

HOMEMADE

Health

Collaborative Publication by Holistic Health Coaches

SUMMER 2025

**Defy Aging Norms with
Full-Circle Wellness for
Women 40+**

*Summer Renewal
& Connection with*

MINDFUL ADVENTURES

- *Pet Soul Connections: Healing Compassion and Well-Being*
- *Herbs & Spices: Flavor & Vibrant Energy*
- *Fit for Summer: Active Lifestyle Without the Gym*
- *Safe Sun for Vitamin D
& more in this issue*

RECIPE:

*Green Goddess
Summer Pesto*

SPOTLIGHT:

*Summer Meal
Planning*

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Aging doesn't have to mean decline—it's an opportunity for expansion, resilience, and joy. Visit [Homemade-health.com](https://www.homemade-health.com) to get started.

WELCOME FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Homemade Health theme for 2025 is ... MINDFUL!

Conscious - Aware - Compassionate - Intentional - Alive - Sensitive - Alert - Kind - Awake - Understanding - Sentient - Thoughtful - Purposeful - Empathetic - Observant - Wise - Charitable - Deliberate

Summer brings **Mindful Adventures** full of intentional exploration
enthusiastic fun
empathetic connections
thoughtful openness
observant curiosity
purposeful expansion
alive exhilaration

The Homemade Health Coach Team invites you to activate all of your senses to experience **Mindful Adventures**. We're sharing valuable, curated, and actionable resources on Homemade-Health.com and in the following pages - all geared toward helping you prioritize self-care, fine-tune your intuition, and strengthen your body-mind-spirit through our unique collective, holistic approach.

Spring 2025 - *Mindful Starts*
Summer 2025 - *Mindful Adventures*
Fall 2025 - *Mindful Traditions*
Winter 2025 - *Mindful Insights*

Kris Francefort

Kris Francefort
Homemade Health Publisher



ARE YOU A HOLISTIC WELLNESS SPECIALIST?

Consider contributing to our seasonal publication



Inquire by emailing
kris@homemade-health.com



Next edition planning starts NOW.



Simple 6 week
Healthy
Eating
Jumpstart
Program

Prioritizing healthy eating can feel **impossible** when you are juggling your job, managing a household and trying to add in self-care.

I'm Joanne Raia and I've been supporting busy women in getting healthier with plant-based foods since 2015. I can help you eliminate the struggle with my customized one-to-one jumpstart program. It includes support calls, meal plans, recipes, an app and more!



If you are interested in learning more
— I'd love to chat.
Contact me at 860-268-1927 or jo@rawjo.com

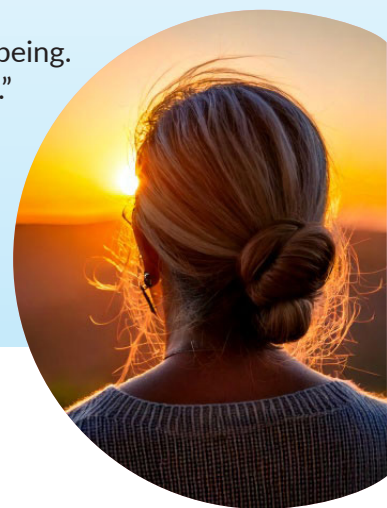
The Homemade Health Approach

By Kris Francefort, Founder and Team Leader of Homemade Health

Homemade Health helps women 40+ break free from aging stereotypes and unapologetically claim their rightful zest and vitality.

We serve women 40+ at all stages of maturity who are:

- Committed to breaking free from traditional, outdated beliefs and expectations about aging.
- Motivated to take proactive steps toward lifelong health, strength and vitality.
- Open to holistic, natural, and energetic approaches to wellness.
- Prioritizing self-care and willing to embrace proven lifestyle strategies for lasting well-being.
- Refusing to accept fatigue, weight gain, brain fog, or chronic symptoms as “normal aging.”
- Seeking expert guidance, accountability, and a like-minded, supportive community.
- Ready to take aligned action to slow down, or reverse the aging process so they can move toward their highest potential.
- Enthusiastic about taking control of their health confidently to claim a life they will savor fully, with purpose and joy.



Our Vision and Mission

At Homemade Health, we envision a world where women 40+ break the barriers of stereotypical aging norms, radiate vitality, and thrive at every stage of maturity.

Our mission is to shift the narrative from decline to empowerment—where every woman prioritizes personal well-being and steps into her full potential with finely-tuned intuition, strength of body-mind-spirit, confidence, and purpose aligned with her highest good.

Aging doesn't have to mean descent—it's an opportunity for expansion, resilience, and joy. Through holistic wellness, self-care, and the power of energetics, we guide women to claim their health, elevate their energy, cultivate deep, lasting connections, and live with intention.

Together, we create a ripple effect of transformation that uplifts individuals, strengthens communities, and inspires a new paradigm of aging—one of freedom, heart-centered kindness, and limitless possibility.

We guide women toward a future where they feel strong, vibrant, and in control of their well-being.

Events—Stay Tuned

We're planning some exciting events for the near future. You'll learn and practice effective techniques, along with lifestyle strategies to slow down or reverse your aging process.

Visit [Homemade-Health.com](https://www.homemade-health.com) for event updates, more plant-based recipes, DIY eco-swaps, and lifestyle tips to help create ageless living in your home!



Unique Homemade Health Team Approach

Incredible benefits of our team method

Holistic Expertise: Our team of six Wellness Professionals offers diverse specialties, skills, and knowledge, providing a comprehensive perspective that addresses your well-being from every angle.

Skilled Guidance: With over 120 collective years of experience, our team delivers guidance tailored to the unique needs and goals of the aging population, ensuring optimal effectiveness of your health journey.

Integrated Solutions: Our collaborative approach fosters integration among different wellness specialties, crafting comprehensive and effective wellness strategies.

Innovative Strategies: Benefit from the most current advice and techniques informed by the latest studies and developments in the health and wellness field.

Support Network: Tap into a support network where our team addresses concerns, answers questions, and provides guidance, maximizing your chances of success and well-being.

How We Help

We recognize the feelings of exhaustion, discomfort in your body, stress, worry about getting older, and stuck despite doing “all the right things.”

