. On rimmed baking sheet, toss 1 lb **golden beets** (4 small; scrubbed and sliced into rounds ⅛ in. thick) with ½ Tbsp **olive oil** and ¼ tsp **kosher salt**; arrange in single layer. On second sheet, repeat with 1 lb **red beets** (4 small; scrubbed and cut into wedges ½ in. thick), ½ Tbsp oil, and ¼ tsp salt. Roast, rotating positions of pans halfway through, until tender, 22 to 24 min. Meanwhile, in large bowl, stir 1 small **shallot** (thinly sliced into half-moons), ¼ tsp **Meyer lemon zest**, 1½ Tbsp **Meyer lemon juice**, and a pinch of salt. Let sit until beets are ready, then stir in ½ tsp **honey** and 1 Tbsp oil. Add 2 cups **baby arugula** and toss. Gently fold in beets along with 1 **navel orange** and 1 **Cara Cara orange** (both peeled and sliced into rounds ¼ in. thick). Top with 2 Tbsp roasted and salted **pistachios** (chopped), a pinch of **flaky salt**, and 2 oz **ricotta salata** (shaved).

NUTRITIONAL INFO
PER SERVING About 340 cal, 12.5 g fat (2 g sat), 18 mg chol, 517 mg sodium, 38 g carb, 7 g fiber, 18 g sugar (0.5 g added sugar), 7 g pro

YOUR GROCERY LIST

Stock up on these picks to help you eliminate excess fluid.

CITRUS

This type of fruit has potassium, an electrolyte that helps balance liquid in the body (including reducing it when there's too much!), and magnesium to support bladder and urinary health, says Iu. Grapefruit, limes, lemons, and oranges contain both.

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Eat to Beat Bloat

the bloating water that accompanies it. Give the meal below and the foods at right a try—after weeks of delicious but salty holiday treats, it may help you feel less...

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Eat to Beat Bloat

Retaining Lake Michigan? Try these foods to reduce water weight.

BY ALYSSA JUNG



FEELING PUFFY after enjoying a delicious meal or during times of hormonal fluctuation is no fun. Bloating, a common complaint, can be caused by gas but can also happen when the body holds on to excess water, whether because of a salty meal, hormone levels, or medications such as some for hypertension that have fluid retention as a side effect.

One healthy quick fix for non-gas-related discomfort is eating foods that are natural diuretics. These help the kidneys make more urine to flush excess salt and water from the body, leading to frequent trips to pee and eventually a less bloated belly, says Laura Iu, R.D.N., an intuitive-eating counselor in

New York City.

You can find over-the-counter diuretic pills, but foods that are natural diuretics are a better bet. Water follows sodium in the body, which is why salty foods can make you retain water. Potassium and other electrolytes help balance

things out by prompting your kidneys to flush out more sodium and

the bloating water that accompanies it.

Give the meal below and the foods at right a try—after weeks of delicious but salty holiday treats, it may help you feel less balloon-like.

One note: If you have diabetes, kidney disease, or heart failure or you take prescription meds, ask your doctor whether the diuretic foods you want to eat will interact with any of them (grapefruit, for instance, may affect blood levels of some drugs for cholesterol or high blood pressure).

ROASTED BEET AND ORANGE SALAD

ACTIVE 25 MIN. TOTAL 40 MIN. SERVES 6

Heat oven to 425°F with racks in upper and lower thirds of oven. On rimmed baking sheet, toss 1 lb golden beets (4 small; scrubbed and sliced into rounds 1/4 in. thick) with 1/2Tbsp olive oil and 1/8 tsp kosher salt; arrange in single layer. On second sheet, repeat with 1 lb

red beets (4 small; scrubbed and cut into wedges 1/2 in. thick), 1/2Tbsp oil, and 1/8 tsp salt. Roast, rotating positions of pans halfway through, until tender, 22 to 24 min. Meanwhile, in large bowl, stir 1 small

shallot (thinly sliced into half-moons), 1/4 tsp

Meyer lemon zest,

11/2 Tbsp Meyer lemon juice, and a pinch of salt. Let sit until beets are ready, then stir in

1/2 tsp honey and

1 Tbsp oil. Add 2 cups

baby arugula and toss. Gently fold in beets along with 1 navel orange and 1 Cara

Cara orange (both peeled and sliced into rounds 1/4 in. thick).Top with 2 Tbsp roasted and salted pistachios (chopped), a pinch of

flaky salt, and 2 oz

ricotta salata (shaved).

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 243 cal, 13.5 g fat (3 g sat), 15 mg chol, 517 mg sodium, 28 g carb, 7 g fiber, 19 g sugar

(0.5 g added sugar), 7 g pro

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YOUR GROCERY LIST



Stock up on these picks to help you eliminate excess fluid.

