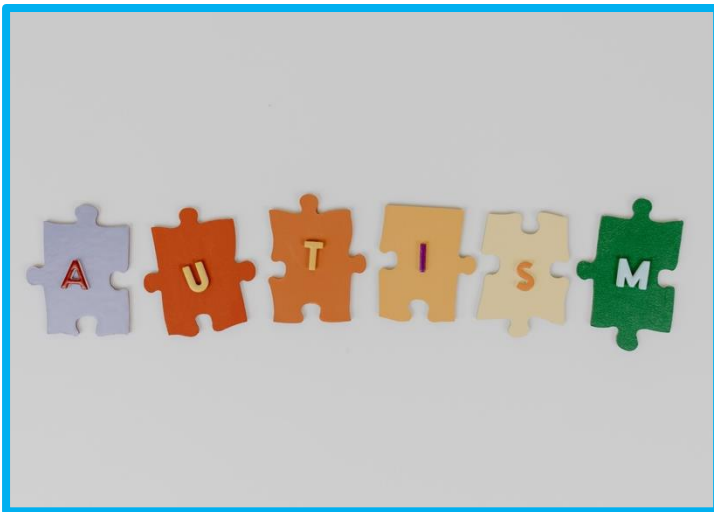


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HEALTH OBSERVANCE

Autism Awareness Month

Dawn Koch, Health Coach – Orthus Health

Autism or ASD is a complex, lifelong developmental disability that typically appears during early childhood and can impact social skills, communication, relationships, and self-regulation. Individuals with autism can show certain behaviors and are diagnosed on a “spectrum” that affects people differently and to varying degrees. Autism has risen in the United States from [1 in 125 children in 2010 to 1 in 54 in 2020](#).

ASD occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups, but is about four times more common among boys than girls. According to the CDC, we do not know all the causes of ASD. Some risk factors include environmental, biological, and genetic risk factors.

- Children who have a sibling with ASD are at a higher risk of having ASD.
- Individuals with certain genetic or chromosomal conditions can have a greater chance of having ASD.
- When taken during pregnancy, the prescription drugs valproic acid and thalidomide have been linked with a higher risk of ASD.
- Children born to older parents are at greater risk for having ASD.

It can be difficult to diagnose ASD since there is no medical test, such as a blood test. Typically, a doctor will look at the child’s behavior and development to help make a diagnosis. ASD can sometimes be diagnosed at 18 months or younger. However, many children do not receive a final diagnosis until much older.

There is currently no known single cause of autism, but an early diagnosis can help a person receive the support and services they need. Proper support can help lead to a quality life filled with opportunities. Have an open dialog with your pediatrician if you have any concerns.

Sources:

- <https://autismsociety.org/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>



WellBalance Health Corner Benefits of Cycling

Learn about the benefits of riding bike. These benefits include physical ones such as weight loss and muscle gain, as well as mental wellbeing improvement.

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Invest in our Planet this Earth Day

Learn about how Earth Day got its start, and ways that you and your community can participate in bettering our planet.

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The Benefits of Biking

Dawn Koch, Health Coach – Orthus Health

National Bike Month is observed in the spring each year. It is a health observance established in 1956 and promoted by the League of American Bicyclists and celebrated across the country. Cycling is a low-impact activity that is gentle on your joints and a great way to stay in touch with the world around you. Whether you ride outside or inside on a stationary bike, you can benefit greatly from this activity.

Some of the benefits of cycling include

- Potential weight loss from calories burned.
- The movement and resistance help to strengthen leg muscles, especially those supporting your knee.
- Regular rhythmic movements are a great cardio workout and great for your heart and lungs.
- Cycling can help control blood pressure, blood sugar, and improve your cholesterol.
- Cycling can relieve stiffness, especially in your lower body.
- If you need to break a pattern of repetitive workouts, cycling gives you as much of a leg workout as a regular trip to the gym.

Benefits of riding outside

- Exercising in the fresh air and sunlight improves mood.
- Biking outside also improved cognitive function in older adults.
- Riding a real bike provides more of a workout for stabilizing muscles that you use to keep upright.
- Riding a real bike also improved your balance and coordination.

If you want to be more active but aren't sure what to try, consider biking and reap the many health benefits. You should consult your doctor before you begin an exercise program.

