

August 2022



 Franciscan
WORKING Well

In This Month's Issue:

Vitamin D
End of Summer
Carb Substitutes
Beat the Heat and Repeat

August 2022 By: Rebecca Saylor, LCSW, EAP Therapist

The Importance of Self-Care

Self-Care isn't just a buzzword, it's a legitimate practice for improving overall wellness. I know we live in a fast-paced society and often times we are busy caring for others and forget that by taking good care of ourselves, we can be the best version of ourselves for those we love and serve.

We all know positive life-style factors like quality nutrition, good sleep hygiene habits, proper hydration, and regular exercise can strengthen your body to adapt to stress and re-

duce the toll of emotions like anxiety or depression. So I'm not going to focus on those here. What I want to know, is what are you doing for you right now to take care of you? When a patient, child, significant other, a loved one, ect. is not feeling their best, we take action. Why not apply that to ourselves? It's vital to your well-being that when you notice you are not at your best, you take action. What makes you feel good when faced with the stressors of everyday life. Is it taking a walk and noticing the flowers, wind, sounds of the birds? Is it heading to the beach to hear the waves and feeling the breeze on your face? Is it taking a drive with the windows down, music up, and singing along to your favorite song?

Find your moment of peace and serenity and incorporate that into your life! Maybe it's a daily 10 min walk, or a weekly activity, or a monthly massage, even a yearly vacation. Whatever it is, it's not selfish to take care of YOU! In fact, self-care is the most important thing. And if you don't know what that looks like yet because you haven't done it in so long; start small and try different things. You will find what works for you!



For more information, join our webinar on The Importance of Self-Care and Tackling Debt. on August 17th, 2022 at 11:30AM CST.

**Northern & Western Indiana Region, Illinois Region CALL 1-800-747-7262
Central (Indianapolis) Region CALL 1-800-963-0060**

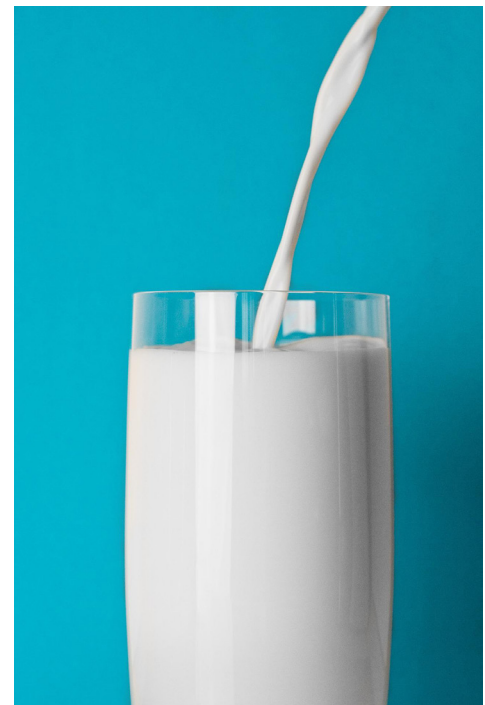
Vitamin D



Vitamin D continues to be an active area of research, and many doctors are now including a check of vitamin D levels with a patient's regular blood work.

Vitamin D, known for its ability to improve calcium absorption, may also reduce the risk of colon and breast cancer, depression, heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Its role as an anti-inflammatory is promising and may lead to even more benefits. In fact, there may be a link between insufficient vitamin D levels and an increased risk of dementia. While early research on vitamin D has yet to show conclusive evidence that taking a vitamin D supplement will prevent illness, both the safety of vitamin D and the easy access to the vitamin supplement lead most doctors to recommend regularly taking the supplement. But, before you start taking vitamin D (or increasing your dose), here's what you should know.

- Vitamin D - promotes calcium absorption, reduces inflammation and improves the immune system
- It is found in fortified milk and juice, lean meat and fish and made in the body through exposure to sunlight.
- Have your doctor test your level of vitamin D before starting any supplements.
- Many calcium supplements also contain vitamin D, so be aware before taking additional amounts.
- Dosage amounts range from 400-2000 mg per day, depending on your current level.
- The upper limit (UL) of vitamin D is 4000 mg per day. This high dosage has not shown any added benefit in research studies.
- Too much vitamin D, a fat soluble vitamin, can result in vitamin D toxicity, causing vomiting, fatigue, and, possibly, calcium stones. Do not exceed the upper limit recommended.