CITRUS

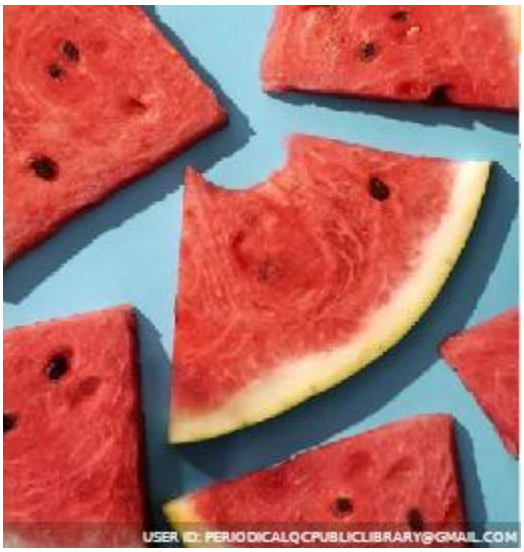
This type of fruit has potassium, an electrolyte that helps balance liquid in the body (including reducing it when there's too much!), and magnesium to support bladder and urinary health, says Iu. Grapefruit, limes, lemons, and oranges contain both.

SWEET POTATOES

These tubers can have a mild diuretic effect thanks to potassium and magnesium. Their high fiber content may also help you feel a bit lighter by keeping you regular.

BEETS

These earthy root veggies have vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that help fight inflammation (when it’s chronic, it may result in hormonal imbalances that cause bloating). They are also a source of key fluid eliminators potassium and magnesium.



COFFEE & TEA

Ever wonder why you need to pee not long after downing a cup of coffee or tea? It’s because caffeine is “a well-known diuretic that can increase urine production by stimulating the kidneys and promoting fluid excretion,” Iu explains. Both coffee and tea also deliver a dose of antioxidants.

MELONS

Potassium is in them, but melons also contain an amino acid called citrulline (it’s especially abundant in watermelon), which may have a diuretic effect, says Iu. Citrulline is involved in the urea cycle, through which the body gets rid of waste via urine.

DANDELION GREENS

Many people see these as weeds, but they are edible and deliciously bitter and contain plant compounds that may produce a mild diuretic effect, says Iu (they have potassium too). You can enjoy them raw in a salad or sauté them as you would other leafy greens.

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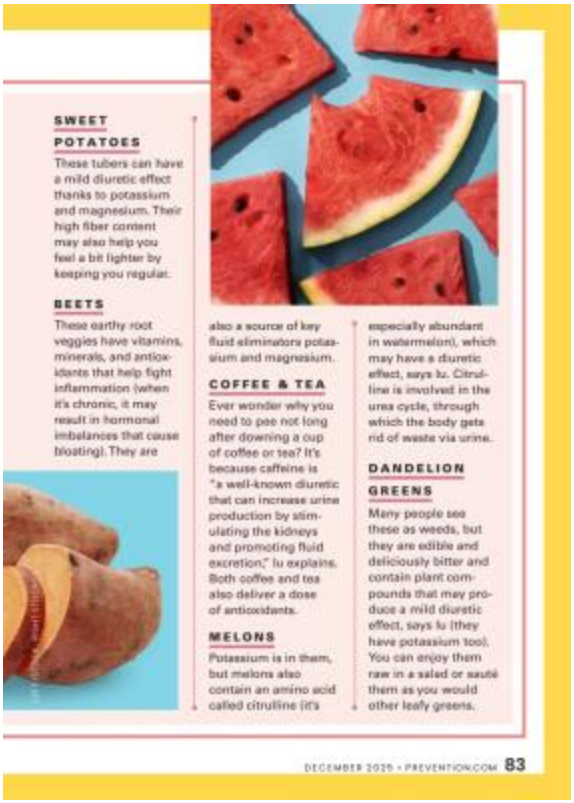

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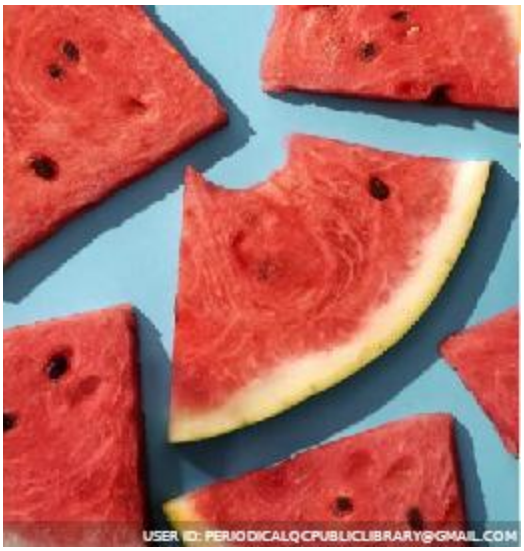

