



Partners in Prevention

Taking Health & Safety to Higher Ground

January 2018

YOUR GAMEPLAN TO LIVE

STAY ACTIVE DURING THE COLD WEATHER MONTHS!

Baby, it's COLD outside! At least here in the northeast! It's cold, it's dark, and it's difficult to stay motivated about being healthy and fit when all we really want to do is stay inside and keep warm... hibernate! Eat more, move less, and feel worse! Hunkering down actually makes us less social, more negative, less healthy, and more depressed. Exercise – especially in these winter months – can help us to feel better all the way around. Here are the benefits to winter activity.

The days are short, but you need sun! Get it when you can. Bundle up, go outside, get moving, burn calories, and smile while you do it! You will warm up in no time at all! You are out of that stale, dry, germ, inside air, and it feels good (and is good for you... *unless it's too cold*). The sun provides your body with vitamin D (on bare skin), makes you feel happier, and helps you to sleep more soundly!

Feeling blue? A daily workout releases feel-good brain chemicals (serotonin and dopamine), which can help to reduce anxiety and depression while increasing your wellbeing.

Exercise makes you stronger, more energetic, keeps your weight in check, and boosts your immunity! We could all use a dose of that during cold and flu season. Exercise causes changes in antibodies and white blood cells, the body's immune system cells that fight disease. These antibodies circulate more rapidly, so they can detect illnesses earlier than they might have otherwise. Exercise also slows down the release of stress hormones which may protect against illness. Physical activity may even help flush bacteria out of the lungs and airways. This can reduce your chances of getting a cold, flu, or other illness. P.S. – you need to exercise regularly to keep that immunity up!

Exercise is good for you, but don't overdo it. Studies have shown that people who follow a moderately energetic lifestyle on most days benefit the most. If you are already a heavy exerciser, don't think that working out more will boost your immunity. In fact, it can do the opposite. Moderation and consistency is key!

Healthy Lifestyle – Healthier Immune System

It makes sense that if you live healthy, every part of your body will benefit... including your immune system. Strategies such as the following can help your immune system to fight off cold, flu, and other diseases.



Bliss Ball: No-bake Nut-free Powerbites

Makes 10 Gluten-free balls.

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup unsweetened shredded coconut, toasted
- 1/4 cup ground flax
- 1/2 cup raw sunflower seeds
- 1/3 cup sunbutter
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup or raw honey
- 1/2 cup mix of dried cranberries, golden raisins, and dark chocolate chips

Directions:

In a mixing bowl combine all ingredients and mix well. Roll into balls and let chill in the refrigerator. Remove and enjoy – store them in the fridge

<https://lexiscleankitchen.com/healthy-food-friday-sunflower-seeds-no-bake-nut-free-powerbites/>

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- Eat an abundance of vegetables and fruit. Avoid processed foods as much as possible.
- Do not smoke.
- Exercise regularly (even light exercise is greatly beneficial).
- Maintain a healthy weight for you.
- Do you enjoy alcoholic beverages? If so, drink only in moderation.
- Get adequate sleep.
- Do what you can to avoid infections. Stay clean, wash your hands frequently, carry hand sanitizer, actually use the wipes for grocery carts, stay clear of persons with infectious disease if possible, cook your meats thoroughly.
- Work on keeping your stress level low... chronic stress, especially, is harmful.
- Many studies have found that the following herbs and supplements can be helpful.
 - ◇ **Echinacea** Certain studies have found that it can help to prevent the common cold and recurrent infections
 - ◇ **Elderberry Flowers and berries** of the elder plant have been used as medicine for 1000's of years. Several studies indicate that elderberry can boost the immune system and is especially beneficial in treating symptoms of cold and flu.
 - ◇ **Probiotics** are good bacteria that help you digest nutrients that boost the detoxification of your colon and support your immune system Studies indicate that probiotic bacteria have several immune regulatory effects and anti-inflammatory properties.
 - ◇ **Ginger root has been used to aid in digestion, treat and prevent viruses, bacteria, and parasites since before recorded time.** It's also known for its ability to treat inflammatory disorders.
 - ◇ **Vitamin D** can modulate the innate and adaptive immune responses. Deficiency in vitamin D is associated with increased autoimmunity as well as an increased susceptibility to infection (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3166406/>).

QUICK TIPS ON PREVENTING WINTERTIME SLIPS & FALLS

Slippery roads and sidewalks, slippery parking lots and building entrances... all create an increased risk for injury due to slips and falls. The following are some simple tips to avoid getting hurt.

