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**HEALTH OBSERVANCE**

**Children’s Eye Health and Safety Month**

*Kimberly Farrell – Wellworks For You*

Promoting healthy eyes and clear vision in children is crucial for their well-being and development. One of children's most common eye health issues is myopia or nearsightedness, which often manifests during their school-age years. This condition can significantly impact their academic activities, including reading and writing. However, parents and caregivers have the power to reduce the risk of myopia and other vision problems by taking proactive steps.

Regular eye exams are essential for maintaining children's eye health. These exams enable early detection and timely treatment of myopia and other vision problems. By identifying these issues early on, parents can ensure their children receive the necessary care and support to optimize their visual abilities.

Did you know that excessive screen time, whether from television, computers, or mobile devices, has been linked to an increased prevalence of myopia in children? Encouraging children to engage in outdoor activities, such as sports and nature exploration, not only helps to reduce screen time but also exposes them to natural light, which is beneficial for their eye health.

In addition to regular check-ups and managing screen time, there are other measures parents can take to enhance their children's eye health and safety. Protecting their eyes from injuries is paramount, especially during high-risk activities like sports and biking. Children should wear appropriate protective eyewear, such as goggles or helmets with face shields, to safeguard their eyes from potential harm.

Teaching children about eye safety is equally important. They should be aware of the dangers of looking directly at bright lights or the sun, which can lead to eye damage. Additionally, they should be advised against rubbing their eyes excessively, as it can increase the risk of infections.

By taking proactive steps to protect and nurture their children's eyes, parents and caregivers contribute to their immediate well-being and set them up for long-term success and development. By implementing these measures, parents and caregivers can ensure their children enjoy good eye health and vision for years.



**WellBalance Health Corner**

*The Benefits of Shopping Your Local Farmers Market*

Learn about the benefits of choosing your local farmers market over a supermarket chain.

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**How to Safely Work Out in the Summer**

Learn how to stay active safely during the heat of the summer months.

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# WelBalance

## HEALTH TIP CORNER

### Environmental Wellbeing

## The Benefits of Shopping Your Local Farmers Market

*Kellie O'Keefe – Wellworks For You*

The local farmers market offers a refreshing alternative in a world dominated by large supermarkets and online shopping. It's more than just a place to purchase fresh produce—it's an experience that brings numerous benefits. From supporting local economies to fostering community connections and promoting healthier lifestyles, shopping at your local farmers market has many advantages.

### Supporting Local Farmers and Economy

When you shop at a local farmers market, you directly support your community's hardworking farmers and producers. Unlike supermarkets that often prioritize mass-produced goods, farmers markets allow small-scale farmers to showcase their unique products. You contribute to their livelihoods and the local economy by purchasing from them. This support helps maintain agricultural diversity, preserve farmland, and ensure that money stays within the community, fostering economic resilience.

### Access to Fresh, Seasonal Produce

Farmers markets offer a bounty of fresh, seasonal produce that is often harvested just hours before it reaches your hands. The fruits, vegetables, and other goods are typically grown using sustainable farming practices, resulting in higher nutritional value and superior flavor than mass-produced alternatives. Moreover, buying seasonal produce reduces the carbon footprint associated with long-distance transportation, supporting a more sustainable food system.

### Community Connections and Personal Relationships

Shopping at your local farmers market allows you to connect with your community. You can meet the farmers, artisans, and other vendors face-to-face, fostering personal relationships and a sense of belonging. Conversations about farming techniques, recipes, and local traditions are common occurrences. The market becomes a gathering place where people share their passion for food and forge meaningful connections, strengthening the community's social fabric.

### Promoting Healthier Lifestyles

A trip to the farmers market can inspire healthier eating habits. The abundance of fresh, whole foods encourages a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Additionally, farmers markets often offer a variety of organic and locally sourced products free from synthetic pesticides and additives. This emphasis on wholesome, nutritious options supports overall health and well-being.



# How to Safely Workout in the Summer

Lisa Kyler – Wellworks For You

Summer brings sunshine and warm weather but also presents unique challenges for maintaining an effective workout routine. The soaring temperatures and high humidity levels can increase the risk of heat-related illnesses and dehydration. However, with proper precautions, you can continue exercising safely and achieve your fitness goals during the summer. Here are some essential tips to ensure a safe and enjoyable workout experience in the heat.

**Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate.** Staying hydrated is crucial when exercising in the summer. Drink plenty of water before, during, and after your workouts. Aim to consume at least 8-10 glasses of water each day. If your workout lasts longer than an hour, consider a sports drink that replenishes electrolytes lost through sweat.

**Time Your Workouts Wisely.** Plan your workouts during the cooler parts of the day, such as early morning or late evening, to avoid peak heat hours. Exercising when the sun is less intense helps prevent heat exhaustion and sunburn. If you must exercise during the day, seek shade or opt for indoor workouts in air-conditioned spaces.

