

Have you “herb”?



Here are some Herbs that are good for combating spring allergies:

**Chamomile**—its anti-inflammatory properties offer relief to dry, itchy eyes. Try placing refrigerated, wet chamomile tea bags over your eyes for 3 to 5 minutes.

**Peppermint**—The combination of peppermint’s menthol oils and tannins makes it a powerful decongestant. Improved breathing by steeping fresh or dried peppermint leaves in boiling water to create a sinus-clearing tea.

**Thyme**— An antimicrobial and expectorant herb, thyme is useful at treating coughs, clearing congestion and soothing sore throats. Steep 1 to 2 teaspoons fresh thyme to create a tea, or try commercially prepared thyme tea bags.

**Honey**—its healing and expectorant qualities make it a great natural treatment for easing coughs and soothing sore throats. A spoonful in a cup of tea ought to do the trick, or combine the powers of honey with thyme.

**Ginger**—A natural pain killer, ginger can help soothe the irritation of a sore throat. It’s especially powerful when combined with honey. Simmer 1 teaspoon of fresh, grated ginger or 1 to 2 teaspoons of the dried, powdered form in a cup of water for 5 to 10 minutes to create ginger tea. Add honey.

**Cayenne peppers** are rich in quercetin, a bioflavonoid that prevents the release of histamines and other inflammatory chemicals that can cause allergy symptoms. Also help ease pain from a sore throat.

Please consult with your doctor first if you are taking any medications as the herbs could interfere with their effectiveness.



# Wellness Corner Connection

## Debby Schiffer, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIFs

### Stress: Know the Signs and Ways To Cope

We all experience stress. It’s the way the body and mind reacts to certain triggers or “stressors” in our surroundings. This can include situations, people or places. Regardless of the cause of stress (real or perceived), our body reacts by pumping out a surge of hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline. These hormones potentially prompt symptoms that may play havoc with your health and safety. Prolonged unrelieved stress can cause you to feel distracted, which can result in accidents and injuries. The release of stress hormones depletes the white blood cells in your system that fight off infection. That lowers your immune system, making you more vulnerable to diseases such as colds and the flu. Stress can also result in many other problems, including:

- ◆ Tense muscles, especially in the back and neck
- ◆ Sleeplessness
- ◆ Upset stomach
- ◆ Migraine headaches
- ◆ Worsening of allergies and asthma
- ◆ High blood pressure which contributes to heart disease and stroke
- ◆ Extended recovery from existing illnesses
- ◆ Social isolation

#### Limit time watching or listening to the news.

It’s important to stay informed, but there’s a difference between getting the information you need and becoming vigilantly obsessed. The news is presented in a dramatic way that creates anxiety (and attracts more viewers). All the spin can be infuriating, and yet there’s nothing we can do to stop it except to switch off the television after we know the events of the day.

#### Practice mindfulness.

Mindfulness is an attitude toward living that involves acceptance of whatever is happening in the present moment, self-awareness, compassion, and acting with forethought, rather than reacting automatically. It is best learned by practicing some form of [meditation](#), like focusing on your breath or senses. Many mindfulness apps can guide you to find inner calm amidst the chaos.

With the consequences of poorly managed stress ranging from fatigue to heart disease and obesity, it is important to know how to recognize high stress levels and take action to handle it in healthy ways. Being able to control stress is a learned behavior, and stress can be effectively managed by taking small steps toward changing unhealthy behaviors.

#### The American Psychological Association offers the following tips on how to manage your stress:

**Understand how you stress.** Everyone experiences stress differently. How do you know when you are stressed? How are your thoughts or behaviors different from times when you do not feel stressed?

1. **Identify your sources of stress.** What events or situations trigger stressful feelings? Are they related to your children, family, health, financial decisions, work, relationships or something else?
2. **Learn your own stress signals.** People experience stress in different ways. You may have a hard time concentrating or making decisions, feel angry, irritable or out of control, or experience headaches, muscle tension or a lack of energy. Gauge your stress signals.
3. **Recognize how you deal with stress.** Determine if you are using unhealthy behaviors (such as smoking, drinking alcohol and over/under eating) to cope. Is this a routine behavior, or is it specific to certain events or situations? Do you make unhealthy choices as a result of feeling rushed and overwhelmed?
4. **Find healthy ways to manage stress.** Consider healthy, stress-reducing activities such as meditation, exercising or talking things out with friends or family. Keep in mind that unhealthy behaviors develop over time and can be difficult to change. Don’t take on too much at once. Focus on changing only one behavior at a time.
5. **Take care of yourself.** Eat right, get enough sleep, drink plenty of water and engage in regular physical activity. Ensure you have a healthy mind and body through activities like yoga, taking a short walk, going to the gym or playing sports that will enhance both your physical and mental health. Take regular vacations or other breaks from work. No matter how hectic life gets, make time for yourself — even if it’s just simple things like reading a good book or listening to your favorite music.
6. **Reach out for support.** Accepting help from supportive friends and family can improve your ability to manage stress. If you continue to feel overwhelmed by stress, you may want to talk to a psychologist, who can help you better manage stress and change unhealthy behaviors.

