

NEWS LETTER

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HEALTH OBSERVANCE

National Kidney Month

By Heather Costa, Senior Health Coach - Wellworks For You

The Important Role of the Kidneys

Each kidney may only be about the size of a human fist, but they are tiny powerhouses in the body. They play a vital role as a filter to keep the body functioning by removing waste and extra fluid, as well as releasing them through urine. However, the kidneys do so much more. They activate vitamin D for healthy bones, directly produce red blood cells, regulate blood pressure, and balance minerals such as sodium and potassium in the body.

IN THIS ISSUE

Health Observance

Page 1

Brain Awareness Week – Knowing the Symptoms

Page 2

WellBalance Health Tip Corner

Page 2

Mindful Grocery Shopping

Page 3

Featured Recipe

Page 3

Please Note: The content in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

Chronic Kidney Disease

1 in 3 American adults are at high risk for developing kidney disease.

High blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, a family history of kidney failure, and being over 60 increase the risk for developing kidney disease. An estimated 37 million people in the US have Chronic Kidney Disease and many do not know they have it.



Talk with your doctor about kidney health and follow these important steps to take charge of your kidney health:

See your Health Care Provider for any routine check-ups and screenings, even if you are healthy. Talk to your doctor about an ACR urine test or a GFR blood test annually if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, are over the age 60, are overweight, or have a family history of kidney failure.

Exercise Regularly. Strive for 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

Reduce sodium intake by limiting processed and refined foods. Focus on eating more fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains and low-fat dairy.

Follow only the recommended dosage and reduce regular use of over-the-counter pain medications, such as NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).

Monitor blood pressure. Talk to your doctor if your blood pressure is above 120/80, and ask your doctor what the best blood pressure target is for you.

Quit Smoking. Find a tobacco cessation program for support with the quitting process.

SOURCES:

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/community-health-outreach/national-kidney-month>

<https://www.kidney.org/content/national-kidney-month>

<https://www.cdc.gov/kidneydisease/prevention-risk.html>

<https://www.kidney.org/news/national-kidney-month-take-five-your-kidneys>



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Brain Awareness Week

Understanding Brain Disorders and Injury Symptoms

By Brandon Harrar, Creative Resources Manager - Wellworks For You

The Brain Awareness Week (BAW) is a global campaign from March 15th to 21st, 2021 to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research. This is an opportunity to gain insight on the progress of research, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disorders of the brain. Diseases, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, stroke, schizophrenia, CTE, and depression are some of the most common diagnoses not only in America, but all over the world. Understanding the warning signs of brain disorders is crucial to prevent potential lifelong threats.

When your brain is damaged, it can affect many different things, including your memory, your sensation, and even your personality. Disorders can be caused by illness, genetics, or traumatic injury.

What are the different types of brain disorders?

Brain Injury

Brain injuries are often caused by blunt trauma, which can damage brain tissue, neurons, and nerves. This damage affects your brain's ability to communicate with the rest of your body.

EXAMPLES:

- hematomas
- blood clots
- contusions, or bruising
- cerebral edema (swelling inside the skull)
- concussions
- strokes

SYMPTOMS:

- vomiting
- nausea
- speech difficulty
- bleeding from the ear
- numbness
- paralysis
- memory loss
- problems with concentration
- strokes

Brain Tumors

Tumors in the brain can be very dangerous. They will either form in the brain or spread from another part of the body to become metastatic.

Brain tumors can be either malignant (cancerous) or benign (noncancerous). Doctors classify brain tumors as grades 1, 2, 3, or 4. Higher numbers indicate more aggressive tumors.

The cause of brain tumors is largely unknown. They can occur in people of any age. Symptoms of brain tumors depend on the size and location of the tumor.

SYMPTOMS:

- headaches
- seizures
- numbness or tingling in your arms or legs
- nausea
- vomiting
- changes in personality
- difficulty with movement or balance
- changes in your hearing, speech, or vision

Neurodegenerative Diseases

Neurodegenerative diseases cause your brain and nerves to deteriorate over time. They damage the brain's tissue and nerves, causing change in personality and confusion. Common associated disorders include Alzheimer's disease, which may develop as you age, and Tay-Sachs disease, which is a genetic disorder that can begin at an early age.

