



Celebrating WELLNESS

LiveWELL
December 2023



As 2023 comes to a close, we reflect upon this year's accomplishments and set healthy goals for the new year.



LiveWELL
Achieve better sleep

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Did you know humans need more rest in the winter? Researchers from Charité Medical University of Berlin said "human body clocks are set by the sun and changing day length and light exposure over the year can affect our sleep duration and quality."

So how can you achieve better sleep?

1. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
2. Create a sleep-conducive environment. Make sure your bedroom is cool, dark, comfortable, and quiet.
3. Limit screen time before bed because the blue light emitted by electronic devices can suppress the production of the sleep hormone melatonin.
4. Avoid caffeine and alcohol, as both can disrupt your sleep.
5. Practice relaxation techniques like meditation, deep breathing, or yoga.

Sleep is crucial for our physical and mental health, helping our bodies recover and repair, and playing a key role in memory consolidation and learning. Chronic sleep deprivation has been linked to a variety of health issues, including obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. By getting enough sleep, mood improves, cognitive function improves, and our immune system is healthier. In short, getting enough quality sleep is essential for our overall well-being.

Sourced from: [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com)





HEALTHY GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE

Recipe and photo from eatingwell.com

Typical green bean casseroles bathe ingredients in a heavy cream sauce. This version has fewer calories, sodium, and fat, thanks to a homemade roux.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 1/2 pounds green beans, trimmed and cut into 1- to 2-inch pieces (about 8 cups)
- 2–3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon white or black pepper
- 2 1/2 cups low-fat milk
- 1 1/2 cups fresh whole-wheat breadcrumbs (see Tips) or 1/2 cup shredded or crumbled cheese

EQUIPMENT:

- Large rimmed baking sheets
- 2-quart broiler-safe baking dish

NUTRITION FACTS (PER SERVING):

Calories: 188
Carbohydrates: 25g
Protein: 8g
Fat: 7g

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Position racks in upper and lower third of oven; preheat to 425 degrees F.
2. Toss green beans in a large bowl with 1 tablespoon oil until well coated. Divide between 2 large rimmed baking sheets and spread in an even layer. Roast, stirring once and rotating the baking sheets top to bottom about halfway through, until tender and beginning to brown, 20 to 25 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until very soft and golden brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Add flour, salt and pepper; cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Add milk and continue to stir, scraping up any browned bits. Cook, stirring, until the sauce bubbles and thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat. (See Tips)
4. When the green beans are done, remove from the oven. Preheat the broiler.
5. Transfer half the green beans to a 2-quart broiler-safe baking dish. Spread half the sauce over the green beans. Add the remaining green beans and top with the remaining sauce.
6. Combine breadcrumbs and the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a small bowl (skip this step if you are topping with cheese).
7. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture (or cheese) over the gratin. Place under the broiler and broil, watching closely, until the gratin is bubbling and beginning to brown on top, 1 to 5 minutes, depending on your broiler. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

TIPS:

To make your own fresh breadcrumbs, trim crusts from whole-wheat bread. Tear bread into pieces and process in a food processor until coarse crumbs form. One slice of bread makes about 1/2 cup fresh breadcrumbs.

Variation: to add extra flavor to the cream sauce, at the end of Step 3 stir in 1 tablespoon chopped fresh herbs, such as thyme, sage or parsley. Or make it cheesy by stirring in 1/2 cup shredded or crumbled cheese, such as Gruyère, Swiss, Cheddar or blue cheese.



PlayWELL

Stay active in the cold

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As days get darker and colder, it can be hard to motivate yourself to exercise. Take on activities you enjoy that also provide exercise such as skiing or snowboarding. These two winter activities are great cardiovascular exercises that provide fun while burning some calories.

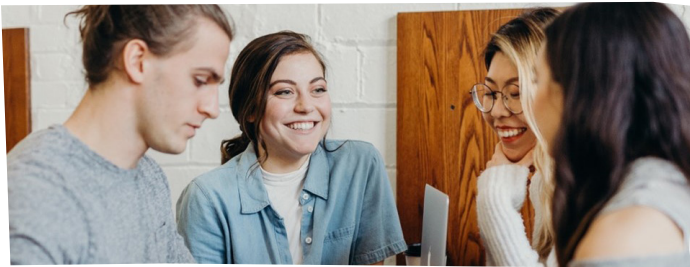
If you are not interested in winter sports, try a hot workout class like yoga, Pilates, or barre, to provide the external warmth our bodies crave. By immersing yourself in a hot class for 45 minutes, the body raises internal heat which is carried throughout the entire day, keeping you warmer for longer.



WorkWELL

Boost morale

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Employees may be facing burnout as the year comes to an end. Check in with your team to see how they are feeling and allow flexibility and time off so employees can recharge.

Employees will benefit mentally, physically, and spiritually from vacation, as will employers. Making sure your people regularly take time off is key to creating a more sustainable workplace with healthier, happier employees.

Sourced from [*Harvard Business Review*](#)

WELL Community

Celebrate end-of-year giving

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As we move into the final month of 2023, we ask you to support The Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation. Studies show charities receive an average of 41% of their contributions in the last few weeks of the year and we need your help. A donation to the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation helps prepare students for college

and career, supports Arizona's skilled trades, provides individuals with unparalleled career exposure, strengthens our future workforce, provides impactful research, and creates healthy workplaces. As a loyal reader, we would be grateful to receive a donation from you so we are able to continue to serve our community.



Donate Here!



www.WellnessAtoZ.org
Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation
2575 E. Camelback Road, Suite 410 Phoenix, AZ 85016