

Live Well, Work Well

Q2

**Your Update
on the COVID-19
Pandemic**

In the
News

NHO

Health and
Wellness

Recipes



In The News

Catch up on the latest developments of the biggest health care news that happened in the past three months.



Your Update on the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 outbreak has dominated health news coverage for weeks now. While many coronaviruses aren't dangerous, COVID-19, which is now deadlier than the 2003 SARS outbreak, has infected more than 153,517 people worldwide and caused over 5,735 deaths. As such, the World Health Organization has designated the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic.

What is a coronavirus?

According to the CDC, coronaviruses are common in animal species, and most don't affect humans. As of now, only seven different coronaviruses are known to infect humans. Common coronaviruses typically cause mild to moderate upper respiratory tract illness, and those affected exhibit cold-like symptoms.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a type of coronavirus that causes severe illness in humans. The COVID-19 outbreak is caused by a virus named severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, shortened to SARS-CoV-2. It is similar to the virus that caused the deadly SARS outbreak in 2003, but it is not the same virus.

Is COVID-19 everywhere?

This particular outbreak's epicenter is in Wuhan, China, but at least 143 other countries, including the United States, have confirmed cases of the virus. As the number of U.S. cases grows, it's important that the American public takes proactive steps to prepare

Now that COVID-19 is stateside and cases grow by the day, it's recommended to practice social distancing and stay at home whenever possible to prevent the spread of the disease.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms of COVID-19 can begin in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus. At this time, it's believed that COVID-19 is being spread from person-to-person. For confirmed cases, reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

If you've traveled to affected areas or have had contact with someone who has recently traveled, and begin to exhibit any of the above symptoms, contact your doctor or public health office immediately. Call before you seek in-person care, and be sure to tell them about any recent travel and your symptoms.

