

SHOP TALK

A Twice-Monthly Newsletter for our Team. September 1, 2024

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

—Jack Welch

"The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things."

—Ronald Reagan

"Leadership is an action, not a position."

—Donald McGannon

"Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better."

—Bill Bradley

"You manage things; you lead people."

—Grace Murray Hopper



SELF-CARE AWARENESS MONTH

Self-Care Awareness Month is celebrated in September to promote healthy routines, self-care, and stress management. It's a time to focus on all aspects of wellness, including physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, and intellectual health.

This month focuses on self-care, managing stress and promoting healthy routines. Create wholesome habits in your lifestyle all month long and see how much better you feel! Research has shown self-care helps manage stress and promotes happiness.

Inside this edition you'll find tips to promote personal wellness through self-care. We hope you find them helpful. And as always, your feedback is invited!



Prioritizing Your Well-Being

During the month of August, take a moment to remember yourself and what you need. A great way to start prioritizing your well-being is to learn about the many different forms of health and wellness. Take a look at how you engage with your wellness. Are there areas you commonly care for? What are some that you don't pay attention to as often? Those might be the areas to prioritize.

Some simple ways of prioritizing your well-being are:

1. Not every act of caring for yourself has to be big or grand—integrating small, doable habits in your daily routine can give your overall wellness a boost and is a great way to improve the way you live.
2. If you want to help loved ones prioritize their wellness, you can check in with them by inviting them to participate in a self-care activity with you, like working out, going out for coffee and having a chat, or just having a quiet night in.
3. Try setting aside a specified amount of time each day to engage in a wellness behavior that fits your needs. Even as little as 15-30 minutes of time daily can go a long way in helping you integrate a healthy new behavior into your daily routine.

4. If you are having trouble discerning what area of your life could use attention or feel like you might need more help and support on your wellness journey, consider seeing a therapist about your concerns. They can help you identify patterns in your life that aren't helping you and lead you to ones that will. Therapy can also help you unearth what might be hindering your wellness while giving you the tools to manage your life and wellness on your own.

Taking Steps Towards a Healthier Lifestyle

The best first step to take when looking to make healthier lifestyle choices is to first engage in reflection. What activities or wellness behaviors seem the most appealing to you? Have you perhaps been missing an activity, such as a sport or hobby, that you used to enjoy? Think about things that align with your core values and bring a sense of accomplishment.

Next, think about ways that you can incorporate these activities into your schedule for at least 30 minutes a week. That's all it takes to get started. As mentioned above, starting small can have a significant impact on overall wellness.

8 types of self care





EASY CHICKEN CURRY

This is a very simple dish with a big flavor. Serve with rice. About 12 servings.

1/2 cup olive oil
 3 each large onions, diced
 2/3 cup curry powder (or to taste)
 5 lbs diced chicken

- In a colander, drain the chicken to remove excess liquid.
- In a large skillet, saucepan or Dutch oven, add oil and onions.
- Cook until starting to soften and becoming a golden brown, about 10-15 minutes.
- Add curry powder slowly, blending in with the onions as you do.
- Add the chicken and stir in to blend with the curry paste. Cover, set the heat to low and cook about 30 minutes, until the chicken juice runs clear, and the chicken reaches an internal temp of 165 F.
- Uncover and cook until the juices reduce somewhat; about 5 minutes or so.
- Remove and place in a steamtable pan for serving.
- If you wish to garnish, use fresh parsley or thinly sliced green onions.



CHICKEN & SAUSAGE SAUTÉ

This tasty dish can be prepared ahead and heated prior to serving. About 12 servings

1/4 cup cooking oil
 2 ½ lbs Italian sausage links
 4 lbs chicken thighs (whole or diced)
 2 each red bell peppers, cut in strips
 2 each green bell pepper, cut in strips
 6 each white potatoes, peeled, chunked
 1 each large red onion, sliced
 1 each yellow onion, sliced
 1 ½ Tbsp Italian seasoning

- In a skillet, cook sausage until browned. Cool and cut into 1" pieces. Set it aside.
- In a bowl, combine all ingredients with oil and Italian seasoning.
- Transfer to a roasting pan, being sure to space the chicken thighs apart.
- Roast uncovered for about an hour, until the potatoes are tender, and the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 F.
- Remove and transfer to a steamtable pan.
- Garnish with freshly chopped parsley, or dried parsley flakes.

SELF-CARE TIPS

Especially during these stressful times, it's important to make self-care, healthy eating, and stress management a priority in order to feel better than ever! Make it a goal to try one of these 8 ways to boost your wellness each day.