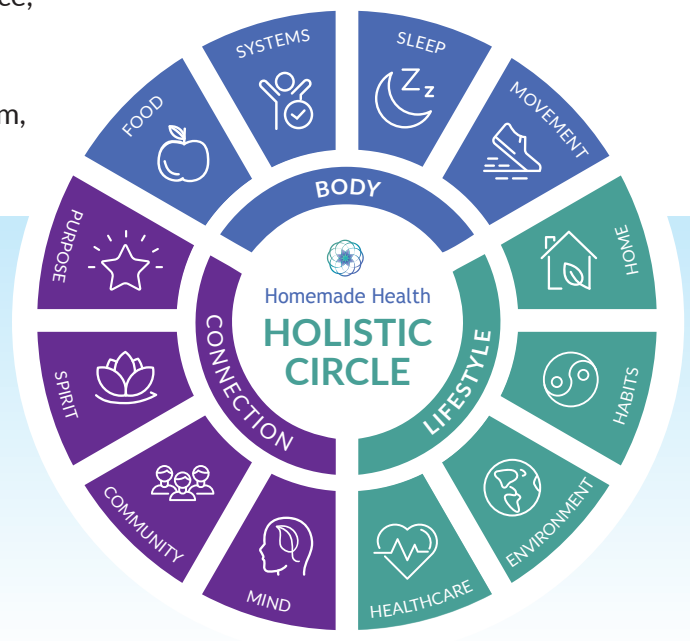
Homemade Health:

- Equips women 40+ with the knowledge, tools, curated resources, and strategies to take control and claim your health at any stage of maturity.
- Provides expert guidance based in a holistic, science-backed approach to lasting well-being.
- Addresses real challenges like hot flashes, brain fog, weight gain, and fatigue, along with a host of other physical symptoms.
- Cultivates an accepting, uplifting community for connection and support.
- Empowers women 40+ to self-regulate, restore balance, build resilience, and step into your highest potential with confidence and clarity.
- Guides the process of filling your days with enthusiasm, energy, activity, purpose and zest for life!

FULL-CIRCLE HOLISTIC WELLNESS SYSTEM

Our Full-Circle Holistic Wellness System integrates three key pillars—Body, Lifestyle, and Connection—and 12 Core Principles to provide a clear roadmap for women 40+ to claim their healthiest life.

For more information, visit homemade-health.com/approach



PETS AND OUR WELLBEING

By Kara Sylvia



One of the best decisions that I made was rescuing my dogs. They have brought so much joy and love into mine and my family's life. We currently have Meeka, who is a beautiful Husky/ Great Pyrenees Mix. She was brought up from Tennessee by Rebound Hounds, a rescue group.

Pets are such a big part of our life. We care for them every day and they give us unconditional love! I bet most of us don't even realize how they affect our health. Pets have a profound impact on our physical, emotional, and social well-being. Whether you're cuddling a cat, walking a dog, or simply watching fish swim, the presence of a pet can create ripples of healing throughout your life.

One of the most noticeable effects of having a pet is the emotional support they offer. Simply petting a dog or cat can trigger the release of oxytocin, the hormone associated with bonding and trust. At the same time, it lowers cortisol,

the body's main stress hormone, resulting in a calming effect that can reduce anxiety and depression.

Pets also provide a sense of purpose and routine. The need to feed, walk, or groom a pet creates structure in the day—something that can be especially grounding for people dealing with grief, mental health challenges, or major life transitions. For many, pets are a steady presence in a world that often feels uncertain.

Pets help our heart. Literally! Studies show that pet owners often have lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and a lower risk of heart disease. People who've had heart attacks even tend to recover faster and live longer if they have a pet.

If you have a dog, you know—they need their walks. But those walks aren't just good for them. They get us outside, moving our bodies, and connecting with nature. Even a short daily walk

helps keep our hearts healthy, our joints working, and our minds clear.

Pets boost our immunity. This might surprise you: kids who grow up around pets are less likely to develop allergies and asthma. And because pets bring in a mix of outdoor germs, they help us build stronger immune systems by exposing us to a wider range of helpful bacteria. (Yes, even a little dog dirt might be doing us good!)

They help us connect with others. Pets are great conversation starters. Whether you're at the dog park, walking around the block, or just sharing pictures online, pets give us a reason to connect. For people who feel shy or isolated, this can be a real lifeline.

The truth is that pets are so much more than animals in our homes. They're our companions, our comforters, our motivators—and sometimes even our healers.

Check out your local shelter or rescue organization, you might just find your new family member with health benefits!



DOGGIE ICE CREAM



INGREDIENTS

- 4 frozen bananas (sliced)
- ½ cup plant based plain yogurt
- ½ cup all-natural peanut butter

Blend together and portion into individual cups and freeze.

For added fun, dip a bone shaped dog biscuit half way into the mixture before freezing.

Make sure the yogurt and peanut butter are free of xylitol and added sugars, as these can be harmful to dogs.

Plant based yogurts are good especially if your dog is lactose intolerant or has allergies to dairy.

Kara Sylvia and Meeka are the lovely cover models for this issue. Kara is certified as a health coach with the Dr. Sears Wellness Institute. She knows prevention is key and hopes to inspire others to live a healthier life. She loves telling others that making one simple change can turn into a new healthy habit, that can lead to big results.

PET RESCUE:

The Healing Power of Compassion

By Ali Anne Johnson

HOW RESCUING A PET CAN BENEFIT YOUR HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

In a world increasingly attuned to the value of compassion, pet rescues and foster programs offer powerful examples of how caring for vulnerable animals can also nurture human well-being and the planet's health. Adopting or fostering a pet is more than an act of kindness—it can launch a chain reaction of benefits that reverberate through households, neighborhoods, and ecosystems.

I currently have 3 animal companions at home which are all from rescue situations. My 7 year old Siberian husky, Finnegan, who you can read about in the *Pets and their People* article, and my two cats, Gizmo - 16 years old, and Merlin - 10 years old, from local shelters in Connecticut. All have brought so much joy, peace and love into my life.



A SECOND CHANCE FOR ANIMALS –AND HUMANS

Every year, U.S. shelters take in over 6 million companion animals. Thanks to expanding rescue networks, about 4.2 million found adoptive homes in 2024, while euthanasia fell to its lowest level on record—around 607,000 animals, an 8 percent shelter-wide euthanasia rate. For the people who welcome these animals, the rewards are immediate and long-lasting. Numerous studies show that interacting with pets lowers cortisol, boosts serotonin and dopamine, and counteracts feelings of loneliness.

PHYSICAL HEALTH PERKS

Pet guardians—especially dog owners—walk more, sit less, and are likelier to meet daily exercise targets than non-owners. That increased movement translates into lower blood pressure, healthier body weight, and better sleep. For children, early exposure to household pets can strengthen immunity and reduce allergy risk, while older adults caring for pets demonstrate slower cognitive decline.

