



Health & Fitness
2022

Resetting after losing 60 pounds



Melissa Caveness, before and after.

Nutrisystem

(StatePoint) — Being indoors makes it easy to pack on unwanted pounds and fall into less than healthy patterns. The warm weather months however are the perfect time to reset and take control of your health.

Even though she wanted to make a change, Melissa Caveness needed to figure out the right path to achieve her goals. “I needed help, and I was motivated, but it wasn’t until Nutrisystem that I was successful,” said Caveness, who lost 60 pounds on the program and can now keep up with her active family. “I can now do all the fun activities and can even outrun my kids...sometimes!”

Using these three simple tips, you can be on your way to a happier, healthier you this season and beyond:

Change Up Your Routine

If you’ve fallen into bad habits, it’s time to shake things up. There’s no better time than right now to change your routine. Whether it’s

making time to eat breakfast or adding in a 15-minute walk at lunchtime, little changes can make a big difference. Committing to these changes for a month or season can increase the likelihood of them turning into long-term, natural habits.

“It takes work to live a healthy lifestyle. But if you get yourself in the right routine, it will become second nature,” says Courtney McCormick, MPH, RDN, LDN, manager, Clinical Research & Nutrition at Nutrisystem.

Prioritize Sleep

When you don’t get enough sleep, you are more likely to choose unhealthy foods and to overeat in general. Sleeping for the recommended seven to eight hours a night improves your overall health and supports your weight loss goals.

To get better sleep, cut out screen time one hour before heading to bed. The light from your phone or tablet suppresses your body’s production of melatonin, a

hormone that controls your body’s sleep cycles. Taking time away for just one hour prior to hitting the hay can make a big difference in your sleep quality.

Use Portion Control

Many of us tend to overeat or rely on large portions of comfort foods. To get just what you need with no wasted food, consider a program like Nutrisystem that brings you meals and snacks that are nourishing and filling in just the right portions. Plus, if you’re still craving some of those comfort foods on colder days, Nutrisystem has plenty of options like broccoli cheddar soup and Merlot Beef with Root Vegetables. You can also keep within your grocery budget by shopping for fresh fruits and vegetables that are in-season — choices around this time of year!

To reset this season, take a cue from those who’ve met success by committing to smart strategies and healthy choices.

6 things to know about COVID-19 vaccines for children under 5

(StatePoint) — COVID-19 vaccines are now available for children under 5 years old, and the American Medical Association is urging parents to get their children vaccinated.

“The wait for this moment has been excruciating for parents who were ready on day one for their children to receive a vaccination to prevent severe COVID,” says Jack Resneck, Jr., M.D., president of the AMA. “While there is overwhelming scientific evidence showing the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, we know many parents and families still have questions.”

Here are six things to know about pediatric COVID-19 vaccines for kids under 5:

1. The vaccines are safe: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reviewed all trial safety data before authorizing and recommend-

ing vaccines for children under 5. The vast majority of side effects were mild, including irritability and crying, sleepiness, fatigue and loss of appetite.

2. The vaccines are effective: Both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are effective at preventing severe disease. Based on 230 pages of data, regulators said the vaccines show a strong immune response in children, and are somewhat effective at preventing symptomatic disease.

3. They’re widely available: Vaccines will be available at pediatricians’ offices, as well as from primary care physicians. Information on locations near you is available at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).

4. COVID-19 poses a danger to children: According to the CDC, COVID-19 is a leading cause of death among children ages 0-19 years. Among children in the United States aged 6 months to 4 years, there

have been more than 2 million cases of COVID-19, more than 20,000 hospitalizations, and more than 200 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic.

5. There is more than one dose: Like most vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccines involve more than one dose. Pfizer’s vaccine is a three-dose primary series at one-tenth the dosage of the adult formulation. The Moderna vaccine primary series is a two-dose regimen, spaced four to eight weeks apart, at one-fourth the dosage of the adult formulation. Booster shots will likely be part of the regimen, too, just as they are for other age groups.

6. Getting up to date is important: Make sure your child is up to date on all vaccines when they get the COVID-19 vaccine. Adolescents and adult immunizations declined during the pandemic and an estimated 26 million



recommended vaccinations were missed in 2020 as compared to 2019.

If you have additional questions, speak with your physician and review trust-

ed resources, including [getvaccineanswers.org](https://www.getvaccineanswers.org).

“COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, they’re backed by science and data; they work. More than 1 mil-

lion people in the United States have died from COVID, and I urge you to keep yourself and your loved ones safe by getting vaccinated,” says Dr. Resneck.

Beyond bubble baths and walks: Six areas of self-care

By Ashlyn Douglass-Barnes, LCSW

We often think of self-care as bubble baths and walks, but self-care or helping keep a balanced life can come from multiple areas of our life, such as physical, professional, personal, spiritual, and emotional. Oftentimes we think of self-care as large planned out gestures that we are adding to our already full calendar, but it might be taking a moment to notice how blue the sky is while stuck in a traffic jam. The traffic jam and the blue sky are both there, so might as well choose something pleasant instead of the unnecessary suffering of being angry and irritated.

Try practicing self-care in each of these six areas:

• Psychological self-care might look like therapy,

journaling, self-help books or groups, which can help with self-reflection and self-engagement. This can also be practicing asking for and receiving help. We may not think of asking for help as self-care, but often part of burnout is trying to do it all and feeling overwhelmed.

• Emotional self-care looks a little different. This might look like self-love, self-compassion, affirming positive things about yourself, and forgiving others. This allows more space for the things we want to do and think about instead of guilt and shame.

• Personal self-care might look like short-term and long-term goal planning, learning who you want to be and do with your life, or learning a skill or hobby, all of which can help you feel you have purpose in the world.

• Professional self-care might look like taking time for lunch breaks, only answering phone calls and emails for work during work hours or setting boundaries with your boss and co-workers so that they learn that you need to spend time at work working and time away from work being away from work. This helps you have the time to recharge when you are not at work and energy to focus on work when you are at work.

• Physical self-care might look more like exercising, eating healthy, or turning off social media, phones, and other distractions to be able to focus on using your body the way you want to. For some, this is our bubble baths and walks. Remember, especially when it comes to exercise, physical self-care isn’t punishment, but rather being able to

spend time doing the things you love to do. In contrast, when you don’t take care of yourself physically, you might be forced into spending time with illness.

• Spiritual self-care is often overlooked but can look like finding peace and tranquility in everyday moments and nature, including enjoying the sunset or being near the ocean. These simple moments of reflection can help us feel grateful to be here on this earth. This might also look like going to a house of worship or praying, where we move the focus away from ourselves to something bigger.

Admittedly, I may not be the perfect example of self-care. It does not come naturally or easily to me, especially working as a helping professional. We can sometimes wear burnout

like a “badge of honor” of how hard we work or how dedicated we are to helping people. However, like everyone else, if we don’t work on our self-care now, we will be forced to focus on it when we really don’t want to, usually with illness, discomfort, or unhappiness. It is better to be able to choose when we have our self-care, like looking at the blues skies while in traffic or taking a moment before answering that work email. And yes, you can even take a bubble bath.