1. **Exercise.** Just 30 minutes of exercise per day can be a major mood-booster. Not only does it benefit your mental health, it keeps you at a healthy weight, gives you more energy, and assists with pain management.
2. **Drink more water.** Hydration is so important for your body, especially during these hot summer months. Water helps transport nutrients to give you energy, and even lubricates your joints. It's the key to digestion, clearer skin, and even weight loss!
3. **Spend time outside.** Fresh air can do a mind and body good, especially if you're exercising outdoors. Spending time in nature can improve your memory, lower your blood pressure, and boost your mood.
4. **Practice deep breathing.** Stress and anxiety can impact your breathing without you even realizing it, causing you to take shallow breaths, or even holding your breath for a period of time, causing your body to tense-up. Practicing deep breathing techniques, and concentrating on breathing from your diaphragm, can make a big difference.
5. **Get enough sleep.** Sleep is a huge factor in our mental and physical well-being. Getting an adequate amount of sleep each night helps keep your weight in check, your risk of depression and anxiety low, your memory sharp, your immune system strong, and so much more.
6. **Take a social media break.** With information constantly being thrown at us via social media, it's important that we take time each day to

disconnect from technology in order to boost our mental and physical health. A digital detox can help with anxiety, sleep, mood, and lots more. Aim to put your phone away one hour before bedtime to allow your brain to wind down before falling asleep.

7. **Call a friend or family member.** Now that being away from family is part of our lives, it's more important than ever to stay connected to those we love. Friends and family play a huge role in our mental health, and social connection can be an instant mood-booster. Make it a goal to call or video chat with someone important to you every day, even if it's just for 5 minutes!
8. **Cut back on sugar and load up on fruits and veggies.** The average American consumes 22 teaspoons of sugar each day, and much of it is hidden in salad dressings, alcohol, coffee creamer, etc. Sugar depletes your energy and makes you feel tired and grumpy (afternoon slump anyone?) If you have a sweet tooth, you can still satisfy it by swapping your sugary sweets for juicy peaches, plump blueberries, or even roasted sweet potatoes.





GRILLED BAKED POTATOES

Bake or boil the potatoes before grilling for a fluffy, crispy potato. Makes 12 halves.

6 each baking potatoes
1/3 cup olive oil
Tony's seasoning to taste

- Scrub the potatoes before baking or boiling.
- If using baked potatoes, bake as you normally would, then cool before handling.
- If using boiled potatoes, boil them whole until tender, then remove and allow to cool before handling.
- Once the potatoes have cooled, split them in half lengthwise.
- Brush the potato all over with oil, then sprinkle Tony's seasoning on the "inside" of the potatoes.
- Place face down on the grill away from the flames and cook until you get nice grill marks.
- Remove and place in a steamtable pan for serving, or if it's steak day and you're at the pit, serve directly from the pit.
- If you place them in a steamtable pan, garnish with a bit of fresh parsley, thinly sliced green onions, or dried parsley flakes.

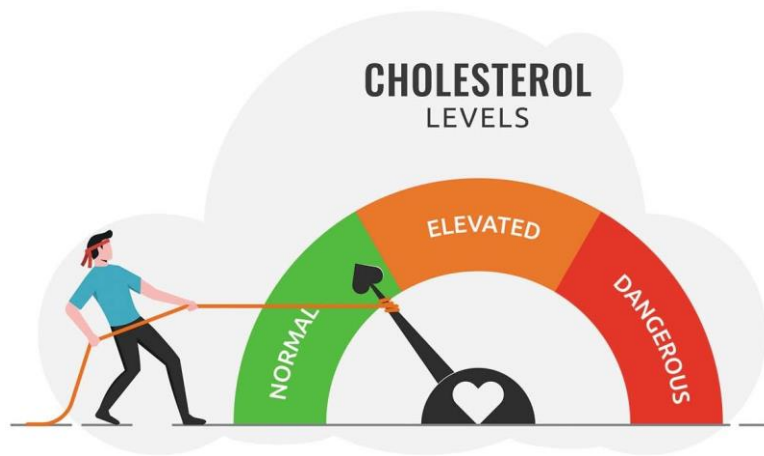


NO CRUST SPINACH QUICHE

This is a great, lower-calorie alternative to a traditional quiche. Makes 1 each, 9" quiche.

3 Tbsp cooking oil or margarine
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup mushrooms, fresh, sliced
12 oz spinach, thawed, drained, chopped
1 cup ham, diced small
5 each eggs
3 cups cheese, shredded (this can be any variety of cheese)
1/4 tsp black pepper

- In a large skillet, sauté mushrooms with onions in the cooking oil until tender.
- Add the spinach and ham; cook until the excess moisture has evaporated; this should be a fairly dry mixture. Allow to cool some.
- In a bowl, beat eggs; add the cheese and pepper and mix well.
- Add the spinach mixture to the bowl and fold in to mix well throughout.
- Transfer to a WELL-GREASED pie tin or cake pan.
- Bake at 350 F for about 45 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.
- Cut into 8-10 wedges and transfer to a half pan for serving on the line.



When it comes to reducing "bad" low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels, how low should you go? "People who are at high risk for cardiovascular diseases can benefit from driving LDL levels as low as possible to help reduce their risk for heart attacks and strokes," says cardiologist Dr. Christopher Cannon, editor in chief of the Harvard Heart Letter. "Across many large clinical trials, for LDL, the lower the better."

The good and the bad

Cholesterol is a fatty substance that occurs naturally in the body. The body uses it to make cell membranes and certain hormones. The fat you consume from food is absorbed in the intestine and transported to the liver, which converts it into cholesterol and then releases it into the bloodstream.

Eating high-cholesterol foods often has only a modest impact on cholesterol in the blood, but many such foods are also high in saturated fats, which have a greater effect on cholesterol levels. "Most of your cholesterol level is determined genetically," says Dr. Cannon.

There are two main types of cholesterol: LDL and high-density lipoprotein (HDL). LDL is called "bad" because excess amounts in the bloodstream can lodge inside artery walls. These deposits, called plaques, can rupture and trigger clotting that blocks blood flow to the heart or brain, causing a heart attack or stroke.

By comparison, HDL has in the past been considered "good" because some forms of HDL collect excess cholesterol from the bloodstream and artery walls. Still, notes Dr. Cannon, "many clinical trials have found that raising blood levels of HDL does not lower the risk of heart attack or stroke, so the focus is on lowering LDL."

By the numbers

Current guidelines from the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology set optimal LDL levels for the general population at below 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL); 100 to 159 mg/dL is deemed high, and 160 mg/dL and higher is considered dangerous.

People with known cardiovascular disease should aim for LDL levels below 70 mg/dL. "Thus, across the spectrum of patients, the higher risk ones have a lower goal for LDL," says Dr. Cannon.

Besides high LDL levels, having one or more other factors also can contribute to your cardiovascular risk, such as

a family history of premature heart disease (a father or brother who was diagnosed at 55 or younger, or a mother or sister diagnosed before age 65)

- smoking
- obesity
- diabetes
- high blood pressure
- low levels of HDL (below 40 mg/dL).

Why the focus on 70 mg/dL? "Studies have shown that when LDL falls below this number, plaques in arteries get smaller and they stabilize, which lowers the risk for heart attacks and stroke," says Dr. Cannon.

But how far below 70 mg/dL should you go? Clinical trials have shown and European guidelines recommend that people with cardiovascular disease at the highest risk should aim for LDL levels below 55 mg/dL. Dr. Cannon notes that the U.S. guidelines have not been updated since 2018, and believes they will eventually follow Europe's lead and make 55 mg/dL the new target for high-risk individuals.

What about people who are not at high risk? In most people in this group, LDL levels between 100 and 130 mg/dL may be acceptable. "However, we still generally aim for LDL levels below 100, since benefits have been seen in trials that look at ways to prevent cardiovascular disease," says Dr. Cannon. "Ultimately, your doctor can suggest the ideal target LDL based on your cardiac risk factors and history."

Lifestyle and medications

The first step to lowering high LDL levels is making dietary changes — cutting down on saturated fat by adopting a heart-healthy diet like the Mediterranean, DASH, or other similar plant-based diets — losing weight and increasing exercise.

But often medication is needed to help drive down very high LDL levels and keep them low. This usually begins with a type of drug called a statin.

