

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023 • VOLUME 17 ISSUE 5

COMMUNITY WELLNESS

SEPTEMBER 18 - 22 IS FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK

Did you know that strengthening your core muscles can lead to an increase in balance and stability?

Fall related injuries are one of the highest reported reasons for hospitalization in Hillsborough County for those above the age of 65. These injuries aren't always preventable, but by training your core and leg muscles you may be able to decrease the likelihood of falling, while getting a healthy amount of physical activity.



Great exercises you can do at home are bridges, and opposite arm and leg raises. These exercises focus on tightening the abdominal muscles which give you stability. Make sure to assess your current ability level before starting. There are resources online that can offer modified versions of exercises like these for people who are less mobile.

If you have questions or concerns about what exercises are best for you, consult your doctor and discuss what activities they suggest to fit your personal health goals and needs.



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OVER THE RAINBOW

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COMMUNITY HEALTH DIRECTOR

When Dorothy sang Somewhere Over the Rainbow she was referring to a place of hope, better than the place she called home in Kansas. In the world of nutrition when we speak of the rainbow we are talking about the variety of colors you can consume, specifically fruits and vegetables. While eating a rainbow may not transport you to a magical land of color-changing horses and flying monkeys, it can help you find better health. Growing up we have been told to eat our 5-a-day. While this is a good achievement, eating those 5-a-day in five different colors is an even better goal. Varying colors can provide you with a wider range of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytochemicals than just sticking with the same color day after day.

To promote good heart health red, orange, yellow, blue, and purple are a good choice due to the phytochemicals they contain. Phytochemicals have antioxidant properties and offer protection that may decrease the risk of many diseases. If you are looking to lower your risk of certain cancers, red, green, white, brown may be what you need. Red, white, and brown can help reduce free radicals while blue and purple may help slow the aging of cells. While I cannot promise that eating all colors every day will prevent or treat any disease/illness, there are still many benefits to including variety in your diet. Fruits and vegetables also provide fiber which promotes good gut health and are recommended in a heart health diet like the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH).

So, just as Dorothy is reaching for her rainbow, go ahead and make your plate colorful. You won't just have a meal that looks great, you may also gain a great heart, brain, and nerves while in the process.

You should talk to your doctor before starting any new diet plan to ensure the foods you are incorporating into your plan aren't contraindicated for any current health condition and that they won't interfere with any medications you are taking.

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Have a question or comment? Email us: DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@flhealth.gov

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One-Pan Spicy Okra & Shrimp

Prep Time:

20 mins

Additional Time:

10 mins

Total Time:

30 mins

Servings:

4

Ingredients

- **2 tbsp** salt-free Cajun seasoning
- **½ tsp** kosher salt
- **½ tsp** black pepper
- **1 tbsp plus 1 tsp** olive oil, divided
- **½ lb.** fresh okra, halved lengthwise
- **1 cup** sliced red bell pepper
- **1 cup** sliced red onion
- **1¼ lbs.** large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- **2 tbsp** chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- **1½ tbsp** fresh lemon juice
- **1 tbsp** unsalted butter
- **3 cups** cooked basmati rice



Prep tip: If you want to peel and devein your own shrimp, buy 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ pounds raw, unpeeled shrimp.

Directions

1. Stir together Cajun seasoning, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high. Add okra, bell pepper, and onion. Sprinkle with 2 teaspoons of the seasoning mixture, and cook, stirring often, until okra is lightly charred and pepper and onion slices are starting to get tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer mixture from skillet to a bowl.

2. Without wiping the skillet, add remaining 1 teaspoon oil to skillet. Pat shrimp dry, and toss with remaining seasoning mixture. Add shrimp to skillet, and cook, stirring often, until shrimp are opaque, 3 to 4 minutes.

3. Return vegetables to skillet, and add parsley, lemon juice, and butter. Toss quickly in skillet until butter melts. Serve over rice.

