

Health and wellness tips for your work and life—  
presented by HealthCheck360°



## Do You Know the Signs of a Kidney Stone?

A recent study published in the Mayo Clinic Proceedings journal found that the prevalence of kidney stones has increased more than fourfold in women and more than twofold in men over the past 30 years.

If treated in a timely fashion, kidney stones usually don't cause permanent damage. Seek immediate medical attention if you experience any of the following:

- Pain so severe that you can't sit still or find a comfortable position
- Pain accompanied by nausea, vomiting, fever or chills
- Blood in your urine
- Difficulty passing urine



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## Exercising the Body and Brain

Studies have shown a strong relationship between the health of the body and the health of the brain. Exercise revs up complex processes inside the brain that can deter depression, help you stay calm and keep your mind sharp.

### Exercise Boosts Mental Fitness

The brain has approximately 86 billion neurons designed to give orders to the rest of the body through chemical messengers called neurotransmitters. Studies show that deficiencies of two of these neurotransmitters (glutamate and gamma-aminobutyric acid, or GABA), can lead to mood disorders such as depression. However, moderate exercise can increase the amounts of the two neurotransmitters, contributing to increased mental fitness.

### Exercise Decreases Stress

When you're stressed, your brain secretes the "fight or flight" hormone, cortisol. Elevated cortisol levels can create a constant and unnecessary feeling of stress. But, if you exercise, you expose your body to "controlled stress," which helps regulate your brain's stress response, keeping you more calm.

### Exercise Slows the Brain's Aging Process

Your brain ages just like the rest of your body, but exercise can help the brain handle natural, age-related deterioration without taking a toll on your memory. Older adults who exercise have larger brain volumes than those who don't. Plus, the brain's hippocampus (which is responsible for memory and learning) is larger in people who are active. Exercising won't make you smarter, per se, but it will help you remember things better as you age.

## Apple Sage Wild Rice Stuffing

4 ounces pecans (chopped)  
4 tsp. canola oil (divided)  
1 ½ cups celery (diced)  
1 ½ cups onions (diced)  
1 medium-sized red apple (peeled, diced)  
2 cups brown rice (cooked)  
1 cup wild rice (cooked)  
½ cup cranberries (dried)  
1 jalapeno pepper (finely chopped)  
1 ½ Tbsp. fresh sage (chopped)  
¾ tsp. salt

### PREPARATIONS

1. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the pecans and cook 2-3 minutes or until beginning to brown, stirring frequently. Set aside on separate plate.
2. Heat 1 tsp. of the oil over medium heat. Cook the celery and onion 8 minutes or until beginning to lightly brown on edge, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the apples and cook 4 minutes or until fork-tender.
4. Stir in the pecans and the remaining ingredients and cook 3-4 minutes or until the rice mixture is heated, stirring occasionally.

Makes: 12 servings

### Nutritional Information (per serving)

Total Calories	160
Total Fat	9 g
Protein	3 g
Carbohydrates	20 g
Dietary Fiber	3 g
Saturated Fat	1 g
Sodium	160 mg
Total Sugars	7 g

Source: USDA

## Save Lives: Don't Be a Distracted Driver

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nine people are killed and over 1,000 others are injured every day in accidents that involve a distracted driver in the United States. The National Safety Council observes April as Distracted Driving Awareness Month to draw attention to this epidemic.

Distracted driving is driving while doing another activity that takes your attention away from the road, and can greatly increase the chance of a motor vehicle crash. While there is little you can do to control other people's driving, there is plenty you can do to reduce your own distractions.

There are three main types of distractions:

1. Visual: taking your eyes off the road
2. Manual: taking your hands off the wheel
3. Cognitive: taking your mind off of driving

By practicing safe driving techniques, you can significantly reduce your chances of being involved in an auto accident. In addition to avoiding distractions, it's important to be aware of other drivers around you and make adjustments to your driving accordingly.

## Don't Be Distracted. Just Drive.

Get to your destination safely by not  
doing the following:

