THIS EDITION FEATURES:

Exercise and Cholesterol: A Healthy Relationship
- Living Life With Purpose
- Add Some Color to Your Plate
- What's in Season This Fall?
- When to Disconnect

Brought to you by Independence
Exercise and Cholesterol: A Healthy Relationship

As you may know, losing weight, eating a healthy diet, and quitting smoking are lifestyle changes that can help keep your cholesterol levels healthy and lower your risk of heart disease. But what you may not know is that exercise has also been shown to play a part.

**How can exercise help unclog arteries?**

**Out with the bad.** Triglycerides are a type of fat in your blood that your body uses for energy. A high level of triglycerides combined with a low level of HDL ("good") cholesterol can put you at risk for heart attack and stroke. Exercise helps convert that fat into energy.

**In with the good.** Exercise helps to increase HDL cholesterol. HDL acts as the cleaning crew to collect and expel LDL ("bad") cholesterol and other fatty deposits and flush them out through your liver. Just 30 to 60 minutes of aerobic exercise a day pumps up your HDL levels.

**Three Steps to Get Moving**

If you don’t exercise now, it’s a good idea to have your doctor evaluate your current cardiovascular health before starting an exercise program.

1. **Make a plan.** Most health organizations recommend at least 30 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous exercise. This can include walking, jogging, biking, gardening, swimming, stair-climbing, and more. You can even exercise in 10 to 20 minute increments if you need to, as long as it adds up to 30 minutes or more by the end of the day.

2. **Raise the bar.** Weight-training counts, too! Start small with light hand weights or by using the low settings on resistance machines. Gradually add more weight when the exercise no longer feels challenging.

3. **Stick with it.** If you get bored easily, vary your workouts. You can also find an exercise group or buddy to keep you motivated. And remember: You’re exercising to look better on the inside, not just the outside!

Living Life With Purpose

It’s easy to get caught up in the trivial details of life and forget the big picture. Whether it’s to help people reach their potential, rescue animals, or be a supportive role model, it’s important to define your purpose to help focus your intentions and activities. A strong sense of purpose can help fuel your energy for life.

**Figure Out What Matters**

If you don’t know your purpose, take steps to define it. First, consider the following questions:

1. **What do you value most in life?**
2. **What are you naturally good at?**
3. **How do you hope that people describe you?**
4. **If you could deliver a message to a large group of people, what would it be?**

Next, use these answers to come up with a statement of purpose. This statement can grow and change, but writing it down and reflecting on it each day will help you stay focused on what’s important to you.
Eating five servings of fruits and vegetables a day is good. But eating fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors is even better. Here’s how to color-code your nutrition:

**Red and pink.** Powerful antioxidants such as lycopene and anthocyanins help reduce the risk of some cancers, protect cells from damage, and keep hearts healthy.

**Sources:** Beets, strawberries, red cabbage, raspberries, red apples, tomatoes, and watermelon.

**Orange and yellow.** Boost your immunity with beta-carotene! This nutrient also helps keep eyes healthy by reducing the risk of developing macular degeneration. It may also help lower the risk of certain cancers and heart attack.

**Sources:** Apricots, butternut squash, cantaloupe, carrots, grapefruit, lemons, nectarines, oranges, peaches, pineapples, pumpkin, corn, sweet potatoes, tangerines, and pears.

**Green.** Whether they’re leafy or crunchy, you can never have too many green vegetables in your diet. These nutritional powerhouses contain an array of vital nutrients, including folate, which is important for pregnant women because it protects against birth defects. Crunchy, cruciferous veggies such as broccoli and cabbage help protect against some types of cancer.

**Sources:** Spinach, romaine lettuce, green cabbage, kale, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts.

**Blue and purple.** Not only are they beautiful, royal-hued produce contains powerful anthocyanins that can help protect us against many effects of aging, including decreased memory function. They also help to curb the risk of cancer, heart disease, and stroke.

**Sources:** Blackberries, blueberries, eggplant, plums, prunes, purple cabbage and kale, figs, raisins.

**White.** Yup, it counts, though we don’t mean potatoes. Aromatic vegetables contain phytochemicals that can help lower cholesterol and blood pressure as well as reduce risk of heart disease and stomach cancer.

**Sources:** Garlic, onions, and leeks.

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**Small Choices, Big Goals**

We make thousands of choices every day, both big and small. But are all of these decisions benefiting our ultimate goals? Say you want to buy a house, but your daily latte habit is chipping away at your down payment. Here are three tactics to help you stay on track and resist instant gratification:

1. **Separate needs vs. wants.** For instance, do you need or want that candy bar? Odds are that chocolate isn’t necessary for survival.

2. **When faced with a choice, visualize your ultimate goal.** If an option doesn’t contribute to that goal, take it off the table.

3. **Once in a while, splurge!** Indulging in an occasional, well-deserved reward is sometimes just the thing to keep us motivated.

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**Add Color to Your Plate**

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What’s In Season This Fall?

After a hot summer, it’s time to get back into the kitchen! The autumn harvest brings a variety of healthful, delicious produce. Be sure to buy locally to get the freshest, most nutritious produce and usually the best value. Here’s what to look for:

**Vegetables:**
Squash, sweet potatoes, mushrooms, eggplant, cauliflower, tomatoes, cabbage, kale, beets, lettuce

**Fruits:**
Cranberries, pears, apples, grapes, figs

**Pumpkins:**
This member of the squash family is identified as a fruit by some and a vegetable by others. Whatever it is, it’s delicious! Skip the pumpkin spice latte and whip up some fresh pies, muffins, curries, soups, and stews.

Recipe of the Month:
Stuffed Acorn Squash

**Ingredients:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Ingredient</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>acorn squash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3 cup</td>
<td>cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>onion, diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>grated apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tbsp</td>
<td>canola or olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cloves</td>
<td>garlic, minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 1/2 cups</td>
<td>cooked brown rice or quinoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/3 cup walnut pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/2 cup roasted sweet potato, chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 tsp dried sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Instructions:**

Preheat oven to 375°. Cut acorn squash in half and scoop out seeds. Arrange squash cut-side down in a large roasting pan and fill pan with ½ inch of water. Bake for 15 – 20 minutes. Remove squash and any remaining liquid. Add squash back to the pan, cut-side up.

While the squash is baking, sauté onion and garlic in oil over medium heat until softened. Place in a large bowl and add the rest of the ingredients. Mix to make a filling and add it to each squash cavity. Cover the entire pan with foil and bake another 25 – 30 minutes. Remove the foil for the last 5 minutes of baking.
If you think getting a massage is frivolous, think again. Massage therapy, also called bodywork, has shown serious results when it comes to pain relief. Whether you prefer light or firm pressure, here’s how getting hands-on can help where it hurts:

- Massage can help alleviate a wide array of head-to-toe pain, particularly in the shoulder, low back, and neck.
- It can also help manage headaches — from your average tension headache to migraines.
- Play sports? A rub-down after the game may be just the thing for your tendonitis.
- Massage has even been shown to help decrease the pain of fibromyalgia, manage the symptoms of depression, and improve concentration.

Talk to your doctor to see if your condition may benefit from massage. Then treat it like a necessary medical therapy. Set up a regular schedule of sessions that last from 10 to 90 minutes. And remember: just because it feels like you’re being pampered, doesn’t mean it’s any less therapeutic.

Tip: If there is a massage school in your area, see if they offer free or reduced-cost massages by students.


### Self-Massage for Feet

If your feet hurt, try stepping on a tennis ball with a bare or socked foot. Roll it back and forth from heel to toe with firm pressure.

### Monthly Quiz:

#### 1. Which statement is MOST true?

- a. Physical activity can help you achieve healthy cholesterol levels.
- b. Exercise clogs artery walls.
- c. Physical activity doesn’t affect cholesterol.

#### 2. Which statement is NOT true?

- a. Eating fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors has health benefits.
- b. Garlic, onions, and leeks contain powerful nutrients.
- c. Green vegetables are the only ones worth eating.

#### 3. Which of the following are possible benefits of massage?

- a. Alleviates low-back pain
- b. Improves concentration
- c. Lessens depression
- d. All of the above