

Wellness News

January 2024

This issue

Benefits of Walking

Winter Activities for Fitness

Maternal Health Awareness Day

Spinach White Bean Soup



“The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write that story by setting goals.” - Melody Beattie



Anthem members: You can view and manage your benefits, access wellness tools and resources to improve your overall wellbeing. Simply scan this QR code with your smartphone's camera to download the Sydney Health app.

Tip: Anthem.com and Sydney Health use the same username and password!



Walking: Physical activity doesn't have to be complicated

Something as simple as a daily brisk walk can help you live a healthier life.

Know the Benefits.

Regular brisk walking can help you maintain a healthy weight, increase your energy level and improve your mood. It's OK to start slowly- especially if you haven't been exercising regularly. As you progress, the farther and more frequently you walk, the greater the benefits. As you build your endurance, you'll be strengthening your bones and muscles and improving your cardiovascular fitness.

Set Realistic Goals.

Even small amounts of activity are helpful. Start with a simple goal, such as, "I'll take a 5- or 10-minute walk during my lunch break." When your 5- or 10-minute walk becomes a habit, set a new goal, such as, "I'll walk for 20 minutes after work." Find specific times for walks. Soon you could be reaching for goals that once seemed impossible.

Stay Motivated and Set Yourself up for Success.

Make walking enjoyable: If you don't like walking alone, ask a friend or neighbor to join you. You might like listening to music or your favorite podcast while you walk.

Vary your routine: If you walk outdoors, plan several different routes for variety. Try routes with hills or stairs as you become a more seasoned walker. Try changing your pace with intervals of walking faster for a few minutes and then slow down and repeat the cycle.

Track your progress: Keeping a record of the steps you take, the distance you walk, and how long it takes helps you see where you started and serves as a source of inspiration. Just think how good you'll feel when you see how many miles you've walked each week, month or year.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20046261>



Anthem members: Be sure to check out ways to sync your fitness devices and trackers on the Sydney app. Login, tap MENU at the bottom of the Sydney home page. Tap "My Health Dashboard", scroll down to "Activity Tracking" and "Manage Devices/Apps"

Winter Fitness

Wintery weather can't stop the fitness champion in you!

Exercising in cooler weather has some distinct advantages over working out in warmer weather. Keep these cold weather benefits in mind and stay on track with your fitness routine all winter.

No heat and humidity to deal with. Winter's chill might even make you feel awake and invigorated.

You may be able to work out longer in cold weather—which means you can burn even more calories.

It's a great way to take in the sunlight (in small doses). Not only can light improve many people's moods, but it also helps you get some vitamin D.

Exercise boosts your immunity during cold and flu season. Just a few minutes a day can help prevent simple bacterial and viral infections, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Try these outdoor activities:

- Brisk walking or hiking
- Jogging or running
- Raking leaves
- Shoveling snow
- Ice skating
- Sledding
- Cross-country skiing
- Snowshoeing



Stay Warm, Stay Safe

Staying warm and dry when heading out to exercise in cold weather is all about layers. They help trap the heat and form a kind of insulation against the elements.

For your first layer, you want something that pulls moisture away from your skin, like the moisture wicking fabrics used in high-performance sportswear. Next, add a layer of fleece; finally, top with a thin waterproof layer.

Hypothermia-Know the Signs

Hypothermia means the body temperature has fallen below 35 degrees Celsius or about 95 degrees Fahrenheit. It occurs when your body can't produce enough energy to keep the internal body temperature warm enough. It can kill you.

Symptoms can include:

- Lack of coordination
- Mental confusion
- Slowed reactions
- Slurred speech
- Cold feet and hands
- Shivering
- Sleepiness

Maternal Health Awareness Day: January 23, 2024

Moms' Mental Health Matters

Pregnancy and a new baby can bring a range of emotions. In fact, many women feel overwhelmed, sad, or anxious at different times during their pregnancy and even after the baby is born. For many women, these feelings go away on their own. But for some women, these emotions are more serious and may stay for some time.

Depression and anxiety may get in the way of doing everyday activities, like taking care of yourself and your baby. They are long lasting and won't go away on their own. But they are treatable, which is why it's important to get help.

Contact a health care provider if you experience:

- Intense anger, worry or unhappiness
- Extreme mood swings
- Difficulty caring for yourself or your baby
- Less interest in things you used to enjoy

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline provides free, confidential support, resources, and referrals from professional counselors to pregnant and postpartum individuals facing mental health challenges 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call [\(833\) 852-6262](tel:833-852-6262).

For additional resources go to [find help](#) at the National Institute of Health's Child and Maternal Health education program

[source:https://www.nichd.nih.gov/ncmhep/initiatives/moms-mental-health-matters](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/ncmhep/initiatives/moms-mental-health-matters)



What else can I do?

Connect with other moms

Look for a moms' group in your community or online. These groups may give you the chance to learn from others who are going through or have gone through the same thing and to share your own feelings.

Be realistic

You don't have to do everything. You don't have to have the "perfect" home. Just do what you can and leave the rest.

Ask for help

Don't be afraid to ask for help from family and friends, whether it's caring for the baby or doing household chores.

Anthem members: You may have access to Anthem's [Building Healthy Families](#) program. This end-to-end digital solution goes beyond traditional maternity support to offer helpful resources from preconception through early parenthood. Members with access, can find it in the Sydney mobile app home screen under "Programs"

Spinach White Bean Soup

This simple crock pot recipe makes a filling and healthy meal for the cooler weather.

Ingredients

- 6 cups reduced-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 can (15-1/2 ounces) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato puree
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup uncooked converted long grain rice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 7 cups chopped fresh spinach
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Directions

In a 4-qt. slow cooker, combine the first 9 ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 6-7 hours or until heated through. Stir in spinach. Cover and cook for 15 minutes or until spinach is wilted. Sprinkle with cheese.



Nutrition Facts

1 cup: 151 calories, 1g fat (0 saturated fat), 2mg cholesterol, 291mg sodium, 26g carbohydrate (3g sugars, 5g fiber), 7g protein. **Diabetic Exchanges:** 2 vegetable, 1 starch.

source:<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/spinach-white-bean-soup>

Anthem members: You can find additional information about fitness, nutrition and more via the Sydney app. Tap on menu from the home screen, “My Health Dashboard”, and scroll down to “My Health News”.