



WELLBEING



Insights

January 2015

Living a Better, More Vibrant Life

**Happy
Healthy New
Year!**

Understanding
**Carpal Tunnel
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CLEMENTINES are the
Superfood of the Month

Balancing Stress with Worldwide
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January is **Stress Management** Month



January is *Stress* *Management* Month



January is Stress Management Month. The holidays are over and everyone has to get back to work. There is no surprise that the New Year leads to a variety of different stress levels.

Stress is bad for your overall well-being, including your cholesterol, but small changes to your everyday routine can help reduce stress. From aromatherapy to chewing gum, to walking, here are several speedy tension-relievers.

How About Aromatherapy?

Is stress getting to you? If yes, it is time to stop and smell the roses. They contain linalool, a chemical that helps reduce stress. So do herbs, such as lavender and basil, and fruit, such as oranges, grapes and mangoes. That is another good excuse to keep a bouquet of flowers, dried lavender or a bowl of fruit nearby. They smell lovely and can benefit your cholesterol.

Chew Gum, Fight Stress

Chewing gum is a great stress-buster and a little treat that will not hurt your cholesterol.

According to a large study, workers who chew gum report less stress than their gum-free colleagues. This is because chomping on a stick of gum stimulates the vagus nerve, which helps induce relaxation. Just make sure your gum is sugar-free.

Tea for Stress

The British have the right idea when they brew a pot of tea during stressful times. It turns out that black tea is rich in stress-busting antioxidants, including polyphenols, flavonoids and amino acids. There is also some evidence that green tea can help lower harmful LDL cholesterol. Have a cup!

Laugh Away Stress

When it comes to stress, laughter really is a good medicine. A good belly laugh triggers production of endorphins, the brain's feel-good neurotransmitters. It also relaxes your blood vessels and increases blood flow — the ideal antidote to tension.

Take a Walk

If stress is a constant companion, add a 20 to 30-minute walk to your daily routine. Walking and other forms of exercise help reduce anxiety. Even better, take your stroll in a neighborhood park.



A recent Japanese study revealed that walking outside, especially in a forest setting, is an effective way to combat chronic stress.

Spend Time With Your Pets

Whether you live with a dog, a cat or even a bird, stress reduction is one of the great benefits of an animal companion. In one study, just watching 10 minutes of cute animal film was enough to lower volunteers' heart rates and blood pressure when they were stressed. Other research has linked pet ownership with significantly lower triglyceride and cholesterol levels.



Find a Room With a View

Next time you are overwhelmed, turn off the computer screen and look out of the window instead. One study revealed that students sitting at window seats recovered faster from performing a series of stressful tasks than classmates who faced a blank wall or even a high-definition plasma screen displaying a nature scene. The more time they spent gazing at the view, the faster their heart rates dropped back to normal. Hmm . . . that is a good excuse to ask your boss for an office with a window.

Listen to Music

As you load your personal soundtrack onto your iPod, include a medley of relaxing music to take the edge off stress. Listening to mellow tunes with a slow, steady rhythm helps to slow down your breathing and heart rate so you feel calmer. Whether you are a fan of Enya or Gregorian chants, you can find something that suits your style.

Whatever you decide to do to relieve stress, make sure it is enjoyable. If you are unable to contain your stress, consult your doctor immediately.

Contributed by:  sharecare

Angelina Jolie

How she deals with stress...

Being a worldwide celebrity, philanthropist and movie star can be extremely stressful. For celebrity Angelina Jolie, balancing life and managing her stress includes the simple things in life. Jolie told Stylist Magazine that she has a hard time calming down with all the chaos in her home, so she tries to find peace in the little things that bring her joy.

Jolie says, "I find meditation in sitting on the floor with the kids coloring for an hour or going on the trampoline. You do something you love, that makes you happy, and that gives you your meditation. But I think it's good I'm not somebody who needs quiet moments because I never get them. They're very rare."



Worldwide superstar Jolie balances her stressful life by meditating and spending time with her children.



Understanding **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

Contributed by: United HealthCare

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a common condition affecting the hands and wrists. Effective treatments exist to help patients manage or even cure this condition.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a condition that causes tingling or numbness in the hand and fingers, followed by shooting pains through the wrist and arm, which are often worse at night. This occurs when the passageway between the bones at the base of the hand, the carpal tunnel, begins to narrow. Because this is already a narrow space, only about the size of your thumb, the ligaments inside the space can press against the nerves and lead to tingling, numbness and pain.

Causes of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Several factors cause this narrowing of the carpal tunnel. The anatomy of a person's wrist may make a person more prone to the condition. Underlying health conditions that lead to water

retention or inflammation can also lead to Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Some pregnant women suffer from the condition during pregnancy because of the increased fluids in their bodies. While some believe that overuse can lead to Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, the National Institutes of Health indicates that no scientific data exists to support such a claim.

Symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome causes numbness in the hand, thumb, index, middle and ring fingers, but not in the smallest finger. Some patients describe their symptoms as a feeling of heaviness in the fingers. Symptoms often present at first during the night, later showing up during the day as the condition progresses. Individuals may also experience a weakened grip, as well as an inability to tell the difference between hot and cold when touching with the affected fingers.

Dealing with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Recovery from Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is often



successful. Sufferers find relief from ongoing pain and numbness and regain normal use of their hands and wrists. When overuse is the primary cause, taking breaks, resting the hands and applying cold packs to reduce swelling can be effective in alleviating the symptoms.

If rest and ice do not provide relief, the next step is to try wrist splints. If carpal tunnel flairs up at night, splints can be beneficial as they hold hands still during sleep. Some find that wrist splints worn during the work day also bring relief.

Doctors may prescribe nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. These provide temporary relief from symptoms, but do not appear to provide an actual remedy for the condition.

Corticosteroid injections are a third non-surgical option. Injecting the carpal tunnel with a corticosteroid may relieve some pain, as well as reduce swelling. This only works if the medication is injected directly into the carpal tunnel, not if it is taken orally.

If non-surgical treatments do not effectively control the condition and it is having a significant impact on an individual's quality of life, doctors may recommend

surgery. Both endoscopic and open surgeries are available, depending on the severity of damage and the patient's anatomy. The goal of surgery is to relieve pressure on the median nerve. To achieve this, doctors cut the ligament pressing on the inside of the carpal tunnel nerve. Over time, the cut ligament can grow back in a new way, leaving more room for the nerves.

Sufferers should talk to their doctors about how to alleviate Carpal Tunnel Syndrome before it begins to progress. Whether the effective course of action is wrist braces or surgery, those experiencing symptoms have a variety of treatment options.



Nothing Expensive...

is Required to Get You
MOVING...

Nothing expensive or complicated is required for you to be physically active. When it comes to exercise, small increases can make big improvements to your health.

At Home

- Reduce screen time for you and your family. Play actively with your children. Join them in a game of hopscotch or jump rope.
- Work in the garden or mow the grass. Rake leaves, prune, dig or pick up trash.
- If moderate TV time is a must, do push ups, crunches, leg lifts, etc., while watching your favorite show or during commercials.
- Take your dog (or the neighbor's dog) for a walk.
- Simple stretches and exercises first thing in the morning can help make you and your family feel more alert and productive at school and work.