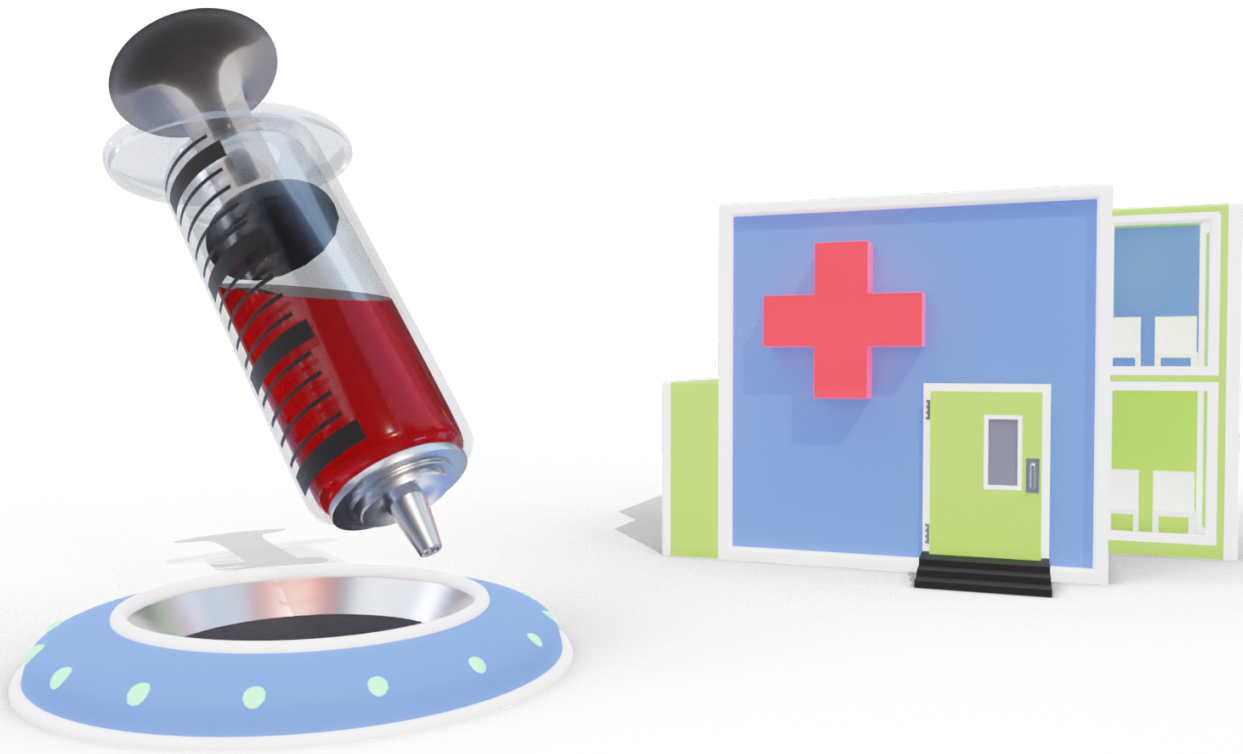
How to Protect Yourself

According to the CDC, you should take the following precautions to avoid person-to-person spreading of a coronavirus:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with those who are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.

In addition, the CDC is recommending that extra precautions are taken to prevent further spread of the disease. This includes canceling or postponing any events within the next eight weeks in which 50 or more guests would be in attendance. Social distancing and self-quarantining is also strongly recommended.

For more information about prevention or COVID-19 in general, click [here](#).



Experts Warn That the Flu Should Be as Concerning as COVID-19

In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, many are understandably concerned about how it will affect the United States. Health officials, however, warn that Americans should be equally concerned with fighting off the flu. Similar to the past few flu seasons, the 2019-20 flu season is deadly. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates, there have been at least 36 million cases of the flu so far. It's also estimated that there have been 370,000 hospitalizations and 22,000 deaths for flu-related illness.

What's different about this year's flu season, though, is that two flu strains are overlapping. This phenomenon, which is referred to as a double-barreled flu season, is rare and means that you can get sick with influenza twice this year. As peak flu season begins, health officials are urging people to take preventive action.

Most people wrongly assume that the flu won't affect them because they're healthy adults. The seasonal flu can make even the healthiest of people sick and can even result in hospitalization. That's why the CDC is strongly recommending that you get vaccinated as early as possible.

What is the flu vaccine?

Each year, the Food and Drug Administration works with the World Health Organization to create a vaccination to protect against the flu. For the 2019-20 flu season, all regular-dose flu shots are quadrivalent to protect against four different flu strains. The flu vaccine is the most effective way to protect yourself against the flu. The CDC recommends that everyone older than 6 months should get the flu vaccine.

Where can you get vaccinated?

You can get vaccinated against the flu at your doctor's office, in a clinic or pharmacy, and maybe even at your workplace. Some urgent care clinics and local health departments provide flu vaccines as well. Visit the [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) to locate where you can get a flu vaccine.