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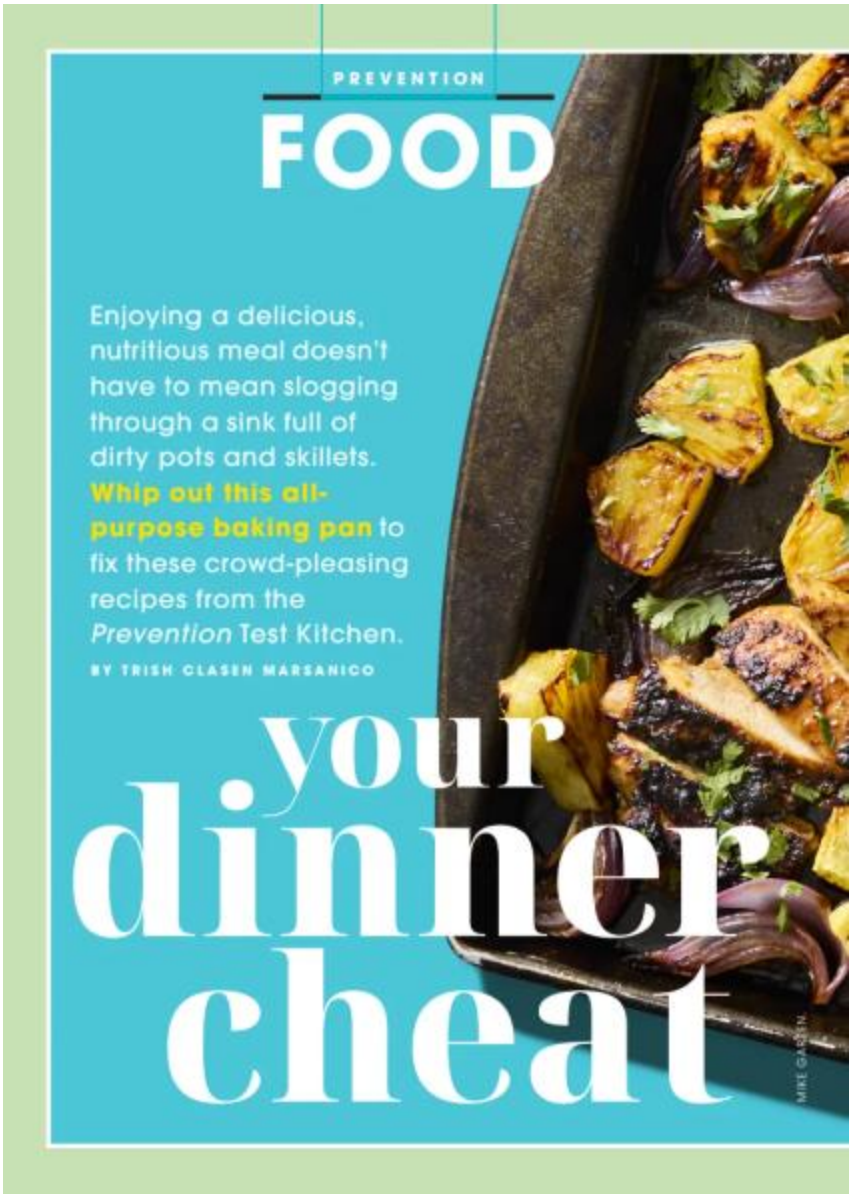

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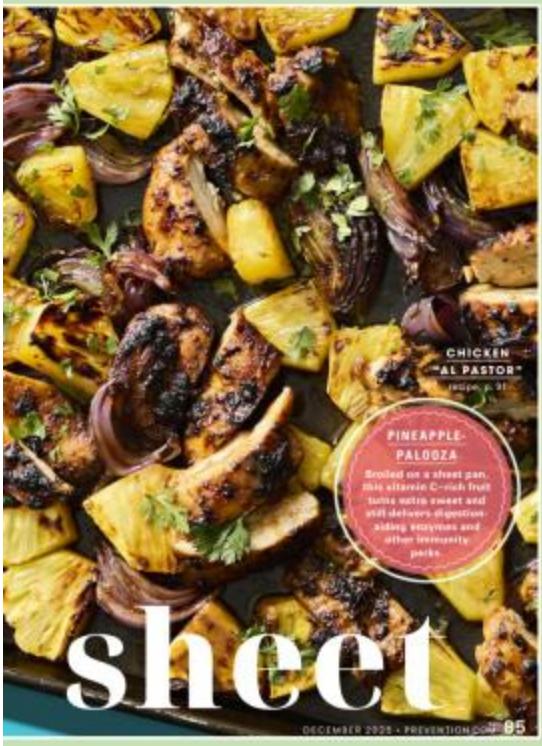

PINEAPPLE PALOOZA

Broiled on a sheet pan, this vitamin C–rich fruit turns extra sweet and still delivers digestionaiding enzymes and other immunity perks.

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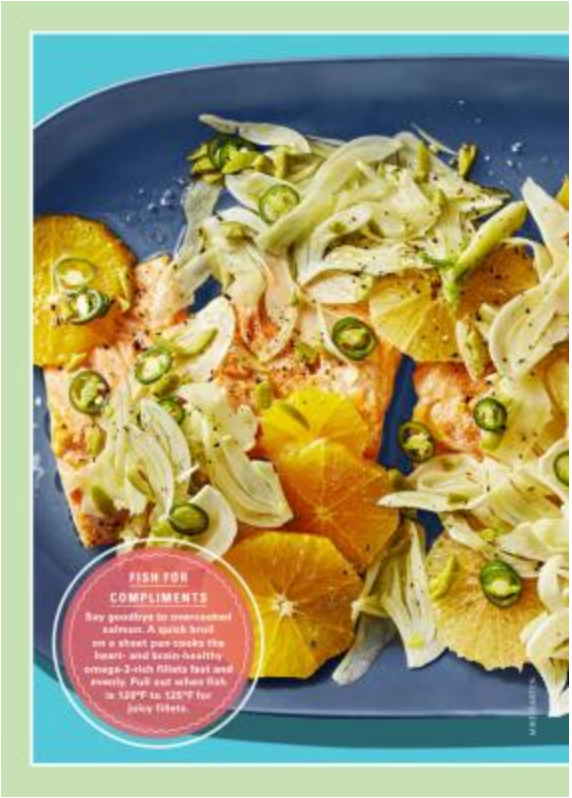

FISH FOR COMPLIMENTS

Say goodbye to overcooked salmon. A quick broil on a sheet pan cooks the heart- and brain-healthy omega-3-rich fillets fast and evenly. Pull out when fish is 120°F to 125°F...