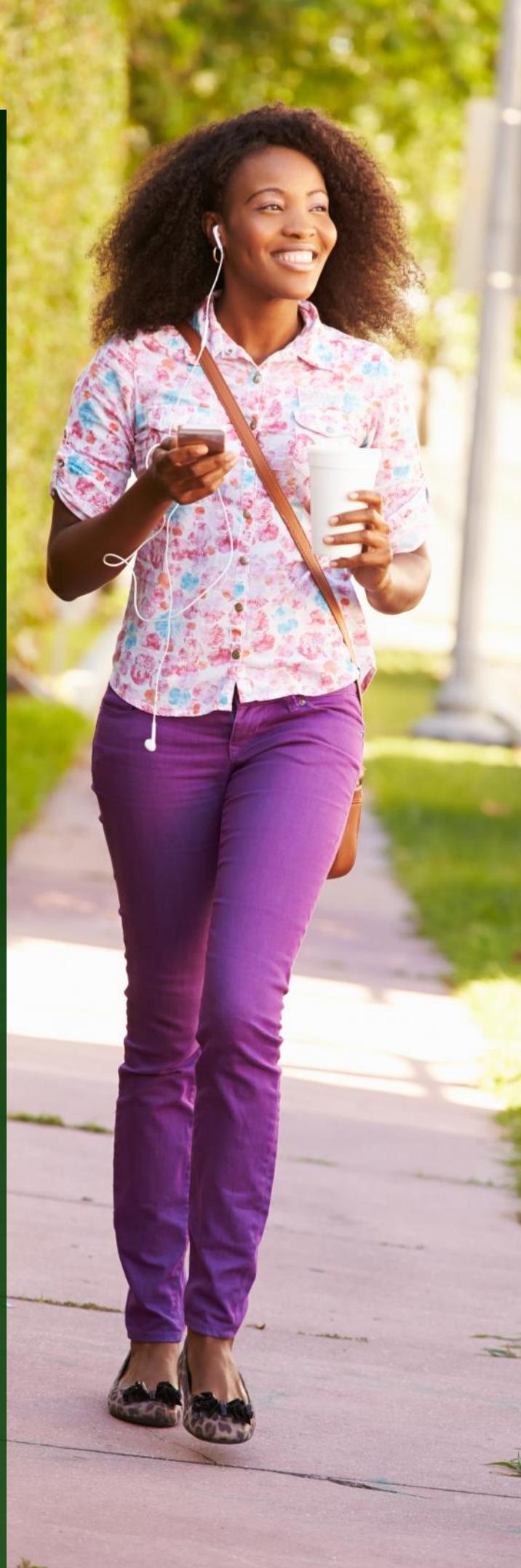
At Work

- Go for a short walk during your lunch or break. You will exercise and relieve stress at the same time.
- Start a walking or exercise group with work colleagues and stick to a routine.
- Do simple exercise moves at your desk or stand up while talking on the phone.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Sit on an exercise ball instead of a chair. This strengthens your abs and back.
- Forego the intercom and walk over to a co-worker's desk.
- Schedule walking meetings or brainstorming sessions.
- Take the parking spot furthest away. The more steps you take per day, the better.

Outside

Take advantage of all that nature has to offer:

- Canoe down a beautiful river.
- Go swimming at your local public swimming area.
- Take a walk on your state park trails.



Stress Management

Effective stress management starts with identifying your sources of stress and developing strategies to manage them. One way to do this is to make a list of the situations, concerns or challenges that trigger your stress response. Take a moment to write down the top 10 issues you are facing right now. You will notice that some of your stressors are events that happen to you while others seem to originate from within.

External Exasperations

External stressors are events and situations that happen to you. Some examples of external stressors include:

- **Major life changes.** These changes can be positive — a new marriage, a planned pregnancy, a promotion or a new house. They can also be negative — the death of a loved one or a divorce.
- **Environment.** The input from the world around us can be a source of stress. Consider how you react to noises, such as a barking dog, or too much or too little light in a room.
- **Unpredictable events.** Out of the blue, uninvited houseguests arrive. Or you discover your rent has gone up or that your pay has been cut.
- **Workplace.** Common stressors at work include an impossible workload, endless emails, urgent deadlines and a demanding boss.
- **Social.** Meeting new people can be stressful. Just think about going on a blind date and you probably start to sweat. Relationships with family often spawn stress as well. Just think back to your last spat with your partner or child.

Strategies to manage external stressors include lifestyle factors such as eating a healthy diet, being physically active and getting enough sleep, which help boost your resiliency.

Other helpful steps include asking for help from others, using humor, learning to be assertive and practicing problem-solving and time management.

Internal Irritations

Not all stress stems from things that happen to you. Much of our stress response is self-induced. Those feelings and thoughts that pop into your head and cause you unrest are known as internal stressors.

Examples of internal stressors include:

- **Fears.** Common ones include fear of failure, fear of public speaking and fear of flying.
- **Uncertainty and lack of control.** Few people enjoy not knowing or not being able to control what might happen. Think about how you might react when waiting for the results of a medical test.
- **Beliefs.** These might be attitudes, opinions or expectations. You may not even think about how your beliefs shape your experience, but these preset thoughts often set us up for stress. Consider the expectations you put on yourself to create a perfect holiday celebration or advance up the career ladder.

The good news is that we have the ability to control our thoughts. The bad news is that our fears, attitudes and expectations have been our companions for a long time and it often takes some effort to change them. Strategies to manage internal stressors include reframing your thoughts, challenging negative thoughts, using relaxation techniques and talking with a trusted friend or counselor.

Take the First Step

Recognizing a problem is the first step toward solving it. By beginning to identify and understand the sources of your stress, you have taken the first step in learning to better manage it. Manage it, not eliminate it. Stress is a fact of life, and that is okay. You can learn ways to handle it.

Crispy Baked **Eggplant Fries**



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: about 8 to 10 fries

Calories	115
Fat	8.8 g
Total Carbs	6.6 g
Protein	3.75 g

Do you ever wonder what you can do to help with your french fry addiction? This healthy eggplant recipe will please you and the entire family.

Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant, cut into 1/4" fries
- 1 cup of almond flour/meal + 2 Tbsp. arrowroot powder OR 1-1/2 cups of cornmeal
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1-1/2 teaspoon fine grain sea salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil

Preparation

- Lay eggplant matchsticks in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with paper towels. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of salt and let stand for 25 minutes.
- At the 25-minute mark, pat dry the eggplant matchsticks with paper towels.
- Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C) and place a rack in the middle of the oven. Lightly grease a baking sheet with olive oil.
- In a medium bowl, combine remaining ½ teaspoon of salt, almond meal plus arrowroot powder (or cornmeal), garlic powder, paprika and oregano.
- Crack two eggs in a small bowl and lightly beat.
- One by one, dip the eggplant fries in the beaten eggs and transfer to the almond meal mixture (or cornmeal), being sure to coat them thoroughly.
- Place eggplant fries on a baking sheet and bake for 20-25 minutes, flipping them at the 12 minute mark.