# How to Manage Your Stress

## Eat Right

You can help control stress by eating right. Here are some Dos and Don'ts for stress-less eating.

- ◆ DO have foods high in B vitamins, such as bananas, fish, whole-grain cereals, rice, nuts, chicken, avocados and dark leafy vegetables. Vitamin B helps maintain your nerves and brain cells. You may want to check with your doctor to see if you should add a B-complex vitamin supplement as well.
- ◆ DO drink water, which helps hydrate your whole system.
- ◆ DO get enough magnesium, which helps regulate blood sugar levels. Good sources are broccoli, cabbage, tofu and cod.
- ◆ DO get enough essential fats, such as found in oily fish. Essential fatty acid increases the serotonin in the brain, which regulates your mood.
- ◆ DON'T eat candy and other sweets, since sugar causes the body to get more stressed out by causing blood sugar swings.
- ◆ DON'T drink coffee, black tea or other caffeinated beverages. Caffeine releases stress hormones like adrenaline, which increases your feelings of stress.
- ◆ DON'T eat fatty comfort foods since these can thicken your blood and make you feel lethargic.

**Q.** How can I break the habit of eating when stressed?

**A.** Instead of eating, send an email to yourself or to a buddy about how you feel. Then give yourself some time before you reach for food. Perhaps the writing will be enough.

## Sleep

- Getting enough sleep will help you have the energy to deal better with stress along with anything else you encounter during the day. It also recharges your immune system and keeps you healthy. Here are some suggestions for getting a good night's sleep.
- Keep your bedroom dark.
- Avoid napping during the day if you find that it keeps you awake at night.
- Avoid alcohol late at night. While it may help you fall asleep, it reduces your quality of sleep and may cause you to awake later in the night.
- Avoid caffeine later in the day. That means coffee, tea or caffeinated soda.
- Try to keep things peaceful and quiet before sleep.
- Reserve your bedroom for sleep. Don't try to get any last-minute work done there.
- Sleep in a bed that is conducive to sleep. Are your mattress and pillows right for you? Do they give you enough support? Are they comfortable enough?
- Keep the noise level down in your room. If you need to mask outside noise, consider a white noise machine or the soothing sounds of waves, rainforests or waterfalls. Or use earplugs.
- Check that the temperature is right (Goldilocks)-not too hot and not too cold. Is ventilation OK?
- Avoid eating a big meal right before going to sleep.

## De-stressors

- Take some "me time" right now.
- Remember... This too shall pass.
- Walk outside, breathe, connect with Source.
- Talk to yourself as if you were a good friend.
- Laugh.
- Step away from the situation.
- Identify what you really want.
- Get help—you don't have to do it all alone.
- Re-evaluate your priorities.

## Why Meditate?



I'm sure you have heard that meditation can be a great way to manage stress. But if you're like most of us, the thought of sitting still for any length of time seems almost impossible and so unproductive, right? Well, I've been making a valiant effort to try sitting in silence even for a few minutes a day, and guess what, I'm more productive because I approach my "to do" list with more calmness and focus.

These are some of the proven benefits of meditation:

- **Improved concentration** – A clear mind makes you more productive, especially in creative disciplines like writing.
- **Less bothered by little things** – Do you sometimes allow yourself to get upset by little things? It is the nature of the mind to

magnify small things into serious problems. Meditation helps us detach. We learn to live in the here and now, rather than worrying about the past or future. We do not worry about meaningless things, but see the bigger picture.

- **Better Health** – There have been numerous studies pointing to the health benefits of meditation. The reason is that meditation reduces stress levels and alleviates anxiety. If we can reduce stress, many health benefits follow.
- **Knowledge of Self** – Meditation enables us to have a deeper understanding of our inner self. Through meditation we can gain a better understanding of our life's purpose.