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FISH FOR COMPLIMENTS

Say goodbye to overcooked salmon. A quick broil on a sheet pan cooks the heart- and brain-healthy omega-3-rich fillets fast and evenly. Pull out when fish is 120°F to 125°F for juicy fillets.

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SALMON WITH CITRUS-FENNEL SALAD

ACTIVE 30 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4 2 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for brushing 4 5-oz skin-on salmon fillets Kosher salt and pepper 1 fennel bulb (12 oz)...

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SALMON WITH CITRUS-FENNEL SALAD



ACTIVE 30 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4

2 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for brushing

4 5-oz skin-on salmon fillets Kosher salt and pepper

1 fennel bulb (12 oz)

1 grapefruit

1 navel orange, plus 2 Tbsp fresh orange juice

1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

5 Castelvetrano olives, pitted, quartered, and thinly sliced

1 serrano chile, thinly sliced

1 5-oz pkg. mixed greens

1. Heat broiler with oven rack 6 in. from heat source. Brush rimmed baking sheet with oil. Place salmon skin side down on pan and season with 1/2 tsp salt. Broil until just opaque throughout, 4 to 8 min. (depending on thickness).

2. Meanwhile, core and thinly slice fennel; reserve fronds for serving. Remove and discard peel from grapefruit and orange, then thinly slice into rounds.

3. In small bowl, whisk orange juice and lemon juice with 2 Tbsp oil. Stir in olives and serrano chile; transfer 1 Tbsp to large bowl and add sliced fennel and

1/4 tsp each salt and pepper; toss to coat.

4. Arrange fish on platter, top with fennel salad and grapefruit and orange slices, and drizzle with remaining dressing. Serve over mixed greens sprinkled with reserved fennel fronds.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About

313 cal, 14 g fat (2.5 g sat), 66 mg chol, 429 mg sodium, 16 g carb, 4 g fiber, 6.5 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 30 g pro

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COLOR POP

That rainbow on your sheet pan? Hello, antioxidants! Red peppers supply vitamin C, while sweet potatoes offer beta-carotene to support eye and immune health.

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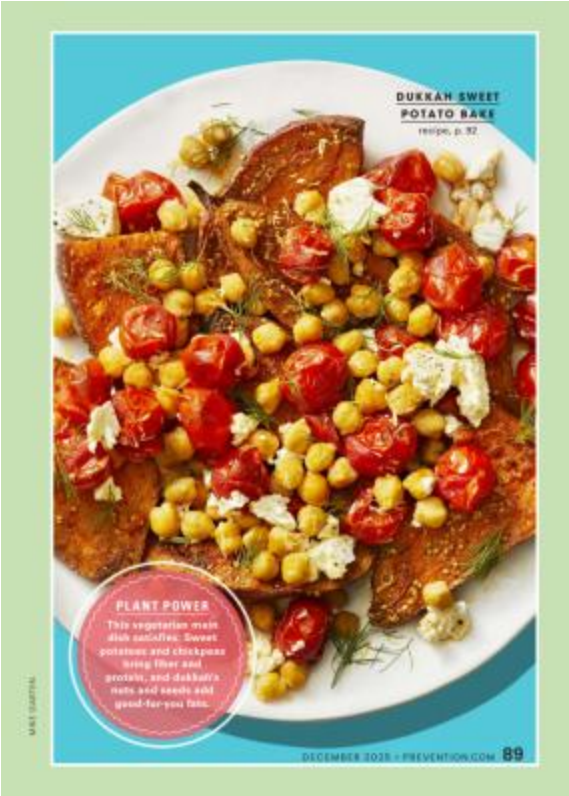

PLANT POWER

This vegetarian main dish satisfies: Sweet potatoes and chickpeas bring fiber and protein, and dukkah’s nuts and seeds add good-for-you fats.

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DOUBLE UP

Veggies benefit your health only if you eat them, so spread them out on two sheet pans— overcrowding on one traps steam, which leaves food mushy instead of deliciously browned.

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DOUBLE UP

Veggies benefit your health only if you eat them, so spread them out on two sheet pans— overcrowding on one traps steam, which leaves food mushy instead of deliciously browned.



FOOD

CHICKEN "AL PASTOR"

ACTIVE 15 MIN.
TOTAL 30 MIN.
SERVES 4

- 2 Tbsp chipotles in adobo
- 1 tsp lime zest plus 2 Tbsp lime juice, divided
- 2 cloves garlic, grated
- 1 tsp ancho chile powder
- 1 tsp dark brown sugar
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt
- 1½ lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed
- 2 red onions, cut into ½-in. wedges
- 1 small pineapple, peeled, cored, and cut into 1-in. pieces (about 1 lb)
- ¼ cup cilantro, chopped and divided
- 3 cups cooked rice

1. Heat broiler with oven rack 6 in. from heat source. In mini food processor, puree chipotles, lime juice, garlic, ancho chile powder, brown sugar, cumin, oregano, 1 Tbsp oil, and ½ tsp salt until smooth. Transfer to medium bowl, add chicken, and turn to coat.