Dine In or Take Out: Order Well at Every Restaurant

Holiday to-do list have you on the go? From celebrating with family, to dashing around town for those last minute gifts, the holiday season can interfere with your plans for healthy, home-cooked meals. Below are tips to help you choose healthier options when eating out or ordering takeout.

The more vegetables the better. Many restaurants now have vegetarian or vegan options. You may want to try one of these options or at least choose an entrée that has lots of vegetables. Vegetables contain fiber and nutrients to help you stay full longer without going overboard on calories.

Think (or ask) about ingredients used. Restaurants often add extra salt, sugars, oils, flavorings, butter, and cream to make dishes more appealing. Don't be afraid to ask what is in your food and to then request for something to be changed.

Order the way you want it, and don't be afraid to ask what is in your food and to then request for something to be changed. For example, ask to substitute olive oil for butter or for light or no salt.

Divide the meal in half and save half for a later meal. Restaurant portions tend to be larger than a meal served at home. Ask for a to-go box with your meal, and portion out your leftovers before you begin eating.

Choose sides carefully. Ask for a side salad or side item with vegetables or fruit.

Make water your beverage of choice!

This will lower your calorie intake and save you money.



Asian Dishes

- ◆ Order vegetables with a *grilled protein* or *choose a vegetarian meal*.
- ◆ Choose *brown rice* instead of white rice.
- ◆ Get sushi made with *rolled cucumbers* instead of rice.
- ◆ Choose broth-based soups and dishes.
- ◆ Ask for sauces on the side.
- ◆ Steer clear of sugar-based sauces (*like duck or plum*).

Mexican Dishes

- ◆ Try a burrito bowl or salad. Order it *heavy with vegetables* and *lighter on the meats and rice*.
- ◆ Go minimal on toppings (*like sour cream and cheese*), and add fiber-rich options like tomatoes, lettuce, onions, and salsa.
- ◆ Opt for corn tortillas rather than flour tortillas.
- ◆ Be mindful of the chips and salsa. Ask for them to be taken away or only take a small amount with your meal. Avoid filling up on them before your meal.
- ◆ Cut burritos in half and save half for lunch the next day.

Italian Dishes

- ◆ Ask for *whole-wheat* or *whole-grain* pasta.
- ◆ Look for these words on the menu: *grilled, steamed, lightly sautéed, baked, roasted, seared, or broiled*.
- ◆ If you are choosing a pasta dish, choose one that incorporates a *lean protein*, and opt for marinara or a simple sauce made of olive oil, lemon, and garlic. Skip the Alfredo or cream sauces.
- ◆ Be mindful of bread or breadstick appetizers. Choose to not eat them, or eat only one small piece with your meal.

Indian Dishes

- ◆ Try kebabs made with *prawns, grilled chicken, tandoori salmon, or vegetables*.
- ◆ Look for dal, such as dal Bukhara, made with lentils and beans and loaded with fiber and protein.
- ◆ Order *steamed vegetables* to stir into curries. This adds volume and reduces the calories from fats like ghee and cream.

Yoga for Better Mental Health

With its emphasis on breathing practices and meditation—both of which help calm and center the mind— it's hardly surprising that yoga also brings mental benefits, such as reduced anxiety and depression. What may be more surprising is that it actually makes your brain work better.

A sharper brain

When you lift weights, your muscles get stronger and bigger. When you do yoga, your brain cells develop new connections, and changes occur in brain structure as well as function, resulting in improved cognitive skills, such as learning and memory. Yoga strengthens parts of the brain that play a key role in memory, attention, awareness, thought, and language. Think of it as weightlifting for the brain.



Studies using MRI scans and other brain imaging technology have shown that people who regularly did yoga had a thicker cerebral cortex (the area of the brain responsible for information processing) and hippocampus (the area of the brain involved in learning and memory) compared with nonpractitioners. These areas of the brain typically shrink as you age, but the older yoga practitioners showed less shrinkage than those who did no yoga. This suggests that yoga may counteract age-related declines in memory and other cognitive skills.

Research also shows that yoga and meditation may improve executive functions, such as reasoning, memory, learning, reaction time, and accuracy on tests of mental acuity.