Remember, you shouldn’t feel guilty for taking a moment for yourself.

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Ashlyn Douglass-Barnes, LCSW is the clinical director and a licensed clinical social worker at JFS Orlando. Ashlyn has worked in a variety of settings including outpatient community based mental health, inpatient/admission psychiatric hospital, substance abuse/DUI, dialysis/medical, and in home/office outpatient therapy.

An overview of NTM, a progressive lung disease

(StatePoint) — Did you know that everyone inhales nontuberculous mycobacteria into their lungs as part of daily life? NTM is a group of over 200 types of bacteria. While most of these types of bacteria do not cause harm in humans, some do. The most common type of NTM lung disease is MAC or mycobacterium avium complex. Naturally found in soil and water, for most people the organisms do no harm. However, in a small number of vulnerable individuals, NTM can infect airways and lung tissue, leading to disease. As of 2012, more than 86,000 people are likely living with NTM lung disease nationwide.

NTM lung disease is a progressive disease, so the sooner you speak to your doctor and receive a correct diagnosis, the sooner you can discuss treatment options with them.

To help individuals better understand the signs and symptoms of NTM lung disease and be empowered to get the

help they need, the American Lung Association, supported by Insmid Incorporated through a collaborative sponsorship, is sharing these important facts about the condition:

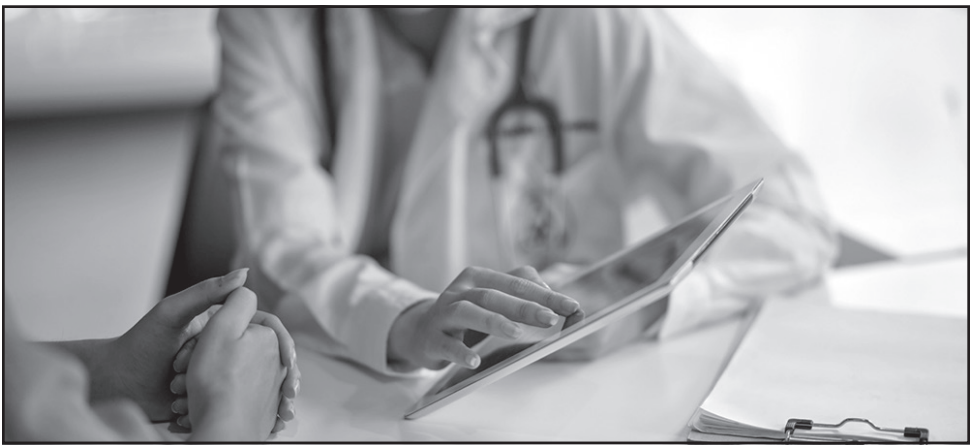
What are NTM lung disease's most common signs and symptoms? The symptoms of NTM lung disease are similar to other lung conditions. Common symptoms include chronic cough that may produce mucus, fatigue, weight loss, fever and night sweats.

Who's at greatest risk? Although anyone can get NTM lung disease, some groups of people are at much higher risk, including those with lungs damaged from diseases such as bronchiectasis, COPD, cystic fibrosis, silicosis or a previous tuberculosis infection. Other high-risk groups include postmenopausal women and people over 65, as well as individuals with a weakened immune system due to an autoimmune disorder, or from taking immune suppressing medications.

How does NTM lung disease affect one's health? The less progressive form of NTM lung disease, nodular bronchiectasis, causes inflammation, damage and scarring over time. As the disease progresses, the damaged airways lose their ability to clear mucus normally, which invites recurring respiratory infections. The more progressive form, cavitary disease, causes scarring, fibrosis and the formation of cavities or pits in the lung tissue, which can lead to respiratory failure. Some NTM organisms can cause disease in other parts of the body, including the lymph nodes, skin, soft tissue and bones.

When is it time to see a doctor? Consider asking your doctor about NTM lung disease if you're living with a chronic lung disease and your symptoms are getting worse or not going away.

How is NTM lung disease diagnosed? Diagnosis typically involves three different



assessments: A clinical exam, a chest X-ray or CT scan, and a lab culture. It's important that diagnosis includes identification of which species of mycobacterium are causing the infection, since that will determine treatment options.

What are next steps after diagnosis? Treatment options vary depending on the type of NTM species involved, but typically include two or more courses of antibiotics for an extended period of time, as

well as making healthy lifestyle changes. In some cases, surgery is an option. While NTM lung disease is treatable, it can be challenging to eliminate all of the bacteria so it doesn't continue replicating. Advocates encourage seeking a second opinion and following up with a pulmonologist or infectious disease specialist with specific experience treating NTM lung disease, particularly if symptoms persist after treatment.

More information can be found at Lung.org/NTM.

"If you experience new or worsening symptoms, these may be clues about what's happening in your body," says Brian, a patient with a rare, genetic lung disease called Alpha-1 who was diagnosed with NTM lung disease after discussing with his doctor how his symptoms changed. "Don't be afraid to advocate for yourself."

The patient experience — should you demand more from your doctor?

Experiencing any health problem — a fever, a toothache, blurry vision — is bad enough. Then comes the potentially excruciating part — the visit to a healthcare provider and the scheduling difficulties, long waits, and doctors and staff in a hurry that often can be a part of that experience.

But maybe patients are asking and expecting too little of the medical profession.

"Patients need to up the ante," said Dr. Jeff Kegarise, an eye doctor, clinical and business management expert, and co-author with his wife, Susan, of "One Patient at a Time: The K2 Way Playbook for Healthcare & Business Success" (www.theK2Way.com).

"They should expect not

just good care, but good service. How good is healthcare, or any business for that matter, if it doesn't meet your needs and wants?"

Here are a few questions that Kegarise said patients should ask themselves about their primary-care physicians, dentists, optometrists and other healthcare professionals:

- Does the office provide a friendly and welcoming atmosphere? This may sound basic, but Kegarise insists that how phone calls are handled and how patients are greeted when they arrive is critical to a good patient experience. And, he says, not every office excels at this. "But patients should expect it," Kegarise

says. "Sometimes it seems that the bar has been lowered and patients simply have come to accept that the welcoming at a doctor's office is going to be unpleasant. It doesn't have to be that way."

- Do they treat you as a person or as an ailment? Kegarise bemoans the fact that in some medical offices, staff members refer to patients by their illness or injury, rather than by their names. "Doctor, there's a knee contusion in room 1 and a gastric distress in room 2," Kegarise says that if they refer to patients in that manner, they likely think of them that way, and not as people. "We have never seen a diseased eye walk into our practice," he says. "No glau-

coma checks in at the front desk, and no conjunctivitis sits down in my exam chair."

