

ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle



Embrace Winter

Tips to keep you out of hibernation and on track!

It's cold. The days are short. The sun doesn't shine nearly enough. Most of us endure the winter months counting the days until spring. What if we made the decision to look at winter a bit differently and actually embraced the season as an opportunity to improve our health and fitness?

Think of it, less outdoor time could mean more indoor workout time, quiet reflective time with soft candlelight to ease stress, and a chance to try out new, healthy recipes—the possibilities are endless. You can lose those last few pounds or get back on track and tone up before short sleeve season.

Just in case you're short on ideas, this issue is packed with specific things you can do this winter to boost your health and well-being.

If you're in the mood to hibernate, rather than vegging out on the couch, make good use of your indoor time to move your health and wellness to the next level.

- Take the time to schedule routine health exams—yes, the ones you've been putting off.

*If we had no winter,
the spring would not be
so pleasant: if we did not
sometimes taste of adversity,
prosperity would not
be so welcome.*

Anne Bradstreet

- Look up healthy recipes online, print them, and protect them with a plastic sheet protector before you put them in a 3-ring binder. Then commit to trying one new recipe a week until spring.
- De-stress by building deep breathing or meditation skills. That quiet time first thing in the morning or an hour or so before bedtime is ideal for spending 10-15 minutes practicing.
- We've all got our favorite TV show (or two). Put your exercise equipment where you can bump up that metabolism while you watch. If you can't make it through the entire show, just exercise during the commercials. You'll be amazed at how quickly you're able to do more.
- A body at rest tends to stay at rest. Start your day off with high energy activities and save sedentary activities until the end of the day.
- Try 30 second intervals throughout your day to keep your energy pumped. Every 30 minutes or so (you may want to set your phone alarm for this) boost your heart rate for 30 short seconds—take a short walk; do a couple of squats, leg-lifts, or windmill stretches. You'll boost your energy and your focus.
- Start using a tracker to keep track of your activity, food intake, sleep habits, other useful monitors. Using technology in this way can make you very aware of your habits and more likely to improve the healthy ones. It can also be fun to add a little healthy competition with a buddy.
- Being around others trying to improve their health can be motivating. Just reading a post or talking with a co-worker can provide the spark you need at that moment. Surround yourself with the kind of people who motivate and inspire you. If you don't know any such people, then go online to sites like Sparkpeople.com.
- Try out a new indoor fitness class. Many of them start in January.
- Keep your mind in good shape too by eating right, regular exercise and life-long learning. Your brain is like your body—if you don't use it, you lose it.

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What can you do to challenge your mind today? Take a class, learn a new skill, or solve a challenging puzzle.

- Get your house in shape by cleaning, organizing, fixing up or painting. It will get you off the couch and moving and you'll have a clean, organized place to live.



Finding motivation to head out in the cold is a challenge for many people. By dressing in layers and moving, you'll warm up in no time. There are a lot of fun activities you won't want to miss out on.

- Cross country skiing is a surprisingly good workout and a great way to enjoy the winter beauty. If you're new to it, rent skis and boots and look for groomed trails in parks near you.
- Ice skating is a great activity for the entire family.
- When's the last time you went flying down a hill on a sled? Why not? It's a blast and you'll burn some calories climbing back up that hill for another go.
- Build a snowman or an entire snow family. If there's a lot of snow, build a snow fort.
- A brisk walk is refreshing any time of day.

It's amazing what you can do and how much better you can feel with a little change of perspective. It's going to be a great winter.



In the News

An Apple a Day

Apples have long been used as an icon for healthy eating, and scientists have uncovered a very good reason to make sure that you do have an apple a day—specifically a Granny Smith apple.

New studies continue to validate the importance of the number and balance of bacteria in the intestines of an individual for a variety of healthy reasons including weight. Previous studies on mice have shown that when you implant the intestinal bacteria of an obese mouse into a thin one, the thin mouse becomes obese. Who knew that bacteria could be responsible for so much?

This recent study found that Granny Smith apples are a good source of nondigestible compounds that help to promote the growth of beneficial bacteria. The apples were fed to mice and the fecal bacteria composition of obese mice changed to be similar to that of lean mice.

Scientists are sure to continue to look in this direction to find ways to keep us healthy—finding that after all...we are what we eat.

It Worked for Me

Submitted by Denise F.

I don't have the time to cook from scratch every night, but I really think it is important to eat foods that I prepare and to stay away from processed foods. I found that if I cook up a big batch of a healthy recipe on the weekend, fill up single serving containers and freeze, that I am never without good wholesome, almost-fresh food.

I feel so much better when I eat this way. I am experimenting with quinoa, beans, and lots of vegetables. Now, if only I could get my husband on board...

Burrito Bowl

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup diced sweet onion
- 1 pound lean hamburger
- 1/3 cup Old El Paso Medium Thick n' Chunky Salsa
- 1 15 oz can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 15 oz can corn, drained
- 1 14.5 oz can diced tomatoes
- 1 4 oz can Old El Paso diced green chilies
- 1 cup jasmine rice (or any long grain)
- 1 Tablespoon taco seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 1/2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup shredded cheddar/jack cheese
- S & P to taste

Optional toppings: sour cream, cilantro, green onions, tomatoes, avocado

In a large pan heat the olive oil over medium heat. Sauté the onions and red peppers. Add in hamburger and cook until browned. Stir in salsa, black beans, corn, tomatoes, green chilies, jasmine rice, taco seasoning and chili powder. Pour in chicken stock and then bring to a light boil. Cover the pan and reduce heat to low. Cook for an additional 15-20 minutes, or until the rice is all the way cooked.

When rice is done, add salt and pepper to taste. Top with your favorite toppings. Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 185 calories, 13 grams protein, 6 grams fat, 29 grams carbohydrate, 864 mg sodium.



Enchiladas

- 1 cup enchilada sauce
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 1/2 cups butternut squash, peeled and diced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and diced
- 10 oz can diced tomatoes, no-added-sodium
- 1 1/2 cups canned organic black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 cup water
- 8 medium low-carb whole wheat flour tortillas
- 1 cup reduced-fat shredded Colby Jack cheese
- 2 tbsp chopped scallions, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Spray the bottom and sides of a large baking dish with pan spray. Even spread out 1/4 cup of the enchilada sauce on the bottom.

In a large skillet, heat olive oil on medium-high. Add onions, garlic, and jalapeno and cook 2-3 minutes until onions become translucent. Add diced butternut, Rotel tomatoes, black beans, water, cilantro, cumin and chili powder. Cover and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the squash is tender.

Place 1/3 cup of the squash mixture in the center of each tortilla. Roll tortillas and place in the baking dish seam side down. Top with remaining enchilada sauce and cheese. Cover with foil and bake until heated through and the cheese is melted. Top with scallions. Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 180 calories, 12 grams protein, 6 grams fat, 26 grams carbohydrate, 444 mg sodium.

Chicken Bruschetta

- 3 medium tomatoes, diced
- 2 small cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 2 tbsp fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 tbsp extra virgin oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- fresh cracked pepper to taste
- 3 oz fresh part-skim mozzarella, diced
- 1.25 lbs chicken breast, boneless, skinless

Combine onion, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, tomatoes and pepper. Set aside a few minutes. Set aside and let it sit at least 10 minutes or as long as overnight. Toss in the cheese when ready to serve.

Grill chicken; slice into thin pieces. Top with bruschetta and serve. Makes 6 small servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 158 calories, 22 grams protein, 6 grams fat, 5 grams carbohydrate, 122 mg sodium.