Improved mood

All exercise can boost your mood by lowering levels of stress hormones, increasing the production of feel-good chemicals known as endorphins, and bringing more oxygenated blood to your brain. But yoga may have additional benefits. It can affect mood by elevating levels of a brain chemical called gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which is

associated with better mood and decreased anxiety.

Meditation also reduces activity in the limbic system—the part of the brain dedicated to emotions. As your emotional reactivity diminishes, you have a more tempered response when faced with stressful situations.

Drugs and talk therapy have traditionally been the go-to remedies for depression and anxiety. But complementary approaches, such as yoga, also helps, and yoga stacks up well when compared with other complementary therapies.

A review of 15 studies, published in the journal *Aging and Mental Health*, looked at the effect of a variety of relaxation techniques on depression and anxiety in older adults. In addition to yoga, interventions included massage therapy, progressive muscle relaxation, stress management, and listening to music. While all the techniques provided some benefit, yoga and music were the most effective for both depression and anxiety. And yoga appeared to provide the longest lasting effect.

A number of small studies have found that yoga can help with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It is not used by itself, but as an add-on treatment to help reduce intrusive memories and emotional arousal and to produce calmer, steadier breathing. Deep, slow breathing is associated with calmer states because it helps activate the parasympathetic nervous system.



6 Tips for Eating Healthy on a Budget

Eating on a budget doesn't mean you have to sacrifice nutrition!

You can enjoy nutritious foods without breaking the bank.

Eating healthy when money is tight can be challenging, especially if you are living with a costly condition like diabetes. These tips can help.

A diet that includes plenty of *vegetables, fruits, and lean proteins* is important for good health, especially if you have diabetes. Healthy eating is key to maintaining blood sugar levels in your target range. But the cost of nutritious foods can quickly add up.

With a little know-how and planning, you can enjoy nutritious foods without breaking the bank. And if you need help, a diabetes care and education specialist can work with you to develop a plan that fits your lifestyle, beliefs, and culture.

By following these six tips, you may be surprised at how much you can stretch your grocery budget.



Continued on pg. 6

#1: Plan Your Recipes

Planning ahead allows you to think about your food needs, tastes, and budget. If you know you have to stretch your money for the week, meal planning can really pay off.

- ♦ **Adapt recipes to fit your needs.** A diabetes care and education specialist can customize your diabetes diet for your specific needs. Choosing meals that help manage your blood sugar is key to managing your diabetes. If you love pasta dishes, but your diabetes meal plan has you following a low-carb diet, you can search recipes that use veggie noodles instead of traditional noodles. These are great alternatives to increase your vegetable intake and keep your blood sugar from spiking.
- ♦ **Use recipes with common ingredients.** Using the same ingredients for multiple meals doesn't mean they all have to taste the same. Using different herbs and spices can turn common ingredients into meals with different flavors. If your favorite protein is chicken, cook one whole chicken and use it for several different dishes. You can have chicken and vegetable stir fry one night and chicken fajitas another night.
- ♦ **Find ways to stretch a recipe.** You can stretch meals by making dishes that freeze well. Search online for delicious healthy recipes like soups and casseroles that are budget-friendly and easy meals to stretch. For example, make a large batch of vegetable soup or white bean chicken chili that can last throughout the week, or freeze the leftovers to have later. You'll also spend less time in the kitchen than if you make a different meal every night.

Planning your weekly menu also increases the chance that your pantry and refrigerator are stocked with healthy ingredients to make balanced meals that help you maintain your blood sugar levels.

#2: Shop With a List

Once you've planned your meals for the week, create a shopping list with the ingredients you need. Having a shopping list makes shopping easier and faster, which helps you reduce impulse buys and take home only the items you need. It also helps you avoid extra trips to the grocery store to buy forgotten items.

If your shopping list includes nuts, beans, or grains, consider buying in bulk to save money and keep your pantry well-stocked for future meal planning.