2. On rimmed baking sheet, toss onions and pineapple with remaining Tbsp oil and ¼ tsp salt. Nestle chicken, smooth side up, amid pineapple. Broil until chicken is cooked through and nicely charred, 12 to 15 min. Transfer chicken to cutting board and let rest 5 min. before slicing.

3. Keep broiling pineapple until it is browned in spots and onions are tender, 3 to 4 min.

4. Add lime zest and half of cilantro to rice and fluff with fork. Serve topped with chicken, pineapple, and onions. Sprinkle with remaining cilantro.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 550 cal, 17 g fat (4 g sat), 106 mg chol, 888 mg sodium, 84 g carb, 4 g fiber, 15 g sugar (7.5 g added sugar), 36 g pro

TACO-SPICED CHICKEN AND PEPPERS WITH SWEET POTATO WEDGES

ACTIVE 15 MIN.
TOTAL 30 MIN.
SERVES 4

- 1¼ lbs sweet potatoes (about 2 large)
- 3 Tbsp olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt and pepper

CHICKEN “AL PASTOR”

ACTIVE 15 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4 2 Tbsp chipotles in adobo 1 tsp lime zest plus 2 Tbsp lime juice, divided 2 cloves garlic, grated 1 tsp ancho...

TACO-SPICED CHICKEN AND PEPPERS WITH SWEET POTATO WEDGES

ACTIVE 15 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4 11/4 lbs sweet potatoes (about 2 large) 3 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt and pepper

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CHICKEN “AL PASTOR”

ACTIVE 15 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4

2 Tbsp chipotles in adobo

1 tsp lime zest plus

2 Tbsp lime juice, divided

2 cloves garlic, grated

1 tsp ancho chile powder

1 tsp dark brown sugar

1/2 tsp ground cumin

1/2 tsp dried oregano

2 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt

11/2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed

2 red onions, cut into 1/2-in. wedges

1 small pineapple, peeled, cored, and cut into 1-in. pieces (about 1 lb)

1/4 cup cilantro, chopped and divided

3 cups cooked rice

1. Heat broiler with oven rack 6 in. from heat source. In mini food processor, puree chipotles, lime juice, garlic, ancho chile powder, brown sugar, cumin, oregano, 1 Tbsp oil, and 1/2 tsp salt until smooth. Transfer to medium bowl, add chicken, and turn to coat.

2. On rimmed baking sheet, toss onions and pineapple with remaining Tbsp oil and 1/4 tsp salt. Nestle chicken, smooth side up, amid pineapple. Broil until chicken is cooked through and nicely charred, 12 to 15 min. Transfer chicken to cutting board and let rest

5 min. before slicing.

3. Keep broiling pineapple until it is browned in spots and onions are tender, 3 to 4 min.

4. Add lime zest and half of cilantro to rice and fluff with fork. Serve topped with chicken, pineapple, and onions. Sprinkle with remaining cilantro.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 550 cal, 17 g fat (4 g sat), 156 mg chol, 556 mg sodium, 64 g carb, 4 g fiber, 15 g sugar (1.5 g added sugar), 35 g pro

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TACO-SPICED CHICKEN AND PEPPERS WITH SWEET POTATO WEDGES

ACTIVE 15 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4

11/4 lbs sweet potatoes

(about 2 large)

3 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt and pepper

2 peppers (1 red, 1 yellow; about

1 lb total), cut into 2-in. pieces

1 Tbsp taco seasoning (we used Siete)

1 Tbsp fresh lime juice plus grated lime zest, for serving
1 tsp tomato paste

4 6-oz boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed
Chopped parsley, for serving

1. Arrange oven racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 450°F. Halve sweet potatoes crosswise, then cut into wedges; toss on large rimmed baking sheet with 1 Tbsp oil and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Roast on lower rack 10 min.

2. On second rimmed baking sheet, toss peppers with 1 Tbsp oil. In large bowl, whisk together taco seasoning, lime juice, tomato paste, and remaining Tbsp oil. Add chicken and turn to coat.

3. Nestle chicken amid peppers. Reduce oven temp to 425°F and roast chicken and peppers on upper rack until sweet potatoes are golden brown and tender, peppers are tender, and chicken is nearly cooked through, 11 to 13 min. Remove both trays from oven.

4. Heat oven to broil and broil chicken and peppers on upper rack until chicken is lightly browned and cooked through, 1 to 3 min. more.

5. Transfer chicken to plates and serve with sweet potatoes and peppers, spooning any pan juices on top. Sprinkle with parsley and lime zest if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 409 cal, 15 g fat (2.5 g sat), 124 mg chol, 356 mg sodium, 26 g carb,

5 g fiber, 10.5 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 41 g pro

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FOOD

2 peppers (1 red, 1 yellow; about 1 lb total), cut into 2-in. pieces
1 Tbsp taco seasoning (we used Siete)
1 Tbsp fresh lime juice plus grated lime zest, for serving
1 tsp tomato paste
4 6-oz boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed
Chopped parsley, for serving

