



## MAKE EXERCISE A FAMILY AFFAIR

A lot of parents struggle to find time for workouts. Others worry that they can't get the kids off the couch. And, of course, the vast majority of us simply have trouble getting motivated to exercise.

All of those problems might have the same solution: Make exercise a family affair.

How? First of all, by setting realistic expectations. If you regularly do three-hour workouts, scale things back to get the family on board.

Next, make it fun for everyone. Talk with your family about how you might get in shape together, and get everyone's ideas for physical activities. It might help to choose something that everyone can learn together, rather than something that one of you already excels at.

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Finally, build exercise into the family routine with a reasonable commitment. Don't try to go from no exercise to a seven-days-a-week program. Instead, maybe you all do something together three times a week. This way you can up your family fitness game, and, if you're inclined, work in additional workouts at other times. And, everyone can find time for recovery and even a little (well-earned) couch surfing.

The best part? This will not only make your bodies stronger, but it'll make your family stronger, too, according to psychologist Sylvia Rimm. She notes that exercise "really bonds families," and reduces tension between parents and kids.

## Smart Facts

**1 IN 3**

children are physically active every day.

**60**

minutes of daily activity are recommended for school-aged kids and teens.

**40%**

higher test scores are recorded among physically active kids.



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# HYDRATE! HOW WATER FUELS YOUR HEALTH

We've all heard the directives: Drink eight glasses of water a day.

Some sources might recommend a little more or a little less, but the bottom line is this: We all need a lot of water every day to feel good and be as productive as possible. Why? Well, water performs a wide range of jobs for us, from helping to move nutrients through our bodies to supporting cognitive functions. As a result if you let your water levels drop too low, you'll see a wide range of negative effects.

So, how do you stay on top of your hydration needs? Following are a few tips:

- **Drink before you're thirsty.** Athletes often say that if you wait until you're thirsty, you're too late. Stay ahead of your body's water needs by drinking fluids all day long. One way to do this is to keep a glass or bottle of water in front of you all the time, and to take special care to drink up in the morning and at night.
- **Drink something tasty.** Staying hydrated doesn't have to be flavorless and boring. You can find lots of healthful flavored waters, fruit juices and more to keep your body flush with fluids. Just limit alcohol and caffeine, and don't go heavy on added sugars.
- **Eat your water.** Keeping your fluids topped off doesn't have to mean drinking a lot. Fruits and veggies contain lots of water, and they have the added benefit of providing vitamins, nutrients and more.
- **Stay cool.** Your body won't need as much fluid if you don't lose fluid to sweating. Avoid extreme heat and the hottest part of the day. And, meanwhile, drink plenty of fluids.
- **Dress smart.** Light, loose-fitting clothes that can wick away sweat help you stay cool and, therefore, limit the amount of fluids you lose to heat.
- **Get an app.** Of course, these days there are apps that can help you track your hydration. Check out your smartphone's app store. Or, just set a timer to remind yourself to drink regularly.
- **Check yourself.** If you are going to be out in the heat or exerting yourself, or if you experience illnesses that involved fever, vomiting or diarrhea, pay attention to your body and watch for signs of dehydration. A few of the most common ones include darker-than-usual urine, a lack of urination, muscle cramps, fever or chills, dry mouth or skin, fast heartbeat, dizziness, confusion or drowsiness.



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# GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM

A recent Forbes article notes that 70% of surveyed employees said they'd like to improve their health, but 63% were unwilling to commit an hour a day to that effort.

Maybe those respondents didn't realize that employer-sponsored wellness programs make it easier than ever to put your desire for a better health into action. The following are some common wellness-program components and ways to make the most of them.

**On-site fitness centers.** If the gym is at your workplace, your excuse for not working out withers. A couple of times a week, substitute a workout for lunch at a restaurant or schedule a fitness session before or after work. Choose activities you enjoy and recognize that the goal is better health ... not professional-athlete fitness.

**Classes and programs.** Do you smoke? Need healthy-diet info? Want to de-stress? Nearly every workplace offers free classes and programs that help you eliminate bad habits and develop better ones. Many classes are online and, therefore, flexible. Squeeze something worthwhile into the time you otherwise would step out for a smoke, get a snack at the vending machine or something like that.