- Do they make sure you understand what they are telling you? It's critical that patients understand the diagnosis and the planned care, so education should be part of the visit, Kegarise said. "There is a disparity between what we want patients to know and what patients can likely absorb," he says, "so we reinforce what we say." At his office, this includes providing the patient customized handouts summarizing everything from testing to medication to diagnoses.

- Are they upfront about what they can and can't do? Kegarise promotes a

can-do, positive approach to responding to patients' needs. But at the same time, he says, it's important that medical professionals don't overcommit. "If they promise something, they should be able to deliver," he says. "If they can't accomplish something the patient requests or needs, they should admit that and explain why it can't be done." It is okay to say "we can't," as long as you say, "yet here is what we can do," he says.

"The more that patients want, expect, and demand from their doctor visit, the better the level of standard care provided will be," Kegarise says. "Most doctors want to provide better care, yet many feel too constrained by

the ever-increasing administrative burdens and declining reimbursements — each of which cuts into the time available for patient care. Those business pressures do exist, but they are not an excuse for delivering a poor patient experience."

Dr. Jeff Kegarise is a board-certified optometrist, clinical and business management expert. He has lectured for many years on clinical disease, and his management methods were recognized by The Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Kegarise is a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Optometry and completed his residency at The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

7 behavioral health tips for older adults

(StatePoint) — Older adults experiencing a behavioral health issue such as anxiety or depression may be embarrassed and think they simply need to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps," but helping them seek help can empower them to live their best lives, according to experts.

"Everyone is different, but there are tools for better health, including therapy, medication and self-care," said Dr. Lindsay Evans-Mitchell, medical director for behavioral health for Cigna Medicare Advantage.

Behavioral health disorders affect one in five adults over 55. Older men have the highest suicide rate of any age group or gender. Among men who are 75 and older, the suicide rate is 40.2 per 100,000 — almost triple the overall rate.

The most common behavioral health disorder in older adults is dementia, and its incidence is growing as the Baby Boomer generation ages. Experts project that more than 9 million Americans 65 years or older will have dementia by 2030. Anxiety disorders

and mood disorders are also common among older people.

Dealing with a behavioral health issue? These self-care tips can help:

1. Find a Provider. "Cognitive disorders, such as dementia and mood disorders, often look the same," Dr. Evans-Mitchell said. "Only a trained professional can make an accurate diagnosis." For help finding a provider, reach out to your primary care physician or health plan, such as Medicare or Medicare Advantage. Also consider virtual therapy. It's easy to schedule and offers the convenience of seeing a therapist without leaving home.
2. Nurture Yourself. Good nutrition feeds the body and mind. If you have questions about nutrition for older adults, consult your physician or a registered dietitian. Additionally, drink water throughout the day. "Dehydration can worsen cognitive issues," Dr. Evans-Mitchell said.
3. Sleep Well. Like all adults, older people need seven to nine hours of sleep nightly. Dr. Evans-Mitchell noted that older people's tendency

to go to bed early, wake up early, and nap throughout the day can disrupt healthy sleep cycles and limit rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, potentially contributing to behavioral health issues.

4. Exercise. Even moderate exercise can improve mental and physical health. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans describes benefits such as improvements in brain health, better cognitive function, and reduced risk of anxiety and mood disorders. People who exercise also tend to sleep better. Having trouble getting started? Some Medicare Advantage plans include a fitness benefit, which can pay for a gym membership or provide at-home fitness tools.

5. Head Outside. Being outside has numerous benefits, including vitamin D absorption needed for cognitive health. Additionally, research has shown that chemicals released from trees can stimulate brain functions. Don't forget the sunscreen though, as skin cancer is most common in people older than 65.

6. Buddy Up. Papa, available through some Cigna Medicare

Advantage plans, connects older adults and their families with "Papa Pals" for companionship and support. "Papa Pals" can provide transportation, help with everyday tasks -- or simply be a friend, doing activities like watching movies or playing games.

7. Parent a Pet. Caring for pets generates positive emotions and can reduce anxiety. Just petting a dog has been shown to lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol, and pets provide a bond that can elevate two feel-good brain chemicals: oxytocin and do-

pamine. Dogs also encourage people to exercise outdoors.

"Behavioral health issues can be complex and confusing to navigate, but taking positive actions can be empowering," Dr. Evans-Mitchell said. "It's never too late to make a new start."



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Cottage cheese is a Jewish super food

By Rachel Ringler

This underrated ingredient might be the answer to dinner. And breakfast. And snack time, too.

When I close my eyes and imagine the interior of my childhood refrigerator, certain items are always there: blue-glass bottles of seltzer, Breakstone whipped butter, a hunk of (kosher) salami, and cottage cheese. Why cottage cheese? I don't know. My mother liked to eat it. As the daughter of Polish Jewish immigrants, she grew up with it. She would often start her day with a cut-up orange and a scoop of cottage cheese. And when she made her weekly foray to Waldbaum's, our local supermarket, cottage cheese was always one of her purchases.

I never thought of it as Jewish, per se, but when Tablet came out with their book last year, *The 100 Most Jewish Foods*, I was bemused, but not shocked, to see that cottage cheese made the list. Food writer Gabriella Gershenson described cottage cheese as "the New World version of pot cheese, curd cheese..." The Nosh contributor Sonya Sanford, whose parents were born in the former Soviet Union, remembers eating noodles and cottage cheese several times each week during her childhood. And Leah Koenig, in her recently published *The Jewish Cookbook*, describes noodles and farmer's cheese/cottage cheese as Ashkenazi comfort foods.



Dan Perez

Broccoli cottage cheese pancakes.

I recently did an informal survey of Facebook friends and Instagram followers about how they feel towards cottage cheese, and I received passionate responses filled with either nostalgia or horror. Many hate it — especially those who had it forced on them as the ultimate diet food — but there are plenty who remember it lovingly, mixed with canned peaches, or with noodles, butter, and pepper, or schmeared on matzah and topped with jelly. Or, as April, one of the respondents, said — "Don't judge," she begged — it's even good combined with broad egg noodles and ketchup.

While I shunned it for years (such a rebel!), I now find myself buying cottage cheese quite a lot. After all, cottage cheese lasts for weeks in the refrigerator, it's high in protein, and it's a quick lunch or breakfast combined with savory or sweet elements. It also reminds me of my mother.

To get you through the next chunk of time, here are some recipes with cottage cheese that are quick to make, delicious, and wholesome. And a scoop of it just may bring you back in time.

Broccoli and Cottage Cheese Pancake Recipe
By Adeena Sussman

Ingredients
1 1/2 cups broccoli florets (from 1/2 small head), finely chopped
1 cup full-fat cottage cheese
2 large eggs
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp chopped fresh chives
2 Tbsp chopped fresh dill, plus more for serving
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp kosher salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper



Cottage cheese waffles.

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more if needed
Sour cream, for serving

Directions
In a medium bowl, stir the broccoli, cottage cheese, eggs, flour, chives, dill, baking powder, salt, and pepper until combined.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat.