FOSTERING: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SHELTER AND HOME

Fostering gives animals a temporary safe haven while freeing up critical shelter space. By placing kittens, puppies or other animals in private homes, it allows high-intake shelters to save more animals overall. Most foster programs cover food, supplies, and veterinary care, making the arrangement low-cost for volunteers. Agencies typically match animals to households based on activity level, experience, and scheduling needs—meaning even studio-dwelling city residents or frequent travelers can find an appropriate foster fit.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CHOOSING RESCUE OR FOSTER OPTION

By adopting or fostering instead of purchasing from commercial breeders, families shrink demand for industrial-scale breeding facilities, which concentrate animal waste, consume significant water and electricity, and can degrade local land and waterways. Rescued pets are routinely spayed or neutered before placement, helping stabilize community cat colonies and stray dog populations that prey on wildlife or spread zoonotic disease. Lower shelter occupancy also translates into fewer single-use plastics (gloves, syringes, food cups), reduced HVAC loads, and less chemical disinfectant runoff.



A CYCLE OF POSITIVE CHANGE

Communities that embrace adoption and fostering enjoy a multiplier effect: animals leave shelters faster, staff morale and resources improve, and public engagement rises. Campaigns such as NBC/ Telemundo's annual Clear the Shelters have already facilitated more than one million adoptions and raised \$4.5 million for local rescues, proving that grassroots action scales quickly when people see tangible results.



CONCLUSION

Pet rescues and foster programs are not merely safety nets for animals—they are engines of health, hope, and sustainability. Whether you adopt a lifelong companion, welcome a foster pet for a few weeks, or support your local shelter through volunteering or donations, your compassion sets off ripples of well-being that extend across species and ecosystems. In caring for them, we care for ourselves—and for the planet we share.



Ali Anne Johnson is a certified health coach who aims to help people manage their conditions and prevent future flare ups utilizing Medical Medium information. Through diet changes, supplementation, and protocols, she creates a customized plan that works for each individual person.

PETS and their People

HOMEMADE HEALTH COACH TEAM WITH OUR FURRY COMPANIONS

ALI & FINNEGAN

Finn came to my family in August of 2019. We weren't looking to get a dog so soon after losing our beloved husky, Logan. But we heard of this sweet 2-year old husky that needed to be rehomed ASAP. We arranged for a meet and greet and fell in love immediately. A few days later we took him home and realized he was quite that chatterbox as husky breeds typically are.

Through all the talking, he loves to be very active accompanying us on many outdoor adventures including camping trips, hiking and swimming. After a busy day he likes to rest with his favorite blanket and chew bone. We wouldn't have it any other way.

Not pictured are my two senior cats, Gizmo and Merlin.



NESKO & PASHA

Pasha, our recent family member, is just 6 months old.

He is like the world to us. He is full of joy and love.

Having him in our lives is a special bond in the family.

He keeps us active, is the source of many stories to share with each other, and is great company.

We love to have him in our lives.

KRIS & OZZY

Ozzy has been the constant sweet presence in my days through so many big life changes ~ from empty nest (twice!) to the upheaval of leaving my home and way of life established over 34 years and everything in between.

Ozzy has traveled many emotional (and physical) miles with me, offering steadfast love and comfort. He's a true touch point keeping me balanced, fit (the daily walks cannot be missed!), and living with purpose (food, cuddles, treats, and scratchy massages don't just appear from thin air!).

Ozzy brings such joy by being his loving self and irresistible laughter from his quirky antics. There's so much personality packed in one small furry fella. I couldn't dream up a better companion.



LINDA & MADDIE

We acquired Maddie back in July 2017 from the ASPCA.

She was shipped in from Puerto Rico after a weather disaster.

She is now 7 1/2 years old, a great friend and very protective.

She is so appreciative of our love - she always brings me a squeaky toy after i feed her dinner, a gift of love!





KARA & MEEKA

Meeka is the heartbeat of our house. After losing our 10-year-old dog, Misty, I never wanted to go through that pain again. However, our house was missing something. That love, joy, and companionship were gone. We decided to rescue again. Three years ago, we brought home a 10-week-old puppy. It was the best decision. She helped heal my heart.

Meeka more than a dog—she’s our family. There’s nothing like the unconditional love from a dog. She’s my daily reminder that love doesn’t need words. It shows up in a wagging tail, a cuddle, and the way she lights up every time I return home—as if I’m the best thing she’s ever seen. I don’t know what I did to deserve a soul like hers, but I’m so grateful for the gift of being loved by Meeka.

STEPHANIE & BEAR

Bear is my constant cuddle-buddy, support animal, and spirit connection.

We’ve been through a lot together and I can’t imagine life without him always there to give endless love and healing energy during recovery times.

There are no words to describe how full my heart is with love for my precious boy.

Also in this picture is my cat, Blackie.



HOW YOU CAN HELP OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS

There are many ways to help our animal friends: adopt, foster, volunteer, donate, advocate, promote (spread the word)!

Go to [Homemade-Health.com](https://www.homemade-health.com) for more information on worthy animal welfare organizations

Submit an animal welfare suggestion for our website here:
<https://forms.gle/WC5C6UjmPRbZD1L57>



HERBS & SPICES OF SUMMER:

Flavor, Function, and Vibrational Vitality

by Nesko Elden

There's something magical that happens in my kitchen every summer. The markets overflow with radiant fruits, crisp vegetables, and an abundance of fresh herbs, and I find myself pulled—joyfully—into a season of experimentation. I don't follow recipes as much as I respond to the colors, the scents, and the inspiration they spark. A juicy mango here, a handful of mint there. Sweet strawberries next to peppery arugula. Basil blended into something creamy and tangy. Cooking in summer is less about rules and more about intuition, creativity, and letting nature guide the way.

The flavors of summer—bright, bold, and alive—do more than delight our taste buds. They speak to the body. They quench our thirst, support digestion, boost our mood, and energize us without weighing us down. I've come to love how herbs and spices, in particular, can completely transform a dish and how I feel after eating it. They bring lightness, clarity, and vitality—exactly what the body craves during this sun-soaked season.



THE BOTANICAL MAGIC OF SUMMER HERBS AND SPICES

Summer is a playground for herb lovers: **basil, mint, cilantro, parsley, dill, tarragon, lemon balm, thyme, lemongrass, and za'atar** — each with its own personality, taste, and functional gifts. They're more than garnishes; they're powerful plant allies.

