

HEALTHY *You!*

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THIS EDITION FEATURES:

Forever Young(-ish)

Quick and Nutritious Meals
for Busy Weeknights

Herb Power: Flavorful,
Wholesome Meals for
Better Health

Reboot Your Routine

Turning Pages, Building Minds

“Fall” Prevention: Activities
to Improve Balance



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Forever Young(-ish)

Aging is a fact of life, but feeling your age is optional. The good news? Staying mentally and physically young doesn't require magic, just a few intentional habits.

Small, consistent actions can have a big impact. According to the National Institute on Aging, your daily choices — from movement to mindset — can slow down the effects of aging and boost your overall well-being. Here's how:

Move more. Regular physical activity improves heart health, mobility, and mental sharpness. Even brisk walking counts.

» *Strive for 150 minutes per week of moderate activity.*

Sleep well. Quality rest helps your body recover and your brain function better.

» *Adults over 40 years of age need 7 – 9 hours of sleep each night.*

Stay connected. Social interaction keeps you emotionally and mentally well.

» *Call a friend, meet for coffee, or join a group with shared interests.*

Hydrate often. Water plays a major role in joint flexibility, energy levels, and cognition.

» *Aim to drink 6 – 8 cups of water daily (more if you're active).*

Engage your brain. Learning new skills, reading, or doing puzzles strengthens your cognitive reserve.

» *Take a free online course, try a new hobby, or join a book club.*

Eat for longevity. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats supports brain and body function.

» *Focus on eating antioxidant-rich foods like berries, nuts, and leafy greens.*

Protect your purpose. Having goals and a sense of direction can enhance longevity and happiness.

» *Volunteer, mentor, or set fun personal challenges to stay motivated.*

Healthy aging isn't about turning back time — it's about feeling empowered, engaged, and energetic through every stage of life. And best of all? You can start today, no matter your age.

Quick and Nutritious Meals for Busy Weeknights

When your weeknights are a blur of work, homework, and extracurricular activities, easy dinners are a lifesaver. Fortunately, you don't need fancy ingredients or hours in the kitchen to serve up healthy family meals.

Start with **component cooking**: batch-cook staples like rice, quinoa, or shredded chicken on a weekend day. Store them for effortless assembly later in the week.

Keep a package of rotisserie chicken or home-cooked roasted chicken on hand for instant protein. Mix it into sheet-pan dinners or toss it into wraps and salads. One-dish meals like **sheet-pan chicken with vegetables** or **skillet tortellini or pasta** with veggies and cheese can cook in under 30 minutes.

Meat-free nights? Try quick **lentil or bean salads**, grain bowls with canned legumes and tahini dressing, or burrito-style wraps filled with rice, beans, veggies, and salsa.

Freeze a couple of **family-favorite casseroles** or prepared meals (like lasagna or soup) for emergencies. On truly hectic nights, homemade meals are ready in minutes without resorting to delivery or takeout.

By planning ahead and repurposing ingredients, you can keep dinner healthy, fast, and **stress-free** — even when schedules are full.

Sources:
simplyrecipes.com
tasteofhome.com





Herb Power:

Flavorful, Wholesome Meals for Better Health

Fresh herbs like basil, parsley, thyme, mint, oregano, and rosemary add vibrant flavors to dishes without extra calories, sodium, or fat. They're also nutritional powerhouses packed with antioxidants, vitamins, and anti-inflammatory compounds.

Not only do these herbs enhance taste, they also support health: **Rosemary has powerful phytochemicals** like carnosic acid and rosmarinic acid, which may reduce chronic inflammation and help protect against heart disease, cancer, and cognitive decline. **Parsley supplies flavonoids** and vitamins A, C, and K. **Mint soothes digestion**, relieves bloating, and freshens breath. **Oregano, thyme, and sage deliver antioxidants** that combat oxidative stress and may support cardiovascular and immune health.

Cooking tips: Add fresh herbs late in the cooking process. Delicate herbs like basil, cilantro, parsley, and mint are best added just before serving to preserve nutrients and aroma. For sturdier herbs, add in the last 15 – 20 minutes of cooking. Substitute approximately three parts fresh for one part dried when adapting recipes.

Fresh herbs elevate flavor and visual appeal, support digestion, and carry a range of wellness benefits, making them a smart way to make tastier, healthier meals.



