



## WELLNESS NEWS



### Health and wellness resources for you and your family

If you have any questions or would like to make any suggestions about programs or content, feel free to email me at **Marcymo@comcast.net** - I would love to hear from you!

**Healthyfitfamily.com**



The background of the page is a collage of various healthy food items. In the top left, there's a bowl of walnuts. Below it, a wooden honey dipper sits in a bowl of honey. To the right, a bowl of white yogurt is shown. In the bottom left, there's a jar of hummus with a spoon. Next to it, a bowl contains sliced red bell peppers and celery sticks. In the bottom right, there's a bowl of almonds. A banana is partially visible at the top right, and a rice cake is in the middle right. The central text is on a light green rectangular background.

# Health & Wellness

---

Optimal wellness is about much more than just diet and exercise. It is about balancing all aspects of our lives including family, career, stress, time management, lifestyle, and so many components that contribute to our overall health and well-being.

---

Developing a healthy lifestyle and healthy daily habits are the keys to achieving lifelong health and well-being. Simple behavior modifications can add up to monumental changes to your health!

HFF

HEALTHY FIT FAMILY



# Health benefits of whole grains

---

## Healthy choices

When grains are whole and fully intact — which means they contain the bran (husk), germ (think of it as the plant “embryo”), and endosperm (food for the growing embryo) — they are chock full of vitamins, essential minerals, other beneficial nutrients.

Whole grains truly are nutritional superstars. They protect against heart disease, stroke, and Type 2 diabetes. They lower inflammation, keep your digestive system healthy, and are great for getting and staying lean.

---

## Less Healthy choices

Some examples of foods that contain refined grains include:

- White breads
- Baked goods made with white flour
- White pasta (including semolina)
- Crackers
- White rice
- Breakfast cereals

Most of the grains eaten in the modern world have been refined, and their impact on human health is disturbing. For example, in one major study tracking tens of thousands of participants, researchers found that those who ate the most white rice — five or more servings per week — had a 17% higher risk of diabetes than those who ate white rice less than once per month. But those who ate the most brown rice — two or more servings a week — had an 11% lower risk of diabetes than those who rarely ate brown rice. The researchers estimated that swapping whole grains in place of even some white rice could lower diabetes risk by 36%.

Quinoa is a great whole grain to start with



## Warm Quinoa Dish

2 cups cooked quinoa

Roasted:

- squash
- Zucchini
- Peppers
- Onions
- cauliflower

Season to taste with spices like curry, turmeric or just salt and pepper

## Cold Quinoa Dish

- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- diced red, orange, and yellow pepper
- Sliced grape tomatoes
- Golden raisins
- plenty of chopped Mint
- Light Italian or vinaigrette dressing

# Whole grain products

Examples of whole grains include:

- Barley.
- Brown rice.
- Buckwheat.
- Bulgur (cracked wheat)
- Millet.
- Oatmeal. (the slow cook kind like steel cut oats)
- Popcorn.



---

## Gluten

**Many people are worried about gluten these days.**

While grains are the only place you find gluten, not all grains contain gluten. In fact, among the grains most commonly consumed, the only ones that do have gluten are wheat, barley, and rye.

Oats are often cross-contaminated with gluten, so people with celiac disease may react poorly to oats especially if they aren't processed on gluten-free machinery.

Fortunately, there are plenty of delicious gluten-free grains to choose from — like millet, rice, quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, and teff, just to name a few.





# Clean eating

---

07 | Lifestyle

Clean eating means eating foods that are as close as possible to their natural state. This encourages us to make our meals from scratch to make them as “clean” as possible.

The main reason to take on clean eating is the health benefits of consuming foods rich in nutrient content directly from the earth that have not been overly processed.  
(Source - Mayo Clinic)

---

**These items are examples of what might be considered in a clean diet:**

## **Fresh fruit**

Apples, bananas, blueberries, grapes, oranges, strawberries, 100% fruit juice

## **Vegetables**

Avocados, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, corn, green beans, lettuce, mushrooms, onion, peppers, salsa, sweet potatoes, tomatoes

## **Lean meats/protein (including plant protein)**

Dried beans, eggs from grass-fed chickens, fresh fish, grass-fed chickens, plain nut butters (no sugar added), unflavored nuts

## **Whole Grains**

Steel cut oats, brown rice, quinoa, barley

## **Dairy products**

milk, plain yogurt

**Try this simple, clean recipe**





Getting out into nature

# Nature

Exposure to nature not only makes you feel better emotionally, it contributes to your physical wellbeing, reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones. It may even contribute to longevity.

---



Spending time in nature is linked to both cognitive benefits and improvements in mood, mental health and emotional well-being.