- **Basil** offers a sweet, peppery aroma that feels almost euphoric. Its oils are both calming and anti-inflammatory.
- **Mint** is like a fresh breeze for the body. Cooling and invigorating, it helps with digestion and keeps the mind clear.
- **Cilantro** and **parsley** act as gentle detoxifiers, supporting kidney and liver function while adding brightness to every bite.
- **Dill** brings a nostalgic, almost comforting tang—perfect in cooling cucumber salads or chilled soups.
- **Thyme** is antimicrobial, helps with respiratory support, and adds a grounding, savory note to dishes.
- **Lemongrass** is fresh and citrusy, supports digestion, and has calming effects that soothe the nervous system.
- **Za'atar**, a Middle Eastern blend often including thyme, oregano, and sesame, supports immunity and gut health while adding a warm, earthy flavor.

These herbs and spices aren't just culinary tools; they support mitochondrial function, reduce inflammation, and enhance our overall vitality.

THE JOY OF GROWING AND HARVESTING HERBS

One of the greatest joys of summer is stepping into the garden barefoot in the morning, sun just rising, and running my fingers through a patch of fresh herbs. The scent is intoxicating, the colors vibrant. Harvesting your own mint or thyme for your tea, or snipping basil for lunch, creates an intimate connection with the food you eat. It's grounding and joyful, a moment of stillness and gratitude that connects you directly with the Earth.

Even a small herb pot on a windowsill can be a source of nourishment and ritual. Growing your own herbs means you get the freshest flavor and the most potent therapeutic benefits.

COOKING AS A SENSORY RITUAL & EARTH CONNECTION

There's something grounding and almost sacred in the act of tearing fresh herbs with your hands, inhaling their oils, and stirring them into a dish. Touch, scent, sight, taste—all five senses wake up when you cook with real plants. And that sensory awareness is a form of nourishment in itself. I often feel more connected to the Earth and to myself when I cook with fresh herbs and edible flowers—**lavender, nasturtium, calendula, rose**—adding both beauty and a gentle energetic lift to salads, teas, and desserts.

HOW TASTE GUIDES US: BALANCING THE FIVE FLAVORS

The body loves complexity. It thrives when meals include a dance of the five tastes: **sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami**. This balance satisfies us, supports digestion, and keeps our energy steady.

- **Sweet & sour:** Think fresh strawberries with a splash of balsamic.
- **Savory & sweet:** Add a spoonful of pesto to grilled peaches.
- **Spicy & cool:** Mango with chili and mint offers a perfect tension of heat and refreshment.

When we give our bodies this spectrum, we nourish not just our cells but our senses and emotions, too. In summer, when we want to feel light but still energized, herbs and spices help create that sweet spot.

LET THE HERBS LEAD THE WAY

Cooking in the summer isn't about perfection—it's about play. It's about listening to what your body craves, using your senses to explore, and letting the bounty of the season nourish you on every level. Herbs and spices are your guides—they help you digest, hydrate, energize, and connect. And they make everything taste—and feel—a little more alive.



Nesko Elden, BS, MBA - *Functional Nutrition Coach · Food Scientist · Energy Healer*

Nesko Elden is a Functional Nutrition Coach, Food Scientist, and Energy Healer devoted to helping women cultivate vibrant health, sustained energy, and a deep sense of inner harmony. With a background in Food Science and Engineering and advanced studies in integrative health, Nesko brings a uniquely holistic approach to wellness—merging evidence-based nutrition with powerful stress-relief practices and energy healing techniques.

Raised in the Mediterranean, her lifelong passion for food as medicine was shaped by a culture that honors the sensory and soulful aspects of nourishment. She now combines this rich tradition with modern science to help women reconnect with their bodies, restore balance, and reignite their zest for life.

Through her compassionate, personalized coaching, Nesko supports women in navigating the complexities of midlife and beyond—guiding them to break free from burnout, embrace self-awareness, and experience lasting transformation. Her approach empowers clients to not only eat well, but live well—aligned with their values, energy, and purpose.

Join Nesko on a transformative journey to holistic wellness and unlock the vibrant, joyful, and balanced life you were meant to live. Email: nesko@nutritiousdr.com



THE POWER OF *Summer* SEASONAL EATING for Healthier Living

By Linda Yalen

Summer is the season of abundance when it comes to fresh fruits and vegetables. Embracing seasonal eating during the summer not only ensures you're enjoying produce at its peak flavor and nutritional value but also supports local farmers and reduces your environmental footprint.

Summer season foods supports a diverse gut microbiome.

Seasonally variable diets impact the microbiome in a positive way as they rely on seasonal food availability. By eating significant quantities of fruits and vegetables that are available only during the summer, it provides a large shift in microbiome species composition compared to the winter. As you shift your food intake in summer you feed a variety of beneficial bacteria that live inside your system. This in turn creates stronger immunity and better overall health. The increased consumption of fibrous fruits and vegetables during the summer is likely responsible for these beneficial differences.

Here are some delicious and nutritious foods to enjoy during the summer:

Berries: Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries are bursting with flavor and nutrients during the summer months. They're packed with antioxidants, vitamins, and fiber.

Stone Fruits: Peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, and cherries are all at their best during the summer. These juicy fruits are not only delicious eaten fresh but can also be used in pies, cobblers, jams, and salads.

Watermelon: Nothing says summer like a juicy slice of watermelon. This hydrating fruit is low in calories but high in vitamins A and C, as well as antioxidants like lycopene.

Tomatoes: They are at their peak during the summer, coming in a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes. Whether eaten raw in salads, cooked into sauces, or roasted with herbs, they're a versatile and nutritious addition to your summer meals.

Cucumbers: Crisp and refreshing, cucumbers are perfect for hot summer days. They're low in calories and high in water content, making them a great hydrating snack.

Zucchini and Summer Squash: These versatile vegetables are abundant during the summer months. They can be grilled, sautéed, roasted, or spiralized into noodles for a lighter alternative to pasta.

Corn: Sweet corn is a quintessential summer vegetable, best enjoyed freshly picked and lightly steamed or grilled. It's a good source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

Leafy Greens: While some leafy greens may wilt in the summer heat, varieties like spinach, kale, and Swiss chard thrive. They're packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, perfect for salads or sautéing.

Herbs: Fresh herbs like basil, mint, cilantro, and parsley are abundant during the summer and add vibrant flavor to dishes. Use them to make pesto, salsa, or to garnish salads and grilled vegetables.

Bell Peppers: Bell peppers come in a rainbow of colors and are rich in vitamins A and C. They're delicious raw in salads, stuffed with grains and beans, or grilled alongside other vegetables.

By incorporating these seasonal foods into your summer meals, you can enjoy the best flavors of the season while reaping the nutritional benefits. Plus, supporting local farmers and eating sustainably has never tasted so good!

