



OVERCOME PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

As we continue to live in a pandemic world, the toll on our mental health can be considerable. Working around COVID-19 precautions, changing our routines and, perhaps most notably, being separated from each other wears on us. In fact, in December, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 42% of people reported symptoms of anxiety or depression, compared with just 11% one year earlier.

While paying attention to your mental health has always been important, these days it's become essential. In keeping with May as Mental Health Awareness Month, the following are some ways that medical and mental health experts suggest you focus on maintaining a healthy mind.

- **Seek routine.** As much as possible, hold to your normal schedules and activities, including sleep patterns.
- **Take a news break.** Headlines can be worrying. Create a news-free time each day as a break from the continuing crisis.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Race Into Fun
- 3 Meeting the [Extended] Tax Deadline
- 4 Harvest of the Month: Artichokes

- **Make time to de-stress.** Consciously set aside quiet times to simply relax.
- **Take care of your body.** The mind-body connection is a two-way street. Caring for your body by exercising and eating and sleeping well will help to keep your mind healthy.
- **Connect with others.** Being separated doesn't have to mean being disconnected. Make a point of talking regularly on the phone or video conference with friends and family.
- **Tap into your faith.** Your spiritual well-being will feed your mental health.
- **Do good for others.** Research has shown that doing something good for someone else will do a lot of good for you.

Smart Facts

1 IN 5

American adults live with mental illness.

50%

of all mental illness begins by age 14.

41%

of people with a mental disorder receive support.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: START YOUR FUN

For some people, it's almost like the month of May didn't happen last year. Out of concerns about COVID-19, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway postponed last year's Greatest Spectacle in Racing until August, which left a huge void in spring for a lot of folks.

But May is back, and the Speedway and 500 Festival are determined to restore the fun. They'll still need to bow to certain pandemic precautions - most notably, perhaps, the annual 500 Festival Parade will not be held - but they're doing their best to show fans a good time.

Actually, fans might discover even more opportunities for fun, thanks in part to the ways the IMS and 500 Festival adapted last year. The result? Even fans who can't get to any Month of May events can feel like they're part of the festivities. Here are some ways:

Run a virtual mini-marathon. Due to COVID concerns, the annual 500 Festival Mini-Marathon will be a virtual race... which means you can run it from anywhere. Learn more [here](#).

Bring the parade home. With no parade this year, the Speedway and 500 Festival are planning a "reverse parade." On May 29, the 33 drivers who qualify for this year's race will parade through Indianapolis neighborhoods in event-themed cars. Residents are encouraged to decorate homes and whole neighborhoods for the festivities. Learn more [here](#), and plan to check out decorated homes and more on the [IMS website](#) and during the May 30 Indy 500 broadcast.

Rev up the kids. Download activity pages that include pictures to color, word games, "Madlibs" and more to entertain kids (and adults) of all ages.

"Zoom" to the track. Make the Speedway your background for your next video conference. Download images [here](#).

Dive into the pool. Put together a race pool to rival the annual NCAA Men's Basketball Championship brackets. Let friends and family randomly draw racer names, or even whole rows of racers if you have a smaller group, to see who comes out on top. Or let participants choose "teams" of their favorite racers and see whose team does best. (award points matching each racer's finish, and the person with the fewest points wins).

Be there. Of course, even with precautions in place, you can still go to the track and Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum. Click [here](#) to learn more about what's happening when and what to expect when visiting.



*"May is back, and
the Indy 500 is
restoring the fun."*

THE FEDERAL TAX DEADLINE EXTENSION: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

On March 17, the IRS gave Americans a break: It extended the deadline for filing income taxes to May 17 to "help taxpayers navigate the unusual circumstances related to the pandemic."

Some people will welcome the extension as a way to help them address some of those unusual circumstances, such as accounting for a government stimulus check, losses in income due to job disruptions, and other variables. Others will see it as an extension on their usual procrastination and simply push back their last-minute scramble.

Either way, here are some things you need to know about the extension:

You don't have to pay taxes until the deadline. In typical years, if you file for a tax return extension, you still are responsible for paying your federal income tax payment by the April 15 deadline (or pay penalties and interest). This year, however, nothing is due until May 17 UNLESS you make estimated tax payments. Those are due according to the usual schedule.