1. Arrange oven racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 450°F. Halve sweet potatoes crosswise, then cut into wedges; toss on large rimmed baking sheet with 1 Tbsp oil and ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. Roast on lower rack 10 min.
2. On second rimmed baking sheet, toss peppers with 1 Tbsp oil. In large bowl, whisk together taco seasoning, lime juice, tomato paste, and remaining Tbsp oil. Add chicken and turn to coat.
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5. Transfer chicken to plates and serve with sweet potatoes and peppers, spooning any pan juices on top. Sprinkle with parsley and lime zest if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 480 cal, 15 g fat (2.5 g sat), 124 mg chol, 266 mg sodium, 26 g carb, 5 g fiber, 10.5 g sugar, 10 g added sugars, 41 g pro

DUKKAH SWEET POTATO BAKE

ACTIVE 20 MIN.
TOTAL 40 MIN.
SERVES 4

4 medium sweet potatoes (about 2 lbs)
1 15.5-oz can low-sodium chickpeas, rinsed
2½ Tbsp olive oil, divided
Kosher salt and pepper
12 oz grape tomatoes, stemmed
1 Tbsp dukkah (see Note)
2 tsp lemon zest and lemon wedges, for serving
2 oz feta cheese, broken into pieces
Dill fronds, for serving

1. Arrange racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 450°F. Prick sweet potatoes all over with fork and place on large plate. Microwave on High, flipping halfway through, until just tender, 6 to 8 min. (sweet potatoes will continue to cook later). Transfer to cutting board and halve lengthwise.
2. Meanwhile, shake chickpeas in colander to remove excess water. Transfer to rimmed baking sheet and toss with 1 Tbsp oil, ½ tsp salt, and ½ tsp pepper. Roast on lower rack 15 min. Toss with tomatoes and roast until tomatoes burst and begin to break down, 10 to 13 min.
3. On separate rimmed baking sheet, drizzle remaining 1½ Tbsp oil in center, then sprinkle dukkah and ¼ tsp salt over oil. Place sweet potatoes, cut sides down, directly on oil-

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DUKKAH SWEET POTATO BAKE

ACTIVE 20 MIN. TOTAL 40 MIN. SERVES 4 4 medium sweet potatoes (about 2 lbs) 1 15.5-oz can low-sodium chickpeas, rinsed 21/2 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt and pepper...

TACO-SPICED CHICKEN AND PEPPERS WITH SWEET POTATO WEDGES

2 peppers (1 red, 1 yellow; about 1 lb total), cut into 2-in. pieces 1 Tbsp taco seasoning (we used Siete) 1 Tbsp fresh lime juice plus grated lime zest,...

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21/2 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt and pepper

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2 tsp lemon zest and lemon wedges, for serving

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with 1 Tbsp oil, 1/4 tsp salt, and 1/2 tsp pepper. Roast on lower rack 15 min. Toss with tomatoes and roast until tomatoes burst and begin to break down, 10 to 13 min.

3. On separate rimmed baking sheet, drizzle remaining 11/2Tbsp oil in center, then sprinkle dukkah and 1/4 tsp salt over oil. Place sweet potatoes, cut sides down, directly on oil-

dukkah mixture, then spread around to help dukkah adhere and to arrange sweet potatoes in even layer. Roast on upper rack, undisturbed, until golden brown,

15 to 18 min.

4. Arrange sweet potatoes, cut sides up, on platter and top with roasted tomatoes and chickpeas. Scatter with lemon zest, feta, and dill. Serve with lemon wedges.

Note: You can find dukkah online and at many large supermarkets. The ingredients for this Egyptian spice blend can vary, but for this recipe you can also swap in a mix of ground coriander and cumin, cayenne pepper, sesame seeds, salt, and crushed nuts.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 368 cal, 14 g fat (3.5 g sat), 13 mg chol, 521 mg sodium, 50 g carb,

10 g fiber, 15 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 11 g pro

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TACO-SPICED CHICKEN AND PEPPERS WITH SWEET POTATO WEDGES

ACTIVE 15 MIN. TOTAL 30 MIN. SERVES 4

11/4 lbs sweet potatoes

(about 2 large)

3 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt and pepper

2 peppers (1 red, 1 yellow; about

1 lb total), cut into 2-in. pieces

1 Tbsp taco seasoning (we used Siete)

1 Tbsp fresh lime juice plus grated lime zest, for serving 1 tsp tomato paste

4 6-oz boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed Chopped parsley, for serving

1. Arrange oven racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 450°F. Halve sweet potatoes crosswise, then cut into wedges; toss on large rimmed baking sheet with 1 Tbsp oil and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Roast on lower rack 10 min.

2. On second rimmed baking sheet, toss peppers with 1 Tbsp oil. In large bowl, whisk together taco seasoning, lime juice, tomato paste, and remaining Tbsp oil. Add chicken and turn to coat.

3. Nestle chicken amid peppers. Reduce oven temp to 425°F and roast chicken and peppers on upper rack until sweet potatoes are golden brown and tender, peppers are tender, and chicken is nearly cooked through, 11 to 13 min. Remove both trays from oven.

4. Heat oven to broil and broil chicken and peppers on upper rack until chicken is lightly browned and cooked through, 1 to 3 min. more.

