HARC's Guide on

Healthy Eating Active Living

During Lockdown

Plan Ahead

Before heading to the grocery store, plan your breakfast, lunch, and dinner for the following week or two. Planning will avoid multiple trips to the store. Abide by nutritional guidelines by emphasizing on whole grains, vegetables, protein foods and fruits, but keep in mind what your family likes, too. By planning your grocery list ahead of time, you will be less likely to forget items or load up on unhealthy snacks.[1]

While buying groceries, attempt to buy less processed, high-salt, or high-sugar snacks. Instead of buying soda and juices, add citrus or berries to your water for flavor.[2]

Reduce and Control Cravings

Part of staying healthy is being able to tell the difference between hunger and cravings. For example, if you ate three to four hours ago, you are probably hungry now. Therefore, to reduce cravings, plan and stay on a scheduled eating plan. If you need to eat snacks in between meals, plan ahead. It also helps to eat mindfully by portioning snacks that may be less healthy. For example, instead of eating a whole bag of chips in one sitting, portion a small serving and put away the rest of the bag.[3]

Add Vegetables to Your Meals

There are a couple of ways to add vegetables to your meals. For example, you may shred vegetables such as zucchini, beets, or carrots. Add these to your meals by sautéing them or even add a vegetable serving to your bread or whole grain muffin batter before baking. Blending is another creative way to integrate vegetables into your meals. Make fruit smoothies and add in spinach, carrots, or any other vegetable.

Staff Tips

Our chief executive officer, Dr. LeComte-Hinely likes to make stock with leftover chicken bones and vegetable scraps. It's a good way to reduce food waste, save money, and control the sodium content of the broth. This is especially helpful for people with high blood pressure. To add flavor, she likes to add bell peppers and chili pods.
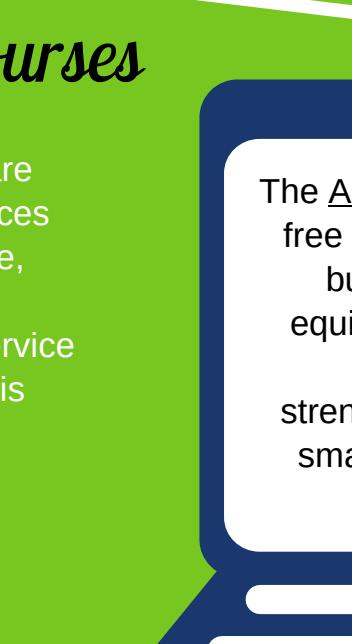
To reduce unhealthy snacking, our administrative manager, Theresa, keeps a bowl of pistachios next to her computer. It's a great way to enjoy healthy snacks throughout the day.
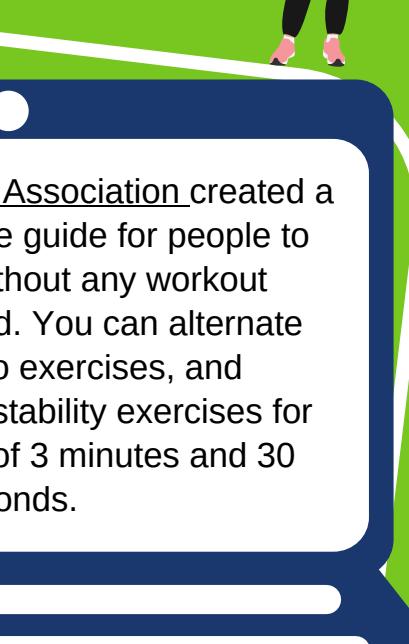
Find Creative Ways to Stay Active

The CDC recommends getting at least 150 minutes of moderate-aerobic activity per week. Benefits include improved thinking, decreased feelings of short-term anxiety, and lower risk of cardiovascular disease (leading cause of death in America).[4] Seek creative ways to get some exercise in your daily routine. This may be by walking your dog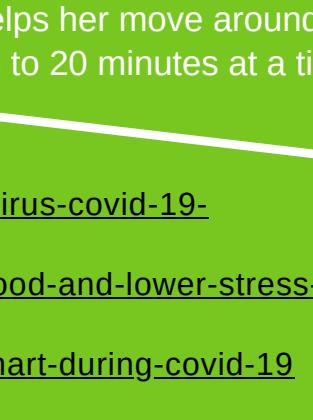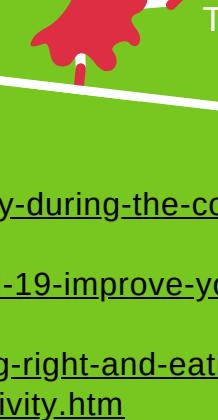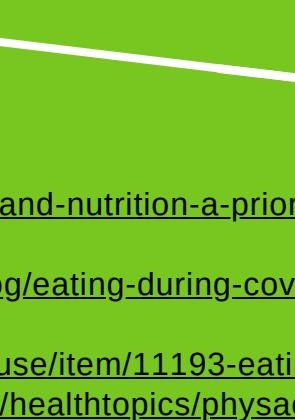, jogging, practicing pilates, yoga, or Zumba. Stretching may also help move and relieve muscle tension. Dancing is another form of staying active. A person may burn up to 95 calories for dancing 15 minutes.[6]

Take Online Courses

Many fitness companies are offering free virtual resources to stay active. For example, Nike is offering their Nike Training Club Premium service for free. Corepower Yoga is also giving access to a collection of free online classes.
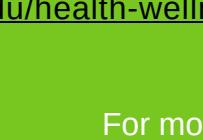
The American Heart Association created a free workout routine guide for people to build a circuit without any workout equipment required. You can alternate between cardio exercises, and strengthening and stability exercises for small increments of 3 minutes and 30 seconds.

Staff Tips

Our research associate, Chris, accommodated his workout routine that used to consist of weightlifting at the gym. Now, his exercises consist of more calisthenics such as burpees, chin-ups, push-ups, etc. Another alternative that he found was a "doorway pull-up bar" to physically challenge himself without buying numerous weights.

Our research assistant, Amairani, found new ways to move around by dancing with salsa/bachata YouTube videos. This helps her move around for 15 to 20 minutes at a time.

Sources:

1. https://nutrition.org/making-health-and-nutrition-a-priority-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic/
2. https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/eating-during-covid-19-improve-your-mood-and-lower-stress-2020040719409
3. https://www.uab.edu/news/youcanuse/item/11193-eating-right-and-eating-smart-during-covid-19
4. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/physactivity.htm
5. https://aea365.org/blog/self-care-in-the-age-of-coronavirus-by-elizabeth-diluzio/
6. https://www.rush.edu/health-wellness/discover-health/exercising-during-covid-19

For more resources, visit: HARCdata.org/covid-19