



THE Y AXIS



Do the Brain Dance

Think you could earn a high score on *Dancing with the Stars*?



Move your feet. Feel the beat. Smile. Keep up with your partner. Learn a new routine every week.

You might not be the next celebrity pick for the popular reality show. But if you want to keep your brain healthy, plan to move and groove a little more.

Why? New research shows that dancing can help keep your brain young and prevent problems like dementia and Alzheimer's disease.⁵ It also improves balance.

Want a high-score the next time you see your doctor? Start dancing.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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8 'Wild' Reasons to Spend More Time Outside

Step outside to improve your health

When the young Cheryl Strayed reached a tipping point in her life, she wasn't happy.

Her marriage failed. Her mother died. She bounced from one job to the next. She made a lot of unhealthy choices. And she knew something had to change.

So she filled a backpack with a few essentials, put on some hiking boots, and headed for the great outdoors.

For the next three months, Strayed hiked north from California to Washington, along 1,100 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail. The journey changed her life and inspired her best-selling memoir, *Wild*.

Have you ever felt a little stressed out, overwhelmed, or in a funk?

Spending time outside can help. Research shows that spending time outdoors can:¹

1. Improve mood
2. Lower blood pressure
3. Reduce stress

4. Increase vitamin D levels
5. Strengthen the immune system
6. Increase energy levels
7. Promote physical activity
8. Improve sleep

Need a reason to spend more time outside?

Chances are pretty good most people would benefit from a regular dose of the outdoors.

You don't need to take a 1,100-mile trek through the mountains to improve your health. But you do need to be active.

Plan a day hike. Visit a park. Go for a bike ride. Take a walk around your neighborhood. Or get outside and work in the yard.

Even if you're busy, spending a little more time outside can improve your move and your health...without medication. And that's kind of *wild*.

MORE

Get outside to improve your well-being
<https://tinyurl.com/93z97n7c>

The 20-Minute Trick to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

You hungry? Take time to chew your food

If you're stressed, in a hurry, or both, it's easy to inhale your food. And a lot of people do eat quickly...in the car, on the way out the door, at the office. Or maybe mealtime at home always feels like a mad dash. Sound familiar?

What you eat certainly makes a difference when it comes to your health. But a recent study found that how you eat may also affect the way your body responds to food.²

In the study, researchers found that eating fast may be linked to an increased risk for diabetes. Your mom was right...chew your food.

In the U.S. about 34 million people have type 2 diabetes. And another 88 million people have prediabetes, according to the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention. Diabetes can lead to:

- Poor circulation
- Kidney failure
- Blindness
- Strokes
- Heart disease
- Early death

Is there anything you can do to prevent diabetes?

Eat a healthy diet. Maintain a healthy weight or lose weight if you need to. Get regular exercise. And there's at least one more recommendation...





Strawberry Fruit Smoothie

About five years ago, farmer Koji Nakao found an apple-sized strawberry in his field. The official weight of 250 grams (8.82 ounces) landed him a spot in the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

His daughter said it was tasty.

Hungry for some sweet and tasty strawberries this summer? Enjoy a dish of sliced strawberries. Make some strawberry shortcake. Add sliced strawberries to a salad. Or give this fruit smoothie recipe a try.⁴

Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 1 C fresh strawberries
- 1 C vanilla yogurt, low-fat
- 1/2 C fruit juice
- 6-8 ice cubes

Directions

1. Put all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend on high until smooth.
3. Enjoy!

Watermelon: A Sweet & Juicy Way to Control Blood Pressure

Study: Eating watermelon helps lower blood pressure

Pick up a carefully-cut wedge of watermelon. Take a bite. Savor its sweet taste. If the juice runs down your arm, you know you've picked the perfect melon.

This summer, we'll celebrate National Watermelon Day. Millions of people will bite into this sweet and juicy fruit. And that may be just the thing to help control blood pressure, according to a recent study.³

Did you know 1 in 3 adults have elevated or high blood pressure?

According to the American Heart Association, elevated or high blood pressure can lead to:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Vision loss
- Kidney disease
- And other health problems

But it doesn't have to be that way. In the study at San Diego State University, researchers looked at the impact of eating cookies vs. watermelon.

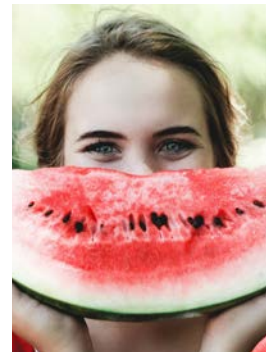
FYI...the results for watermelon were a lot juicier than cookies.

Eating watermelon every day can help you:

- Lose weight
- Lower Body Mass Index
- Reduce triglycerides and LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Lower blood pressure

There's other benefits, too. Watermelon is low in calories. It contains vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that prevent disease and certain types of cancer. And it's about 92 percent water to help you stay hydrated.

Eating a slice of watermelon may be the most popular way to enjoy this fruit. But it also tastes great in fruit salad, salsa, and drinks. That's some juicy stuff...Yum!



MORE

Try this recipe: Watermelon Gazpacho
<https://tinyurl.com/2rc48mme>

The 20-Minute Trick to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes (continued from page 1)

Slow down at meal time. Here's how:

- **Time it.** Set a timer or stopwatch for 20 minutes. Use all the time to eat a normal-sized meal.
- **Chew your food.** Take small bites and chew slowly.
- **Be quiet.** Eat silently for the first five minutes. Think about your

food, what it looks like, how it tastes, and what it took to produce.

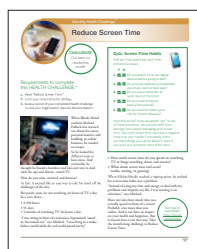
- **Slow down** your eating. Try using your nondominant hand to hold your fork. Put your fork down when you chew. Or try using chopsticks

MORE

Simple steps to prevent diabetes
<https://tinyurl.com/lbnkqus>

References

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3. Connolly, M., et al. (2019). Effect of fresh watermelon consumption on risk factors for cardiovascular disease in overweight and obese adults. *Current Developments in Nutrition*, P06:102-19. From: <https://tinyurl.com/83wwwpr2s>
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2017). Fruit smoothie. From: <https://tinyurl.com/keclclr>
5. Rehfeld, K., et al. (2017). Dancing or fitness sport? The effects of two training programs on hippocampal plasticity and balance abilities in healthy seniors. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*. From: <https://tinyurl.com/3wf43ayt>



Take the July Health Challenge!

Reduce Screen Time: Cut back on media this month

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question:
Can a morning routine make you healthier?