SYMPTOMS:

- memory loss
- forgetfulness
- apathy
- anxiety
- agitation
- a loss of inhibition
- mood changes

OTHER COMMON DISEASES:

- Huntington's disease
- ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), or Lou Gehrig's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- all forms of dementia

Mental Disorders

Mental disorders, or mental illnesses, are a large and diverse group of conditions that affect your behavior patterns. Symptoms will always vary based on the condition. Different people can experience the same mental disorders very differently. You should talk to your doctor if you notice a change in your behavior, thought patterns, or moods.

FREQUENTLY DIAGNOSED DISORDERS:

- memory depression
- anxiety
- bipolar disorder
- post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- schizophrenia

SOURCE: <https://www.healthline.com/health/brain-disorders#risk-factors>



HEALTH TIP CORNER



Know your red flags

One way to manage moments of distress is to identify key thoughts or physical sensations that tend to contribute to your cycle of distress and feelings of being overwhelmed. Addressing one aspect of this loop can de-escalate the cycle and help you regain control.

Source: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-00933-5>

Mindful Grocery Shopping

Nutrition Labels, Daily Value, Calorie Counts

Brooke Wieder, Wellness Coordinator - Wellworks For You

Mindful grocery shopping means turning your awareness up while shopping and being more conscious of the foods and products you are putting into your cart, and in turn, your body. This might look different to everyone, but can be practiced by paying increased attention to the ingredients, nutritional content, sourcing, and packaging of an item. By paying closer attention to the foods we are choosing, one might find a healthier alternative to choose over a typical product. If you're looking to incorporate mindfulness into your weekly shopping trip, try some of the suggested tips below.

Mindful grocery shopping can start before even leaving for the store. Planning out weekly meals and preparing a grocery list ahead of time prepares you, instead of choosing meals as you shop. Don't forget to pack your reusable bags to be mindful of single use plastic!

Once at the grocery store pay close attention to ingredients and nutritional content of foods before purchasing and consuming. Become comfortable reading the Nutrition Label to check for nutrients you want to limit, such as saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. These are usually much higher in processed foods and associated with increased risk of chronic conditions like cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure. Make sure to choose products that include nutrients, such as dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium. If you need a refresher on reading nutrition labels, click here for the [FDA's Nutrition Label Breakdown](#).

SOURCE:

www.apa.org | www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition/nutrition-education-resources-materials | www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition



One can also practice sticking to the perimeter of the market for the majority of your shopping! Grocery stores are generally designed with essentials on the outside (e.g., Fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and bread), and with non-perishables and processed foods in the aisles. Staying on the outside of the store can help you stay focused on fresh foods. In general, when you can choose whole foods that can be prepared at home over processed foods, you will be cutting out many unnecessary ingredients!

Finally think about the source and packing of the product. If you have the option, buy produce sourced from local farms and eat seasonally. Mindful shoppers can also look for products that have minimal packing and can be recycled or repurposed in your home.

Featured Recipe

Blueberry Cream Pie

8 Servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pie crust dough
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups blueberries
- 4 tbsp. butter, melted
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup flour
- 3/4 cup quick oats

NUTRITION

Per serving: Each serving contains about 433 calories, 69g carbohydrates, 6g protein, 16g fat, 7g saturated fat, 64mg cholesterol, 170mg sodium, 138mg potassium, 2g fiber, 43g sugar

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 450° F.
2. Place your pie dough into a 9" pie pan and prick the dough several times with a fork. Bake for 9-10 minutes or until the edges are lightly golden brown. Remove from oven, reduce heat to 350° F.
3. In a medium bowl whisk together the sugar, flour, sour cream, eggs and vanilla until smooth. Gently fold in the blueberries. Pour into the pie shell.
4. In a medium bowl combine the melted butter, brown sugar, flour and oats. Mix until combined, sprinkle evenly over the cake mix.
5. Bake for 55-60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean*
6. Let cool on wire rack. Serve slightly warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream! Enjoy!

Notes

*if your pie crust is browning too much, cover the edges with aluminum foil and continue to bake until toothpick inserted in center comes away clean.



Source: <https://iwashyoudry.com/blueberry-crumble-cream-pie/>