

Health, Wellness & Beauty



Fresh herbs that can reduce your reliance on sodium

Salt has long been used to add flavor to people's favorite foods. In fact, the use of salt as a means to preserving foods and adding flavor to recipes dates back to ancient times and has led to countless conflicts ever since.

According to History.com, wars over access to salt reserves in China are believed to have been fought as early as 6,000 B.C. Though that shows just how

valuable salt has been throughout much of human history, it doesn't indicate the negative effects that can result from diets that feature excessive amounts of sodium.

The American Heart Association notes that sodium plays an essential role in the human body by regulating the kidneys and helping to control the body's fluid balance. Sodium also helps send nerve

impulses and affects muscle function. However, excessive amounts of sodium can compromise heart health. The AHA notes that excessive amounts of sodium in the bloodstream pulls water into the blood vessels, increasing the total volume of blood within them. As more blood flows through blood vessels, blood pressure increases. Over time, that can adversely affect blood vessels and speed up the build-up of plaque that can block blood flow. Higher blood pressure forces the heart to work harder and increases a person's risk for heart disease.

So what about sodium, a mineral so valued, and indeed vital to human existence, that it's led to wars and created countless devotees in kitchens over the centuries? If it's flavor cooks are aiming for, it's possible to reduce reliance on sodium and increase the use of fresh herbs without sacrificing flavor. Such a transition can improve heart health and introduce a host of new flavors at meal time.

Basil

The AHA notes that basil has a sweet and fresh flavor profile and is best added to a dish right before serving. Freshly cut basil leaves can be added to any number of dishes, including tomato sauces, pastas, salads, pizzas, and eggs.

Cilantro

Cilantro are the delicate leaves and stems of the coriander plant. Like basil, cilantro should be added to a dish right before serving and should not be cooked. Cilantro can be paired with beans, tomatoes, corn, and avocados among other foods, and is widely used when preparing Mexican foods at home.

Oregano

The AHA notes that Greek dishes often combine oregano, mint and lemon to create a memorable, delicious flavor profile. If chopping fresh oregano, strip the leaves from the stem and then discard the stem.

Parsley

Parsley isn't just a garnish used to add aesthetic appeal to plates. Flat-leaf parsley provides a light and fresh flavor, while the AHA notes that curly parsley offers a slightly peppery profile. Parsley is typically added to a dish during the final minutes of cooking or right before serving, and can be paired with chicken, fish, potatoes, and pasta among countless other foods.

These are just a handful of herbs that can give meals a flavorful punch and help chefs avoid an overreliance sodium in their recipes.



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Preventive care and the pandemic

Procrastination is not typically considered a good thing. But as the world spent much of 2020 confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, putting certain things on hold became part of the new normal.

In an effort to reduce infection rates, public health officials with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization urged people to limit their in person interactions with people outside of their own households. As a result, many of the things people do on a regular basis, including seeing their physicians for wellness visits, were rescheduled.

It's understandable that many people postponed preventive care and wellness visits during the pandemic, but it's also potentially dangerous. For example, researchers with the Health Care Cost Institute found that childhood vaccinations declined by roughly 60 percent in mid-April 2020 compared with 2019. Other screenings and preventive exams, including mammograms, pap smears and colonoscopies, also declined by significant percentages during the pandemic compared to the previous year.

The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion notes the power of preventive care is undeniable. In fact, the NCCDPHP points out that, while chronic diseases are among the most common and costly of all health problems, they're also among the most preventable. Annual wellness visits and early detection efforts like routine screenings for at-risk populations can uncover problems before they escalate into something more serious. In addition, annual physicals, which are provided free of charge through many health insurance policies, provide great opportunities for doctors to advise patients on their overall health and how to improve it if exams and blood work turn up any red flags.

Visiting a doctor during the pandemic

As vital as preventive care can be, it's understandable if people are hesitant to visit their doctors during the pandemic. But patients can take certain steps to calm their nerves about booking preventive care appointments during the pandemic.

- Schedule telemedicine appointments. The number of telemedicine appointments has skyrocketed during the pandemic.



While the transition from predominantly in-person appointments to telemedicine might have been a reluctant and rocky one at the start of the pandemic, many doctors' offices have since firmly established their telemedicine protocols. The Mayo Clinic advises patients who have not yet tried telemedicine to contact their doctors' offices to arrange an appointment.