You also get an extension for contributing to IRAs and HSAs. Because the deadline for contributing to your retirement plan and health savings accounts are aligned with the federal tax deadline, you also can put off those contributions.

You can request a refund back to 2017. You have up to three years to request refunds for each tax year, but you usually have to make those requests by April 15. This year, you have until May 17 to request refunds for 2017 and after.

State deadlines might have already passed. States are not required to align their tax deadlines to the federal deadlines, so some states might have held to the April deadline.

You could get an extension on the extension. Just as in any other tax year, you can file an extension for this year's taxes, but remember that you are still responsible for paying any taxes due. In other words, a typical extension doesn't extend the deadline for paying your taxes, only for filing the paperwork.

The extended deadline isn't extended. If you file for an extension on May 17, you will still be required to file your taxes by the usual annual extended date of Oct. 15.

You don't have to wait. Of course, you don't have to wait until the deadline to file your taxes, and filing them sooner will mean getting a refund sooner, if you're expecting one.



National Fitness and Sports Month

Each May, organizations across the nation urge Americans to step up their fitness by recognizing National Fitness and Sports Month. Get on board by checking out this [“Move Your Way” fact sheet](#), and then use this handy [interactive activity planner](#) to build a weekly fitness routine around the things you enjoy doing. Learn more at <https://health.gov/our-work/physical-activity>.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH: ARTICHOKE

If anything we grow to eat can be described as intimidating, the artichoke might be it. It looks complex and strong, and it seems difficult to prepare and eat. But fans of the artichoke will say it's not as imposing as it looks, and any effort required to consume it is well worth it.

A member of the sunflower family (an artichoke is actually a flower bud), the artichoke originated in the Mediterranean, where the ancients considered it a delicacy. It arrived in the U.S. in the early 1800s, initially being grown primarily in Louisiana but later shifting to become a California crop. Now virtually all commercially-grown artichokes come from California, where a young Marilyn Monroe was named Artichoke Queen in 1949.

If you decide to eat an artichoke, shop for one that seems heavy for its size and actually squeaks when you squeeze it. They're freshest in early spring, and fresh ones can be sprinkled with water and put into an airtight plastic bag and refrigerator to keep fresh for up to a week. You'll find a variety of options for cooking these nutrient-packed and fiber-rich veggies, ranging from simple steaming to complex recipes.



Recipe: Easy Baked Artichoke

Ingredients:

(one serving)

1 artichoke

½ lemon

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon garlic, minced

2 tablespoons fresh parsley

½ cup parmesan cheese

Directions:

Remove the stem of the artichoke, then cut about 1 inch off the top of the artichoke and use a pair of kitchen scissors to snip off the thorns on the tips of the artichoke petals. Run lemon juice over the cut portion of the artichoke to prevent it from browning, then drizzle the artichoke with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Spread open the petals and rub them with minced garlic. Add the parsley and Parmesan, making sure to get it in between the petals. Top with more pepper if desired. Wrap the artichoke in aluminum foil and bake at 425°F for one hour and 20 minutes. Serve with extra parsley, lemon wedge and your favorite dipping sauce.

Nutrition Information:

CALORIES: 668; PROTEIN: 29G; FAT: 40G; CARBS: 58G; FIBER: 24G; SUGAR: 6G

Sources: Accessed 13 April 2021

1. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00175-z>
2. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/how-improving-your-mental-health-will-help-your-overall-physical-health>
3. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/mental-health-covid-19/art-20482731>
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
5. <https://www.nami.org/mhstats>
6. <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2019/02/5-surprising-mental-health-statistics/>
7. <https://www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com/>

8. <https://www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com/news-multimedia/news/2020/04/20/indy-500-virtual-zoom-meeting-backgrounds-04-20-2020>
9. <https://www.indymini.com/covid>
10. <https://www.cnet.com/personal-finance/taxes/tax-day-extended-to-may-17-everything-to-know-about-the-new-deadline/>
11. <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/taxes/what-the-may-17-tax-deadline-means-for-your-taxes/>
12. <https://whatscookingamerica.net/History/ArtichokeHistory.htm>
13. <https://tasty.co/recipe/easy-baked-artichoke>