

OCTOBER 2024

# PLAN FOR HEALTH NEWSLETTER

## THIS MONTH'S TOPICS:

- **Women's Health**
- **Self-Care**
- **October Recipe: Butternut Squash Fritters**

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

It's important to be proactive about your health by taking care of your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Share your health history and concerns with your doctor to get the right care, including the appropriate women's health screenings.

**Pelvic Exam** - A Pap test is a screening to detect changes in the cells of the cervix (cancerous and precancerous) and is collected during a pelvic exam.

**Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Screening** - This screening may be done as part of a routine Pap test for women 25 years of age and over and at risk. HPV typically has no symptoms and may cause cervical cancer and other serious health problems if left untreated.

**Breast Exam** - A clinical breast exam is performed by a trained health care provider and involves a physical exam that checks your breasts to detect problems or changes.

**Mammogram** - An x-ray used to screen for breast cancer and usually involves two or more x-ray pictures, or images, of each breast. Although a self-breast exam is important, a mammogram is used to find cancerous lumps or cysts in women who have may not have signs or symptoms of the disease.

**Hormonal Health** - Talk with your health care provider about questions or concerns you may have about your menstrual cycle or menopause.

## PRACTICE HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

Healthy lifestyle choices can impact your health and well-being and reduce the risk of major chronic diseases, like cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes.

- Make healthy nutrition choices
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption
- Move more and sit less
- Be tobacco and vape free
- Prioritize mental health
- Manage your stress
- Get adequate and quality sleep



## Program Highlight: Self-Care

This program will teach you what self-care is and how to incorporate it into your daily life. Some of these examples include enjoying a favorite pastime, spending time in nature, listening to music or podcasts, trying something new, practicing mindfulness, and deep breathing. By the end of the program, you'll have learned some new ways — or rediscovered some old ones — of adding more self-care to your day. Go to your member app or website and explore the Program Library on the Journey tab to learn more.

## SELF-CARE

Self-care refers to anything that you do to keep yourself mentally, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually healthy. In a society in which people are expected to work long hours and pass on vacation days, there is an underlying belief that we must always be productive — which can ultimately take away from opportunities for self-care. But by taking some time out to engage in this practice, you may relieve the pressures of everyday life and reset yourself to get back to a healthy point where you can be more productive again. Burning the candle at both ends, so-to-speak, comes with significant consequences, which may include but are not limited to burnout, depression, anxiety, resentment and a whole host of other negative implications. A self-care routine has been clinically proven to reduce or eliminate these consequences and provide significant benefits.

## BENEFITS OF SELF-CARE

**Improved Physical Health** - Engaging in activities like regular exercise, getting enough sleep and eating nutritious meals can enhance your physical health, boost your energy levels and strengthen your immune system.

**Enhanced Mental and Emotional Well-Being** - Practicing self-care can help reduce stress, anxiety and symptoms of depression.

**Increased Productivity and Focus** - Taking care of yourself allows you to recharge and rejuvenate, leading to increased productivity, improved concentration and better problem-solving abilities to tackle daily tasks.

**Better Relationships** - When you prioritize caring for yourself, you have more emotional resources to invest in your relationships and this enables you to show up as your best self in your interactions with others.

**Increased Self-Esteem and Self-Worth** - By prioritizing your needs and engaging in activities that make you feel good, you send a message to yourself that you deserve care and attention.

## EXAMPLES OF SELF-CARE

Even if you only have 5-minute increments spread throughout the day to engage in self-care, that is certainly better than nothing.

**Emotional** – Reflect, journal, laugh with or hug someone.

**Environmental** – Take a walk, breathe in fresh air, recycle, or redesign a room in your house.

**Financial** – Develop a financial plan, start saving (even if \$1 per day) or continue saving, and invest.

**Intellectual** – Read, complete puzzles, watch documentaries, take a class or try something new.

**Occupational** – Polish your resume, take on a task you enjoy, learn a trade or open your own business.

**Physical** – Stay physically active, eat healthy, get your annual checkup, and get 7-9 hours of sleep.

**Social** – Meet up with friends and family, volunteer, stay positive and engage in healthy social media use.

**Spiritual** - Meditate, pray, engage in yoga, practice mindfulness, love one another and help those in need.

Self-care is an important activity to do every day. Doing so will lead toward a better balance among your dimensions of wellness and lead toward improved overall health and well-being. Life is precious, and it is meant to be enjoyed.

## October Recipe: Butternut Squash Fritters

Servings: 13

Total Time: 15 Minutes

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups shredded butternut squash
- 1 cup shredded sharp white cheddar cheese
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more for sprinkling
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, or more as needed

### Directions:

1. Gather all ingredients.
2. Combine the squash, cheese, flour, eggs, thyme, salt, and pepper in a large bowl.
3. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Working in batches, drop batter by 3 tablespoon portions into hot oil. Flatten mounds into 3 inch circles.
4. Cook until golden, 3 to 4 minutes, turning once.
5. Sprinkle with salt immediately after removing from the skillet . Keep warm in a 200 degrees F (95 degrees C) oven while cooking remaining fritters. Add additional oil as needed during cooking. Serve warm.



Stay tuned for November's topics:  
Men's Health and Diabetes Month

