

SB Wellness Group Monthly Newsletter

Sprinkle on a Little Health



Although this month brings holiday joy, it also seems to bring with it the common cold, flu and virus season! We all want to enjoy the holidays without the added stress of being sick. Boosting your energy and immune system with added vitamins, minerals, and nutrients in the diet may be just what you need. Try adding the following items to your diet for meals that will pack a punch against all those dreaded germs we get exposed to:

Wheat Germ contains an important phytonutrient called octacosanol, known to help increase physical endurance and improve the body's ability to handle stress. Just a half cup of wheat germ also provides you with 100 percent of the folic acid and 50 percent of the magnesium, zinc, and vitamin E you need for the day. Sprinkle some on your oatmeal or yogurt. Add to a smoothie or favorite recipe.

Flax Seed: Ground flaxseed packs quite a nutritional punch. Many of the studies on the health effects of flaxseed have been done using ground flaxseed, pure and

simple (you'll need to grind it yourself to allow your body to access its helpful components). Ground flax contains soluble and insoluble fiber. Flax offers omega-3 fatty acids and research has shown there are many potential benefits, including protection against certain cancers, reduced risk of heart disease, and improved immune function. You can easily add ground flaxseed to hot or cold cereals, smoothies, salads, baked goods or yogurt.

Nuts and Seeds: Some nuts can offer such nutrients as omega-3s, selenium, vitamin E, magnesium, folic acid, protein and more. Nuts and seeds seem to reduce blood cholesterol, enhance the immune system and decrease the risk of certain cancers. Add a handful of nuts to your meals each day and try to get a variety. Almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and pistachio nuts are some of the highest in added nutrients. Try to stick to raw, unsalted versions when choosing nuts and seeds.



Happy for the Holidays!

SB Wellness Group Wishes you and your family a healthy and happy holiday season! Check out this month's newsletter for lots of great tips for staying wellness-minded this December!

Yoga Benefits Every Body

By: Elena Keegan – Baton Rouge Yoga Company

Everyone wants to have good health – it is our greatest asset. In order to improve their health, alleviate stress, boost energy and feel better in general, millions of people are now practicing yoga on a regular basis. Men and women are increasing their practice of yoga by taking classes in studios, health clubs and even at work. Companies like Apple, Microsoft, and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Louisiana are

offering their employees the opportunity to take yoga as a means to help manage and minimize the effects of stress, and lead a healthier lifestyle.

Why are millions of people choosing yoga as their favorite method for achieving wellness? It could be because of the long list of benefits, from cardiovascular, respiratory, and weight benefits, to name a few. The fact is – yoga WORKS! At the end of each class, you feel great; you have stretched each
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National Drunk and Drugged Driving Month

Protect Yourself and Your Family and Friends

During the holiday season, and year-round, take steps to make sure that you and everyone you celebrate with avoids driving under the influence of alcohol. Following these tips from NHTSA can help you stay safe:

- **Plan ahead.** Always designate a non-drinking driver before any holiday party or celebration begins.
- **Take the keys.** Do not let a friend drive if they are impaired.
- **Be a helpful host.** If you're hosting

a party this holiday season, remind your guests to plan ahead and designate their sober driver, always offer alcohol-free beverages, and make sure all of your guests leave with a sober driver.

Know How Communities Can Help

Proven community and state-level methods for reducing alcohol-impaired driving include:

- **Sobriety checkpoints.** Studies found that fatal crashes thought to involve alcohol dropped by about 22% following implementation of sobriety checkpoints.

- **Minimum legal drinking age (MLDA) laws.** Studies found that raising the MLDA to 21 reduced crashes by about 16% among people ages 18-20 years.

- **0.08% BAC laws.** Fatal alcohol-related crashes declined about 7% after 0.08% BAC laws were passed.

- **"Zero tolerance" laws for young drivers.** Three studies found that zero tolerance laws resulted in declines in fatal crashes among drivers ages 18-20 years between 9% and 24%



Ways to Give Back During the Holidays

Donate to a Charity or Shelter – you can do this monetarily or give your old clothes or children's toys to a shelter or charity. You can even give towels and blankets to any homeless or animal shelter!

Toys For Tots (www.toysfortots.org)

Soles For Souls (www.soles4souls.com)

Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank (www.brfoodbank.org)

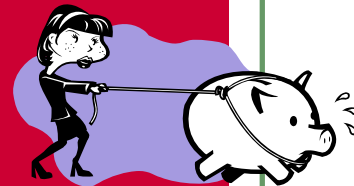
Volunteer at a Shelter – if you can't give money or material items, you can always opt to give your time. Shelters are always looking for volunteers to help them serve food, clean and fix up the shelters, and even visit with people there. Even a couple hours of work are greatly appreciated!

Adopt a Family – The Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul offer programs in which you and a group of family members or friends can help out a less fortunate local family by providing them with a holiday meal and gifts.

Deliver Gifts/ Meals – the best way to get involved in delivering holiday meals and gifts to the less fortunate would be to contact your local church for information on how to be a part of this gratifying experience.

Thank Your Delivery Man – do you purchase gifts online? If you are expecting a lot of deliveries to your house this holiday season, thank your delivery guy by leaving him a thank you card or a small token, maybe even a snack or bottle of water for hauling all those packages!

Wellness Tip of the Month



Save Money this Holiday Season

Set a Budget... Ahead of time – decide on how much you are going to spend for the holidays. Do it ahead of time and stick to it! Don't forget purchases like postage or shipping, holiday cards, home décor, and holiday party favors.

