

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body.

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AHH! Stress Relief

One of the benefits of exercise is stress relief. Some forms of exercise have been shown to be very helpful in reducing tension and elevating mood so that feelings of anxiety and the pressures of daily living are lessened. These include breathing exercises, exercises to relax neck, shoulder and back muscles, and movement like tai chi, yoga and aerobic exercises.

Tai chi and yoga are ancient forms of exercise that may include meditation or other forms of relaxation. An instructional video or class is essential to learn these forms. Videos featuring Liliás Folan are an excellent way to start.

With aerobics, any form of aerobic exercise you find enjoyable will be uplifting and aid in stress reduction—walking, dancing, sweeping, raking, skating. Vigorous movement releases tension while increasing production of chemicals in the brain that lift the spirits.

Breathing exercises

Anxiety and stress increase the heart and respiration rates, raising the body's demand for oxygen. Deep breathing pulls in more oxygen and releases tension. Deep breathing can be done any time to reduce stress. It is helpful to practice deep breathing daily as well as using it as part of warm up and cool down for any exercise session.

Deep Breathing

- Sit or stand, pull your elbows back and inhale deeply
- Hold your breath for 5 counts
- Exhale slowly and completely
- Repeat for a total of 5 complete breaths.

Tension is often carried in the neck, shoulder and back, sometimes without even realizing it. Exercises can help muscles in these areas relax, releasing tension and stress.

Head and Neck

1. Start with mouth closed.
 - A. Stretch mouth open and yawn.

- B. Imagine you are chewing a large piece of sticky toffee. Stretch your mouth in all directions for 5-10 seconds.

2. Slowly nod your head up and down 5 times. Finish with your chin slightly dropped.
3. Look straight ahead with your chin slightly dropped. Slowly turn your head to look over alternate shoulders. Repeat 5 times in each direction.
4. Look straight ahead with your chin slightly dropped. Keep looking straight ahead and bend your head sideways, with your ear going towards your shoulder. Do not lift your shoulder. Bend your head to the other side. Repeat 5 times in each direction.

Shoulders

1. Look straight ahead with your shoulders relaxed. Slowly roll your shoulders forward in a circular movement for 5-10 counts then backwards for 5-10 counts.
2. Look straight ahead with your shoulders relaxed. Breathe in as you lift up your shoulders. Breathe out as you relax your shoulders. Repeat 5-10 times.
3. Sit or stand with your arms by your sides, fingers curled in a loose fist.
 - A. Bring your hands up to your shoulders.
 - B. Spread open your fingers as you stretch your arms upward, with palms facing each other.
 - C. Lower arms sideways with palms facing downward.
 - D. Repeat 5-10 times.

Back

1. Sit or stand with arms held out to the side.
 - A. Slowly turn your head to look at one hand. Keep looking at your hand as you move your arm back, twisting from the waist.
 - B. Slowly return to face forward.
 - C. Slowly twist to the other side. Slowly return to face forward. Repeat 5-10 times.

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Make Cooking Simple

As temperatures begin to rise in May, so does the pace of school and family activities. Time for meals seems to get squeezed out to make room for school award presentation nights, play practice, 4-H meetings and ball games. By stocking up your freezer with basics like the ones featured in recent issues of *Celebrate! A Healthy You*, meals can be ready in 15 minutes.

This month brings another basic, cooked chicken. This recipe comes with a bonus—broth—to add to the freezer stockpile. Slow cookers are great for cooking foods like **Basic Cooked Chicken and Broth** that taste best when simmered slowly over a long period. A day of long, slow cooking allows time for rich flavors to develop fully for great tasting broth. Use the chicken in one of the quick ideas on this month's bonus handout for a speedy supper before heading off to your evening activities.

Basic Cooked Chicken and Broth

2 ½ pounds bone-in chicken pieces such as legs, thighs, breasts, wings
2 carrots, peeled and cut in 2-inch chunks
2 stalks or stems celery, cut in 2-inch chunks

1 onion, cut in four pieces
1 tablespoon dried basil
6 cups water



Place chicken pieces, carrots, celery, onion, basil and water in slow cooker. Cook on low setting for 8 to 10 hours or until meat is very tender.

Scoop chicken out of broth and remove from skin and bones. Chop or shred to use in soup or another recipe. Use within 3 to 4 days, or freeze for longer storage.

Strain broth and discard vegetables. Ladle broth into shallow containers, cover loosely and refrigerate. When cold, remove layer of fat from top of broth and discard. If not using broth immediately, freeze in amounts needed for other recipes like one cup. Be sure to allow ½ to 1 inch of headspace for broth to expand as it freezes. Use within one month.

Makes about one quart of low sodium chicken stock and 2 ½ cups of cooked meat.

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2. Stand with your feet apart and hands on waist.
 - A. Keeping both feet flat, slowly stretch one arm up and across your body. Let your body twist and look at your hand.
 - B. Repeat on the other side.
 - C. Do 5-10 times on each side.



New 2009 Market Directory

The 2009 edition of *To Market, To Market, A Guide to Locally Grown Food in the St. Louis Bi-State Area* is now available on the Web. This guide can help you find sources of locally grown fruits, vegetables and meats. Go to <http://extension.missouri.edu/ecregion/market/index.shtml> to download your free copy.

Words to Consider

“I am still determined to be cheerful and happy, in whatever situation I may be; for I have also learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions, and not upon our circumstances.”

—Martha Washington