5. Transfer chicken to plates and serve with sweet potatoes and peppers, spooning any pan juices on top. Sprinkle with parsley and lime zest if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 409 cal, 15 g fat (2.5 g sat), 124 mg chol, 356 mg sodium, 26 g carb,

5 g fiber, 10.5 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 41 g pro

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dukkah mixture, then spread around to help dukkah adhere and to arrange sweet potatoes in even layer. Roast on upper rack, undisturbed, until golden brown, 15 to 18 min.
4. Arrange sweet potatoes, cut sides up, on platter and top with roasted tomatoes and chickpeas. Scatter with lemon zest, feta, and dill. Serve with lemon wedges.
Note: You can find dukkah online and at many large supermarkets. The ingredients for this Egyptian spice blend can vary, but for this recipe you can also swap in a mix of ground coriander and cumin, cayenne pepper, sesame seeds, salt, and crushed nuts.

NUTRITIONAL INFO
PER SERVING About 388 cal, 14 g fat (3.5 g sat), 13 mg chol, 627 mg sodium, 60 g carb, 10 g fiber, 15 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 11 g pro

ARTICHOKE "HUMMUS" WITH SPICED EGGPLANT AND MUSHROOMS

ACTIVE **20 MIN.**
TOTAL **40 MIN.**
SERVES **4**

- **1 eggplant (about 1 lb)**
- **3½ Tbsp olive oil, divided**
- **¼ tsp smoked paprika**
- **¾ tsp ground cumin, divided**
- **½ tsp ground coriander, divided**
- **Kosher salt and pepper**
- **12 oz mixed mushrooms (we used cremini, shiitake, and oyster), torn (or sliced if large)**
- **1 medium red onion, cut into ½-in. wedges**
- **1 15-oz can chickpeas, rinsed**
- **1 14-oz can quartered artichoke hearts, drained**
- **¼ cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, plus more, chopped, for serving**
- **1 large clove garlic, grated**
- **3 Tbsp tahini, well stirred**
- **1 Tbsp lemon zest plus 1 Tbsp lemon juice and lemon wedges, for serving**

1. Arrange racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 425°F. Trim and slice eggplant into ½-in.-thick half-moons, then toss on large rimmed baking sheet with 2 Tbsp oil, paprika, ½ tsp cumin, and ¼ tsp each coriander, salt, and pepper.
2. On second baking sheet, toss mushrooms and onion with remaining 1½ Tbsp oil, then remaining ¼ tsp each cumin and coriander and ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. Roast, swapping positions of pans halfway through, until vegetables are golden brown and tender, 18 to 20 min. for mushroom mixture; 23 to 25 min. for eggplant.
3. Meanwhile, in food processor, puree chickpeas, artichokes, parsley, garlic, tahini, and lemon zest and juice, scraping sides as needed, until smooth and creamy, 3 to 4 min.
4. Serve roasted vegetables over hummus, sprinkled with additional parsley and along with lemon wedges for squeezing if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO
PER SERVING About 340 cal, 23 g fat (2.5 g sat), 0 mg chol, 694 mg sodium, 26 g carb, 12 g fiber, 9.5 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 11 g pro

SALT SMARTS
Our Test Kitchen uses Diamond Crystal kosher salt, which has lighter flakes than other brands. For Morton, use about half as much.

ARTICHOKE “HUMMUS” WITH SPICED EGGPLANT AND MUSHROOMS

ACTIVE 20 MIN. TOTAL 40 MIN. SERVES 4 1 eggplant (about 1 lb) 3 1/2 Tbsp olive oil, divided 1/4 tsp smoked paprika 3/4 tsp ground cumin, divided 1/2 tsp...

DUKKAH SWEET POTATO BAKE

dukkah mixture, then spread around to help dukkah adhere and to arrange sweet potatoes in even layer. Roast on upper rack, undisturbed, until golden brown, 15 to 18 min. 4....

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ARTICHOKE “HUMMUS” WITH SPICED EGGPLANT AND MUSHROOMS

ACTIVE 20 MIN. TOTAL 40 MIN. SERVES 4

1 eggplant (about 1 lb)

3 1/2 Tbsp olive oil, divided

1/4 tsp smoked paprika

3/4 tsp ground cumin, divided

1/2 tsp ground coriander, divided Kosher salt and pepper

12 oz mixed mushrooms (we used cremini, shiitake, and oyster), torn (or sliced if large)

1 medium red onion, cut into 1/2-in. wedges

1 15-oz can chickpeas, rinsed

1 14-oz can quartered artichoke hearts, drained

1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, plus more, chopped, for serving

1 large clove garlic, grated

3 Tbsp tahini, well stirred

1 Tbsp lemon zest plus

1 Tbsp lemon juice and lemon wedges, for serving

1. Arrange racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 425°F. Trim and slice eggplant into 1/2-in.-thick halfmoons, then toss on large rimmed baking sheet with 2 Tbsp oil, paprika, 1/2 tsp cumin, and 1/4 tsp each coriander, salt, and pepper.

2. On second baking sheet, toss mushrooms and onion with remaining 11/2 Tbsp oil, then remaining 1/4 tsp each cumin and coriander and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Roast, swapping positions of pans halfway through, until vegetables are golden brown and tender, 18 to 20 min. for mushroom mixture; 23 to 25 min. for eggplant.

3. Meanwhile, in food processor, puree chickpeas, artichokes, parsley, garlic, tahini, and lemon zest and juice, scraping sides as needed, until smooth and creamy, 3 to 4 min.

