PURSUIT

Florida Blue
BetterYou

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

Fuel your body for the future

Join us as we celebrate National Nutrition Month®. Its founder, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, encourages everyone to develop healthy eating and exercise habits.

This year's theme is Fuel for the Future, highlighting eco-friendly ways to fuel your body and help protect the environment. You will also lower your risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Check out these tips to give your body the fuel it needs to stay well now and into the future.

Eat with the environment in mind

- Enjoy more plant-based meals and snacks
- Purchase foods with minimal packaging
- Buy foods in season and shop locally when possible
- Start a garden in your backyard to grow food at home

Stay nourished and save money

- Make a plan for meals and snacks a week ahead
- See what foods you have on hand before you shop
- Use a grocery list and check the sale items
- Learn about community resources and local farmer's markets

Eat a variety of foods from all food groups

- Include your favorite cultural foods and traditions
- Try lots of different kinds of fruits and vegetables
- Avoid fad diets that restrict whole food groups
- Have a protein, carbohydrate, and healthy fat at each meal

Make tasty foods at home

- Use how-to videos to hone your cooking and meal prep skills
- Try new flavors and foods from around the world
- Find creative ways to use leftovers rather than tossing them
- Create happy memories by eating with friends and family when possible
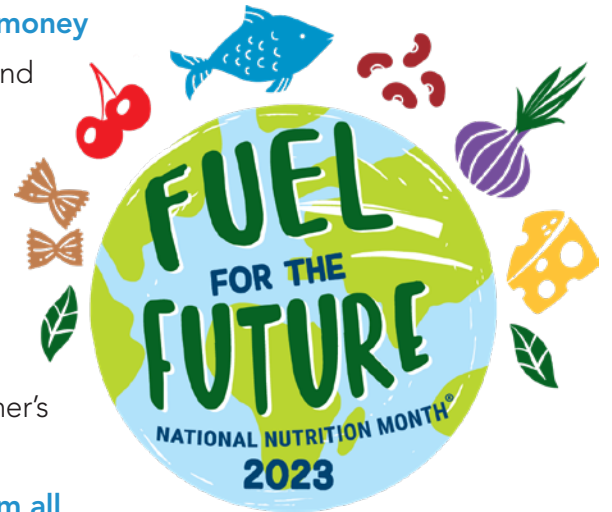
A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist can teach you how your nutrient needs may change with age, and give you personalized nutrition information to meet your health goals. Ask your doctor for a referral or go to eatright.org and click on Find a Nutrition Expert.

> To add more fuel to your future, **join us** for a live webinar on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 1:00 pm ET

Resource: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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The sleep mood connection

We know a good night's sleep is good for our physical health, but did you know it's just as important for our mental health? Sleep problems — whether it's not getting enough sleep or not getting quality sleep — can negatively impact our overall health. Quality sleep helps improve our mood, increase productivity and, in general, is linked with a greater satisfaction in life.

How sleep boosts well-being

Sleep is food for our brains. According to **healthypeople.gov**, when you sleep, your body is working to repair cells and restore the energy your body and brain need to function. Physically, sleep is helping your body repair tired muscles and conserve needed energy. Neurologically, sleep is working to restore brain functions like memory, creativity, problem solving skills and focus. Sleep also helps restore our emotional stability.

What happens when we don't get our ZZZs?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says that not getting enough sleep can impact our overall health and increase our risk for chronic diseases and conditions like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity and mood disorders like depression. People who don't get enough sleep often experience poorer judgment, slower thinking, irritability, mood changes and a decline in work productivity.

Inadequate sleep, especially over a long period of time, can lead or contribute to mood disorders. Chronic sleep problems have been linked to depression, anxiety and mental distress. According to the National Institutes of Health, "one study reported that participants who slept only 4.5 hours per night were more stressed, sad, angry, and mentally exhausted than a comparison group with longer sleep."

For tips on how to improve sleep and boost your mental well-being visit the **Your Mental Health Matters** section of BlueAnswers, and view **Sleep Yourself Happier with Dr. Dewan.**

> Learn more about the connection between mental health and sleep. **Click here** to join us for a live webinar on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 1:00 pm ET.

Resource: FloridaBlue.com

Orange and Avocado Salad (Serves 4)

Ingredients:

Cilantro-Lime Vinaigrette
- 1 cup packed cilantro
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup lime juice
- ¼ cup orange juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- Pinch of minced garlic

Salad
- 2 large oranges
- 8 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 avocado, diced
- ¼ cup slivered red onion
- ½ cup Cilantro-Lime Vinaigrette

To prepare vinaigrette:

Puree cilantro, oil, lime juice, orange juice, salt, pepper and garlic in a blender or food processor until smooth.

To prepare salad:

Slice both ends off oranges. With a sharp knife, remove the peel and white pith; discard. Working over a salad bowl, cut the segments from their surrounding membrane; discard the membrane. Add greens, avocado, onion and vinaigrette; toss to coat. (Refrigerate the extra dressing for up to 2 days.).

Recipe courtesy of Eatingwell.com; *for nutritional information click* here.