---

Nature can generate many positive emotions, such as calmness, joy, and creativity and can facilitate concentration. Nature connectedness is also associated with lower levels of poor mental health, particularly lower depression and anxiety.





# Benefits of Being in Nature



## **Fuel for the brain**

Studies show that far more active thinking happens when we are outside

## **Reduces Inflammation**

when inflammation kicks into overdrive, it can cause multiple health problems such as autoimmune disorders, inflammatory bowel disease, depression, and cancer.

## **Gives you your daily dose of vitamin D**

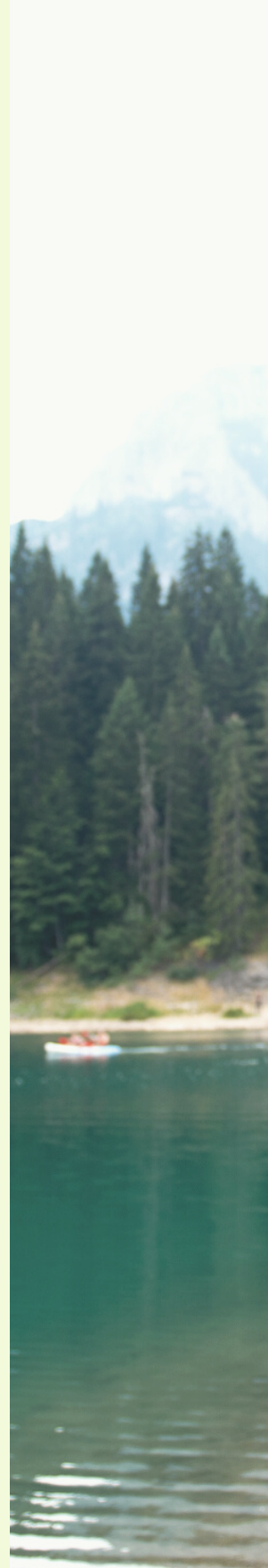
Many of us are not getting enough vitamin D. The reason, according to scientists - We're not getting enough sunlight!

## **Better Sleep**

How well we sleep has a lot to do with hormones like melatonin and our natural circadian rhythm, both of which are affected by exposure to direct sunlight. If you're spending too much time indoors, your body's natural rhythms cannot synchronize properly, and your sleep cycle is not in sync!

## **Cognitive Benefits**

Both correlational and experimental research have shown that interacting with nature has cognitive benefits



Experimental findings show how impressive nature's healing powers can be—just a few moments of green can perk up a tired brain

---

Even the sounds of nature may be recuperative. Berman and colleagues found that study participants who listened to nature sounds like crickets chirping and waves crashing performed better on demanding cognitive tests







# Mindfulness

---

There is growing recognition that mindfulness-based therapies offer support for our mental health. Perhaps less well known, these techniques also dramatically improve our physical wellbeing.

Mindfulness takes us beyond coping and making do. The techniques help us to see the world differently, grow, flourish, and live a more compassionate, fulfilled life.

---

**"If mindfulness were a pill, we should all be taking it".**

---



## Benefits of developing a mindfulness practice

- Relieves stress
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces chronic pain
- Improves sleep
- Increases memory
- Decreases cognitive decline
- Reduces anxiety
- Decreases Depression

Several disciplines and practices can cultivate **mindfulness**, such as yoga, tai chi and qigong, but most of the literature has focused on mindfulness that is developed through mindfulness meditation — those self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring mental processes under greater voluntary control and thereby foster general mental well-being and development and/or specific capacities such as calmness, clarity and concentration

---

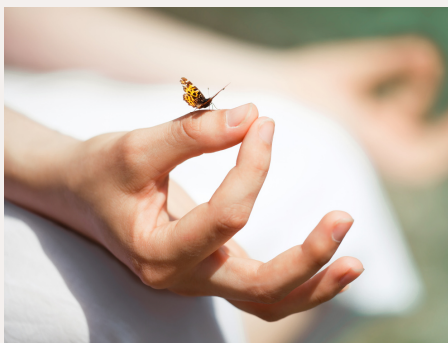
**Remember to breathe deeply**

# Mindfulness

---



**Mindfulness** – gently noticing what is going on for us, in the present moment, without passing judgment.



**Mindfulness** is best strengthened by a regular meditation practice. This practice invites us to slow down, breathe and observe our inner experience.

(Source: Harvard Health)



---

The mind-body effect is getting a lot of press and research, and for good reason - it works, and there's scientific support behind that," Harvard Medical School professor Dr. Herbert Benson, a pioneer and world-renowned expert on the physiological changes that occur during meditation.