Your vitamin D levels may change from season to season, especially as sunlight is reduced. Talk with your doctor about your vitamin D levels and whether taking supplements is right for you.

End of Summer

Though school supplies are lining the shelves of your nearby stores, there is still plenty of summer left to enjoy.

If you need some ideas, try the following:

Farmers Markets— There is still time to enjoy fresh, local produce. Late summer produce includes peppers, tomatoes, corn, and blackberries! Look for Farmer's Markets to be listed on your municipal website.

Festivals / Fairs – Look for organizations in your area (park districts, churches, schools, etc.) to host end of summer events. Whether it's a county fair or church picnic, August is prime time for weekend fun!

Concerts / Performances – Many performance groups put on an end of summer show, highlighting what they worked on in June and July. Look for these to be advertised in your local paper, on a community website, or through mail or email.

Sports – Even if you are not a sports fan, a summer afternoon at a baseball game can be great entertainment! Many minor league parks offer affordable tickets and parking as well as special theme events. Or see if there is a summer league near you. Contact your local high school or community college for more information.

City Sites – Think like a tourist in your own town! Check out museums, botanical gardens, amusement parks, the zoo, forest preserves, walking trails, and local lakes.

Take advantage of these final weeks of summer by trying something new. Bike or walk a new trail, rent a canoe or kayak on a nearby lake, or visit a historical building near you. Enjoy summer fruits and vegetables, and spend time with family and friends. The sun is still bright, temperatures are still warm, and there is still plenty to do this summer!



Carb Substitutes

With so many low carb diets and products around, it's clear that carbohydrates have gotten a bad reputation. It's important to start by acknowledging that not all carbohydrates are equal! Carbohydrates can be found in fruits and vegetables (good), grains (can be good), and sugar (not so good). If you are trying to limit carbohydrates, here are some ideas to consider.

Recognize that whole fruits, vegetables, and grains are healthy. The key word is "whole." The whole fruit and vegetable contain fiber, which is good for reducing cholesterol, making you feel full longer, and for weight loss. Whole grains do the same thing, but some people are gluten intolerant or sensitive, so limiting whole grain products can be okay.

Simple carbohydrates (white flour, white pasta, sugar, etc.) have the opposite effect of whole grains. They can be a cause of weight gain and can drive blood sugars up. Avoid or limit these.

Whether you are actively trying to follow a keto diet or have never counted carbs, choosing a lower carbohydrate option once or twice a week is worth trying for everyone. Focus first on reducing/eliminating simple carbohydrates. Then try one of the swaps for more nutrients and less carbohydrates!

If you are looking for a substitute for carbs, try these:

- **Zucchini** is an easy substitute for noodles. You can buy an inexpensive spiralizer, which makes noodle making easier! If you don't have a spiralizer, try a vegetable peeler or a sharp paring knife to make long "noodles." Boil the zucchini noodles for one minute or saute for 1-2 minutes in a little olive oil. Add whatever seasoning or sauce you like!
- Use **cauliflower** to make cauliflower rice or for cauliflower "mac and cheese." To make cauliflower rice, try a food processor or grater to make the smaller rice sized pieces. Saute the cauliflower rice for about 5-10 minutes. To make cauliflower "mac and cheese," cut the cauliflower into bite sized pieces. Boil the cauliflower for about 5 minutes then place on a paper towel. Pat dry to reduce the water. Use in your favorite mac and cheese recipe!
- Try grilled **portobello mushrooms**, large lettuce leaves, or roasted eggplant slices instead of bread or rolls. These are great for hamburgers and other sandwiches.
- **Almond flour**, while expensive, can be used in place of regular flour for many baking recipes. Almond flour has more calories than regular flour, so factor that in if you are trying to lose weight.