#3: Buy Frozen or Canned

When it comes to fruits and vegetables, frozen and canned options can be healthy alternatives to fresh produce. What's more, they cost less and last longer. Many frozen veggies and fruits even have resealable packaging that allows you to use what you need and store the rest. This way you can enjoy your favorites even when they aren't in season.

When choosing canned options, it's best to select those that come in water, not syrup. Be sure to read the label for any added sugar or salt. You'll want to avoid those. And skip frozen options that have added butter or cream sauces. Choose options without sauce or look for packaging that reads "lightly sauced" to avoid extra sugar, salt, and empty calories.



Coupons are a great way to save on your grocery bill! You can clip coupons from newspapers and ads or search online for digital coupons.

#4: Cut Cost With Coupons

Coupons are a great way to save on your grocery bill, especially if you have your shopping list planned out. You can search for online coupons for the ingredients on your list.

With over a billion coupons available each year, you will likely find a coupon that you can use. If you can't find a coupon for those blueberries on your list but find one for strawberries, consider making the swap to save money. Even low-value cents-off coupons can really add up. Just by using five 50-cents-off coupons a week, you can end up saving over \$100 each year.

#5: Buy Store Brands

Buying generic or store brand items can save you 20% to 30% on your food bill. Items like canned tomatoes, milk, olive oil, and frozen fruits and vegetables are usually available in a cheaper store brand version.

Just be sure to compare the ingredients list and nutrition facts panel to make sure you're not getting a product with added ingredients. Learning which store brands your grocery store carries can help you reduce your total at the cash register.


#6: Try Growing a Garden

If you can, growing your own fruits and vegetables is a great way to save money and have fresh produce at your fingertips. Even if you don't have a yard to grow a garden, many fruits, vegetables, and herbs can grow in pots on patios or balconies.

Having a constant supply of fresh produce at home can save you money at the store. You may not be able to grow a "money tree" in your garden, but it'll feel like you did with the extra money you'll be saving.

Healthy Eating: Not "One Size Fits All"

Diabetes meal plans for healthy eating are not one size fits all. Work with a diabetes care and education specialist to create a meal plan that fits your health needs, tastes, and budget. They're there to help you make healthy food choices that work with your eating plan. Eating healthy to manage diabetes doesn't have to be a hassle, and best of all, doesn't have to break the bank.



Halloween Candy Doesn't Need to be Scary: How Parents Can Help Children Eat Healthy

- ◆ Parents can encourage healthy eating habits for their children during Halloween, even amid all the candy.
- ◆ They recommend that parents not place too many restrictions because that can make candy even more enticing.
- ◆ Instead, they suggest serving a healthy meal before trick-or-treating, as well as letting children choose which one or two pieces of candy that want to eat at any given time.

Try not to “ghost” on healthy eating during Halloween festivities.

Parents may want to consider treating Halloween candies as an opportunity to help their children learn balance and lifelong healthy eating habits.

Yes, it's possible for Halloween to be both fun and healthy.

She explained to Healthline how and offers strategies to get started.

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Start the night off right

Even before the candy comes home, you can begin preparing for success.

Before sending your kids trick-or-treating, try to serve a nutritious, balanced meal. This should include a protein, vegetable, and complex carbohydrate. Some whole-wheat pasta with vegetables and meat or a plant-based meat alternative, for example.

This can help with kids hungry and less likely to overindulge in candy.

[Nationwide Children's Hospital agrees](#), suggesting parents feed children dinner before the Halloween festivities, as this “will prevent candy from substituting dinner as well as prevent overeating of treats.”

When the Candy Comes Home

Talk with your children about fullness cues is more effective than simply saying “no.”

You can start the discussion by encouraging your children to pay attention to how they are feeling when eating candy and how they feel afterward.

And if your children still ask to eat a larger amount of Halloween candy than what is reasonable, you can bring up this topic of fullness cues again and help them come to their own conclusions, which may feel less restrictive and yield better results.

Avoid severe restrictions

Being overly restrictive with candy can often make children want it more.

When we make certain foods inaccessible to children, these foods are ‘put on a pedestal’ and become more desirable. We also don’t want children to eat too much candy and experience negative health consequences. But finding a healthy balance is possible.