- Inquire about office procedures. Doctors try to keep patients healthy, not get them sick. Various medical organizations, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, have provided thorough checklists to help physicians prepare their offices to welcome patients during

the pandemic. Patients can ease their concerns by contacting their doctors' offices and asking them about their pandemic-related protocols.

- Don't hesitate to make requests. There's no such thing as being too safe from COVID-19, so patients can work with their doctors to calm their fears even further. Ask to pay copays over the phone and request that the front desk call you when the doctor is ready so you don't have to sit in the waiting room.

Preventive care is an important component of health care, even during a pandemic.

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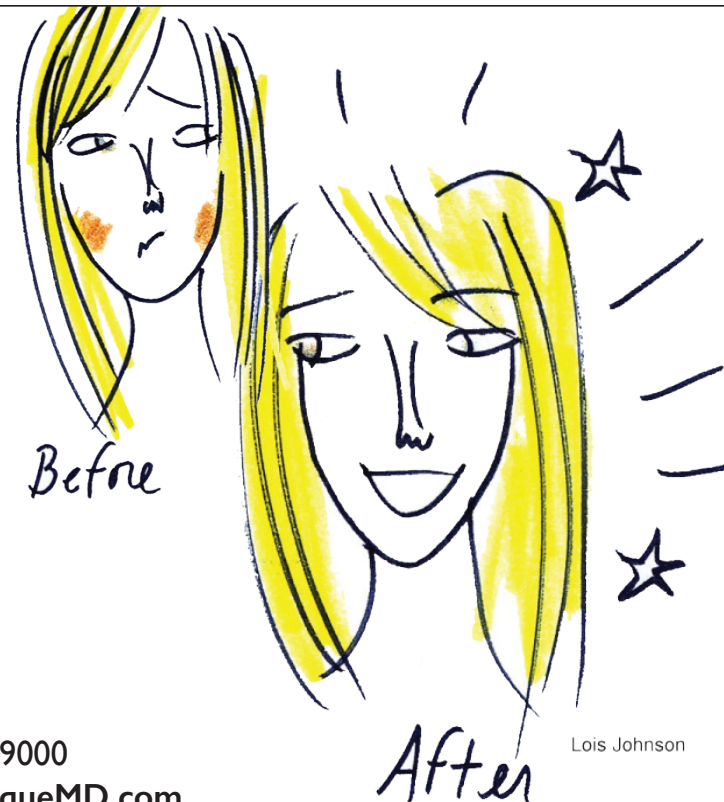
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-AS SEEN IN -



The role different vitamins play



Many adults have known about the value of fruits and vegetables since they were youngsters and their parents repeatedly told them how important it was to eat healthy foods. Despite those early lessons, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that less than 10 percent of adults and adolescents eat enough fruits and vegetables. That's unfortunate, as fruits and vegetables are loaded with vitamins that benefit the body in myriad ways.

The U.S. National Library of Medicine notes that vitamin deficiency occurs when people do not get enough of certain vitamins. Recognizing the many functions vitamins serve may compel adults and adolescents to include more fruits and vegetables in their diets.

· **Vitamin A:** The USNLM notes that vitamin A helps form and maintain healthy teeth, bones, soft tissue, mucous membranes, and skin. According to the World Health Organization, vitamin A deficiency is the leading cause of preventable blindness in children and increases the risk of disease and death from severe infections.

· **Vitamin B6:** Vitamin B6 helps form red blood cells and maintain brain function. Though the National Institutes of Health notes that isolated vitamin B6 deficiency is uncommon, a deficiency has been associated with various conditions, including a weakened immune system and dermatitis cheilitis, a condition marked by scaling on the lips and cracks at the corners of the mouth.

· **Vitamin C:** Vitamin C is an antioxidant that promotes healthy teeth and gums, helps the body absorb iron and maintains healthy tissue. In addition, vitamin C plays an integral role in helping wounds heal. Vitamin C deficiency impairs bone function, and Merck notes that in children that impairment can cause bone lesions and contribute to poor bone growth.

· **Vitamin D:** The USNLM notes that 10 to 15 minutes of sunshine three times per week is enough to produce the body's vitamin D requirement for people at most latitudes. It's hard to rely on food to supply ample vitamin

D, which helps the body absorb calcium that is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy teeth and bones.