Linda Yalen is a certified Integrative Health Practitioner specializing in longevity through detoxification. She is also a Bioenergetic Health Coach with a company called Energy 4 Life (www.e4l.com), and a holistic cancer coach with Beatcancer.org, an organization that specializes in cancer education (www.beatcancer.org)

WHAT YOU DO EACH DAY MATTERS

BUILD HABITS THAT STRENGTHEN YOUR MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT

by Valerie Osiecki, Guest Contributor

As we navigate the ups and downs of daily life, our habits play a powerful role. They can support a longer life, boost productivity, and enhance physical and mental well-being... or they can pull us into feelings of gloom and doom.

We've all been there—moments when life feels out of our control. But the Law of Attraction teaches us that while we may not control circumstances, we can control our thoughts. And our bodies listen. Science backs this up in fascinating ways.

Have you ever heard of the woman who believed she was pregnant and experienced all the symptoms? Or the medical student who, while studying diseases, starts presenting the same symptoms?

This mind-body connection is real—and powerful.

Consider the placebo effect: patients experience real pain relief from a sugar pill simply because they *believe* it's medicine. Similarly, some cancer patients who visualize their immune system attacking tumors have shown remarkable improvements, even slowed tumor growth.

Fear and stress can trigger illness. But belief in healing, youthfulness, energy, and strength can create real biological changes.

Family, friends, and doctors agree: a positive mindset is key to healing. Yet when faced with pain, discomfort, or difficult news, positivity can feel out of reach.

That's when it becomes an intentional practice. We may not have control over the events, but we have powerful control over how we think about them. Trust the process—even if it's just baby steps each day.

PLANTING NEW SEEDS OF HEALTH AND JOY

One of my favorite quotes says, "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now." — Chinese Proverb.

If your habits aren't supporting your best self yet, there's no better moment to plant new seeds for growth. New habits, new adventures!

Summer is the Adventure Boosting Season – a time when the world feels alive with possibility. It's the perfect opportunity to explore walking in new environments: the beach, wooded trails, vibrant arboretums.

Feeling the soft sand underfoot, the cooling shade of ancient trees, the fragrance of wildflowers carried on a breeze.

As you move, you start a beautiful chain reaction:

Movement increases circulation.

Circulation reduces inflammation.

Reduced inflammation supports muscles, joints, and vital organs.

Stronger circulation also delivers more oxygen to the brain, enhancing cognition, balancing hormones, and lifting your mood.

Wow! Imagine the power of one small daily step!

Walking isn't just exercise, it's a celebration of life, a boost to your body, mind, and spirit.

Let this summer be the beginning of something extraordinary: a season of daily habits that spark health, joy, and adventure.

A SIMPLE PRACTICE FOR DAILY GROWTH

One small but life-changing habit for me has been my "Three Good Things" List.

Every night, no matter how the day went, I write down three good things.

Some nights it's big wins. Other times, it's a smile from a stranger or a warm cup of tea.

No matter what, this practice shifts my focus to the good.

Even in the hardest moments, there is still joy, hope, and strength within us.

Try it, you might be surprised by how powerful this simple habit can be.

"Wellness isn't complicated. It's the natural result of small, joyful steps." — Valerie Osiecki

QUICK WIN FOR A POSITIVE MINDSET

Tonight, before bed, jot down three good things that happened today.

They don't have to be monumental. Maybe you made someone laugh. Maybe you enjoyed a few quiet moments. Maybe you made it through a hard conversation.

By doing this daily, you'll rewire your brain to focus on hope, gratitude, and resilience—even when life feels overwhelming.

Valerie Osiecki believes healthy living should feel natural, joyful, and within reach. As a Certified Health Coach and Functional Nutritional Counselor, she empowers clients with simple steps, whole-food inspiration, and compassionate support to create a lifestyle that feels personal and sustainable. Explore more at SmartLifeStyling.com or connect with Valerie at valerie@smartlifestyling.com.

SENSIBLE SUMMER

SUN EXPOSURE

for Optimal Levels of Vitamin D and Beyond

By Ali Anne Johnson

The sun is miraculous. It provides warmth to our planet, helps grow our food, and sustains life. Many of us love the feeling of rays hitting our skin. Animals love sun exposure as well, just look how your cat or dog finds their way to a sunny patch and basks in it. It's no secret that the sun has life-giving properties, but how much sun is too much, how little is too little?

Some people are afraid of sun exposure because of aging concerns or cancer. They rarely see the sun and cover up every inch of skin on those unlikely occasions. Other people spend so much time in the sun that they frequently get burned, their skin is dry and leathery and sun damage is visible in the form of wrinkles, spots and discoloration. People on both ends of the sun exposure spectrum may experience unwanted health problems.

Sun-wary people may have less signs of aging but are missing out on the healing benefits of moderate sun exposure. When the sun hits our skin many beneficial chemical reactions occur, most prominently synthesis of Vitamin D. Lack of sun may actually increase our risk of many types of cancers, diseases and conditions due to Vitamin D deficiency.

Sun-worshipping people get a sufficient dose of Vitamin D, but have a greater risk of skin damage and skin cancer due to the increase in UV rays and radiation from the exposure. Sun-lovers may also have increased health benefits which we'll discuss next.

Many of us know the importance of the sun providing Vitamin D and it's benefits, such as stronger bones, better sleep, improved mood, and a healthier immune system. The sun's benefits are believed to be far greater than Vitamin D, those effects to be studied further. Sunlight is likely nourishing your cells beyond what you can imagine.

Find the right balance of exposure to maximize the benefits without increasing the risk of skin damage.



It's important to

A - Get enough sunlight for adequate levels of vitamin D and overall health.

B - Protect your skin from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays that may cause damage.

HERE ARE KEY ELEMENTS OF SENSIBLE SUN EXPOSURE TO ACHIEVE THIS BALANCE:

1. LIMIT TIME & DURATION: Short, steady sun exposure over time is recommended. Fair-skinned individuals might need only about 10-20 minutes of midday sun several times a week, while those with darker skin may require longer. Don't let your skin burn. Geographical considerations also play a role on how much sun you can tolerate.

2. COVER UP: Sun management also includes what you wear. When spending extended periods outdoors use additional protective measures such as clothing (hat, sunglasses, long sleeves) and seek shade when UV rays are the strongest.

3. HYDRATE: Prolonged time in the sun dehydrates our skin and bodies. Drink appropriate amounts of fluids and apply moisturizer after sun exposure. Electrolyte drinks and natural non-toxic moisturizers are best.

4. VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTATION: Sunlight is a significant source of vitamin D. People who have limited sun exposure need to consider supplements. Ideally 1000-2000 IUs of Vitamin D per day is suitable for most people.