4. Serve roasted vegetables over hummus, sprinkled with additional parsley and along with lemon wedges for squeezing if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 349 cal, 20 g fat (2.5 g sat), 0 mg chol, 604 mg sodium, 36 g carb, 12 g fiber, 9.5 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 11 g pro

SALT SMARTS

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DUKKAH SWEET POTATO BAKE

ACTIVE 20 MIN. TOTAL 40 MIN. SERVES 4

4 medium sweet

potatoes (about 2 lbs) 1 15.5-oz can low-sodium chickpeas, rinsed

21/2 Tbsp olive oil, divided Kosher salt and pepper

12 oz grape tomatoes, stemmed

1 Tbsp dukkah (see Note)

2 tsp lemon zest and lemon wedges, for serving

2 oz feta cheese, broken into pieces Dill fronds, for serving

1. Arrange racks in upper and lower thirds of oven and heat oven to 450°F. Prick sweet potatoes all over with fork and place on large plate. Microwave on High, flipping halfway through, until just tender, 6 to 8 min. (sweet potatoes will continue to cook later). Transfer to cutting board and halve lengthwise.

2. Meanwhile, shake chickpeas in colander to remove excess water. Transfer to rimmed baking sheet and toss

with 1 Tbsp oil, 1/4 tsp salt, and 1/2 tsp pepper. Roast on lower rack 15 min. Toss with tomatoes and roast until tomatoes burst and begin to break down, 10 to 13 min.

3. On separate rimmed baking sheet, drizzle remaining 11/2Tbsp oil in center, then sprinkle dukkah and 1/4 tsp salt over oil. Place sweet potatoes, cut sides down, directly on oil-

dukkah mixture, then spread around to help dukkah adhere and to arrange sweet potatoes in even layer. Roast on upper rack, undisturbed, until golden brown,

15 to 18 min.

4. Arrange sweet potatoes, cut sides up, on platter and top with roasted tomatoes and chickpeas. Scatter with lemon zest, feta, and dill. Serve with lemon wedges.

Note: You can find dukkah online and at many large supermarkets. The ingredients for this Egyptian spice blend can vary, but for this recipe you can also swap in a mix of ground coriander and cumin, cayenne pepper, sesame seeds, salt, and crushed nuts.

NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVING About 368 cal, 14 g fat (3.5 g sat), 13 mg chol, 521 mg sodium, 50 g carb,

10 g fiber, 15 g sugar (0 g added sugar), 11 g pro

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WORD BUILDING

Can you make four 4-letter words and three 5-letter words using the first seven letters of the alphabet—without repeating any letters within each word?

MAKING A CONNECTION

Change one letter in each word to create five new words that go together. CAKE FOND ROVER SPA SCREAM

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CAKE

FOND

ROVER

SPA

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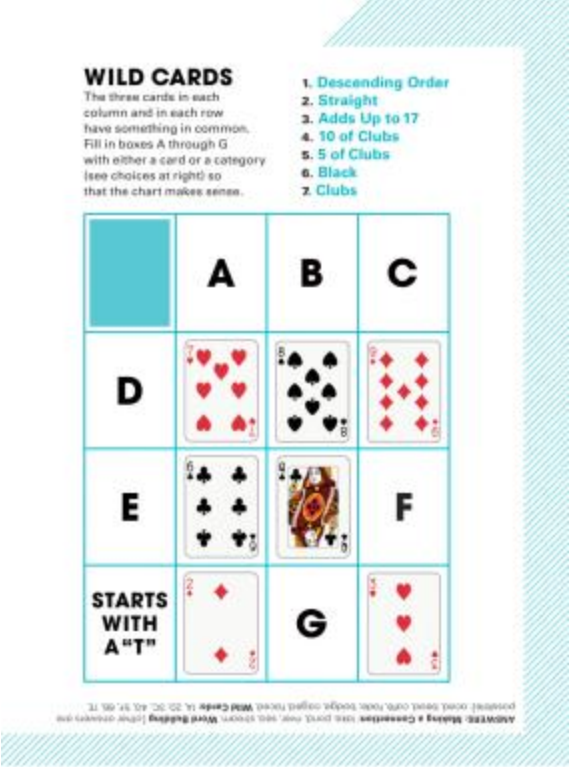

WILD CARDS

The three cards in each column and in each row have something in common. Fill in boxes A through G with either a card or a category (see choices at...

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WILD CARDS

The three cards in each column and in each row have something in common. Fill in boxes A through G with either a card or a category (see choices at right) so that the chart makes sense.



1. Descending Order
2. Straight
3. Adds Up to 17
4. 10 of Clubs
5. 5 of Clubs
6. Black
7. Clubs

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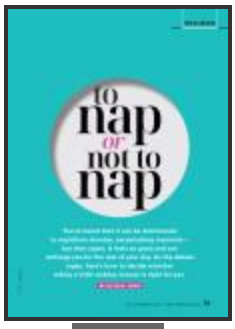

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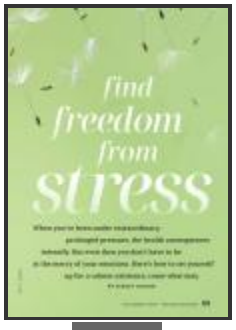

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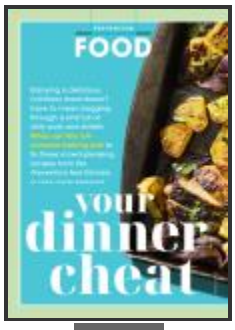

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