

CORE Solutions

Supporting & Celebrating Family Caregivers Awareness Month



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Supporting & Celebrating Family Caregivers

Families are the primary source of support for older adults and people with disabilities in the US.

Research indicates caregiving also takes a significant emotional, physical and financial toll. With nearly half of all caregivers over age 50, many are vulnerable to a decline in their own health. If you are a caregiver for an elderly or disabled relative, know that you are not alone.

As a caregiver, it is important to prioritize your own health and well-being to best support your loved ones. Below are a few steps you can take to manage your responsibilities:

- Intentionally make time for yourself to ensure that you are healthy, both mentally and physically.
- Organize a binder of information you need frequently.
- Join a support group and build your caregiving team to ensure you do not feel alone.
- Maintain a positive outlook and find humor in everyday situations.

If you do not live close to your elderly loved ones, you can still help support them from a distance:

- Check in with your loved ones often. If you cannot visit in person, virtual communication can help you and your loved ones feel less lonely and isolated.
- Schedule a weekly telephone or video chat, send a daily text message or check in via social media.
- Send cards and letters. Getting a letter or card can brighten your loved one's day.
- Send a care package. Because it might be hard for older people to get to the store, putting together a care package of things you know they'll need, such as canned goods, over-the-counter medicines, and cleaning supplies, may be a huge help in addition to a reminder that you care about them.

Juggling your work and caregiving responsibilities can be challenging. It is important to remember to take care of yourself.

Source: [dhs.gov](https://www.dhs.gov).

Monthly Moves: Gardening!

The benefits of gardening go far beyond connecting to nature and creating a beautiful yard. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, gardening qualifies as exercise. In fact, getting out in the yard for just 30 – 45 minutes can burn up to 300 calories.

Routine garden upkeep activities, such as raking, weeding and trimming, engage multiple muscle groups at once, improving your overall fitness level. Here are four strategies to transform gardening duties into a bona fide workout:

1. Create a routine. Treat gardening like any workout — stretch for 10 minutes first, then alternate light activities with heavier ones. You might rake for a little while, then dig a few holes, then prune. Cool down for 10 to 15 minutes, perhaps by snipping flowers or picking vegetables. Just keep in mind that gardening requires endurance, strength and flexibility, so it's important to build up gradually.
2. Dig deep. Digging is one of the highest-intensity gardening activities. Pushing down with one foot, turning over the soil, then down on the other foot and bringing the soil to the top engages multiple muscle groups. Bottom line: Take every opportunity to dig.
3. Mix it up. Lifting and carrying 40-pound bags of mulch, stretching to reach low-hanging fruit and pushing a lawn mower around a large plot can be physically draining. Your best bet: alternate between activities like raking, mowing, weeding, pruning and digging. And if you're spreading mulch, be sure to switch hands periodically.



4. Go old school. Use manual clippers, shears and mowers instead of tools that plug into an outlet. Using a traditional push mower, for example, requires you to use your legs, upper body strength and core. Although not so with power mowers or the type you sit on and steer.

Just keep in mind that gardening tools, methods, conditions and plot size all impact the intensity of your workout. If you've been inactive for months, start slow. Apply sunscreen, wear a broad-brimmed hat, and be sure to take frequent water breaks.

Source: henryford.com



Recipe: Pineapple Green Smoothie

Servings: 1

Serving Size: 1 1/2 cups

Calories: 297 | **Fat:** 5.7 g | **Protein:** 12.8 g | **Carbs:** 54.3 g | **Fiber:** 9.8 g | **Sodium:** 144.7 mg | **Sugar:** 29 g

[Click here](#) for the recipe.

Use ripe bananas for this creamy Greek yogurt, spinach and pineapple smoothie. Chia seeds add healthy omega-3 fats, fiber and a little protein for an extra nutritional boost.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1/3 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1 cup frozen banana slices (about 1 medium banana)
- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple chunks
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1 – 2 teaspoons pure maple syrup or honey (optional)

Directions:

1. Add almond milk and yogurt to a blender, then add spinach, banana, pineapple, chia and sweetener (if using); blend until smooth.

Source: eatingwell.com

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