5. EAT SENSIBLY: A healthy diet is shown to protect your skin from damage. Nearly all fruits, vegetables, herbs and leafy greens are beneficial to consume daily. In particular, tomatoes, melons and berries help repair skin from damage and lessen the likelihood of burning. Going to the beach for the day? Eat a healthy breakfast and pack a lunch that will give your body an extra layer of security.

6. NON-TOXIC SUNSCREEN: The best are non-nano mineral sunscreens that are zinc oxide based.



By following these principles, you can gain the health benefits of sun exposure while minimizing the risks associated with UV radiation. The bottom line is that sunlight has both positive and negative effects and it's important to balance them for maximum benefit and health. Summer is here, get outside and enjoy it!

Always consult with a healthcare provider on your specific needs and exposure to the sun.

Ali Anne Johnson is a certified health coach who aims to help people manage their conditions and prevent future flare ups utilizing Medical Medium information. Through diet changes, supplementation, and protocols, she creates a customized plan that works for each individual person.

Fit for Summer

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE WITHOUT THE GYM

by Kris Francefort

You don't have to play sports to stay active in warm weather – try a few of these unique ways to “exercise” this summer.

Grab a friend or group to enjoy these activities together and get your Vitamin S (Social Connection), key to living a long and happy life!

OUTDOOR EXPLORATION & ADVENTURE

Hikes and Nature Walks: Explore local trails, parks, and nature reserves.

Bird Watch: Walk through different habitats while observing and identifying various bird species.

Geocache: A treasure-hunting activity using GPS to find hidden gems.

Beachcomb: Stroll along the beach searching for shells, sea glass, and other nature finds.

Urban Exploration: Discover new areas of your city by walking or cycling through neighborhoods, parks, and landmarks.



WATER FUN

Swim: Enjoy the water at pools, lakes, or the ocean.

Snorkel: Explore underwater environments and observe marine life.

Stand-Up Paddleboarding: Provides a low-intensity workout while allowing you to enjoy the water.

Water Aerobics: Join a class or follow along to routines in the pool for a low-impact exercise.

Floating and Relaxing: Even just floating or gently paddling in the water can provide light exercise.

GARDENING & YARD ACTIVITIES

Gardening: Digging, planting, weeding, and watering plants engages you physically.

Landscaping: Work on outdoor projects like building garden beds, laying stones, or creating paths.

Composting: Turn compost and use your soil gold for all plantings.



WELLNESS & RELAXATION

Outdoor Yoga or Tai Chi: Practice mindfulness and flexibility in a serene outdoor setting, like the beach, a park or your backyard.

Meditative Walk: Engage in slow, deliberate walking while focusing on your breath and surroundings. Some communities have labyrinths that heighten this conscious-raising activity.

Forest Bathe: Spend quiet time in the forest, absorbing the sights, sounds, and smells of nature.

CREATIVE & ARTISTIC PURSUITS

Outdoor Photography: Walk around capturing the beauty of nature, architecture, or urban scenes.

Arts and Crafts in your yard or local park: Bring your supplies outside to sketch or paint nature and craft projects in a new setting.

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Community Clean-Up: Participate in local efforts to clean up parks, beaches, or neighborhoods.

Farmers' Markets: Walk around and shop locally.

Outdoor Concerts and Festivals: Dance and move around while enjoying live performances.



DIY & HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Home Renovations: Painting, sanding, and other renovation activities are naturally physical.

Building Projects: Construct furniture, decks, or garden structures.

Organize and Declutter: Clean and organize spaces in your home and garage for great energy flow in your home.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Picnics and Park Days: Walk, play, and explore.

Treasure Hunts: Organize a scavenger hunt for family or friends.

Backyard Camping: Set up tents and enjoy camping activities at home.



Grounding-Earthing

by Kara Sylvia

Grounding, or earthing, is the practice of connecting with the Earth's electrical charge by walking barefoot on natural surfaces like grass, soil, sand, or even by using grounding equipment.

Why use grounding?

Many people believe that grounding can have various health benefits, and scientific evidence is still emerging.

Here are some of the most common benefits of grounding demonstrated through various research studies.

Benefit #1 – Reduces chronic inflammation

Chronic inflammation is a causative factor of pain and an accelerant of the aging process. Grounding reduces or even prevents the main signs of inflammation following injury: redness, heat, swelling, pain, and loss of function.

Benefit #2 – Reduces pain

Most pain is due to or associated with increased inflammation, and typically responds rapidly to grounding.

According to a study published in the Journal of Inflammation Research, when you ground, mobile electrons from the Earth make contact with your skin and enter your body, acting as natural antioxidants. They protect cells, tissue, and organs from oxidative stress.

People with muscle soreness who slept on a grounding system experienced a reduction in inflammation according to a study in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine.

Their blood markers also indicated that grounding facilitated quicker healing.

Benefit #3 – Improves sleep and balances circadian rhythms

Grounding has been associated with increased melatonin production while normalizing cortisol levels, both of which reduce sleep disturbances.

Grounding helps you sleep better at night as it assists in normalizing stress hormones. It can even reduce hot flashes.

From a study in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, people with sleep disorders slept under a cotton sheet with conductive carbon threads woven into it. This was connected to a wire that led to a metal rod placed in the earth outside. Participants slept better when they were grounded and also reported a reduction in pain and stress.

Benefit #4 – Improves blood flow and reduces blood viscosity (stickiness)

Higher blood viscosity (that is, thicker, sludgy blood) often correlates with diabetes and cardiovascular disorders. Studies found that grounding significantly reduces blood viscosity, thus potentially improving red blood cell spacing (thinning them out).

Grounding is good for your heart rate variability, according to a study in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine. Participants wore grounding patches on the palms of their hands and soles of their feet, then had bloodwork done. Results showed that after grounding, they had less red blood cell clumping. Good news for the heart!

Benefit #5 – Accelerates healing from trauma

Accelerated wound healing, whether involving injury, surgery, or burn, may result from a combination of reduced inflammation as well as improved circulation carrying healing factors to the site.

Benefit #6 - Earthing improves mood

In a study, 40 adults were either grounded or sham-grounded (no grounding) for 1 hour while relaxing in a comfortable recliner chair. For the group that was grounded, the chair was equipped with a conductive pillow, mat, and patches connecting them to the ground.

Using a mood assessment it was found that the group that were grounded had a statistically significant improvement in pleasant and positive moods compared to those who were not grounded.

Benefit #7 - Earthing improves facial blood flow

The Earth protects your skin and enhances its appearance, according to a study in the Journal of Cosmetics, Dermatological Sciences and Applications. Participants were grounded in a chair using a conductive mat, pillow, and patches.