Preliminary Research Ties Gum Disease to Higher Rates of Stroke

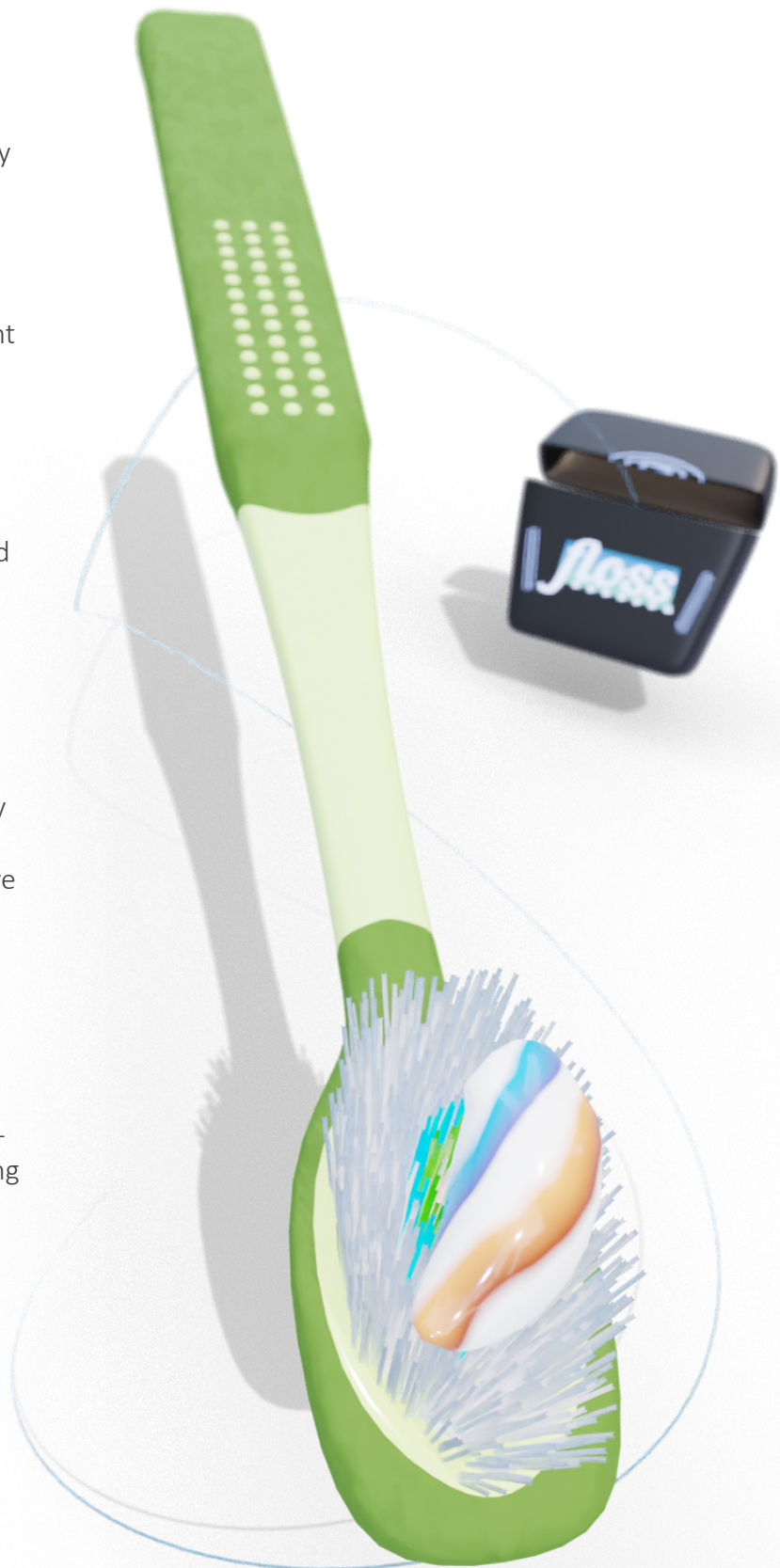
According to preliminary research from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, treating gum disease may help prevent stroke. Two studies, which were run by Dr. Souvik Sen, chairman of clinical neurology at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, revealed that the gum disease treatment can help prevent stroke by reducing the buildup of plaque in arteries and narrowing of the brain's blood vessels.

The Research

In the first of the two studies, Sen and his team found that patients with gum disease had twice as many strokes that were caused by the thickening of brain arteries than patients without gum disease. Additionally, the first study found that patients with gum disease were three times more likely to have a stroke involving the back of the brain's blood vessels than patients without gum disease. The second study found that patients with gum disease were 2.4 times more likely than patients without gum disease to have severely blocked brain arteries.

What This Means for You

Given the potential link between gum disease and systemic health problems, preventing gum disease may turn out to be an important step in maintaining your overall health. In most cases, this can be accomplished by practicing good daily oral hygiene, including brushing and flossing, and regularly seeing a dentist for cleanings. Tell your dentist about changes in your oral health, including any recent illnesses or chronic conditions.





NHO

Learn more about national health observances (NHOs) from the past three months in this section.