Keep the ‘healthier candies’ available

While you can’t always predict what your children will bring home from school or trick-or-treating, you do have control over the types of candies you keep at home.

There are a variety of candy brands that make slightly healthier versions lower in sugar and free from artificial food dyes. Dark chocolate-based candies tend to be healthier as they are lower in sugar compared to gummy candy, lollipops, and taffy.

Chocolate is also less likely to stick to teeth and cause cavities. Some chocolate candies contain nuts, which offer some nutritional value as well, as long as your child is not allergic.



Provide some alternative options for candy

Halloween is about more than candy. Sensible options for trick-or-treaters, [suggests Nationwide's](#) and [Eat Right, from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#), also include things such as:

- ◆ granola bars
- ◆ juice boxes
- ◆ gummies made with fruit juice and added vitamin C
- ◆ whole-grain cheddar flavored crackers
- ◆ sugar-free gum
- ◆ mini bags of pretzels
- ◆ mini rice cereal treat bars
- ◆ individual fruit cups



Let them choose their own candy

Let your children make different piles for candies. For example, a pile of “personal favorites” and a pile to donate. Suggest donating to shelters or sending in care packages to people serving overseas. After the sorting is complete, allow your children to choose their own candies from their personal pile. Allowing children to choose one piece of candy, or two fun-sized pieces of candy for dessert each night can help to moderate their sugar intake without giving them a complex about it.

Wrap it up

Finally, you’ll want to think about the timing of when your children are eating their candy treats in the days after Halloween night.

Giving the candies out earlier in the day, but after a nutritious meal, is probably best. That way, the sugar has enough time to wear off before it’s time to unwind for the day.

Since sugar can be stimulating, it’s best to allow at least 2 hours between candy and bedtime.

Want to be a healthier you? We can help!

The Florida Department of Health has **FREE** health education programs.

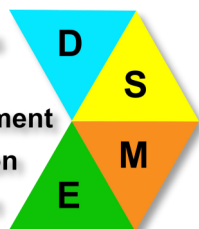
Call **813-307-8009** to register.

The logo for the 'BP For Me' program. It features the text 'BP F ME' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter 'F' is replaced by a red heart with a white ECG line running through it.

BP For Me

This 4 week program is designed for individuals who have high blood pressure and want to improve their heart health and reduce their risk for complications.

Diabetes
Self-
Management
Education
Program



Diabetes Self Management Education

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, learn how to better manage your condition in 7 weeks through reducing risks of complications, improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, and self-monitoring, learning about medications, and practicing coping skills.



Diabetes Prevention Program

This 26-session program can help anyone who is overweight, pre-diabetic, or at risk for Type 2 diabetes. Participants will learn and practice skills on healthy eating, being active, and positive coping for a healthy lifestyle change. Participant will lose weight and increase their physical activity during the program.



Get Into Fitness Today

This 12 week program, participants learn about healthy eating, physical activity and ways to live a healthier life while. Participant will lose weight and increase their physical activity.



Get Into Fitness Together- a Learning Emotional Activity Program (GIFT-LEAP)

This program is designed to encourage children ages 5-9 to make healthy choices so that they can lead a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. The program is 6 weeks long and covers healthy eating, physical activity, and how to deal with stress and emotions. Families are welcome to join in the program!

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www.floridakidcare.org



FL HEALTH CHARTS

Have you ever wonder how healthy your community or state is? Or how your own health

status compares to others Floridians? If so, Florida Health Charts is a great resource that paints an accurate picture of the health status of our state.

www.FLHealthCharts.gov

PARKS AND RECREATION

Florida State Park

www.floridastateparks.org

Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation, and Conservation

www.hillsboroughcounty.org/

Plant City Parks and Recreation

www.plantcitygov.com/parksrec

Tampa Parks and Recreation

www.tampagov.net/parks-and-recreation

Temple Terrace Parks and Recreation

www.templeterrace.com/

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* All numbers are area code (813) unless otherwise indicated.



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