Buy Less – Do a family-to-family gift exchange meaning give 1 gift the whole family can use. It saves you the time and money. A White Elephant gift exchange is also a great idea, you only buy 1 gift! Here's how to organize this:

White Elephant

Shop Prices, Not Sales – EVERYONE is having sales during the holidays. Make sure you are getting a good deal, check the original price and compare it to the sale price.

Wrap Gifts Yourself – if the store doesn't offer free gift wrapping, take it home and wrap it yourself!



Exercise Trend of the Month

Mind / Body Exercise

Mind-body exercise is physical activity performed with an internal focus. Mind/Body exercises are gaining popularity due to their many proven physical benefits as well as emotional benefits – particularly for managing stress and anxiety. Many forms of mind/body exercises are beneficial for people with conditions that might not allow them to participate in “regular” forms of exercise, but they can also help advanced exercisers enhance their fitness levels and become more balanced. Even some top performing athletes in intense sports like professional football are using mind / body exercises to improve their skill level.

Mind-body exercises have been proven to help people:

- Improve muscular strength, flexibility, balance and coordination
- Decrease anxiety
- Decrease pain
- Enhance sleep
- Decrease side effects of medical procedures
- Strengthen the immune system and enhance the ability to heal
- Increase sense of control and well-being
- Reduce the medical and economic costs of

psychological distress

- Improve glucose tolerance
- Reduce responsiveness to stress hormones
- Increase self-awareness, self-efficacy, and personal empowerment
- Decrease pain and pain sensation
- Reduce blood pressure

When performed correctly; Yoga, Tai Chi, and Pilates are traditional forms of mind-body exercises.

YOGA -- While stretching is certainly involved, yoga is really about creating balance in the body through developing both strength and flexibility. This is done through the performance of poses or postures, each of which has specific physical benefits.

TAI CHI – The ancient art of tai chi uses gentle flowing movements to reduce stress. Tai Chi is sometimes described as "meditation in motion" because it promotes serenity through gentle movements, connecting the mind and body and promoting balance and coordination.

PILATES -- Pilates is a form of exercise that emphasizes the balanced development of the body through core strength, flexibility, and awareness in order to support efficient, graceful movement.

Yoga Benefits Every Body Cont'd

part of your body to release tension and you have relaxed so deeply that sometimes instructors have to wake participants up. But the benefits go far beyond stress relief.

Research has shown that yoga improves the overall health and condition of just about every system in the body. Regular yoga participants improve their strength and flexibility; they increase their energy and circulation and enhance their digestive, cardiovascular and endocrine systems.

During a typical yoga class, participants focus on their breathing while doing gentle stretches, or poses. Every pose can be adapted to meet the level of the student from beginner to advanced. Even individuals who have limited mobility can adapt the poses to be done in a chair with the assistance of the instructor.

A few years ago, I had a woman who had her ankles fused due to an automobile

accident and was unable to walk for exercise. She felt uncomfortable at the gym or pool and started coming to yoga twice a week at her office, and did most of the poses in a chair. After four weeks of practice, she felt much better and was able to drastically decrease her pain medicine. For yoga practitioners, results like that are not rare, but rather commonplace. Ask any person who practices yoga on a regular basis and they will tell you how much better they feel when they are practicing yoga, especially after a long day. Give yoga a try and experience for yourself how much yoga can improve the way you feel.



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Your Partner in Health!

www.SBWellness.com
8733 Siegen Lane #370
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Phone: 225-445-5814

E-mail:

shellybeall@sbwellness.com



Recipe of the Month

Roasted Red Pepper Artichoke Dip

Use this dip recipe to make bruschetta or serve it on its own.



- 1 7 oz. jar roasted red peppers, drained
- 1 6 oz. jar marinated artichoke hearts, drained
- 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup fresh grated parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup capers, drained
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

Add ingredients to a food processor and pulse until mixture becomes the texture of chunky pesto.

Recipe from: [Suite 101](#)

Beat Holiday Stress

Holiday time often brings family together and can be loaded with good times and memories. But as with any big event in life, many of us experience lots of added stress. **Stress Happens!** – remember, stress is almost unavoidable during the holidays. Its all about learning how to deal with your stressors. So take a deep breathe, expect it, and control it! Try some of the following tips to beat the holiday stress this year:

Remember to enjoy yourself. If you find you are focusing on the negatives of the season, stop and list all of the positive and joyful things you love about it. Try sitting down with your family and writing a motto for the holidays. Include what the holidays mean to you and what is most important. Now look at your schedule. Does it fit with your motto? If not, make some adjustments. Set realistic goals. Try to create a balance between friends, family, work, entertainment, and play. **Don't beat yourself up over a little dessert!** Enjoy yourself every step of the way. Choose to be in the spirit and have a healthy and joyful season!

Tired of all of the crowds? Hit the gym! Take it from us; it is the least crowded place to be right now. Take a

break from the crowds, the in-laws, the wrapping, and the stress and go blow off some steam on the treadmill. **Meditate or do Yoga!** Just 10 minutes of stretching or deep-breathing can make a world of difference on your stress level. See our Exercise Trend of the Month: Mind/Body on Page 3.

Worried? Anxious? Sad? Remember, these feelings are all very normal, in spite of it being Christmas! Allow room for the many different emotions that may hit you and be good to yourself. Its okay to feel sad, lonely, or worried. Just keep it in perspective. Remind yourself that life changes and that every Christmas will be a little different than the last. Focus on what is important to you right now.

Don't Blow your Budget. If you set a budget ahead of time, you are less likely to go over it as the holidays get closer. See our Wellness Tip of the Month on Page 2 for tips on saving money this holiday season.

Do Something Nice For Yourself. Set aside some time EVERY DAY to do something that makes you happy: reading a book, exercising, painting your nails, calling a friend or family member.

Tis' the Season to be Jolly!!!