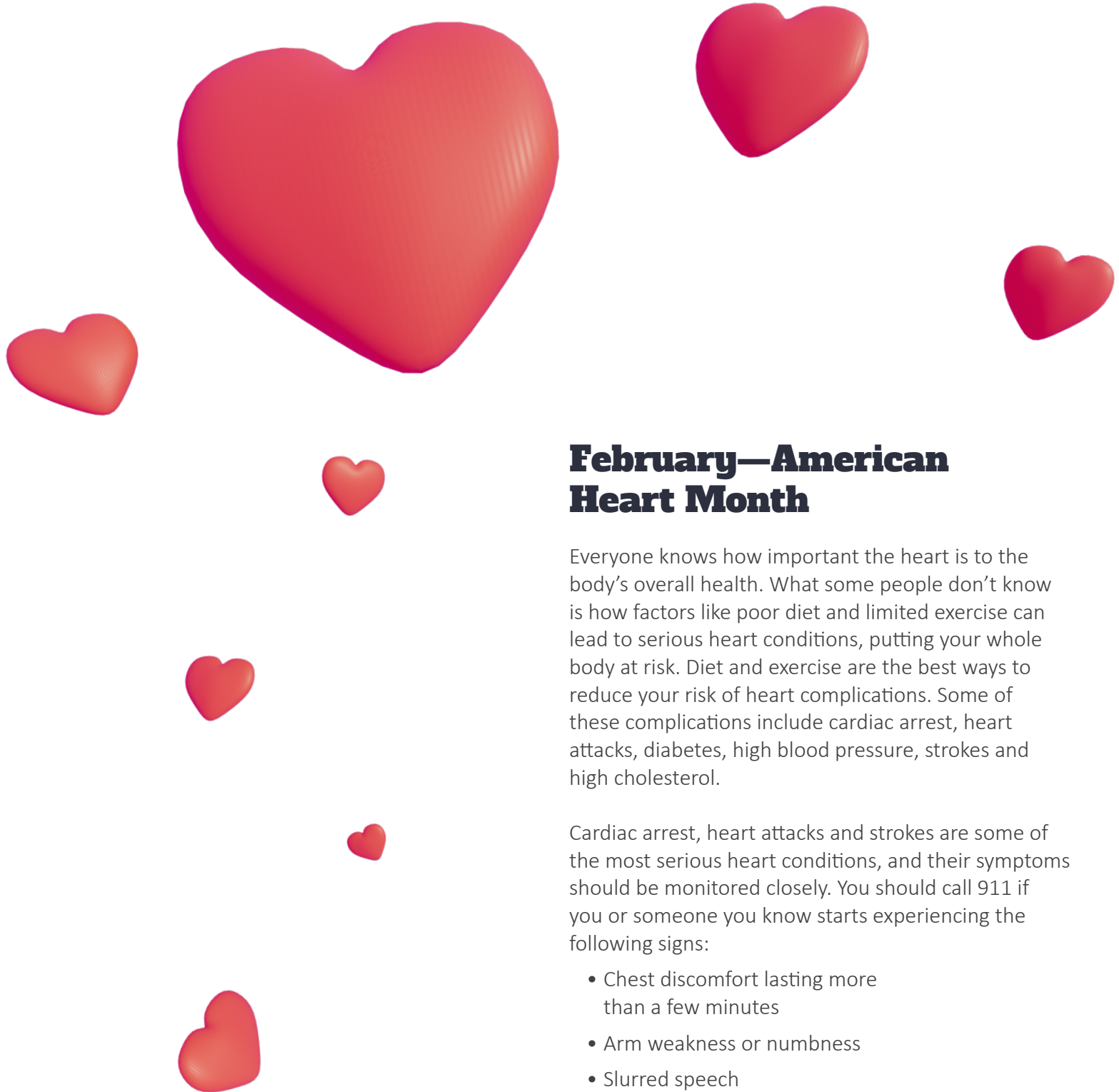
January—National Radon Awareness Month

Radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in some homes, is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, according to the National Cancer Institute. Due to its high prevalence, National Radon Awareness Month is celebrated every January in hopes of raising awareness about radon and its harmful effects.

In fact, 1 in every 15 homes has an elevated radon level, so it's important for you to test and eliminate radon dangers at your residence. Ensure that your family is breathing easy by testing for radon and installing a radon mitigation system if the gas levels in your home are too high.

If a radon test reveals that your home's radon level is dangerous, you can install a radon mitigation system. A qualified radon reduction contractor can install a system in typically less than a day. If your home's water source also has high levels of radon, a point-of-entry treatment device can be installed to reduce emissions.





February—American Heart Month

Everyone knows how important the heart is to the body's overall health. What some people don't know is how factors like poor diet and limited exercise can lead to serious heart conditions, putting your whole body at risk. Diet and exercise are the best ways to reduce your risk of heart complications. Some of these complications include cardiac arrest, heart attacks, diabetes, high blood pressure, strokes and high cholesterol.

Cardiac arrest, heart attacks and strokes are some of the most serious heart conditions, and their symptoms should be monitored closely. You should call 911 if you or someone you know starts experiencing the following signs:

- Chest discomfort lasting more than a few minutes
- Arm weakness or numbness
- Slurred speech
- Unresponsiveness when tapping on shoulders

For more information about heart health and early warning signs, visit [heart.org](https://www.heart.org).