Make pancakes out of the batter, using 3 tablespoons per pancake. Fry until the edges are lacy and browned, 2 to 3 minutes per side, adding more oil to the skillet between batches as needed.

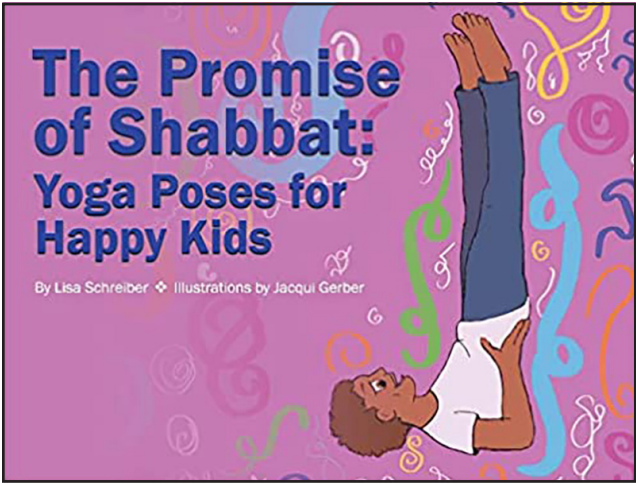
Serve with sour cream and garnish with chopped dill.
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Cottage cheese waffles

Ingredients
1 cup drained cottage cheese
3 eggs
1 1/2 cups flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
3/4 cup milk

Directions
Add all ingredients to a blender and purée. Pour batter into waffle maker and cook until browned and crispy.

Keeping children happy with yoga



By Christine DeSouza

Yoga for children? "Yes!," said local resident Lisa Schreiber, author of "The Promise of Shabbat: Yoga Poses for Happy Kids." A registered yoga teacher and certified children yoga instructor, Schreiber teaches "Kids Yoga with a Jewish Twist" to children of all ages in several facilities throughout Central Florida.

In her book, she has combined her love of yoga and Shabbat to bring children daily yoga poses that are simple to do and have meanings that reflect on the Shabbat.

"The practice of Yoga has much in common with Judaism, including the beliefs for living a happy life as well as the values that help get us there. The link between the two can strengthen and fortify our separate practice of each and, ultimately, our quality of life," Schreiber said.

For example, the 31-page book begins "On Monday, it

was rainy all day and it made me feel blue." The vividly colored page, illustrated by Jacqui Gerber, shows a sad little boy looking out his window at the falling rain. "But then I remembered the Sunshine of Shabbat and my happiness grew," he says, and the illustration is of him stretching in the Sunshine pose.

The book is simple, elegant, and perfect in blending Shabbat with our daily lives and yoga for our health — adults would benefit from it as well.

At the end of the week of yoga poses, Schreiber explains that learning yoga poses helps children cope with the ups and downs of life. There is a chart that describes the benefits of and how to do each pose. She also suggests some modifications to simplify each movement.

Schreiber, her husband, Rick, and two sons have lived in Central Florida since 2003. She served on the PJ Library parent committee in the past, and she currently teaches



Lisa Schreiber

"Mommy and Baby Stretch" at The Roth Family JCC and kids yoga at Chabad of Greater Orlando on Lake Howell Road in Maitland.

In 2019, Schreiber went on the Momentum Trip to Israel, sponsored by SPARK.

Illustrator Jacqui Gerber grew up in Central Florida. She is the daughter of Dori Gerber, who is well-known in the Jewish community.

Jacqui Gerber currently attends the University of Central Florida where she is working on a degree in Advertising and Public Relations. She attended a Birthright trip to Israel and stayed for an internship.

There will be a Book signing at the Roth JCC on Sunday, July 24 from 10-11:30 a.m. Schreiber is also available to do book readings and signings in the community.

"The Promise of Shabbat: Yoga Poses for Happy Kids" is available on Amazon and at Target.

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There’s a new test for cancer risks from a longtime Jewish genetic screening program



It was only after Abby Match was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer that she learned she was a carrier of a mutation in her BRCA1 gene associated with a significantly elevated risk for developing breast cancer at a young age.

By Renee Ghert-Zand

After discovering a suspicious lump in her breast one day while in the shower, Abby Match was diagnosed in August with an aggressive form of breast cancer. She subsequently underwent a bilateral mastectomy, a hysterectomy, chemotherapy and radiation. It was only after she discovered she was sick that Match, 35, learned she was a carrier of a mutation in her BRCA1 gene — associated with a significantly elevated risk for developing breast cancer at a young age, and also for ovarian and other cancers. One in 40 Ashkenazi Jews have a BRCA mutation, which is 10 times higher than in the general population. Match, a speech pathologist living outside Philadelphia, wishes she had known beforehand about her genetic predisposition. She could have — by having a genetic screening. Had she known she was a BRCA carrier, she could have more closely monitored herself for early signs and taken certain preventive steps. “Knowledge is power — it is important to know the risks ahead of time,” Match said. “It doesn’t mean that it will happen, but knowing allows you to take actions to increase the chances to live a long, healthy life.” Having a genetic screening for cancer risk is actually quite simple—and recently became easier with a national program called JSscreen that focuses on the prevention of Jewish genetic diseases. A nonprofit project of the Emory University School of Medicine’s Department of Human Genetics, JSscreen provides genetic screening tests for at-home use that can be completed just by sending in a saliva sample using a mail-in kit. JSscreen long has provided subsidized reproductive testing for genetic diseases, screening for conditions like Tay-Sachs disease that could impact a couple’s future children. Now the organization also offers cancer genetic testing, including a comprehensive panel of more than 60 cancer susceptibility genes associated with hereditary risks for breast, ovarian, prostate, colorectal, skin and many other cancers. Genetic counselors discuss the results with users by phone or secure videoconference. “Making cancer genetic

testing accessible is key,” said Dr. Jane Lowe Meisel, associate professor of hematology and medical oncology at the Emory University School of Medicine and medical director for JSscreen’s cancer program. “This type of testing is important because it alerts people to their risks before they get cancer. They can then take action to help prevent cancer altogether or to detect it at an early, treatable stage.” If your mother or father has a BRCA mutation, you have a 50% chance of carrying it. After Match’s diagnosis, her family members underwent genetic screening and discovered that Match’s mother, Carla Rockmaker, 61, carries the same BRCA1 mutation as her daughter and had passed it on to her. “It was very distressing, to say the least,” Rockmaker said. Rockmaker, who lives in Sarasota, Florida, decided to undergo a preventive bilateral mastectomy and also encouraged her fiancé to be screened. It turned out that he carries a BRCA2 mutation. The couple plans to avoid excess sun exposure and monitor their health closely, as BRCA-related cancers include pancreatic, prostate and melanoma, in addition to breast and ovarian cancer. Jews also are at higher risk of carrying a mutation in the APC gene, increasing their risk for colorectal cancer. After completing a pilot project in Atlanta from July 2019 to June 2020 in which 500 people of Jewish background were tested for mutations in the BRCA genes, JSscreen formally launched its 60+ gene cancer screening test nationally in January. “For the Atlanta pilot, none of the people tested had related cancers in close family members, but we still found that there was a higher rate of BRCA mutations than in the non-Jewish population,” JSscreen Executive Director Karen Arnovitz Grinzaid said. “We added the cancer panel to our testing options because we want to impact the health of the Jewish community over the entire life span.” The subsidized cancer screening, which costs consumers with insurance \$199 (or \$349 for those without insurance or who choose not to use it), requires a doctor’s order and is available to anyone age 21 and above.