Many people like the idea of meditation, but feel they don't have enough time. (News flash: When you really want to do something you can find time.) Get up just a few minutes earlier or watch 30 minutes less TV or browsing the internet. Meditation requires an investment of time, but clearing the mind can help you accomplish more in the rest of your day. Nothing is better than the feeling of inner peace. What is the point in being tremendously busy but unable to enjoy it? Meditation is not about retreating from the world; it gives us inspiration. Whatever you do, if you have peace of mind, your work will be more enjoyable and productive. At first you may have a difficult time "not thinking"! Our minds are cluttered with thoughts that are hard to block. A helpful technique is to concentrate on one object, maybe a candle flame or a small dot or flower. Perhaps begin by repeating a word or phrase to yourself, also known as a Mantra. This is a good place to start. And do not worry about "doing it wrong". Anything you do is better than nothing. Give it a try. It takes practice but will be so worth the time and effort. Good luck. **Namaste\***

\*The definition of **Namaste** (pronounced na, ma, stay) is both a physical gesture and a spoken spiritual salutation, which is the recognition of the divine spirit (or soul) in another by the divine spirit in you.

The word **Namaste** translates simply to "I bow to the divine in you."



## Poison Ivy, Oak, or Sumac

Whether your itchy rash is from poison ivy, oak, or sumac, you've got plenty of choices to get relief. For most folks, those annoying bumps and blisters will be nothing but a bad memory in a few weeks.

If you think your skin rubbed up against one of the poisonous plants, wash the area thoroughly with soap and cool water right away. The sooner you clean your skin, the more likely you'll be able to remove the oils that cause an allergic reaction. It's also a good idea to wash all clothes and shoes that may have touched one of the plants, too.

A rash due to poison ivy, oak, or sumac may show up right away. But sometimes it can take a few days after you had contact with the plant for a rash to appear.

### Home Remedies for Poison Ivy, Oak, or Sumac

Even though your rash can go away on its own in 1 to 3 weeks, your skin will feel better if you take some steps at home.

To help with oozing problems, try over-the-counter creams or lotions that you put on the rash, such as:

- Calamine lotion
- Zinc carbonate
- Zinc oxide

For itchiness, your skin will feel better if you soak in a bathtub with cool water and an oatmeal-based bath product. Or place a cool, wet compress on the rash for 15 to 30 minutes at a time, a few times a day. There are a few things to avoid. As tough as it is to resist, don't scratch the blisters. Bacteria on your hands can get into the blisters and lead to an infection. Also, some creams or ointments can make your rash worse. **Don't use any of these:**

- Antihistamine creams or lotions
- Anesthetic creams with benzocaine
- Antibiotic creams with neomycin or bacitracin

Resource: WebMD

## Sun Safety Time!

Given the epidemic of skin cancer in this country, sun safety should now be an important part of our lives. Some people think about sun protection only when they spend a day at the lake, beach or pool. But sun exposure adds up day after day, and it happens every time you are in the sun. **If you work outside, take note!** Sun safety should include methods of sun protection (which will help prevent skin cancers and premature aging) and methods of skin cancer detection.

There are many easy to use products that will help make your life sun safe. Sun protective clothing, including hats, sunglasses, sunscreens, umbrellas, sun shades, awnings, canopies, window film or UV film, all will help protect you from ultraviolet radiation. It is important, however, that you familiarize yourself with how to best combine sun protection methods, what the standards for sun protection apply to each product and how best to use each product. For example, sun protective clothing should offer a UPF of 30+ and therefore block 97 percent of UV. Sunscreens are best if they are broad spectrum and have a SPF 30+. You should also know that all sunscreens should be applied 20 minutes before being exposed to the sun and should be reapplied every two hours while exposed.



## The Importance of Hydration

### Hydration Will Help Keep You Healthy!

It's no secret that not drinking enough water can have a negative impact on your health. Even setting aside long term health effects like kidney damage and seizures, dehydration can cause more immediate problems like headaches, fatigue, joint pain, inability to concentrate, nausea, vomiting, and memory loss. Obviously, suffering from any of these symptoms is going to make for an unpleasant workday.

### Dehydration Can Affect Your Mood

Not drinking enough water isn't just bad for health; it can affect behavior as well. Studies have shown that even slight levels of dehydration can have a negative impact on people's mood. People who are feeling irritable are less likely to get along with co-workers or get their work done, and probably won't want to even be at work in the first place. So when employees have access to plenty of water, it can drastically improve people's moods and make work a more pleasant environment to be in.