March—National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month is celebrated every March and focuses on spreading the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthy eating habits. Many Americans think that eating healthy means they have to empty their wallets, which isn't necessarily the truth. In honor of National Nutrition Month, keep the following money-saving tips in mind next time you're grocery shopping:

- **Make a weekly meal plan.** Before you go to the store, think about what meals and snacks you want for the week. Read recipes thoroughly so you can make an accurate list of everything you need, reducing the risk that you'll have to run back to the store later in the week.
- **Create a list—and stick to it.** Make a detailed list of what you need to buy before you go to the store. When you get to the store, don't buy anything besides what's on the list.
- **Plan where you're going to shop.** Many grocery stores run sales or offer coupons on various healthy foods. Check out the ads and plan your grocery list around what's on sale.



Looking Ahead...

April

National Distracted Driving
Awareness Month

May

National Stroke
Awareness Month

June

Fireworks
Safety Month



Health and Wellness

Stay on top of the latest trends in health and wellness with the three articles in this section.



Don't Let Spring Allergies Get You Down This Year

More than 50 million Americans suffer from allergies every year. In particular, springtime allergies are an annual nuisance for many people. As plants begin to bloom and neighbors start to cut their grass more frequently, allergy sufferers nationwide start sniffing and sneezing. What's more, mold growth blooms both indoors and outdoors, making it almost impossible to escape allergy triggers.

Spring Allergy Alleviation Tips

To reduce your allergies, be sure to take the following steps:

- Wash your bedding every week in hot water to help keep pollen under control.
- Wash your hair before going to bed, since pollen can accumulate in your hair.
- Limit the number of throw rugs in your home to reduce dust and mold.
- Wear an inexpensive painter's mask and gloves when cleaning, vacuuming or painting to limit skin exposure, and dust and chemical inhalation.
- Vacuum twice a week.
- Make sure the rugs you have are washable.
- Change air conditioning and heating air filters often.

Treating Allergies

Treatment for most allergies is available both over-the-counter and by prescription. Talk to your doctor to find out what treatment method is right for you. If your allergy symptoms are severe or chronic, you may need a series of allergy shots. Contact your physician or allergist to determine which treatment option is best for you.

Things You Can Do to Improve Your Daily Mental Health

Mental health plays a huge role in your overall health and well-being. It affects everything, including how we think, feel and act, and helps determine how we make healthy choices and cope with stress.

Because it's such a crucial component of your health, it's important to focus on maintaining or improving your mental health. Here are five simple ways to do so every day:

1. **Express gratitude.** Taking five minutes a day to write down the things that you are grateful for has been proven to lower stress levels and can help you change your mindset from negative to positive.
2. **Get exercise.** You probably hear all the time how beneficial exercise is to your overall health, but it's true. Exercising can improve brain function, reduce anxiety and improve your self-image.
3. **Spend time outdoors.** Getting outside, especially when it's sunny, can greatly improve your mood, which in turn benefits your mental health.
4. **Be kind.** Helping others and being kind not only helps the receiver of the act, but can also help you. It doesn't have to be anything extravagant—holding the door or giving a compliment can go a long way.
5. **Get a good night's sleep.** Fatigued individuals typically experience drowsiness, mood changes, loss of energy and appetite, headaches, and a lack of motivation, concentration and alertness. Strive for seven to eight hours of sleep a night to improve your mental health.

By doing these five things every day, you'll be well on your way to improving your overall mental health.





Save Lives: Don't Be a Distracted Driver

According to the CDC, nine people are killed and over 1,000 others are injured every day in accidents that involve a distracted driver in the United States. On an annual basis, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration cites that about 9% of fatal crashes are reported as distraction-affected crashes.

What is distracted driving?

Distracted driving is driving while doing another activity that takes your attention away from the road, and can greatly increase the chance of a motor vehicle crash. While there is little you can do to control other people's driving, there is plenty you can do to reduce your own distractions.