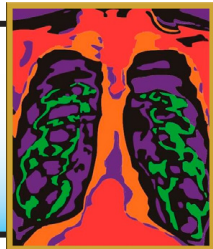
JSscreen, which originally launched in 2013 with seed funding from The Marcus Foundation, initially focused on reproductive screening for haged 18-45 to determine the risk for having a child with a genetic disease. This testing helps parents and would-be parents ensure that they are taking the precautions necessary to have healthy children. (For example, couples in which both parents are carriers of the same genetic disease can minimize their chances of passing it on by conceiving via in-vitro fertilization with pre-implantation genetic testing of embryos). JSscreen’s ReproGEN test screens for 226 genetic diseases, many of which are commonly found in the Jewish population (Ashkenazi, Sephardic and Mizrahi), and others that are found in the general population. Most of these diseases are inherited in a recessive pattern, meaning that a child may have the condition only if both parents carry a mutation in that disease gene. Each child of two carrier parents has a 25 percent chance of inheriting both mutations and having the condition. JSscreen also screens for several X-linked conditions that can be passed from a carrier mother to a child who may have symptoms. Some of these genetic diseases are relatively common, such as Gaucher’s, cystic fibrosis and Tay-Sachs. However, Carly Sonenshine, a 32-year-old social worker in Atlanta, learned from her JSscreen test that she carries a mutation for CPT2 deficiency, an extremely rare condition that prevents the body from using certain fats for energy. There are three main types of the disease, one lethal to neonates. JSscreen counseled Sonenshine’s husband to do the genetic panel, too, before the couple began trying to have children. They discovered he was a carrier for three genetic diseases, including CPT2. “We considered doing IVF, but I got pregnant naturally in the meantime,” Sonenshine said. “We did chorionic villus sampling [CVS] and learned our son was just a carrier” — and not afflicted with the disease. However, they weren’t as lucky when Sonenshine had a surprise pregnancy just five

months after their son’s birth. Prenatal testing was positive for the disease. The couple considered terminating the pregnancy, but then Sonenshine’s husband found some reputable research indicating that the severity of the condition could be determined based on the parents’ CPT2 mutations. “We sent the researchers our JSscreen results and they did the analysis and were able to tell us that our daughter would have a mild and manageable form of the disease,” Sonenshine said. “We just need to make sure our daughter eats a low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet in order to keep her healthy. We wouldn’t have known this without JSscreen.” Thousands of people have done reproductive testing through JSscreen over the years. Adding the cancer genetic test is bringing in a whole new demographic, the organization said. In the future, JSscreen plans to add screening for other genetic risks. Anyone planning a baby should do reproductive genetic screening, Grinzaid stressed, and cancer genetic testing is relevant to the entire Jewish community, not just those with a family history of cancer. Match and Sonenshine



Prenatal testing enabled the parents of Layla Sonenshine to take steps to ensure her good health despite her being positive for CPT2 deficiency, an extremely rare genetic disease that prevents the body from using certain fats for energy.

are both active advocates of genetic screening and help educate others. Match, for example, now holds virtual parlor meetings to introduce the idea of genetic screening to friends and raises funds for JSscreen through a jewelry-making project. “With JSscreen, you don’t have to wait for cancer to find you,” Match said. This article was sponsored by and produced in partnership with JSscreen, whose goal is making genetic screening as simple, accessible and affordable as possible, and has helped couples across the country have healthy babies. JSscreen now offers a new test for hereditary cancer risk. To access testing 24/7, request a kit at JSscreen.org. *This story was produced by JTA’s native content team.*



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Is your sleep apnea under control?

(StatePoint)—High-quality sleep is fundamental to your health and happiness. However, for the 10-30 percent of U.S. adults living with sleep apnea, a good night's rest is not guaranteed.

Obstructive sleep apnea is a respiratory condition where airways narrow during sleep, causing short periods when you're not breathing. Incredibly common, it's estimated that there are millions of Americans with undiagnosed and untreated sleep apnea. Uncontrolled sleep apnea is associated with a number of challenging symptoms, including Excessive Daytime Sleepiness. This symptom, which can linger even after one begins being treated for sleep apnea, is often described as feeling excessively drowsy. If you experience EDS, you might even fall asleep when

you shouldn't. For example, sleepiness at work or while you're watching kids, along with drowsy driving, could put you and others at an increased risk of accidents and injury.

Not everyone being treated for sleep apnea experiences complete symptom relief. This is why the American Lung Association, with support from Jazz Pharmaceuticals, is encouraging the public to recognize their own or a loved one's sleep challenges.

"The first step to better sleep is to share your unresolved symptoms with your healthcare provider. If you are diagnosed with sleep apnea after participating in a sleep study, your doctor will work with you to manage the condition," says Dr. Atul Malhotra, a board-certified pulmonologist, intensivist and research chief of Pulmonary, Critical

Care and Sleep Medicine at UC San Diego.

Dr. Malhotra recommends setting up a follow-up appointment within three months after you begin treatment -- or sooner if problems arise, and then on an annual basis after that.

"Unfortunately, some patients continue to experience lingering symptoms," says Dr. Malhotra. "It's important to address these concerns with your doctor."

You'll know if your treatment is working based on how you're feeling. Are you less sleepy during the day? Do you have higher energy levels? Does your bed partner notice less snoring, gasping or sleep disruptions? To help your doctor understand what you're experiencing at your appointment, it's important to distinguish fatigue, which



is a lack of energy, from sleepiness, which is an inability to stay awake.

For more information

about sleep apnea and EDS visit lung.org.

Everyone deserves the benefits of high-quality sleep. If

you have difficulty getting a good night's rest, be sure to talk to your doctor about your symptoms right away.

Detoxify your body naturally

(Family Features) —As you prepare your mind and body for the warmer months, you may be interested in detoxification as a way of cleansing and eliminating toxins. A typical detoxification period may include fasting and a strict diet combined with light, appropriate exercise.

According to Ayurvedic practices, an ancient Indian science focused on whole-body healing and health optimization, it may be beneficial to detoxify. Consider these steps toward detoxification from the experts at Buddha Teas:

Aim for a healthy lifestyle

Before considering the specifics of daily routines and phases of detoxification, it's important to focus your lifestyle around healthy practices. For example, aim to minimize stress by participating in uplifting activities such as mindful walking, meditation, spending time in nature or other hobbies that put you at ease. Remember to rest both your mind and body, and get an

appropriate amount of sleep each night.