**Group activities.** Many employers sponsor group activities such as team participation in a community walk or run, on-site fitness classes and more. Grab your work friends and make participation a social activity. You'll have so much fun, you might forget it's about wellness.

**Discounts.** Think a gym membership, fitness tracker or class enrollment is too expensive? Maybe not if you can take advantage of the discounts offered by many employers. Some employers even utilize reimbursement programs (like First Person's Improve Mint) to help pay for fitness equipment and more. Find out what deals might be available to you and start saving on getting healthy.

**Connect with help.** In recent years, employers have realized that their employees are looking to them more and more for help with mental health issues, family stressors and financial worries. As a result, companies have connected with resources – locally and virtually – that employees can use to get on the right track.

**Employee Assistance Programs.** Despite employers seeing an increase of 70% of utilization, Employee Assistant Programs (or EAPs) are one of the most-neglected of all employee benefits. EAPs provide a wide range of free resources for people trying to improve their physical, mental, family or fiscal health. Contact your HR team and ask for information.

Regardless of how you connect with your employer's wellness programs, you'll discover that those programs do what they're supposed to do: increase your overall wellness, which means you'll feel, live and work better. Isn't that worth an hour a day?



## National Immunization Awareness Month

Every August is National Awareness Month. This year it holds special importance, because many families put off getting regular vaccinations due to COVID-19 restrictions. Now healthcare experts are encouraging families to get back on track, and to add COVID-19 vaccinations to their list of precautions. Learn about why and when you should vaccinate, and more, at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/growing/>.

# HARVEST OF THE MONTH: BLUEBERRIES

Typically at the top of just about every "super food" list, blueberries offer a tasty pathway to healthy eating. And, why not? These sweet sources of fiber are packed with vitamins and give you loads of antioxidants and compounds that fight off chemical reactions that damage cells, speed up aging and increase cancer risks.

Known by indigenous North Americans as "star fruits" (because of the five-pointed star shape at the end of the berry), blueberries often are described as the only naturally blue food. Although they've only been grown commercially for about a century, these close relatives to cranberries, bilberries and huckleberries are thought to have been on humans' menus for more than 13,000 years.

These days, most of the world's blueberries come from the U.S., with Chile and Canada also providing large shares of them.

When shopping for blueberries, look for firm, dry and plump berries with smooth skin. Avoid buying packages of blueberries with juice stains (that could mean some of them are damaged), leaves, stems or wrinkled fruits. If you can't get fresh berries, you'll can buy them frozen, canned or dried.



When you do get fresh berries, whether from the supermarket or freshly picked, you should store them in the refrigerator, where they'll keep for up to 10 days. Don't wash them until you're ready to eat them. Fresh blueberries can be frozen, but, again, wait to wash them until after you're ready to eat or cook with them.



## Recipe: Healthy Blueberry Muffins

### Ingredients:

1½ cups mashed ripe banana or 3 large very ripe bananas  
2 large eggs  
2 cups rolled oats, plus more for topping  
¼ cup neutral oil (sunflower, vegetable or grape seed)  
¼ cup pure maple syrup  
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1½ teaspoons cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon kosher salt  
1 heaping cup blueberries  
Turbinado sugar, for garnish (optional)

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place 12 muffin cups into a muffin tin. Mash bananas, place in a blender with eggs, oats, oil, maple syrup, vanilla, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon and kosher salt. Blend on high for 1-2 minutes, until a smooth batter forms. Add blueberries; gently stir until combined. Pour batter, divided evenly, into muffin cups. Sprinkle tops with turbinado sugar (or extra oats and gently press them down). Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean. Remove from muffin tin and allow to cool a few minutes before serving.

### Nutrition Information:

CALORIES: 159; FAT: 5.5G; CARBS: 23.5G; FIBER: 2.5G; SUGAR: 9.5G; PROTEIN: 3.2G; CALCIUM: 56.7MG; POTASSIUM: 417.4 MG

### Sources: Accessed 12 July 2021

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