There are three main types of distractions:

- Visual—Taking your eyes off the road
- Manual—Taking your hands off the wheel
- Cognitive—Taking your mind off of driving

Preventing Distracted Driving

Allowing yourself to become distracted while driving can lead to dangerous, and even fatal, consequences. To minimize risks while driving:

- Do not talk on your cellphone or use the text messaging feature.
- If you absolutely must conduct a conversation, use a hands-free device.
- Never touch up your makeup or hair in the rearview mirror.
- Only adjust the radio when you are completely stopped.
- Never allow animals to sit on your lap while driving.
- Do not eat or drink while driving.
- Avoid reading maps or directions. Instead, pull into a parking lot to get your bearings and determine where you need to go next to reach your final destination.

By practicing safe driving techniques, you can significantly reduce your chances of being involved in an auto accident. In addition to avoiding distractions, it's important to be aware of other drivers around you and make adjustments to your driving accordingly.



Recipes

Try out these two healthy recipes,
which are from the USDA.



Pan-roasted Tilapia With Tomatillo Salsa

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 pound tomatillos
- ½ cup yellow onion (peeled and finely chopped)
- 2 serrano or other chiles (finely chopped)
- 3 cloves garlic (peeled and minced)
- 3 tsp. vegetable oil
- ¼ tsp. Kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves (chopped)
- 4 tilapia fillets

Nutritional information for 1 serving

Calories	181
Total fat	6 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Cholesterol	48 mg
Sodium	196 mg
Total carbohydrate	9 g
Dietary fiber	2 g
Total sugars	5 g
Added sugars included	0 g
Protein	23 g
Vitamin D	3 mcg
Calcium	32 mg
Iron	1 mg
Potassium	595 mg

Directions

1. Heat the oven to 450 F.
2. To prepare the tomatillos, peel back the husk from the smooth green tomatillo skin. Rinse the tomatillos with warm water and cut into quarters.
3. Place the husked tomatillos, onion, chiles, garlic and 1 tsp. oil in the baking pan, stir well and transfer to the oven. Roast about 20 minutes until the tomatillos are soft and dark green. Set aside to cool.
4. Transfer the mixture to the blender. Add the salt, lime juice and cilantro, and puree.
5. Place the skillet on the stove over high heat and, when it is hot, carefully add 2 tsp. oil.
6. Put the tilapia fillets in the pan, waiting about 30 seconds between additions. Cook about 5-6 minutes, until golden brown on both sides.
7. Transfer the tilapia to the serving plate and top with generous amounts of salsa. Serve right away.



Kickin' Colorful Bell Peppers Stuffed With Quinoa

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 cup cilantro leaves (roughly chopped)
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 Tbsp. freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 Tbsp. freshly grated Parmesan
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 (16-ounce) can chickpeas (drained, rinsed)
- ⅓ cup tomatoes (diced)
- ¼ cup red onion (diced)
- ¼ cup green bell pepper (diced)
- ¼ cup zucchini (diced)
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan
- 3 Tbsp. panko or plain bread crumbs
- Olive oil
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 orange bell pepper

Nutritional information for 1 serving

Calories	371
Total fat	27 g
Saturated fat	7 g
Cholesterol	7 mg
Sodium	332 mg
Total carbohydrate	44 g
Dietary fiber	7 g
Total sugars	7 g
Added sugars included	0 g
Protein	11 g
Vitamin D	0 mcg
Calcium	144 mg
Iron	3 mg
Potassium	473 mg

Directions

1. In a blender or food processor, combine the cilantro, olive oil, pine nuts, garlic, lime juice, Parmesan and crushed red pepper, and blend until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If the pesto is too thick, add a couple more drops of olive oil.
2. In a large bowl, combine the quinoa, chickpeas, tomatoes, red onion, green bell pepper and zucchini. Add the pesto, season with salt and pepper, and stir to combine.
3. In a small bowl, stir together the Parmesan, bread crumbs and a little olive oil to lightly moisten the mixture.
4. Heat the oven to 375 F.
5. Arrange the peppers in a large baking dish and stuff each one with an equal amount of the quinoa-vegetable mixture.
6. Top each pepper with an equal amount of the Parmesan–bread crumb mixture.
7. Pour about ¼-inch of water into the bottom of the baking dish, cover it with foil and bake until the peppers are tender, about 20 minutes.
8. Remove the foil and place the peppers under the broiler, broiling just until the Parmesan–bread crumb mixture is light golden brown.