- Wear flat shoes with slip resistant soles.
- Take short, flat, careful steps when walking across ice or snow.
- Don't run. Walking slowly will decrease your chances of slipping or falling.
- Wipe your feet. Use the mats available at building entrances.
- At building entrances, remove snow and water from your feet so that you aren't contributing to already slippery conditions inside.
- Choose to travel on salted and/or shoveled walkways vs. areas with snow and ice piled up.
- Spread salt or sand when you see icy spots. You can help reduce the number of falls by taking action.

Warm Roasted Winter Salad Bowl



Vegan, gluten-free, nut-free, refined sugar-free, soy-free.

4-6 Servings

Ingredients:

Salad:

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa (any) + 1.5 cups water
- 2 ½ cups chopped Yukon Gold Potatoes
- 1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed and chopped (app 3 cups)
- 3 large garlic cloves (peel on)
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup stemmed and finely chopped kale
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons pepita seeds (more or other seeds ok)
- Sliced avocado

Dressing:

- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon pink Himalayan or other sea salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 400F and line one extra-large (or 2 large) baking sheets with parchment paper.
- Place chopped potatoes, green beans, and garlic cloves onto the baking sheet. Toss with the oil and season with a generous amount of salt and pepper. Spread into an even layer.
- Roast 15 minutes, remove from oven and flip. Continue roasting 10-20 more minutes until potatoes and beans are tender and golden. Keep an eye out to prevent burning.
- Meanwhile, cook quinoa. Add to medium pot with 1.5 cups water. Bring to low boil, reduce heat to medium-low, cover with lid, and cook for 13-17 minutes until water is absorbed and quinoa is fluffy. Remove from heat, fluff with fork, and leave lid on to keep warm.
- Whisk dressing ingredients together in a small bowl. Set aside.
- Chop kale and green onions.
- When vegetables are finished roasting, remove garlic cloves and set aside. Spoon potatoes and beans into a large serving bowl. Stir in quinoa and other chopped vegetables.
- Trim ends off garlic cloves and push the roasted garlic out. Finely chop or mash garlic. Whisk the garlic into the dressing until combined. Pour dressing onto vegetables and toss to coat.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately.
- Leftovers can be reheated in a saucepan with some oil, and the salad will keep in the fridge for a few days.

Tip: To boost the protein, you can add any legume.

<http://ohsheglows.com/2015/01/21/warm-roasted-winter-salad-bowl/>

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Oral Care is Important to Overall Health

A well-balanced oral care regimen is important for overall good health. Poor oral health is linked to all kinds of disease including diabetes and heart disease. Components of a comprehensive oral care plan include twice daily brushing, flossing, and the addition of *oil pulling* daily.

We are all familiar with brushing and flossing, but many of you have probably never heard of *oil pulling*. Many of us here at OAI, personally practice oil pulling with great success. Not only does it keep our mouths clean, but it has even helped to heal gum issues. The following is how to do it.

- Measure out about 1Tbs. of coconut oil. Some like more; some like less.
- Swish the oil around inside your mouth. It will go from solid to liquid quickly. Using your tongue and cheeks *pull* the oil through your teeth.
- Do not gargle or swallow. If you do feel like you want to swallow, just spit it out and start again.
- Note: DO NOT SPIT IN THE SINK as it will clog your drain once it becomes solid again. Instead, spit it out into the trash.
- Try to “pull” for 5 – 10 minutes. We’ve done it longer. It’s really up to you. The coconut oil will be whitish when you spit it out.
- Rinse your mouth with water or mix 1 tsp. of baking soda in a cup of water to gargle and rinse. No mouthwash is necessary.

Flossing is important! If you are already a flosser, keep it up! If not, making this a daily habit will greatly enhance your oral and overall health. Try to build your flossing skills slowly. Start with just a few teeth and add one a day until you are flossing your entire mouth. The following are basic flossing guidelines.

- Use a piece of floss 15 to 18 inches long and wrap each end around your index fingers.
- Starting at the gum line, wrap the floss around the side of the tooth in the shape of a “C,” and gently but firmly slide the floss up and down the tooth and side-to-side, making sure you get down into the gum line as well. Make sure you scrub both sides of the adjacent teeth before moving on to the next set.
- Repeat on the rest of your teeth, including the back side of your last tooth.

If dexterity is an issue, use soft plaque removers instead of floss. Similar to toothpicks, they allow you to clean between your teeth with one hand. If brushing, flossing or using a plaque remover causes your gums to bleed, this is a warning sign that bacteria are at work, causing damage. If left to fester, it can easily cause chronic inflammation elsewhere in your body. The answer is to gently floss and brush more often, until your gums no longer bleed from brushing or flossing. If bleeding persists longer than a week, see a dentist (<https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2018/01/13/improve-oral-health>).