### If staying hydrated is difficult for you, here are some tips that can help:

- ◆ Keep a bottle of water with you during the day. To reduce your costs, carry a reusable water bottle and fill it with tap water.
- ◆ If you don't like the taste of plain water, try adding a slice of lemon or lime to your drink.
- ◆ Drink water before, during, and after a workout.
- ◆ When you're feeling hungry, drink water. Thirst is often confused with hunger. True hunger will not be satisfied by drinking water. Drinking water may also contribute to a healthy weight-loss plan. Some research suggests that drinking water can help you feel full.
- ◆ If you have trouble remembering to drink water, drink on a schedule. For example, drink water when you wake up, at breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and when you go to bed. Or, drink a small glass of water at the beginning of each hour.
- ◆ Drink water when you go to a restaurant. It will keep you hydrated, and it's free.

**Sports drinks** can be helpful if you are planning on exercising at higher than normal levels for more than an hour. It contains carbohydrates and electrolytes that can increase your energy. It helps your body absorb water. However, some sports drinks are **high in calories from added sugar**. They also may contain high levels of sodium (**salt**). Check the serving size on the label. One bottle usually contains more than one serving. Some sports drinks contain caffeine, too. *Remember that a safe amount of caffeine to consume each day is between 200 and 300 mg. (milligrams).*

**Energy drinks** are not the same as sports drinks. Energy drinks usually contain large amounts of caffeine. Also, they contain ingredients that over stimulate you (guarana, ginseng, or taurine). These are things *your body doesn't need*. Most of these drinks are also high in added sugar. According to doctors, children and teens should not have energy drinks.

Resource: Familydoctor.org

## Proven Reasons Why You Should Walk

By [MedinineNet.com](http://MedinineNet.com)

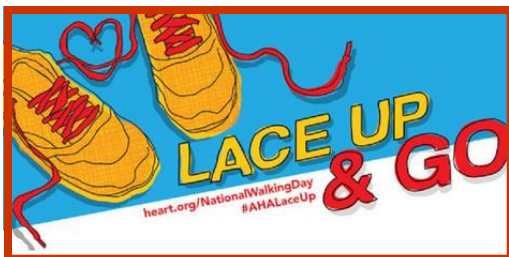
With the warmer weather fast approaching, one of the easiest and least expensive ways to stay physically fit is to walk. You'd think a simple activity like walking would be just that, simple. Yet fewer than 50% of American adults do enough exercise to gain any health or fitness benefits from physical activity.

Here are some reasons why you should start walking:

- ♥ Walking can prevent Type 2 diabetes. The Diabetes Prevention Program showed that walking 150 minutes per week and losing just 7% of your body weight (12-15 pounds) can reduce your risk of diabetes by 58%. A great reason to offer a weight loss AND a walking challenge at work.
- ♥ Walking strengthens your heart if you're male. In one study, mortality rates among retired men who walked less than one mile per day were nearly twice that among those who walked more than two miles per day.
- ♥ Walking strengthens your heart if you're female. Women in the Nurse's Health Study (72,488 female nurses) who walked three hours or more per week reduced their risk of a heart attack or coronary event by 35% compared with women who did not walk.
- ♥ Walking is good for the brain. In a study on walking and cognitive function, researchers found that women who walked the equivalent of an easy pace at least 1.5 hours per week had significantly better cognitive function and less cognitive decline than women who walked less than 40 minutes per week. Think about that!
- ♥ Walking is good for your bones. Research shows that postmenopausal women who walk approximately one mile each day have higher whole-body bone density than women who walk shorter distances, and walking is also effective in slowing the rate of bone loss from the legs.
- ♥ Walking helps alleviate symptoms of depression. Walking for 30 minutes, three to five times per week for 12 weeks reduced symptoms of depression as measured with a standard depression questionnaire by 47%.
- ♥ Walking in short bouts improves fitness too! A study of sedentary women showed that short bouts of brisk walking (three 10-minute walks per day) resulted in similar improvements in fitness and were at least as effective in decreasing body obesity as long bouts (one 30-minute walk).
- ♥ Walking improves physical function. Helps prevent physical disability and weakness especially in older adults.

The list of benefits goes on and on but if I continued, there'd be no time for you to start walking!

If you're a seasoned walker, keep doing what you're doing. If you've been inactive and tire easily, it's best to start slow and easy. At first, walk only as far or as fast as you find comfortable. If you can walk for only a few minutes, let that be your starting point. For example, you might try short daily sessions of five to 10 minutes and slowly build up to 15 minutes twice a week. Then, over several weeks' time, you can gradually work your way up to 30 to 60 minutes of walking most days each week. Set realistic goals for yourself. Track your progress. Walk with a friend. It helps keep you going and accountable. And keep in mind that usually the first step is the most difficult. But once you start I know you will be glad you did...so will your health!