Those who practice grounding regularly tend to be centered, balanced, calm, strong and positive, according to Deepak Chopra. In fact, a study in Explore reported improved mood, plus reduced depression and stress in those who received grounding therapy.

Kara Sylvia is certified as a health coach with the Dr. Sears Wellness Institute. She knows prevention is key and hopes to inspire others to live a healthier life. She loves telling others that making one simple change can turn into a new healthy habit, that can lead to big results.



To learn more about grounding, check out these films:

Benefits of Grounding -

themovementparadigm.com/benefits-of-grounding

The Earthing Movie: The Remarkable Science of Grounding (full documentary) -

youtube.com/watch?v=44ddtROXDVU



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Grounding Practices

by Kris Francefort & Kara Sylvia

There are many types of grounding. All of them focus on reconnecting to the earth. This can be done through either direct or indirect contact with the earth.

For People with Outdoor Access:

Barefoot Walking: Have you ever been outside on a warm summer day and felt the urge to run barefoot in the grass? One of the easiest ways to ground yourself to the earth is to walk barefoot. Whether on grass, sand, or even mud, allowing your skin to touch the natural ground can provide you with grounding energy.

Lying on the ground: You can increase your skin-to-earth contact by lying on the ground. You can do it in the grass by the park or on the sand at the beach. If you're going to ground yourself in this way, be sure to take the proper precautions and never lie somewhere you could be injured and be careful of poison ivy and oak.

Submersing in water: According to advocates for grounding, water may be used to ground in the same way the physical earth is used for grounding. They suggest simply wading in a clear lake or swimming in the ocean as a way to ground yourself. As always, be sure to stay safe when swimming, especially in murky or deep waters.

Gardening: Gardening not only connects you to the Earth but also provides a sense of purpose and relaxation. Digging, planting, and weeding can be grounding activities.

Outdoor Yoga or Meditation: Practice yoga or meditation outdoors, preferably on natural surfaces. Doing so can help you connect with the Earth while benefiting from the fresh air and tranquility of nature.

Forest Bathing: Spend time in a forest or wooded area. Forest bathing, or *shinrin-yoku*, is a Japanese practice that involves immersing yourself in the sights, sounds, and scents of the forest.

Camping: Go camping in natural settings where you can be in close contact with the Earth. Sleeping on the ground in a tent can provide a strong grounding experience.

For People with Limited Outdoor Access:

Indoor Plants: Bring nature indoors by keeping houseplants. Touching, caring for, and even talking to your plants can create a sense of connection to the Earth.

Balcony or Rooftop Gardens: If you have access to a balcony or rooftop, create a small garden with potted plants, herbs, or vegetables. This allows you to connect with the Earth even in urban environments.

Grounding Mats or Sheets: Grounding mats or sheets with conductive properties can simulate the benefits of direct contact with the Earth's surface. You can place these on your bed or sit on them while working or relaxing.

Urban Parks: Seek out urban parks or green spaces in your city. Even small pocket parks can provide a natural environment for grounding activities.

Visualization and Meditation: If you can't physically access natural surfaces, practice grounding through visualization or meditation. Imagine yourself walking barefoot on the grass, feeling the Earth's energy, and connecting with nature.



Earthing Products: Some companies offer earthing products like shoes with conductive soles, socks, bands and patches or wristbands that can help you connect with the Earth's energy even while in an urban environment.

Kris Francefort is a certified health coach who realizes a profound truth: our well-being is intertwined with Earth, biologically and energetically. What's good for us is good for the planet. Our health is in our hands – choosing wellness each step of the way nurtures us and Earth.

Tips on giving 'earthing' a try:

If you're interested in exploring earthing, use these simple steps:

1. Take your socks off.
2. Walk outside, even if it's just on some soil or grass in your backyard.
3. Stand there for a moment and be quiet for three to 10 seconds.
4. Take three deep breaths from your solar plexus chakra, which about 2 inches above your belly button.
4. Simply sit, stand, or walk with your bare feet on the grass, dirt or concrete outside for at least 15 minutes a day.
5. After consistently connecting to the Earth, notice how you feel. It may be a subtle tingling in your feet, or a calmer demeanor.





SEASONAL MEAL PLANNING

Summer

by Kris Francefort

It's summer – time for casual, light and nutritious eating! Here are a few tips to make meal planning a breeze.

MAKE IT FRESH – Hot days call for cool meals featuring the season's best fresh fruits and veggies.

MAKE IT EASY – Pick what's in season (and on sale) then build a meal around it.

Grill outside to reduce clean-up and keep your house cool. Try these lightened-up grilled dishes:

Veggie burgers - make your own or stock up on frozen varieties (check the label for whole food ingredients and no added chemicals).

Eggplant and Zucchini - Slice into rounds or strips, season with homemade or oil-free dressing and grill until just tender.

Portobello mushroom caps make a hearty meal. They'll soak up flavorful sauces or dressings, are great by themselves.

Pizzas with homemade or premade whole-grain pizza crusts, flatbreads or tortillas and load up on seasonal product toppings.

Fruit salad – lightly grill fruit then toss with fresh orange juice and zest.

Avocados – Lightly brush peeled and pitted avocado halves with oil-free dressing, grill over indirect heat until just browned, top with chopped tomatoes and fresh lime juice or salsa.

No Time to Cook? Then Don't!

Raw summer fruits and veggies are packed with seasonal flavor, no cooking required.

Smoothies are a great way to get delicious, cool nutrition:

- Buy and freeze fruit when it's in season (and often at great prices). Used in place of ice, it thickens your drink and is a great way to use fruit before it spoils.
- Set up a Do-It-Yourself Smoothie Bar with fresh on-hand ingredients and experiment!
- Toss in that handful of healthy leafy greens and use up beverages already in your fridge such as fruit juice or non-dairy milk.
- Freeze any leftover smoothies into ice pops!

Summer salads are easy and so fresh! Make your own by tossing salad greens with raw corn kernels, diced summer squash, sunflower seeds, sliced strawberries, and fresh blueberries.

Picnic at Home – Grab high-quality, fresh,, ready-made salads, slaws, loaves of whole-grain bread, and olives. Set the patio table, spread a blanket on the lawn, or meet up in the kids' tree house to dine!

MAKE IT AHEAD OF TIME

Clean, chop and store vegetables and fruit to have on hand throughout the week or for handy snacks.

Batch-freeze portioned staple items, like cooked quinoa, rice, and beans to use during meal preparation.

Prepare double recipes – serve one now and stash extras in the freezer.