Superfood of the Month

Clementines

This winter fruit is a healthy way to satisfy your sweet tooth. A clementine is a hybrid between a mandarin and a sweet orange. The exterior is a deep orange color with a smooth, glossy appearance. Clementines can be separated into 7 to 14 segments.

Health Benefits of Eating Clementines

Clementines pack a punch when it comes to vitamin C. Just one clementine contains 36 milligrams, which is 60 percent of your daily value of vitamin C. Whether working as an antioxidant or synthesizing essential substances, such as collagen and neurotransmitters, vitamin C has quite an impact on your health. As an antioxidant, it protects cells, proteins, fats, carbohydrates and DNA from damage caused by free radicals. Your skin depends on vitamin C to protect its cells from free radicals formed in response to sunlight. It is essential for the synthesis of the connective tissue, collagen, which supports tendons, your skin, blood vessels, bones and tissues throughout the body.



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1

Calories	35
Total Fat	0 g
Sodium	1 mg
Fiber	1 g
Total Carbs	9 g
Protein	1 g
Sugars	7 g



Starting Your 2015 New Year Fitness Plan



So, you are going to
start a personal
Fitness Plan in 2015?

Good for You...
Get Fit and Become a
HealthierU this New
Year!



Starting a fitness program may be one of the best things that you can do for your health and well-being. Physical activity can reduce your risk of chronic disease, improve balance and coordination and even help you loose weight and improve your self-esteem. Here are several simple steps that you can take to start your program:

- 1) Consult your physician to make sure that you are physically able to start a workout program.
- 2) Assess your fitness level by recording a baseline and benchmark your progress. You should consider recording:
 - Your pulse rate before and after you walk 1 mile
 - How long it takes you to walk 1 mile
 - How many pushups you can do at one time
 - How far you can reach in front of you, seated on the floor with your legs in front of you
 - Your waist circumference
 - Your body mass index
- 3) Design your fitness program.
 - Create fitness goals (lose weight or preparing for a marathon)
 - Create a balanced routine by aiming for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week
 - Build activity into your daily routine by finding time to exercise
 - Plan variety in your exercise program to keep it interesting
 - Allow for recovery time, including sleep and rest
 - Document your activity and progress in a journal or personal fitness device
- 4) Assemble the equipment needed to start your activities, such as correctly fitting athletic shoes and socks, personal fitness devices and activity logs.
- 5) Get started slowly and plan for building up gradually.
- 6) Monitor your progress so that you can see your improvements which will be motivating and inspiring.
- 7) Share your achievements with others including your physician.

During the year, we will be featuring basic exercises each month that can help you shape up and get fit. Be on the lookout each issue for the Exercise of the Month column for more information.

**GET
FIT**

Eat This...

Not That...



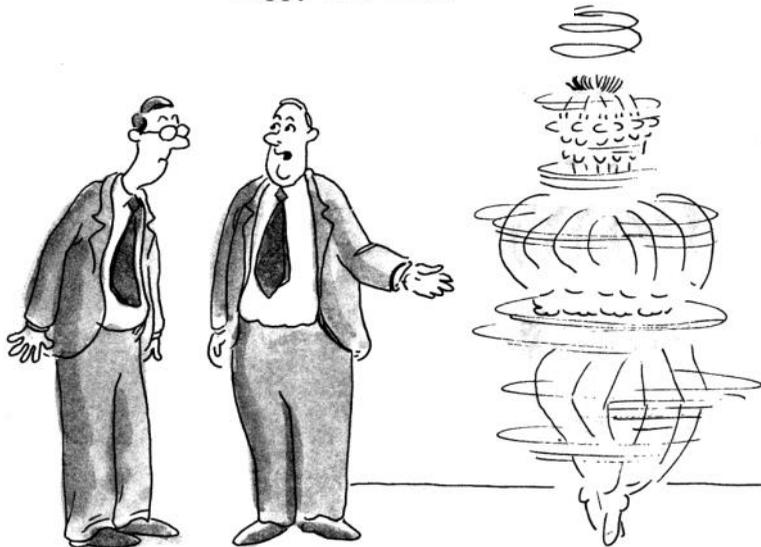
Coconut Milk or Whipping Cream

Coconut milk is much lower in calories and can give the same creamy consistency in your soups and stews. Try this substitution today to lower your calorie intake.

2015



Happy New Year!



“He puts a positive spin on everything.”



WELLBEING
Insights

We would like your feedback and personal stories to use and feature in future publications.

Your Personal Wellness Story:

If you have a personal health or wellness story that you think would inspire others, please feel free to send a brief letter and your picture to our editor.

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Thank you for reading and contributing. We sincerely hope that we can become a healthier part of becoming a healthier you.



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