**The first Wednesday in April (3rd) is National Walking Day.** The American Heart Association sponsors this day to remind people about the health benefits of taking a walk. Wear your sneakers (or take them with you) to work, and at some point in the day, you are encouraged to take a 30-minute walk.. If you have to, break up the 30 minutes into 10 minutes 3x in the day. Let this kick start incorporating more movement into every day!

Here are some great ways to make that 30-minutes more enjoyable:



- ♥ Wear comfortable clothes.
- ♥ Take a friend to pass the time.
- ♥ Make sure to stretch those muscles.
- ♥ **Drink plenty of water.**
- ♥ Move your arms, too.
- ♥ Make sure you have good posture.

### What type of shoe?

One of the advantages of walking is that you don't need lots of fancy equipment, but shoes can make a difference. There are many athletic shoe types to choose from: running, walking, cross-training, etc. If you are only going to use them for walking, it's suggested you get a walking shoe. Walking shoes typically have heels and toes that are rounded up to reduce impact on heel strike and increase energy during push-off.



Why not take a walk with a co-worker during your lunch break and see how refreshed and de-stressed you feel when you return.

Map out a few safe routes at work so employees know where and how far to walk.

Start a walking club or challenge to keep everyone motivated to move!



# Cilantro Lime Chicken with Avocado Salsa

*Tender Juicy Cilantro Lime Chicken made with a quick marinade then grilled to lock in all the flavors. This paleo chicken recipe is topped with a fresh zesty Avocado Salsa – a healthy, easy, 30 minute meal you'll love.*

Prep Time: 15 mins

Cook Time: 12 mins

Total Time: 27 mins

Yield: 4

Category: Paleo, Gluten Free, Kid Friendly, 30 Minute Meal

Method: Grill

Cuisine: Mexican

## Ingredients

### Cilantro Lime Chicken:

- 1.5 lb. boneless chicken breast
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### Avocado Salsa:

- 4 avocados, diced
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, diced
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1/2 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- salt to taste



joyful healthy  
EATS

## Nutrition

- Serving Size: 4 oz. chicken + salsa
- **Calories:** 317
- **Sugar:** 1 g
- **Sodium:** 239 mg
- **Fat:** 22 g
- **Saturated Fat:** 3 g
- **Carbohydrates:** 11 g
- **Fiber:** 7 g
- **Protein:** 24 g
- **Cholesterol:** 55 mg



## Instructions

1. To a small bowl, add 1/4 cup of lime juice, olive oil, 1/4 cup of fresh cilantro, ground cumin, and 1/4 teaspoon of salt. Whisk until mixed.
2. Add chicken and marinade to a large ziplock bag. Let chicken marinate for 15 minutes.
3. Preheat grill to medium high heat (about 400 degrees). Place chicken on grill and grill each side for 4-6 minutes, until chicken is no longer pink. Remove and let sit.
4. To make the avocado salsa: add avocado, 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, 3 tablespoons lime juice, red wine vinegar, red pepper flakes, garlic clove, and salt to a small bowl. Gently toss to mix.
5. Top Cilantro Lime Chicken with fresh Avocado Salsa.

## What goes with Cilantro Lime Chicken?

1. Serve cilantro lime chicken with [black bean quinoa](#).
2. Cilantro lime rice would also be a great light option to pair with cilantro lime chicken.
3. Top this flavorful cilantro lime chicken with a fresh chunky avocado salsa or homemade [guacamole](#).
4. Make a [fresh mango salsa](#) or pice de galo.

Recipe taken from [www.joyfulhealthyeats.com](http://www.joyfulhealthyeats.com)



We are the choices that we make. Every choice gives us the opportunity to create our course...our life's journey. Right now we are one choice away from a new beginning.

For a moment, think about what YOU really want, what is your intention? What will make you happy, fulfilled, content, safe, confident, empowered? What choices (or changes) do you need to make to get there? If you have struggled in the past, perhaps one way to succeed this time is to be accountable. Find someone you trust. Someone who can be your ally and hold you accountable to your intentions.

You really only have 3 Choices in life: Give up, Give in, or Give it all you've got.

What are you going to do?

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**We're so busy watching out for what's just ahead of us that we don't take time to enjoy where we are.**