

November 2024

Live Well, Work Well


HealthCheck360



Fall Into Mindfulness

The changing seasons can help you prioritize your physical, emotional and mental health by presenting the opportunity to start new routines or cut out unhealthy habits. Autumn is a great time to embrace the concept of mindfulness, the practice of being fully present in the moment.



Making the Most of the Season

Fall is a season of transition, making it a good time for building resilience and practicing mindfulness. Trees shed their leaves, and the days grow shorter; this natural process may mirror personal lives, where change is inevitable. Consider the following ways to work with the energy of fall to amplify your mindfulness practice:

- **Start each day with an intention.** People often set goals and intentions seasonally, making fall the perfect time to refocus your time and energy. Setting intentions can help align your values with your purpose.
- **Keep a gratitude journal.** Make a daily habit of noting what you're grateful for during the fall. Reflecting on these moments of gratitude can help you appreciate the season more deeply.

- **Practice meditation.** Take a moment each day to meditate and practice deep, mindful breathing. This exercise can help you stay grounded and calm during the busyness of the season.
- **Take a nature walk.** Take hikes or leisurely walks through parks, forests or your neighborhood to soak in the beauty of fall. Instead of listening to music or a podcast, try a "quiet walk" and leave your phone at home, or set the volume to silent so you can stay focused on the experience.
- **Go photowalking.** Alternatively, take your phone or camera along during a nature walk to capture the season's sights. Not only will you get movement in, but you can also unleash your creativity and connect with your surroundings.
- **Cook a seasonal recipe.** Savor the seasonal flavors and cook a delicious homemade meal or bake a sweet treat. Fall flavors (e.g., apple, pumpkin, maple, ginger, cinnamon and sage) can add a comforting touch to your cooking.

Like with any exercise, regular practice builds mindfulness, so find ways to incorporate mindful activities or insert them into an existing daily or weekly routine. Contact a doctor for more information on improving your mindfulness.

Daylight Saving Time and Your Health

Most of the United States shifts between standard and daylight saving time (DST) each year in an effort to “save” natural light. Clocks will get set one hour back on Sunday, Nov. 3. Although you may be excited about gaining another hour in your day, DST can wreak havoc on your physical and cognitive health for several days, weeks or even months.

The disruption of DST can negatively impact your health. Your internal clock regulates critical processes, including the immune system. Interruptions to the circadian rhythm, your body’s 24-hour biological cycle that regulates wake and sleep, can also impair your focus and judgment. In fact, research revealed that fatal traffic accidents increased by 6% in the week following DST. Fortunately, there are ways to increase your odds of a smooth DST transition.

While you may be tempted to use the extra hour to indulge in various activities, health experts recommend using that time for sleep. To help make the DST transition easier, consider going to bed 15-20 minutes early in the days beforehand to help your body get used to the difference. If you have specific health concerns, talk to your doctor.

Helping Your Body Adjust to the Time Change

If your state follows DST, consider these tips to protect your circadian rhythm:



Exercise in the morning.



Prioritize daylight exposure.



Keep a regular sleep routine.



Remove sleep disturbances.

Study Reveals 2 Key Aging Points

The body undergoes numerous changes—externally and internally—as people age. While it’s traditionally believed that humans age gradually, research from the Stanford University School of Medicine revealed that people age in two significant “bursts” during their lives. Researchers found that humans undergo major changes in their bodies’ molecules and microorganisms around ages 44 and 60. These changes potentially impact several aspects of a person’s health. For those in their 40s, researchers found significant molecular changes related to alcohol, caffeine and lipid metabolism; cardiovascular disease; and skin and muscle. At 60, the largest molecule changes were associated with cardiovascular disease, immune regulation, kidney function, carbohydrate and caffeine metabolism, and skin and muscle. The study recommended lifestyle changes, such as exercising more and drinking less alcohol, when people near these key aging points in their 40s and 60s. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

Makes: 24 servings

Ingredients

- 4 medium apples
- 1 cup flour
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- ½ cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1 cup oats (uncooked)
- ½ cup margarine or butter
- Cooking spray

Preparations

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Put the flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, brown sugar and oats in the mixing bowl. Stir together.
3. Add the margarine to the bowl. Using two knives, mix the ingredients and cut into crumbs.
4. Lightly grease the bottom and sides of the baking dish with cooking spray.
5. Spread half of the crumb mixture in the greased baking dish.
6. Remove the core from the apples and slice them. Put the apple slices into the baking dish.
7. Top the apples with the rest of the crumb mixture.
8. Bake in the oven for 40-45 minutes.
9. Cut into squares.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Total calories	82
Total fat	4 g
Protein	1 g
Sodium	53 mg
Carbohydrate	12 g
Dietary fiber	1 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Total sugars	7 g

Source: MyPlate