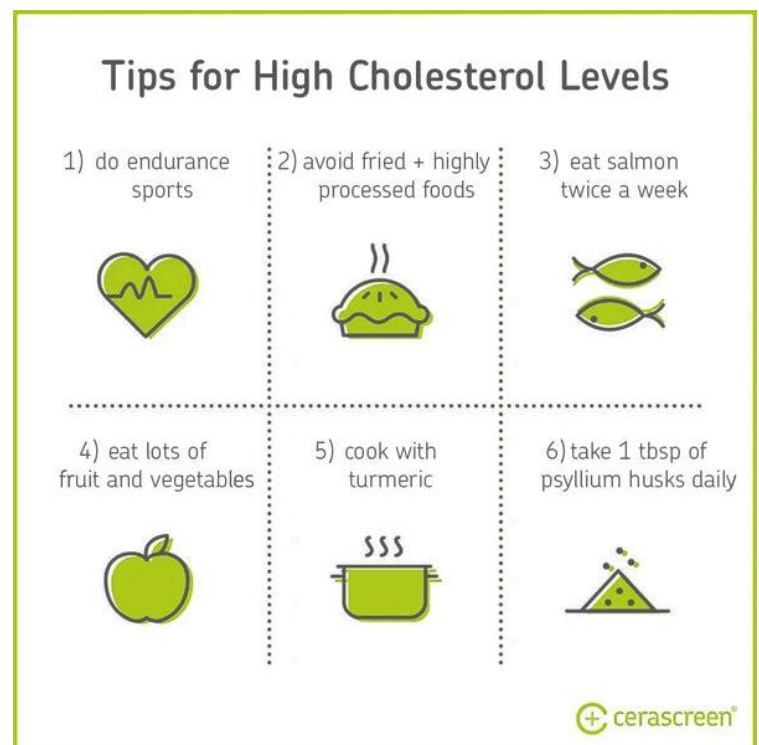
Statins work to lower LDL by blocking an enzyme in the liver that helps make cholesterol. The drugs also have anti-inflammatory properties, and inflammation is a known contributor to plaque buildup. Another benefit: statins help prevent plaques from breaking open and releasing chemicals that stimulate blood clot formation, which leads to heart artery blockage and a heart attack. Depending on your LDL level, your doctor will recommend the best statin and dosage for your situation.

The downside to statins is the possible side effects. The most common are achy muscles. If this happens to you, your doctor can temporarily lower the dose or switch to a different statin.

While statins are the first-line drug choice, three other classes of medications also can help reduce LDL — ezetimibe (Zetia), bempedoic acid (Nexletol), and PCSK9 inhibitors (Repatha, Praluent, or Leqvio). "Any of the three can be added to or substituted for statin therapy if people have not reached their LDL goal, or if they cannot tolerate statin side effects," says Dr. Cannon.

Ezetimibe blocks cholesterol absorption in the intestine. Bempedoic acid and PCSK9 inhibitors work on liver cell receptors to increase the uptake and destruction of LDL cholesterol, thereby lowering LDL blood levels.

Can your LDL be too low? Not really, says Dr. Cannon. "Driving down LDL to really low levels might increase the risk of medication side effects, but there are no problems directly related to very low LDL levels."



TOP 5 FOODS TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL



DARK GREEN
LEAFY VEGETABLES



SEEDS



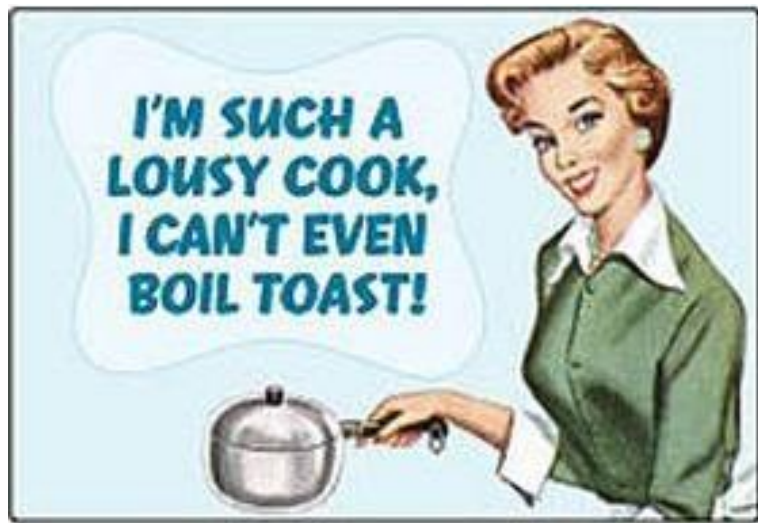
NUTS



AVOCADO



GARLIC



I'm not saying my wife's a bad cook, but she sure broke the dog from begging at the dinner table.

I have to admit, my wife's cooking has improved. That's the best slice of soup I've ever had.

I came home and my wife was crying. She said the dog ate the meatloaf she cooked. It told her not to worry about it. I'd get her another dog.

The first meal my wife tried to cook was so bad that I tried to feed it to the dog, and he sniffed at it and started to lick himself. She comes out and asks, "Ron, what is he doing?" and I said "Trying to get the taste out of his mouth."

My wife makes a meatloaf that will melt in your mouth. If you're stupid enough to put it there.

My wife claims I'm the cheapest person in the world. I'm not buying it.

My wife threw some Omega 3 capsules at me today. It's okay though; I only have super fish oil injuries.