· **Vitamin E:** Vitamin E helps the body form red blood cells and utilize vitamin K. Green, leafy vegetables like spinach and broccoli are good sources of vitamin E. The Office of Dietary Supplements notes that a vitamin E deficiency can cause nerve and muscle damage, potentially leading to muscle weakness and vision problems.

· **Vitamin K:** Vitamin K helps to make certain proteins that are needed for blood clotting and the building of bones. The T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard notes that the main type of vitamin K is found in green leafy vegetables like collard greens, kale and spinach. Vitamin K deficiency is rare, but it can lead to bleeding, hemorrhaging or osteoporosis.

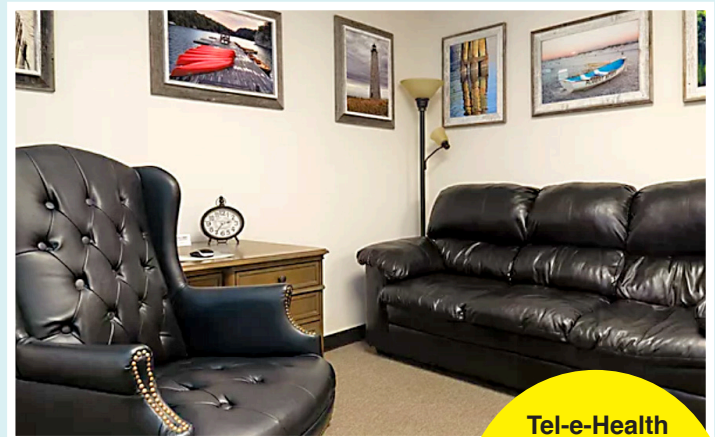
Vitamins are crucial to human beings' overall health. Eating ample amounts of fruits and vegetables is a great and delicious way to avoid vitamin deficiency.

A nutritious diet is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle. When it's part of a health regimen that includes routine exercise, a healthy diet

that's rich in fruits and vegetables can help people reduce their risk for various illnesses, including chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

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IDA-paid consultant achieved little: county audit

BY ROBERT PELAEZ

Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman released an audit of the county's Industrial Development Agency that found a consultant was paid more than half a million dollars to develop a cybersecurity industry but has little to show for it.

The agency has been prominent in the news this year, providing incentives and initiatives to promote local businesses in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. The audit, which covered 2015 to 2019, also found that nearly 70

percent of the projects reviewed did not accomplish their employment goals in one or more years, as required by the agency.

The audit found that the agency did not review the accuracy of the number of jobs created by various projects and that unidentified board members paid for a \$1,600 holiday dinner by using mileage reimbursement funds without first obtaining consent from the board.

"We came in to ask these questions to find out if we are getting the best return on our investment as well as informing people of the process," Schnir-

man said. "I made it a priority to audit the Nassau County IDA so that residents and taxpayers would have a clear picture if the Agency was providing value to the County and our economy."

While the identity of the consultant who was paid \$556,250 was not provided in the audit, reports submitted by the agency to state officials identified the person as Syosset resident Brian J. Noone, according to Newsday.

Noone, who was appointed as the Town of Oyster Bay's inspector general last year, told Newsday that he brought two companies to the county that hired

students from the New York Institute of Technology, and that he helped the institute qualify for federal research programs and develop a business incubator.

"To say nothing came out of this [IDA contract] is so erroneous ... It borders on ridiculous," Noone told Newsday. "I'm not going to sacrifice my reputation for a couple of dollars."

Noone told Newsday that he "did nothing for the [agency] without a contract."

Efforts to reach Noone for further comment were unavailing.

Continued on Page 35

SUDOKU

				1				
		1			4	5		
			5				6	2
						9		5
	8				9		7	3
		4	2					1
			3	5				
9	3		4					
8					2		4	

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

8	1	5	7	9	2	3	4	6
9	3	6	4	8	1	2	5	7
4	2	7	3	5	6	8	1	9
7	9	4	2	3	5	6	8	1
5	8	2	1	6	9	4	7	3
1	6	3	8	4	7	9	2	5
3	4	9	5	7	8	1	6	2
6	7	1	9	2	4	5	3	8
2	5	8	6	1	3	7	9	4

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