

HEALTHY LIVING

Wellness Newsletter from **AAOA**

April 2014

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Chicken Fruit Salad



Ingredients

- 1/4 cup fat-free plain Greek yogurt
- 3 Tablespoons fruit-flavored vinegar
- 4 teaspoons sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons poppy seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, if desired
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 8 cups mixed salad greens
- 2 cups sliced, cooked chicken breast
- 1 cup chopped melon, such as cantaloupe and/or honeydew
- 1 cup strawberries, quartered
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts, toasted
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese

Preparation

In a large bowl, whisk the Greek yogurt, vinegar, sugar, poppy seeds, salt (if using) and black pepper until smooth.

Reserve 1/4 cup of the dressing in a small bowl.

Add the mixed greens to the large bowl and toss to coat. Divide among 4 plates and top with chicken, melon, strawberries, walnuts and cheese.

Drizzle each portion with 1 tablespoon of the reserved dressing.

Nutrition Facts

Yields 4 Servings

Amount Per Serving

Calories 190 g	Fiber 4 g
Fat 10g	Protein 8g
Sodium 234 mg	Carbs 19g



Hooray for Hiking!

Great Tips for the Trail

Ahhh ... blue sky, fresh air, open spaces. Hitting the trail for a hike can soothe your spirit. Better yet, it doubles as a great workout. Of course, depending on the terrain, hikes can vary from relatively easy to quite challenging.

Gear up with the essentials:

- Wear fitness shoes or hiking boots with good traction. Make sure they fit you well. A blister is not a fun hiking companion!
- Pack a waterproof jacket with a hood — and a spare pair of socks, in case your feet get wet.
- Dress in layers so you can peel one or two off if the day heats up.
- Use a light backpack to carry a trail map, a flashlight, and a compass or GPS unit. Include a charged cellphone — programmed with emergency numbers for the area. (Keep in mind that in some areas you may not have reception.) Throw in waterproof matches, a pocketknife and some healthful snacks.
- Add a small first-aid kit to your pack. Include sterile gauze, adhesive tape, an elastic bandage, a chemical ice pack and a smoke flare. Include any medications you may need, such as an inhaler or epinephrine.
- Bring water -- and remember to drink it.
- Apply sunscreen before you head out -- even on cloudy days.
- Use an insect repellent.

Be safe out there:

- Before you head out, check the weather forecast for where you're headed. And, be sure to watch the skies once you're on the trail. Sudden storms can be dangerous.
- Know where you're going — and hike only on clear, marked trails.
- Read any safety information posted at the trailhead. If available, check in at a park ranger station. Find out about trail conditions and what hazards may be in the area — and if you need any special equipment.
- Plan to finish your hike before dark.

Take a hike near you:

Visit your State's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website. Many DNRs offer hiking information and trail maps. You might also find places to hike at:

- Start! Walking Paths, www.startwalkingnow.org -- an American Heart Association website
- National Park Service, www.nps.gov

Talk with your doctor if your plans involve significantly increasing your activity level. Strenuous hikes — or trekking on uneven ground — may not be advised for people with certain conditions.



KINDNESS: How it Pays Sweet Returns

You walked your friend's dog while she recuperated from surgery, and it left you feeling warm and fuzzy; but, it wasn't just because of the exercise and wagging tail.

You made another person happy — and that felt great. Did you know that practicing kindness can also be a plus for your health and well-being?

A Kinder, Happier Life

It turns out that people who make a habit of spreading kindness around them may experience less pain, depression and stress. People who reach out to help others might even live longer, according to some research.

This giving behavior can:

- Help you feel needed and socially connected
- Give you a sense of accomplishment & greater calm
- Take your mind off your own troubles

Everyday Ways to Cultivate Kindness

Maybe you'd like to be more compassionate and giving. Here are three ways to get started:

1. Think small. It doesn't take large — or time-consuming — acts of generosity to brighten someone's day. Everyday actions count, too. You might simply smile at a co-worker who looks a bit down. Or, let a mom with a toddler in tow cut in front of you at the post office.

Who knows? You may just set off a chain reaction of kindness around you.

2. Get involved. If you want to make helping a more routine part of your life, consider volunteering. You can look for opportunities that match your talents and interests.

The needs are many. For instance, you might read to kids at a local school. Or, assist or visit residents at a nursing home — or stock shelves at a food bank. To begin exploring your options, visit volunteermatch.org.

3. Bring it full circle. While you're being kind to others, remember to extend the same courtesy to yourself. For instance, try to:

- Be aware of your feelings and needs
- Avoid negative self-talk -- replace it with supportive, nonjudgmental thoughts
- Treat yourself as you would a friend
- Recognize that imperfection is part of being human

And, the circle can just continue. People who are kind to themselves may feel more positive and optimistic - and more eager to pass it on.