Beat the Heat and Repeat

Summer is a time full of fun gatherings, outdoor activities, and sunshine; but summer also comes with increased temperatures, humidity, and inclement weather. Whether you're enjoying some quality relaxation time, exercising, or being productive outdoors, there are some safety concerns to keep in mind.

Protect Your Skin: Wearing minimal clothing can help you beat the heat, but it may cause painful sunburns. Opt for lightweight clothing that covers your shoulders, head, and feet to avoid common areas for sunburn; find a sunscreen you trust with appropriate SPF and safe ingredients; and keep to the shade when the sun is at its hottest.

Drink Plenty of H₂O: When you're outside during the day, you may experience more perspiration. If you're swimming or around water, it may be difficult to truly assess how much water you've sweated out. Make sure to keep hydrated throughout your day to avoid heat-related ailments. Look for beverages that will hydrate like water avoid drinks that dehydrate like coffee and soda.

Take Breaks: Remember to be aware of your body and its needs throughout your activity time and check in with children who may not realize when they need to take a break in the shade. Eat regular, water-dense meals that include fruit and vegetables and pay attention if you need to slow down or take a break. Keep some cool cloths on hand for quick aid. Be vigilant. Many times heat-related ailments can happen fast; it's not worth a trip to the hospital.

Plan Ahead: Check the weather forecast before planning to spend the day outdoors and create a backup plan if necessary. Know where emergency personnel or services are located, have a plan for emergencies, and keep to a buddy system when in crowds.

Summer can be a fun season with exciting memories made. Keep those memories positive; don't let safety take a backseat.

August 1, 2022 is World Lung Cancer Day.

Sponsored by Lung Cancer Foundation of America, World Lung Cancer Day raises awareness of lung health and the current treatments and screenings for lung cancer.

For more information, see:

<https://lcfamerica.org/get-involved/events/world-lung-cancer-day/>.

Chia Seeds

Despite their small size, Chia seeds offer huge health benefits to many people. These tiny seeds are a source of protein and minerals, aid in proper hydration, add fiber to diet and are an easy way to include healthy fat in your daily diet. This superfood is a protein that even vegetarians and vegans can enjoy.

Not surprisingly, the Mayans and the Aztecs consumed chia seeds for energy and endurance. The ancient Mayan word “Chia” actually means strength!

These nutrition powerhouses are one of the sources for Omega-3 fatty acids, which your body needs to sustain energy. Good fats act like the big, long-burning logs on a fire, whereas carbs are used for short bursts of energy. Eating good fats will also help you feel full, longer, so if you are looking to lose weight, this may be an option that you will want to try.

- Chia seeds house vitamins and minerals that we need. In fact, just one ounce of Chia seeds contains up to 12% of a person’s daily recommended Iron, as well as providing calcium, magnesium and B vitamins.
- In the same one ounce serving, a person can get 10 ounces of fiber.
- Lastly, Chia seeds help the body hold onto hydration, so if you feel as though you are always thirsty you may want to try adding some chia seeds into your diet.

No time in your day to think about nutrition-no problem, you can simply throw some chia seeds into your smoothies or on top of your oatmeal or salad.

They can also be used to create a chia-pudding bowl with little effort--think nutritious version of tapioca pudding.

Simply soak 2 Tablespoons Organic chia seeds in 1 cup of your favorite milk alternative (almond, cashew, oat etc.) for as little as an hour or as long as overnight.

Use these little gems as an egg replacement in vegan cookies or sprinkle them on top of your homemade muffins or granola. To use as an egg replacement, soak one Tablespoon of chia seeds in 3 Tablespoons of water for about 5 minutes. Once the mixture gels, use as approximately one regular egg--the substitution is not 1:1 so you may need to experiment with your baked goods.

Chia seeds are small but mighty, use up to 2 Tablespoons a day (under guidance of your medical provider). These 2 Tablespoons are all a person needs to receive the advantages that these seeds have to offer.

Want to know more?

Connect with Working Well for more information on wellness programs and how they can help you reduce healthcare costs and improve employee well-being.



4111 S. Franklin St.
Michigan City, IN
46360
1-866-552-WELL (9355)