If you have any injuries that cycling will affect, it's best to stay off the bike until you fully recover. Talk with your doctor if you have any conditions that cycling may affect. Stationary or adaptive bicycles are great alternatives for individuals with balance, vision, or hearing concerns.

WelBalance

HEALTH TIP CORNER

Cycling is a low impact way to stay in shape and improve your mental wellbeing.

If the weather is in your favor, hop on your bike and go the distance. Just take the proper precautions and follow our safety tips.

CHECK YOUR EQUIPMENT. Before you plan your ride, you should be aware of any mechanical problems with the bike. Make sure your seat is adjusted and locked in place. Check that your tires are inflated to the proper PSI.

PLAN TO BE SEEN. The death toll in bicycle accidents has increased 37% in the last 10 years, according to [Injury Facts®](#). Make sure drivers can see you by wearing reflective clothing if riding at night.

WEAR A HELMET. This applies to all children and adult riders of all ages. Check the helmet for comfort and tighten the chin straps to ensure proper safety.

FOLLOW THE RULES OF THE ROAD. It is important to always maintain awareness while you are on the roads with motor vehicles around you. Make sure you are following the same rules that apply to motorists, such as stop signs, traffic lights, and proper signaling.

Source:

<https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/summer/bicycles>

Invest in our Planet

this Earth Day

Lisa Kyler, Creative Content Marketing Manager – Wellworks for You

Earth Day was founded in 1970 with the goal to spread education about environmental issues. We now celebrate this day globally on April 22nd, although many places have extended to Earth Week. On the first Earth Day, rallies were held across the US while speeches were given. It successfully raised awareness about environmental issues and was the catalyst for many important legislative changes.

How Can I Participate?

There are many ways to participate in Earth Day or Earth Week. First, take time to educate yourself about current environmental and climate issues. Begin by reading through different events and programs on Earthday.org. Find a cause that interests you personally. There may even be local events going on in your community.

Here are a few ways you can invest in our planet and participate this Earth Day.

- Change your diet to fight climate change by incorporating Meatless Mondays into your weekly meal routine.
- Find your personal carbon footprint and then make changes to reduce it.
- Choose options without single-use plastics when out shopping.
- Buy and shop locally whenever possible. The shorter distance your food must travel, the less pollution it creates.
- Research greener energy options that may be available in your neighborhood for your home.

Although you're only one person, you can still have an impact. Get your family, friends, and community involved this Earth Day and spread the word about different changes they can make. And if you really want to get involved, try writing to your local political offices to voice any concerns you may have. They can vote in changes that impact a larger scale.



FEATURED RECIPE

Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp with Chia Seeds

(Vegan & Gluten-Free)

8 Servings



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INGREDIENTS

- 16 ounces strawberries
- 4 cups rhubarb, chopped into ½ inch thick slices (about 4–5 stalks)
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 4 tablespoons chia seeds
- 2 teaspoons corn starch
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- pinch salt
- 1 cup GF rolled oats
- 1 cup almond flour (or sub other flour)
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- ⅓ cup melted coconut oil – or olive oil or butter or ghee!
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom- optional
- ¼ teaspoon nigela seeds- optional

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven 375F
2. Wash and quarter the strawberries. If very large, quarter again, so each piece is roughly ½ inch thick. Slice the rhubarb into ½ inch slices. Place both in a bowl and add the maple, chia, cornstarch, lemon juice and vanilla and pinch salt. Stir well. Place in a, greased, 8×8 baking dish or 2-quart baking dish. (The pan in the photo is 5 x12)
3. To make the crumble, place all ingredients in a medium bowl and mix really well.
4. Lightly drop crumble evenly over the top and do not press down.
5. Place in the oven, uncovered for 40 minutes. If the top is golden and the edges are bubbly, it's time to take it out.
6. Otherwise, continue baking for 5-7 more minutes. Let sit 15 mins before serving.

NUTRITION

Per serving: Each serving: 259 calories, 12g total fat, 8g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 443mg sodium, 35g carbohydrates, 6g dietary fiber, 20g sugar.

Source: <https://www.feastingathome.com/maple-sweetened-strawberry-rhubarb-crisp-chia-seeds-vegan-gluten-free/>