It's Noisy Out There - Protect Your Hearing

A songbird whistles sweetly. A baby giggles with glee. A gentle breeze blows through the trees. Life can be a symphony of lovely sounds; but, it has plenty of boom-clang-clamor, too.

How noise hurts

Over time, loud noises can damage the inner ear's sensitive hair cells. These cells turn vibrations into electrical signals that the brain interprets as sound. The potential for harm to these delicate cells depends largely on how loud the sound is — what's typically measured in decibels.

Where's the noise?

Decibels measure the intensity of sound. The scale runs from 0 to more than 180. Every increase of 10 on the scale means that a sound is 10 times more powerful than the level below. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud.

It also matters how long or how often you're exposed to a noise. For example, prolonged exposure to 85 decibels — such as the noise of heavy city traffic — can contribute to hearing loss.

3 sound strategies

It's important to avoid loud noises whenever you can — or to shield your ears when you can't escape it.

1. Steer clear. Or, at least distance yourself from loud

noises. If you have to shout to be heard, your ears are in danger.

2. Block it out. Protective earplugs or earmuffs are a must any time you are around loud noises, such as if you:

- Use mowers, leaf blowers or other lawn equipment
- Work with power tools or shop equipment
- Attend concerts or sports events
- Hunt or target shoot
- Ride a motorcycle,* snowmobile or motorboat

3. Take it down a notch. Lower the volume on music players, TVs and other gadgets. And, especially limit the time you spend wearing earbuds — which bring sounds closer to your sensitive hair cells.

Here's where some common sounds fall on the decibel scale:

Sound	Decibels
Normal Conversation	60
Lawnmower, shop tool	90
Chainsaw	100
Personal music player at full volume	105
Rock concert, car horn	110-115
Firecracker, jet engine, gunshot	140-165

Sources: American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery; National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

A Cancer Diagnosis: Coping with Your Emotions

When you learn you have cancer, you may be flooded with emotions, starting with shock. You might feel angry or afraid — and wonder: Why me? Why now? And, Will I survive this?

It may help to know that all these feelings are normal. Of course, that doesn't necessarily make it easier. But, there are ways that may help you manage your emotions — and regain a sense of control.

Reasons for hope

First off, try not to lose sight of this: Millions of people who have faced cancer are alive today. No one's journey will be exactly like yours, but with the treatments available today, the chances of surviving cancer are greater than ever before.

Learn more. Cancer is not a one-size-fits-all diagnosis. Find out as much as possible about your particular disease and how it's treated. This may help you worry less about what lies ahead.

Talking with your doctor is the best way to understand your illness and treatment options. It may help to have someone go with you to your appointments — to take notes and help you remember what was said. But, if too much information upsets or overwhelms you, that's OK. Let your doctor know that. You may decide you want to take it slowly — and think about what you're facing one step at a time.

Unwind and de-stress. Set aside time each day to try to let go of tension and worry. You might take a walk in a park, read an uplifting book or listen to music. Or, find a quiet spot — and breathe deeply while you imagine a calming, peaceful place.

It may seem difficult to relax right now, but relieving as much stress as possible may help your body better fight the disease.

Don't bottle up your feelings. Are you anxious — or scared? You don't have to pretend everything's fine. Sharing concerns with a caring friend or family member can help you work through them.

You might also write down your thoughts or worries in a journal. Try noting what you're grateful for, too — this can be a simple way to feel better.

Live your way. It may feel like cancer has taken center stage — and robbed you of normality. But, you may feel more in control if you continue the daily activities you enjoy. Perhaps that's working on a special project or spending time with your closest friends.

Recruite help. Cancer isn't something you have to go through alone. If you're having a hard time coping, talk with your doctor. He or she may refer you to a counselor who can help.*

You might also turn to a support group. Other people living with cancer can lend understanding ears — and offer practical advice, too. To find a group — and many other services for those with cancer — go to supportorgs.cancer.gov.

*Check your benefits plan to see what services may be covered.

APRIL WELLNESS TIP



Sheridah Bennett
(AAOA Wellness Champion)

Wellness Tip

'V' for Volunteer

If you're wanting to fill some extra time in your schedule, look into volunteering. You can check your city's website to find local events that are taking place and there are often community involvement links on these pages to help get you started.

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We want your feed-back about the Wellness Newsletter. Please e-mail us at wellness@aaomerica.org with any wellness tips or healthy recipe ideas.