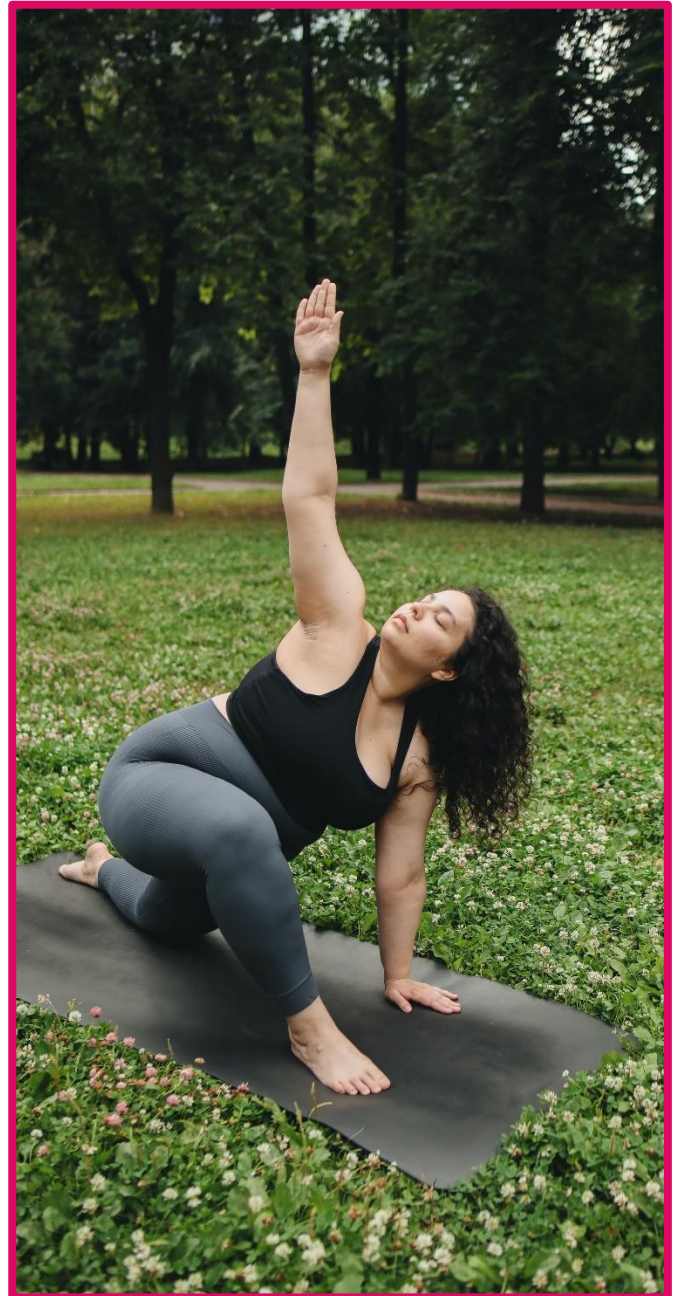
**Dress Appropriately.** Wear lightweight, breathable, and moisture-wicking clothing that evaporates sweat, keeping you cool. Opt for light-colored outfits that reflect sunlight rather than absorb it. Remember a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen with a high SPF to protect your skin from harmful UV rays.

**Warm-Up and Cool Down.** Start each workout with a proper warm-up to prepare your body for exercise. Gradually increase your intensity rather than diving into high-intensity exercises immediately. Similarly, conclude your workout with a cool-down session to lower your heart rate progressively and prevent dizziness or fainting.

**Modify Your Workout.** Adjust your workout routine to accommodate the summer heat. Consider shorter, more frequent workouts instead of prolonged sessions. Engage in less strenuous activities on extremely hot days, such as swimming, water aerobics, or indoor exercises like yoga or Pilates.

**Listen to Your Body.** Pay attention to your body's signals. If you experience dizziness, nausea, headache, or excessive fatigue, immediately stop exercising and find a cool, shaded area to rest. Pushing yourself too hard in the heat can lead to heatstroke or heat exhaustion.

Don't let the summer heat deter you from achieving your fitness goals. By following these safety tips, you can continue working out effectively while minimizing the risk of heat-related illnesses. Stay hydrated, choose appropriate workout times and clothing, modify your routine, and always listen to your body. Embrace the summer season, stay fit, and enjoy your workouts while beating the heat!



## FEATURED RECIPE

### Ricotta-Tomato Toast

4 Servings

Egg-Free, Sesame Free, Vegetarian



## INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup coarsely chopped fresh basil, plus more for garnish
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh chives, plus more for garnish
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil plus  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons, divided.
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper
- 4 ( $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick) slices of crusty whole-grain bread, toasted
- 2 small multicolored heirloom tomatoes, sliced  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick

## DIRECTIONS

1. Combine ricotta, basil, chives, 2 tablespoons oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a food processor.
2. Process until smooth, about 1 minute.
3. Spread the mixture evenly over toast slices.
4. Top with tomatoes; drizzle with the remaining  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons oil.
5. Garnish with additional basil and chives before serving, if desired.

## NUTRITION

### Per Serving:

<b>Calories:</b> 259	<b>Protein:</b> 10g
<b>Carbohydrates:</b> 19g	<b>Dietary Fiber:</b> 4g
<b>Fat:</b> 16g	<b>Saturated Fat:</b> 5g
<b>Calcium:</b> 151mg	<b>Magnesium:</b> 45mg
<b>Potassium:</b> 414mg	<b>Sodium:</b> 444mg

Source: [Ricotta-Tomato Toast \(eatingwell.com\)](http://eatingwell.com)