Preparation phase

Take 3-7 days to prepare your body for detoxification. The start of your journey should involve the elimination or drastic reduction of caffeine, tobacco, alcohol and recreational drugs.

Active cleansing phase

During the 7-14-day active phase, it's important to create and follow a singular diet of kitchari, which consists of mung beans, basmati rice, spices and vegetables. As a complete protein that's easy to digest, kitchari helps reset your digestive system while restoring digestive fire and supporting the elimination of toxins. If you're looking for a place to start, consider trying a few different recipes online, or purchase from a natural foods store.

If kitchari isn't right for you, opt for oatmeal in the morning and steamed vegetables or vegetable soup with basmati rice for lunch and dinner. Be conscious of portion control; eat enough

for satisfaction without overeating. Aim to finish your evening meal 2-4 hours before sunset.

Another important aspect of the active phase is liquid intake. Drink hot water with lemon juice in the morning. Throughout the day, consider a hot tea with bitter herbs like Buddha Teas' Detox Dharma Blend. This delicious option consists of carefully chosen herbs and spices that come together to help eliminate toxins. Other effective hot teas include nettle leaf, dandelion root and dandelion leaf.

Create a morning routine

To stay on track during the active phase, it is helpful to create routines, starting with your morning wake-up call. After brushing your teeth and other daily to-dos, try relaxing techniques like sipping 8-16 ounces of hot water with lemon juice, self-massaging, taking a warm or hot shower or bath, gently exercising and combining these activities with an appropriate active phase morning meal.



Getty Images

Create an evening routine

Proper relaxation prior to bedtime can help encourage restful sleep. Avoid watching TV about one hour before bedtime and consider massaging your feet with herbal oil for a few minutes before rinsing with cool water. Drink

a peaceful beverage like a milk substitute mixed with Buddha Teas' Golden Milk, which is developed from an Ayurvedic recipe that provides satisfaction and comfort while supporting the body and mind.

As your active phase comes to a close, slowly reintroduce foods like dairy, wheat, soy,

meat and fish. Continue activities like gentle yoga, walking, tai chi and qi gong then rejuvenate your body with hot beverages like turmeric ginger tea, chaga tea and mushroom tea.

Learn more about detoxification and its benefits at www.BuddhaTeas.com.

It's summertime! Enjoy the season safely

(StatePoint) —As the days grow long and the weather warms, you're likely spending more time outdoors. Whether you're taking a brisk walk

around the neighborhood or competing in a triathlon, keep these five sunny season tips in mind:

1. Replenish fluids: It's easy

to become dehydrated when you're active. Replenish your fluids by drinking plenty of water and healthy beverages and by consuming water-rich

foods like fresh fruits and vegetables. Because sweat contains electrolytes, you'll also want to add foods that contain sodium, potassium, magnesium and calcium to your diet.

2. Protect skin: Sun exposure can contribute to the production of free radicals. More free radicals in the body means more damage can accumulate over time, and this DNA damage can cause gene mutations that can lead to skin cancer. This is why a multi-layered approach to skin protection is vital.

In addition to recommending daily use of topical broad-spectrum SPF, a 2020 survey found that 87 percent of U.S. dermatologists recommend that their patients take a daily dose of Heliocare Daily Use Antioxidant Formula as a simple way to help protect the skin. This natural, dietary supplement contains 240 milligrams of a powerful antioxidant formula derived from the extract of Polypodium leucotomos. Polypodium leucotomos is a tropical fern

native to Central and South America that has been used for centuries as a remedy for skin-related conditions.

"Adding a daily supplement like Heliocare to your routine is a simple precaution you can take to help your body protect itself from the damaging effects of free radicals," says New York-based dermatologist, Rachel Nazarian, MD.

For more information, visit heliocare.com.

3. Protect your feet: Wearing properly-fitting, sports-specific footwear can help you avoid overuse injuries such as plantar fasciitis and tendonitis. Over time and mileage, athletic shoes lose their ability to absorb shock and will need to be replaced to help keep the muscles and joints in your feet and ankles protected. Headed for a swim? Always wear pool shoes or flip-flops in the locker room to prevent athlete's foot and skin infections.

4. Protect your vision: UV light is harmful to eye health and can put you at greater risk

for a number of conditions that impact vision. Wearing sunglasses with UV protection is a good idea. A hat with a brim or cap with a visor can offer eyes additional shade with the bonus of protecting your scalp and face too. At the pool, keep chlorine and other disinfecting chemicals out of your eyes by always using goggles. Some pairs even offer UV protection.

5. Ward off bugs: There's nothing more calming than connecting with nature, that is until biting and stinging bugs find their way to you. When going for walks in the woods, wear long sleeves and use an EPA-approved insect repellent. When you get home, do a quick inspection for ticks. You can also make your yard a safer, more comfortable place to spend time by using a citronella candle or tiki torch to ward off mosquitoes.

Warm sunny weather is ideal for fun, active days spent outdoors. Just be sure to take precautions to stay healthy and safe.

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Expand your garden and make it thrive

(StatePoint) Starting a garden for the first time or expanding an existing plot is easier than you may think. With a little love and care, your green space will bloom and thrive.

“For anyone with the inclination, a beautiful lawn and garden is always within reach,” says Jamie Briggs, director of marketing, Exmark, a leading manufacturer of commercial mowers and equipment for landscape professionals and homeowners with a lot of lawn to cut.

This is the driving idea behind “Backyard Smart,” a free online video series. These short explainer videos are full of facts and relevant information to answer your most common lawn and garden ques-

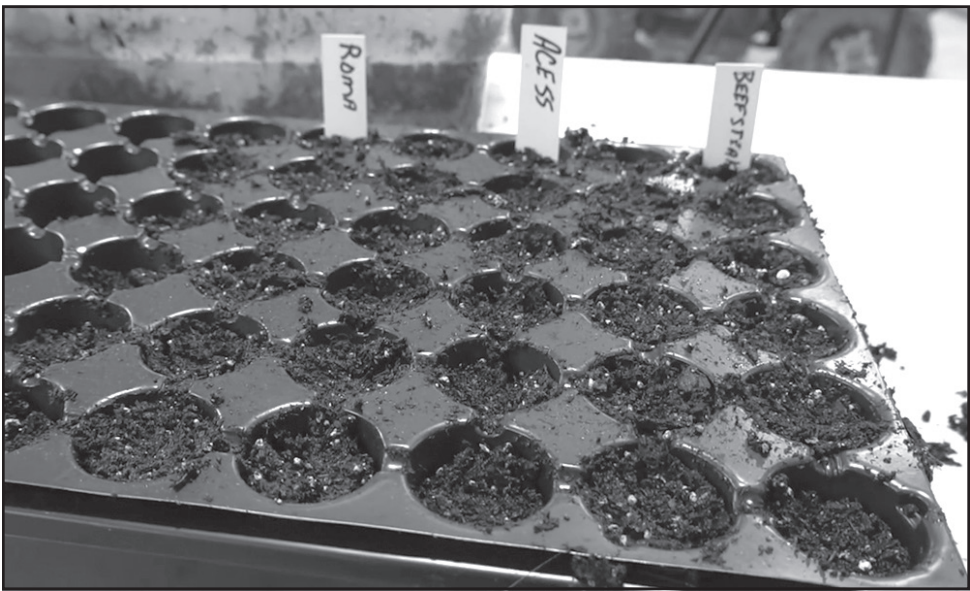
tions. The following planting strategies come directly from two recent “Backyard Smart” episodes:

- **Start With Seeds:** Looking to add new plants to your garden and flower bed? Try starting from scratch. While most nurseries have limited species of mature plants to select from, there are literally thousands of varieties of seeds available at dirt cheap prices. A quick trip to the seed kiosk in your local hardware store offers the potential for you to enjoy flowers you’ve never seen and vegetables you’ve never tasted.
- **It’s easy to be intimidated** by the prospect of growing plants from seeds but the truth is that all you need is soil, just the right amount of water and lots of sunshine,”

says Briggs. “Nature will handle the rest.”

- **Practice “Companion Planting”:** Whether it’s growing marigolds alongside tomatoes to block bad bugs or planting corn next to squash to provide shade, plants are kind of like people, they do better with a buddy. Companion plants help block weeds, prevent pests, create fertile soil, promote pollination and offer plants a place to climb. In fact, people have been practicing this technique for centuries to create vigorous gardens.
- **For more entertaining, easy-to-understand approaches** to making the most of your outdoor spaces, check out the Exmark Backyard Life site at exmark.com/backyard.

If you’ve always dreamed



of having your own, home-grown, fruits and vegetables in your cooking, or brighten-

ing your home with fresh-cut flowers, there is no better time than the present to pursue this dream. The long sunny days of summer are ideal for developing your green thumb.

An exercise regimen or daily chores? Both provide a workout

By John Grimaldi

When we were young and in good health it seldom, if ever, occurred to us that one day we would be too old to dance the night away. We were full of vim and vinegar. No one had to tell us that we needed to get more exercise; we were always in motion from the time we woke up in the morning to the time we called it a day — sometimes in the wee small hours of the next morning. And then, one day,

we realized that it was time to slow down.

So we took off our dancing shoes, put on a pair of house shoes and passed the time on a comfy couch reading a book or watching TV. But, just as we began to accustom ourselves, friends, family and our doctors sounded the alarm, telling us that we needed to get more exercise. Go for a long walk, they said. Go to the gym and work out. They were right, of course: as Sir Isaac Newton put it, “A body

at motion stays in motion; a body at rest stays at rest.” And, too much rest, can lead us to a final resting place.

Indeed, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians ‘Exercise is an important part of nearly everyone’s everyday health, including older adults. Experts say seniors should be as active as possible. If you are an older adult, exercise can help you live a longer, healthier life.’

We Baby Boomers tend

to be nonconformist individualists, as someone once put it, and a goodly number of us may not be the type to engage in organized workouts. But we do prefer an active lifestyle. That means we like to keep busy and we like to engage in systemic activities in our daily lives -- activities that keep us on the go in ways that burn energy. So, does that count as “exercise?” The consensus is that it just might.

National Academy of

Sports Medicine says “Absolutely, cleaning your house is exercise. While you may not be in a gym pumping iron or running on a treadmill, it is still exercise and requires you to work and burn more energy than being sedentary. Cleaning the house is an example of moderate intensity activity, the kind the NASM and health experts recommend that you perform daily to maximize health and fitness. Daily chores like cleaning your house, mow-

ing the lawn, cleaning the car, shopping for food and other things are all examples of moderate exercise, which helps improve health and fitness.”

As always, says the Association of Mature American Citizens, when it comes to matters of health, it’s always a good idea to consult with your healthcare provider. So rather than “guessing” that your daily chores provide the exercise you need, make a list and check it with your doctor.

Plasma donations save lives: You can help

(StatePoint) — Human plasma donations are used to produce life-saving medicines for people affected by serious and rare diseases around the world. Experts say that right now there is a critical need for plasma donations.

“Plasma donors do the amazing. They make a direct impact on the lives of patients affected by rare and serious diseases. We strongly encourage those who meet the requirements, and are otherwise eligible, to donate plasma,” says Dr. Jennifer Hanes, who as a division medical director of CSL Plasma, is responsible for the medical oversight of U.S. plasma donation centers.

Dr. Hanes is sharing five important things to know about plasma donation:

1. What is plasma? Plasma is a straw-colored liquid that carries red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets, helping to maintain a steady level of blood pressure, supporting the immune system and delivering critical nutrients to cells.
2. What is plasma used for? Plasma is used to treat

rare and serious conditions, often by replacing crucial proteins a patient lacks. These conditions include primary immunodeficiencies, hereditary angioedema, inherited respiratory disease, hemophilia and other bleeding or neurological disorders. Every year, it takes more than 1,200 plasma donations to treat one person living with hemophilia, more than 900 plasma donations to treat one person living with Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency (Alpha-1) and more than 130 plasma donations to treat one person living with a primary immune deficiency. Additionally, albumin, a protein contained in our plasma, is used in hospitals and urgent and emergency care settings to treat trauma, shock, burns and other emergencies that could happen to anyone.

3. Who can donate plasma? To donate at a CSL Plasma center, you must be in good health, be between the ages of 18-74, weigh at least 110 pounds, have had no tattoos or piercings within the last four months, meet health and screening requirements

and have valid identification with a permanent address.

4. What is the donation process like? While a first-time plasma donation takes approximately two hours, and up to three hours at times, the second donation is typically shorter. CSL Plasma donors will be re-

warded for helping to create life-saving medicines and will receive a payment in connection with the donation process. It’s recommended that donors drink four to six 8-ounce glasses of water, fruit juice or other caffeine-free liquid at least two to three hours before donation,

avoid caffeinated beverages, avoid alcohol of any type for 24 hours beforehand, eat a meal prior to donation and get adequate sleep.

5. Where can I donate? CSL Plasma has more than 300 plasma donation centers across the United States. Visit cslplasma.com for more

information and to find a nearby CSL Plasma center. The CSL Plasma donor app is also available for Apple and Android devices.

“People depend on plasma donors to live happy and healthy lives, so it’s important to consider donating if you are able,” says Dr. Hanes.

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Do you eat mindfully?

(StatePoint) — Mindful eating doesn't have to be restrictive and you don't have to give up your favorite foods.

"Simply incorporating more foods that are crafted with integrity and align with your values into your day-to-day eating can go a long way toward helping you feel your best," says Kara Lydon, a registered dietitian nutritionist. As an intuitive eating counselor, Lydon advises people to stop looking at food as "good" or "bad" and instead, listen to their bodies and eat what feels best in the moment.

