



THE Y AXIS



## Happiness Is ... A Digital Media Diet

You're probably reading this on a screen right now.

Phone, tablet, computer?



What's your digital diet look like? Maybe you're in front of a computer all day, check your phone often, or binge-watch shows after work.

New research suggests that as your screen time goes

up, your happiness level goes down.<sup>1</sup>

In the study, happiness started to go down after just 1 hour of screen time.

Maybe you can't cut your screen time down to an hour on a workday.

But on the weekend? Unplug. Relax. Reconnect face-to-face. Go on a digital media diet. And be happy.



### COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:  
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## Score a Healthy-Fat Touchdown with Avocados

Discover the health benefits of avocados

Even if you don't follow football, you've probably seen ads, commercials, and sales for Super Bowl LII. The Philadelphia Eagles will take on the New England Patriots on Feb. 4. Here's what you need to know:

More than 70,000 fans will pack the U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minn. About 100 million people will watch the game on TV. And there's at least one more stat you can announce at game time: Football fans will consume about 128 million pounds of avocados on Super Bowl Sunday.

Game-day party grub isn't exactly known for being at the top of the healthy food chain. But avocados deserve a little respect.

The green-colored fruit has officially joined the ranks as a party "must-have." (Yes, it's a fruit.) It's used in salsa and guacamole.

### MORE

Try these avocado recipes  
[tinyurl.com/ajh3yav](https://tinyurl.com/ajh3yav)

Recipes abound for avocados that are sliced, diced, mashed, and pureed for fruit smoothies, ice cream, pudding, sandwiches, and salads.

Health benefits of avocados

Show up to the game-day party, and serve up a little avocado wisdom. They have more fiber than any other fruit. And the healthy fats and antioxidants in avocados:

- Reduce the risk for a heart attack or stroke
- Lower blood pressure
- Improve good cholesterol levels
- Lower triglycerides
- Support brain function

If you're looking for a way to liven up your menu and be healthier, eat avocados. Super Bowl Sunday not required. Add diced avocados to a salad. Use mashed avocado in place of mayonnaise on a sandwich or bagel. Or make your own guacamole, and enjoy!

## Can You Heal Your Heart with a Daily Dose of Exercise?

Physical activity improves heart health

Did you know someone can have a heart attack and not know it? That's the case with one in five heart attacks. If you see any of the warning signs, call 911 right away:

- ✓ Chest pains
- ✓ Pain in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- ✓ Shortness of breath
- ✓ Or sometimes a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness

Getting treatment as soon as possible gives you the best chance for surviving.

Lifestyle medicine and heart health

Preventing a heart attack is ideal. But your risk for a heart attack, heart disease, or heart failure <https://tinyurl.com/ycbf5f9t> increases as you age. What should you do?

Your doctor may have you take medication. And there are other things you can do, like don't smoke, lose weight if you need to, and eat a plant-based diet. Taking steps to control blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose can help, too.

But there's at least one more lifestyle factor you can change to improve heart health as you age. Be more active





### Spinach and Mushroom Quesadillas

Hungry for some healthy quesadillas? Skip the restaurant or take-out menu. You can make your own with spinach, mushrooms, and a few other ingredients. Salsa and hot sauce optional. Here's the recipe.<sup>6</sup>

#### Ingredients

- 10 oz. spinach, chopped
- 2 C shredded cheese
- 2 T butter or olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 sliced portobello mushroom caps
- 4 10-inch flour tortillas
- 1 T olive oil

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Place tortillas on flat baking sheet. Sprinkle with ½ C of cheese. Bake 5 minutes.
3. Heat butter or oil in a pan over medium heat. Stir in garlic and mushrooms. Cook 5 minutes. Add spinach. Cook another 5 minutes.
4. Spoon mixture on to tortillas. Fold tortillas in half.
5. Heat a little oil in skillet. Cook quesadilla for 3 minutes on each side.

## Food for Thought: What You Eat Can Make You Smarter

Healthy fats may improve brain function

In the science fiction movie *Limitless*, Edward Morra (played by Bradley Cooper), feels like his life is unraveling because of writer's block. Then he pops a pill, writes a law-school essay, and pens a book. He learns several languages, and perfectly predicts the stock market to make a lot of cash. All within a matter of days.

No, a pill like that doesn't exist. But what you eat may make you smarter.

A recent study looked at brain images, blood tests, and intelligence scores for a group of healthy adults.

It turns out that people who scored the highest on intelligence

tests all had something in common. They ate healthy fats, or foods that contain monounsaturated fatty acids.<sup>5</sup>

The study helps explain how nutrition can impact thinking and brain health. Healthy fats may help improve networks in the brain used to solve problems, improve focus, and handle tasks that require attention to detail.

Put this brain food on the menu

So what foods are high in healthy fats? Follow a plant-based diet and eat these brain foods: Avocados, olive oil, nuts, seeds, tofu, and even a little dark chocolate. @



#### MORE

Boost your memory by eating right  
[tinyurl.com/ybxf4thr](https://tinyurl.com/ybxf4thr)

### Can You Heal Your Heart with Exercise? (continued from page 1)

Take a daily dose of exercise

A recent study found that 30 minutes of exercise four to five times a week can help strengthen your heart. Doing this may even help reverse heart damage linked to aging.<sup>4</sup>

#### MORE

Get more heart-healthy exercise  
[tinyurl.com/y7dfta3q](https://tinyurl.com/y7dfta3q)

“This dose of exercise has become my prescription for life,” says Dr. Benjamin Levine. He’s a University of Texas Southwestern researcher who helped direct the study. “I think people should be able to do this as part of their personal hygiene, just like brushing your teeth and taking a shower.”

### References

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4. Howden, E., et al. (2018). Reversing the cardiac effects of sedentary aging in middle age: A randomized controlled trial. Implications for heart failure prevention. *Circulation*, 137:4. From: <https://tinyurl.com/ychdvzmm>
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6. Regale, M.S., Spinach and mushroom quesadillas. *AllRecipes*. From: <https://tinyurl.com/ya422b37>



## Take the February Health Challenge!

Feast on Fiber: Eat more fiber-rich foods to improve your health

## Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Joe Raphael answers the question:

What can I do to keep my heart healthy?