Waterpiks are another favorite among people. If you are not already a flosser, using a waterpik along with brushing will enhance your oral health. Flossing is still a better bet as it literally wipes sticky plaque off of teeth, and doing both is awesome!



Mini Vegetable Lasagnas

Makes 12 mini lasagnas

Ingredients:

- Cooking spray or oil mister
- 1/2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 small zucchini, quartered and sliced
- 4 oz. mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 c. chopped artichoke hearts (frozen, marinated, or canned)
- 1/4 c. sliced sun-dried tomatoes
- 1/3 c. basil pesto
- 1 1/2 c. low-fat ricotta cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 24 small square refrigerated wonton wrappers
- 1 c. shredded Mozzarella or Italian-blend cheese

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 375. Spray a 12-cup muffin tin w/cooking spray.
- Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic, zucchini, mushrooms and sauté until softened and just beginning to brown, about 7 minutes. Stir in artichoke hearts; cook 2-3 additional minutes or until liquid evaporates, if needed. Add sun-dried tomatoes and pesto to skillet and stir until well-combined. Remove from heat.
- Combine ricotta, a pinch of salt, and pepper to taste in a small bowl. Set aside.
- Press 1 wonton wrapper into each cup of the muffin tin. Divide half the ricotta mixture into each cup; top with half the vegetable mixture. Divide half of the shredded cheese into each cup. Place remaining wonton wrappers into each cup, making sure corners are in the opposite direction of the first wrapper; gently press down to smash everything into the cup and repeat layering process with remaining ingredients (ricotta, veggies, cheese).
- Bake for 10 minutes, or until cheese has melted and edges of wonton wrappers are golden brown.

<https://ohmyveggies.com/recipe-mini-vegetable-lasagnas-made-in-muffin-tins/>

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Be Calm and Carry On!

Some people plop down on the couch in front of the television for relaxation, but this won't actually help combat the effects of stress. Instead, activate your body's natural relaxation response with relaxation techniques. The more often you practice, the better you will get at it, and the faster you will be able to calm yourself, boost your mood, and improve your mental and physical health. The following is just one relaxation technique you can do today. Over the next few months we will include other relaxation techniques so that you have a small arsenal to combat stress. Note: There are relaxation apps that you can download for free and access on your phone anytime, anywhere.

- Get comfortable. Sit with palms pressed together in front of you with your arms resting against your sides. This should feel easy and relaxed.
- Close your eyes. Think about the space between your hands. What does it feel like? Is it warm? Do both hands feel the same? Do you notice any sensations there?
- Separate your hands just a little bit, but still almost touching. Focus on that space between them. Now, what do you feel? Do you feel warmth, or a tingling? Maybe you feel nothing, and that's OK. Stay focused for another 30 seconds or so.
- Separate your hands just a bit further... just enough for a magazine to fit between. Continue to keep your attention between your hands. Imagine energy there.
- Try pulling your hands a quarter inch or so away from each other and then back again. Does it feel slightly difficult or easy? Warmth and tingling are commonly felt. This is energy.
- Be aware of what you feel between your palms. Now focus on your breathing; easy, relaxed. Stay here for a few moments.
- Now bring your palms together, and when you are ready, open your eyes. Slowly look around, and rise when you are ready.

At Occupational Athletics, we know that the future of healthcare is in the *prevention* of illness and injuries.

It is our mission to provide preventative care utilizing sports medicine principles and lifestyle modification training to create an atmosphere of health, safety, and performance to allow employees to enjoy an enhanced quality of life and reach their retirement—and beyond—SUCCESSFULLY!



Mini BLT Quinoa Cups

Makes 30 mini cups.

Ingredients:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dry quinoa
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chicken or veg. broth or water
- 2 whole eggs
- 3 egg whites
- 1 cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed then squeezed completely dry
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked and crumbled bacon (about 8 slices center-cut)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped tomatoes
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
- Salt & pepper

Directions:

- Rinse quinoa very well in a fine mesh strainer under cold running water. Meanwhile bring broth to a boil in a saucepan. Add rinsed quinoa, cover, cook until broth is absorbed and quinoa is tender, about 15 minutes. Remove lid and let cool slightly.
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl combine remaining ingredients and stir. Add cooked quinoa then stir to combine. Spray mini muffin tins very well with nonstick spray, then fill to the top with quinoa mixture, smoothing the top with the back of a spoon. Bake 15-17 minutes, or until golden brown on top. Let cool 5 minutes then run a sharp knife around the outside of the cups and pop out with a spoon. Cool completely on a cooling rack. Store in the refrigerator, or freeze then reheat by microwaving for 30 seconds.

<https://iowagirleats.com/2012/10/16/mini-blt-quinoa-cups/>



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