With those principles in mind, here are a few simple choices you can make to nourish your body and enjoy your food.

Snack Smart

Snacking can keep you satiated between meals and help you regulate your blood sugar and energy levels. It can also be an opportunity to take in essential vitamins and nutrients. Common processed snack foods are

often loaded with sodium, added sugars and trans fats. Try these wholesome alternatives: Greek yogurt with raw honey, hummus with carrot and celery sticks, apple slices with peanut butter, edamame, egg and cheese bites, nuts or fruit salad.

Choose Grass-Fed Dairy

In conversations about healthy eating, dairy products sometimes unfairly get a bad rap. But dairy actually has essential nutrients that can be incorporated into a well-rounded daily diet. Lydon says that it's helpful to be intentional with your choices. The next time you visit the dairy aisle, take a closer look at the labels and search for the term "grass-fed."

"Grass-fed cows produce dairy with significantly higher concentrations of beta-carotene and certain fatty acids, including conjugated linoleic acids and a more optimal omega-3/omega-6 ratio," says Lydon. "These nutrients play key

roles in disease prevention, mood regulation, cognitive function and more."

Grass-fed dairy not only tastes better and is healthier for you versus grain-fed dairy, it's often more humanely produced. Check out brands committed to farming practices that are good for people, animals and the planet, like Truly Grass Fed. The premium brand of Irish dairy products makes cheese and butter that is always non-GMO, growth hormone rBST-free, and antibiotic free. Its cows live their best lives outside grazing on green grass maintained using regenerative farming practices. To learn more and find wholesome recipes, visit trulygrassfed.com.

Grow at Home

If you have the space, consider starting a small garden in your yard or even indoors on your kitchen counter. Growing your own food is sustainable and can help you connect more deeply to what you feed your family.



What's more, being able to harvest produce at its peak means more nutritional value and flavor per bite. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the prospect of growing plants from seeds, start by buying

a few pots of herbs, such as basil, chives and mint. These can be found at many grocery stores. They're relatively easy to maintain, and can instantly add zest to salads, soups and other meals.

Better eating should never feel like a sacrifice or leave you feeling hungry. The good news is that wholesome, healthier-for-you choices that nourish the body and soul abound today.

Explore the flavors and health benefits of Indian Cuisine at home



(StatePoint) — In the last few years, more Americans

have gotten hooked on the rich, mouth-watering flavors

and bold spices of South Asian cuisine. In fact, research has

shown an increase in searches for Indian cuisine, making it the second most searched for cuisine on Instagram.

Creating delicious Indian foods at home is now possible for anyone, regardless of their culinary skills. With the right shortcuts, you can prepare nutritious meals in less time. Ready to get started? Here are three reasons why you should add Indian cuisine to your lunch and dinner rotations:

1. It's better for you: Indian cuisine features a number of ingredients that support a healthy lifestyle. For example, lentils are an excellent source of protein and gut-friendly fiber, leaving you feeling fuller for longer. Commonly used spices, such as cumin and ginger, aid in digestion and provide anti-inflammatory benefits.

And if you stick to vegetarian and vegan dishes, you'll be taking it a step further. Plant-based diets not only taste

great, but have been linked to weight loss, better blood sugar control and a decreased risk of heart disease, among other health benefits.

2. It's better for the planet: Eating a plant-based diet is one of the simplest ways to protect the planet. With its wide variety of protein-rich dishes and flavorful ingredients, Indian cuisine is a go-to choice for anyone looking to cut back on meat. Studies show that if you eat one plant-based meal a day for a year, you'll save almost 200,000 gallons of water — that's equivalent to 11,400 showers.

3. Time-saving meal kits can make it convenient: For people who are not sure how to get started, a meal kit subscription is the perfect way to gain fluency in Indian flavors and makes the experience of putting authentic dishes on the table easy.

In particular, The Cumin Club, available nationwide,

offers more than 30 authentic Indian dishes starting at \$4.99 each. All you need is hot water and about five minutes to make a satisfying meal. This better-for-you option uses all-natural ingredients you can feel good about, including spices sourced from different regions of India. From classic street food to comforting bowls of paneer butter masala, the brand's ever-expanding menu is vegetarian- and vegan-friendly, represents various cuisines of India, and is an excellent choice for busy, health-conscious foodies on a budget. To learn more, visit thecuminclub.com and receive 20% off your first order by using the code: EAT20.

Making authentic Indian food a part of your weekly rotation is an easy way to add healthier options with a ton of flavor. Thanks to new shortcuts, preparing it at home is easier than ever.

Get your health back on track

(StatePoint) — Since the start of the pandemic, Americans have been postponing routine care. With more Americans vaccinated against COVID-19, medical experts are urging patients to return to routine health care and get caught up on delayed or foregone preventive health screenings.

"While we know that prevention is the best medicine, the pandemic has caused many Americans to delay important routine health services vital to keeping themselves and their families healthy, particularly critical immunizations and preventive cancer screenings. We urge everyone to get up to date on their routine health care needs," says Gerald E. Harmon, M.D., president of the American Medical Association.

According to the AMA, you and your family should take these six steps to get your health back on track:

1. Get screened: Estimates based on statistical models

show that since April 2020, 3.9 million breast cancer, 3.8 million colorectal cancer and 1.6 million prostate cancer diagnoses may have been missed due to pandemic-related care disruptions. Check in with your health care provider. If you're due for preventive care, tests or screenings, make an appointment. These measures are designed to keep you healthy and help your doctor spot certain conditions before they become more serious.

2. Don't wait: An estimated 41 percent of adults with one or more chronic health conditions reported delaying or forgoing health care since the pandemic started. Additionally, one in three of those adults reported that doing so worsened one or more of their health conditions or limited their abilities to work or perform other daily activities. Whether you have a chronic health condition or not, don't wait until something is wrong before seeing a doctor. If something does feel off, schedule an

appointment with your doctor as soon as possible.

3. Consider telehealth: If you're uncomfortable or unable to go in person to your physician's practice, check on telehealth options, which have greatly increased over the past two years.

4. Visit your pediatrician: During the pandemic, pediatric immunizations decreased. As public health measures are rolled back, people gather in groups, and traveling resumes, non-COVID-19 infections that decreased during the pandemic are likely to increase again. Well-child visits and recommended vaccinations are essential to helping ensure children stay healthy and protected from serious diseases. If your child is due for a check-up, schedule one immediately.

6. Don't neglect mental health: While mental health screenings via digital health tools are up, routine care for mental health is down. Approximately 52 percent of adults with mental health



conditions delayed or forewent care since the pandemic began. Given the adverse effects the events of the past two years have had on mental health, such as increasing anxiety, depression and loneli-

ness, it's especially important to prioritize this aspect of your health now.

For more resources, visit ama-assn.org.

"We encourage everyone to contact their trusted medical

professional to schedule their annual physical and other vital care to help prevent serious health repercussions that could potentially last long past the pandemic," says Dr. Harmon.