1 WEEK OF SUMMER MEALS

Pasta with White Beans and Summer Squash

+ Mixed greens with oil-free dressing + Fresh berry and melon salad

Veggie Burgers + Grilled corn on the cob sprinkled with no-salt seasoning mix

+ Peach banana nice cream

Grilled Pizza + Kale salad + Blueberries with lemon date cream

Summer Veggie Rolls + Fresh tomato and cucumber salad

+ Fresh pineapple sprinkled with ground coriander

Grilled Portobello Mushrooms with Strawberry Salsa + Arugula, watercress and quinoa salad

+ Grilled fruit salad with a lime-honey drizzle

ORGANIC AND CONVENTIONAL FRUITS-VEGETABLES SHOPPING GUIDE 2025 From ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP (EWG)

DIRTY DOZEN - Buy organically whenever possible (these retain the highest pesticide load):

Potatoes
Blueberries
Blackberries
Apples
Pears
Nectarines
Cherries
Peaches
Kale, collard and mustard greens
Strawberries
Spinach

*Note that most sweet corn and Hawaiian papaya, although low in pesticides, are genetically engineered (GE).

Sources: Wholefoods.com, Environmental Working Group, blog.integrativenutrition.com (57 Quick and Easy Healthy Recipes), Lifeasmom.com

CLEAN FIFTEEN - Safest to purchase conventionally grown (lowest residual pesticide):

Pineapple
Sweet corn
Avocados
Papaya
Onions
Sweet peas
Asparagus
Cabbage
Watermelon
Cauliflower
Bananas
Mangos
Carrots
Mushrooms
Kiwi



Watermelon Tomato Salad

Recipe by Kara Sylvia

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 (3- to 4-pound) watermelon, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 cups quartered cherry tomatoes
- 3 TBSPS chopped fresh basil (1 TBSP for garnish)
- 3 TBSPS chopped fresh mint (1 TBSP for garnish)
- 2 ounces crumbled plant-based feta cheese
- Balsamic glaze, for drizzling
- Salt, for sprinkling
- Freshly ground black pepper

Method:

- In a large serving bowl, combine the balsamic vinegar, shallot, and kosher salt. Add the watermelon, tomatoes and 2 tablespoons each of basil and mint. Toss to fully combine and coat the watermelon and tomatoes with the dressing. Top with a sprinkling of feta, a drizzle of balsamic glaze and the remaining 1 tablespoon each basil and mint. Season all over with flaky salt and black pepper.



Green Goddess Summer Pesto

Recipe by Nesko Elden

This pesto is a summer staple in my kitchen—smooth, fresh, a little tangy, and packed with energy-boosting greens. Add this amazing pesto sauce to your grilled veggies, pasta or sandwiches to have another dimension to the taste!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1/3 cup toasted pine nuts
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil (or aquafaba for oil-free option)
- 1–2 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 gloves of garlic
- Sea salt to taste
- Optional: nutritional yeast for extra depth

Method:

- In a food processor, combine basil, spinach, pine nuts, and garlic (if using).
- Blend while slowly adding olive oil (or aquafaba) until smooth.
- Add balsamic vinegar and salt. Taste and adjust.
- Store in the fridge and enjoy with grilled veggies, pasta, or as a sandwich spread.



Strawberry Arugula Salad with Mint & Almonds

A refreshing salad that combines peppery greens, juicy berries, cooling herbs, and the satisfying crunch of almonds.

Recipe by Nesko Elden

Ingredients:

- 2 cups arugula
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- 6–8 fresh basil or mint leaves, torn
- 2 tbsp sliced or slivered almonds (lightly toasted)
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (or aquafaba for oil-free option)
- Pinch of sea salt

Method:

- In a large bowl, toss arugula and strawberries.
- Add the torn herbs and almonds.
- Whisk together balsamic vinegar, olive oil (or aquafaba), and sea salt.
- Drizzle dressing over the salad, toss gently, and serve immediately.



Mango, Red Pepper, Cucumber & Mint Salad

This vibrant, hydrating salad gets a flavor boost with the addition of crunchy cucumbers and zesty purple onions—a perfect balance of sweet, sour, and spice.

Recipe by Nesko Elden

Ingredients:

- 1 ripe mango, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cucumber, thinly sliced or chopped
- 1/4 small red (purple) onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh mint
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 tsp honey or maple syrup (optional)
- Sea salt and chili flakes to taste

Method:

- In a large bowl, combine mango, bell pepper, cucumber, red onion, and mint.
- In a small bowl, whisk together lime juice, honey, sea salt, and chili flakes.
- Pour the dressing over the salad, toss gently, and chill for 10–15 minutes before serving for extra flavor infusion.



Beat the summer heat with the refreshing and naturally sweetened Better Than Soda Summer Cooler. This delightful beverage, served in convenient mason jars, combines the zesty flavors of a variety of citrus fruits with filtered water for a hydrating treat.

Enhance your drink with additions like fruit powder, frozen fruit, and fresh mint leaves for an extra burst of flavor. Easy to prepare and perfect for keeping in the fridge, these coolers are a healthy alternative to sugary sodas, offering a crisp and invigorating way to stay refreshed all summer long.



Better Than Soda Summer Cooler

Ingredients:

1 lemon
1 lime
1 orange
1 grapefruit (optional)
Filtered water

Optional items

- 1-2 teaspoons fruit powder (pomegranate, cherry, blueberry, raspberry, bilberry, etc)
 - Frozen fruit
 - Fresh mint leaves
- 4-6 (24-oz) mason jars

Method

1. Prepare the Citrus Fruits:
 - Wash thoroughly.
 - Thinly slice (including the peel), removing seeds to prevent a bitter taste.
 - Evenly distribute citrus slices between mason jars.
 - For stronger citrus flavor, muddle some of the slices with the back of a spoon to release more juice.
2. Add filtered water to about half-full if adding optional items OR to the top, leaving 1" to top if just citrus fruits.

3. Add optional items, then add filtered water, leaving 1" at the top.

- Fruit powder, sprinkle into each mason jar and stir swiftly with a spoon to combine
- Frozen fruit and/or mint leaves, toss a few pieces of fruit & leaves into each jar

4. Infuse: Put the lids on and place jars in the refrigerator. Infuse for 2 hours; overnight for stronger flavor.

5. Serve: Stir the infused water before drinking.

Notes

- Experiment with other infusion fruits like strawberries, blueberries, or cucumber in a variety of combinations for additional flavors.
- Fruity ice cubes – use frozen fruit to keep your Summer Cooler cool & when you finish drinking, go ahead and eat the fruit as a finisher.
- Don't throw away the citrus peels! Store in a glass container in the freezer. A few pieces in hot or iced tea are delightful – and don't forget to muddle them to get a punch of exhilarating flavor.

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