

# Heart WELLNESS

Live life with a full and healthy heart

LiveWELL  
February 2019



[www.WellnessAtoZ.org](http://www.WellnessAtoZ.org)

Take charge of your health to put yourself on the path to wellness. Health and wellness means living life fully with vitality and meaning. Wellness looks different for each individual and evolves as our lifestyles change.

Improving your overall mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing are essential to living a full and healthy life. The Heart Wellness newsletter will share tips on how you can make simple lifestyle modifications to become the healthiest version of yourself.

## LiveWELL

Be still my beating heart

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Your heart beats roughly 60-100 times per minute. The harder your heart has to pump, the tougher it is to maintain long term. Things like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, chronic disease, and inflammation all play a major role in your heart health.

Inflammation is the body's natural response to infections, wounds, and other tissue-damaging responses such as allergies and illness. Chronic inflammation can lead to a multitude of diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, and asthma. There are many types of prescribed anti-inflammatory medications and there are many herbs to help reduce inflammation naturally. Inflammation can also be controlled by subtle lifestyle changes.

Below, we've compiled our top lifestyle modifications to reduce inflammation and promote a healthy heart:

- 1. Quit smoking.** Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. In Arizona, the number one cause of death is heart disease. By quitting smoking, you can improve your heart health by 50%!
- 2. Maintain an active lifestyle.** Exercising for as little as 20 minutes a day can reduce your risk of heart disease and chronic inflammation. Do something that gets your heart and lungs pumping and always consult a physician before attempting any type of new exercise.
- 3. Consume heart-healthy foods.** We live in a country where processed and fast foods are becoming more and more convenient. Unfortunately, these foods are proven to be high in cholesterol, trans fats, and sodium, all resulting in inflammation. Your best option for optimal heart health is in choosing fresh foods such as fruits, vegetables, fatty fish, whole grains, nuts, and olive oils.
- 4. Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese can cause multiple chronic illnesses and diseases. Carrying extra fat around your waist (visceral fat) is a big determinant in heart-related illness. Talk to your doctor or a registered dietitian about ways you can maintain a healthy weight!



The Mediterranean Diet has been widely studied as the number one lifestyle diet to improve overall health and reduce your risk of heart disease and inflammation.



# PlayWELL

Sneaking exercise in to your day



Many times we hear that the reason people don't exercise is because they don't have the time. Maintaining an active lifestyle is a fundamental part in keeping your heart healthy and fortunately, it doesn't take much to improve your overall physical fitness.

We've compiled a few ways to improve your cardiovascular health and not spend hours at the gym:

**1. Take a mid-day break.** We spend the majority of our waking hours at work. Take time during your day to get away from your desk and get the blood flowing. Studies have shown that taking a brisk 10-minute walk relieves stress and increases creativity and productivity.

**2. Think outside of the (elevator) box.** Just because there is an elevator, doesn't mean you have to use it. Take the stairs when possible. It's amazing just how a few flights can get your heart pumping!

**3. Keep your weekends active.** Set a goal for yourself to stay active on the weekends. Do the kids have a soccer game early on Saturday? Wear your running shoes and do a few laps on the sidelines (in the distance so they don't get embarrassed).

**4. Schedule time with a friend.** Many times we try to schedule lunch or happy hour with a friend we haven't seen in a while. Why not switch it up and go for a hike, walk, or bike ride? You will bond and catch up and you'll feel great when you're done!

**5. Make it a family affair.** Chances are if you aren't active, your kids won't be either. Be a good role model and schedule an after-dinner bike ride or neighborhood walk.

Need a great challenge to keep you motivated? Sign up for the 2019 Wellness Wonders of AZ Spring Challenge. It begins April 1!



# WorkWELL

What Does Wellness Mean to You?

## What does wellness mean to you?

Wellness is caring for your mind, body, and spirit to support living your best life. When one of these areas is out of balance the other areas are also affected, creating a ripple effect.

## How long have you been at Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine (SCNM)?

I have been at SCNM for three years. I started in Development helping fundraise for the college and SCNM Sage Foundation, then transitioned into Human Resources in April 2018. I am loving the opportunity to contribute to the institution in a whole new way.

## Do you have a wellness goal?

I am getting married in the fall of 2019, and like many brides to be, I have a weight loss goal. When looking for fun ways to workout I found boxing and fell in love with it. Now my goal isn't just about weight loss, but about being stronger. I love my new muscles!

## Which challenges do you face in achieving your goal?

I try to make it to a 5:30 p.m. boxing class, but that means I need to leave the office a little before 5 p.m. It is easy for me to get caught up in projects and decide to stay at work a little longer and skip going to my workout. When I put the boxing classes on my calendar it helps remind me to leave.

## How has your workplace helped you in achieving your goal?

We have a bicycle desk that I love! I can bring my laptop with me and work while I cycle for a 30- minute workout. I also have an adjustable desk so I can stand throughout the day. Additionally, we have a gym and yoga studio on campus...SCNM is very mindful of employee health and has many great resources.



Andrea Thomas,  
Human Resources Coordinator,  
Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine





Whole-grain pasta is one of the easiest ways to sneak whole grains into your diet. This recipe combines whole grains, fresh vegetables, and omega-3 rich foods like walnuts and olive oil for a savory, heart-healthy meal.

## BROKEN LASAGNA WITH WALNUT PESTO

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup walnut halves (4 ounces)
- 2 cups lightly packed basil leaves
- 1 large garlic clove, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 pound whole wheat lasagna noodles, broken into 1-inch pieces
- 6 ounces watercress, arugula or other bitter greens, thick stems discarded and leaves coarsely chopped
- Sautéed mushrooms, for serving

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350° and bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Spread the walnuts on a baking sheet and toast for 8 to 10 minutes, until they are fragrant and lightly browned. Let cool completely.
3. Coarsely chop half of the walnuts and set the remaining toasted walnuts aside.
4. In a food processor, pulse the remaining walnuts with the basil and garlic until the walnuts are finely chopped.
5. With the machine on, add the olive oil in a thin stream and process until the pesto is almost smooth.
6. Add 1/2 cup of the cheese and pulse until just incorporated.
7. Transfer the walnut pesto to a bowl and season it with salt and pepper.
8. Add the broken lasagna noodles to the boiling water and cook until al dente.
9. Drain the pasta, reserving 1/2 cup of the pasta cooking water.
10. Return the drained pasta to the pot.
11. Add the watercress and walnut pesto and toss well.
12. Add the reserved pasta water and toss again until well coated.
13. Transfer the pasta to bowls, garnish with the remaining 1/4 cup of cheese, the chopped walnuts, and sautéed mushrooms and serve.

*Photo and recipe adapted from the recipe blog at foodandwine.com*



**NUTRITION INFORMATION  
PER SERVING:  
(RECIPE SERVES 6)**

**Total calories: 525  
Protein: 12g  
Carbs: 64g**

**Fiber: 2g  
Total Fat: 27g**

## WELLCommunity A kind heart is a healthy heart



**"No beauty shines brighter than that of a good heart."**

Being passionate about something can be soothing for the heart and soul. Giving back to those who need it most in our community is one of the best ways to improve your mental wellbeing.

Check out these great spring-time opportunities to get involved with Special Olympics of Arizona.

<https://www.specialolympicsarizona.org/get-involved/volunteer-for-a-day/volunteer-opportunities>