



The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

October 2024

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about breast cancer and the importance of early detection and prevention. Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide, but with early detection and preventive measures, the chances of successful treatment are significantly increased.

Regular self-examinations and mammograms are crucial. Women in their 20s and 30s should become familiar with their breasts and report any changes to their healthcare provider. Clinical breast exams are recommended every three years for women in this age group.

Once women reach their 40s, annual mammograms should become a priority. These screenings can detect tumors too small to feel and identify changes in breast tissue. Women with a family history of breast cancer or genetic predispositions should discuss earlier or more frequent screenings with their healthcare provider.

Early Signs and Symptoms to Watch For

While a lump in the breast is the most recognized symptom, there are lesser-known signs of breast cancer that women should be aware of. These include:

- **Inverted Nipple:** Any sudden change in nipple shape, such as inversion or retraction, should not be ignored.
- **Skin Changes:** Redness, scaling, dimpling, or thickening of the skin can indicate underlying issues.
- **Nipple Discharge:** Any unusual discharge, particularly if it is bloody or occurs without squeezing, should be evaluated by a healthcare provider.
- **Breast Pain:** Persistent pain that is not related to the menstrual cycle warrants a check-up.
- **Swelling or Lump in the Armpit:** This could indicate that cancer has spread to lymph nodes.

Being informed about these signs can empower women to seek medical advice promptly, leading to earlier diagnosis and improved treatment options. This Breast Cancer Awareness Month, take the time to understand these signs and share this knowledge with loved ones. Early detection saves lives, and awareness is the first step in prevention.

Source: <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/>



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Soaking Up the Sun: How to Make the Most of Shorter Days

As we turn the clocks back for daylight savings, it can be easy to get caught up in the shorter days and longer nights. With less sunlight to work with, it's more important than ever to make time to get outside and soak up the daylight, especially for our mental and physical well-being. Getting outside during daylight hours can boost your mood, improve focus, and even help regulate your sleep patterns. Exposure to natural light during the day keeps your circadian rhythm in balance, which in turn promotes better sleep at night. Plus, fresh air and movement can do wonders for relieving stress and lifting your spirits—something we all need more of as the days grow darker and colder.

But with work schedules, family obligations, and everything else on your plate, how do you make time for it? Start small! Try a brisk walk during your lunch break or take a few minutes in the morning for a quick stretch outside. Even just 15 minutes of natural light can make a noticeable difference. If you're working from home, set up your workspace near a window, or take phone calls outside when possible. For the weekend, plan outdoor activities that make the most of daylight, like hiking, biking, or even a simple stroll in the park. Not only will you get some much-needed vitamin D, but it's a great opportunity to disconnect from screens and reconnect with nature.

As we adjust to the time change, prioritizing outdoor time will help you stay energized and balanced, even as the days get shorter. So, bundle up, step outside, and enjoy the benefits of daylight, no matter how brief it may be!

Simple Ways to Maximize Outdoor Time During Shorter Days:

- Take your breaks outside
- Start your morning with sunlight
- Move your workspace near a window
- Plan weekend outdoor adventures
- Combine outdoor time with social time
- Garden or do yard work
- Take phone calls outdoors
- Bundle up and embrace the cold
- Use outdoor playtime for kids
- Create outdoor routines

Source: <https://www.fepblue.org/news/2018/10/02/07/31/5-ways-to-make-the-most-of-shorter-darker-days>



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Teal Pumpkin Project Making Halloween Inclusive for All

Halloween is a fun and exciting time for kids to dress up, explore their neighborhoods, and collect treats. But for children with food allergies, it can be a little more complicated. That's where the Teal Pumpkin Project comes in—a nationwide movement that aims to make Halloween safer and more inclusive for all children.

The Teal Pumpkin Project was created by the Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) organization. It encourages households to offer non-food treats on Halloween to help kids with food allergies enjoy the festivities without worrying about allergens in candy. By placing a teal-colored pumpkin outside your home, you signal that you have safe, non-food options available for trick-or-treaters.

So, what kinds of non-food items can you offer? Think of fun and creative alternatives like glow sticks, stickers, bubbles, small toys, or temporary tattoos. These options not only make Halloween more inclusive for children with food allergies but also for kids with dietary restrictions, diabetes, or other conditions that limit their candy consumption.

How to Get Involved

Participating in the Teal Pumpkin Project is simple! Here's how you can get involved:

1. Place a teal pumpkin outside your home to show that you're offering non-food treats.
2. Provide non-food items as a safe alternative to candy. You can still offer candy, but just keep the two options separate.
3. Spread the word to your friends and neighbors to help raise awareness about food allergies and promote inclusivity during Halloween.

This small act of kindness can make a big difference in creating a more enjoyable, stress-free Halloween for everyone. So, consider joining the Teal Pumpkin Project this year—your thoughtful gesture could mean the world to a child who just wants to enjoy Halloween like everyone else!

Source: <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2019/10/29/774121173/teal-pumpkins-make-halloween-less-tricky-for-kids-with-food-allergies>

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach. Your EAP is here to help with family, work, health, well-being & legal issues.

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Chicken Tinga Tostadas

Ingredients

- 8 corn tortillas
- Cooking spray
- 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups Chicken Tinga
- 1 (15 ounce) can low-sodium refried beans
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crumbled cotija cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh cilantro

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Arrange tortillas in a single layer on a baking sheet and coat on both sides with cooking spray.
3. Bake, flipping once, until crispy, about 12 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, heat chicken tinga and refried beans in separate pans until steaming
5. Divide the beans among the tortillas, then top each with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chicken and 1 tablespoon each cheese and cilantro.

Nutrition

Per Serving: 2 tostadas

Calories: 345 | Protein: 21g | Carbohydrates: 44g | Dietary Fiber: 8g | Saturated Fat: 2g | Total Sugars: 3g | Sodium: 514mg | Cholesterol: 53g

Source: <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/7944697/chicken-tinga-tostadas/>