RECIPE

High-Protein Egg Bites

Ingredients

8 large eggs
1 cup cottage cheese
1/2 tsp sea salt
1 jar (8 oz.) sun-dried tomatoes, drained and chopped
1 handful baby spinach, chopped
1/3 cup fresh basil, julienned
Feta and black pepper for topping

Directions

1. **Prep.** Heat oven to 350°F. Spray a 12-cup muffin pan with cooking spray.
2. **Mix.** Blend eggs, cottage cheese, and salt until smooth. Stir in sun-dried tomatoes, spinach, and basil. Pour evenly into muffin cups. Top with feta and pepper.
3. **Cook.** Bake for 20 – 22 minutes until puffed and firm. Cool for 5 minutes. (They'll deflate.)
4. **Serve.** Enjoy warm or refrigerate leftovers for up to five days.



Reboot Your Routine

As summer winds down, many of us experience a subtle disruption in sleep, movement, focus, and daily rhythms. Research shows that long breaks often lead to increased sedentary behavior, poorer diet quality, and diminished cardiovascular fitness. Fortunately, it's possible (and healthy) to regain balance with gentle, mindful routines.

- Start by **reflecting on your summer habits**. What habits did you enjoy? Which ones slipped away? This helps build clarity without judgment.
- Next, **set realistic goals**, starting small. Sustainable routines begin with one habit at a time — nothing overwhelming.
- **Consistency matters**. Aim for steady sleep/wake times and real-life reminders (sticky notes, alarms, routines) to anchor habits.
- Engage in **moderate exercise**. Even 20 minutes of walking three times a week helps transition into a healthier momentum. Spending at least two hours per week in nature has proven mental health benefits.
- Support your mental wellness with **mindfulness practices**. Journaling, practicing gratitude, or meditative breathing can help reduce stress and promote clarity.

Instead of abandoning structure entirely during breaks, adapt routines to fit changing seasons or schedule shifts.

Turning Pages, Building Minds

September is National Literacy Month, a time to remind us how critical reading is for all ages. Reading stimulates brain function, builds vocabulary, improves comprehension, and even reduces stress.

Reading aloud daily to young children exposes them to a wide vocabulary, often several hundred thousand more words by kindergarten, and may support future academic success. It also fosters empathy, emotional awareness, and social-emotional bonding between caregivers and children.

For adults, reading supports cognitive well-being, sharpens memory, and can even speed recovery from stress. Providing books and promoting shared reading at home or through community programs can transform lives, especially in underserved populations.

School, family, library, and community events all help rekindle a love for stories and empower learners of all ages. By reading together, we reinforce literacy as a tool for growth, creativity, and lifelong engagement.



Sources:
allaboutbooks.org
childmind.org
imaginationlibrarywashington.org
readabilitymatters.org

“Fall” Prevention: Activities to Improve Balance

As leaves turn colors and autumn sets in, it’s the perfect time to focus on fall prevention. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s STEADI initiative, exercises that strengthen the legs and improve balance are essential for fall prevention. Regular routines, including chair-rises, heel-to-toe walking, and single-leg stands, can dramatically improve stability and reduce fall risk, especially in older adults.

Harvard Medical School and other health experts recommend starting with simple balance holds: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, then together, then lift one leg for 10 – 30 seconds, progressing to eyes-closed versions when safe.

Tai chi and gentle, wall-supported Pilates have also been proven to boost postural control, coordination, and core strength — all key to reducing fall risk.

For the best results, try pairing balance drills with leg-strengthening movements, like sit-to-stand repetitions and heel raises, three times a week. Consistency matters. Even two or three sessions per week can produce measurable improvements in stability and confidence.

Sources:
[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
[hopkinsmedicine.org](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org)



MONTHLY QUIZ

1. Which of the following habits is not strongly linked to healthy aging?

- A. Regular exercise
- B. Staying socially connected
- C. Skipping sleep
- D. Eating antioxidant-rich foods

2. Which of the following can save time prepping dinners during the busy school week?

- A. Cook each meal fresh each night
- B. Always order takeout
- C. Batch-cook staples like rice or shredded chicken in advance
- D. Skip dinner and go to bed hungry

3. Which of the following strategies best supports rebuilding a routine after summer?

- A. Overhauling everything at once
- B. Focusing on one small habit at a time
- C. Skipping structure entirely
- D. Waiting until autumn starts

1. C; 2. C; 3. B

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