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HEALTH OBSERVANCE

Mental Health Month

Kellie O'Keefe - Wellworks For You

May is Mental Health Month, a time to raise awareness about mental health and the importance of caring for our mental wellbeing. Mental health is essential and this month puts the spotlight on mental wellness and encourages people to care for themselves and their loved ones.

Why Mental Health Month Matters

Mental illness is more common than you might think. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), approximately one in five adults in the United States experiences mental illness in a year. It can range from mild to severe and can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, or background.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. Our psychological and physical health are interconnected; caring for one can improve the other. For example, we may experience physical symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, and stomach problems when we neglect our mental health. By prioritizing our mental health and seeking support when needed, we can improve our overall wellbeing and reduce the risk of developing physical health problems.

Access to mental health care is essential. Mental Health Month seeks to raise awareness about mental health care's importance and reduce barriers to accessing care. By advocating for better mental health care and supporting organizations providing mental health services, we can help ensure everyone can access the care they need.

How You Can Get Involved

Educate yourself and others about mental health. One way to get involved is to educate yourself and others. You can read books, articles, and attend workshops or webinars to learn more about mental health and how to care for yourself and your loved ones.

Support mental health organizations. Many organizations provide support and resources for people who experience mental illness. You can support these organizations by donating money, volunteering your time, or spreading awareness about their work on social media.

Prioritize your mental health. Taking care of your mental health is one of the most important things you can do. You can prioritize your mental health by practicing self-care, seeking help, and contacting friends and family for support.

Mental Health Month is necessary to raise awareness about the importance of caring for ourselves and others. Educating ourselves, supporting mental health organizations, and prioritizing our own mental health can help reduce stigma and improve access to mental health care for all.

Source: [Home](#) | [NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)



WellBalance Health Corner

Socializing with Friends Without Alcohol

Whether you are practicing sobriety or are sober curious, learn more about ways to socialize and connect without alcohol.

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Women's Health Month: Top 5 Health Concerns and How to Get Screened

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WelBalance

HEALTH TIP CORNER

Social Wellbeing

Socializing with Friends Without Alcohol

Kellie O'Keefe – Wellworks For You

For many people, socializing with friends often involves drinking alcohol. Whether it's going out to a bar or having drinks at home, alcohol has become a common way to socialize and connect with others. However, it's important to remember there are many other ways to enjoy time with friends. Not only can these activities be just as fun, but there are benefits to socializing without alcohol.

Alcohol-Free Activities

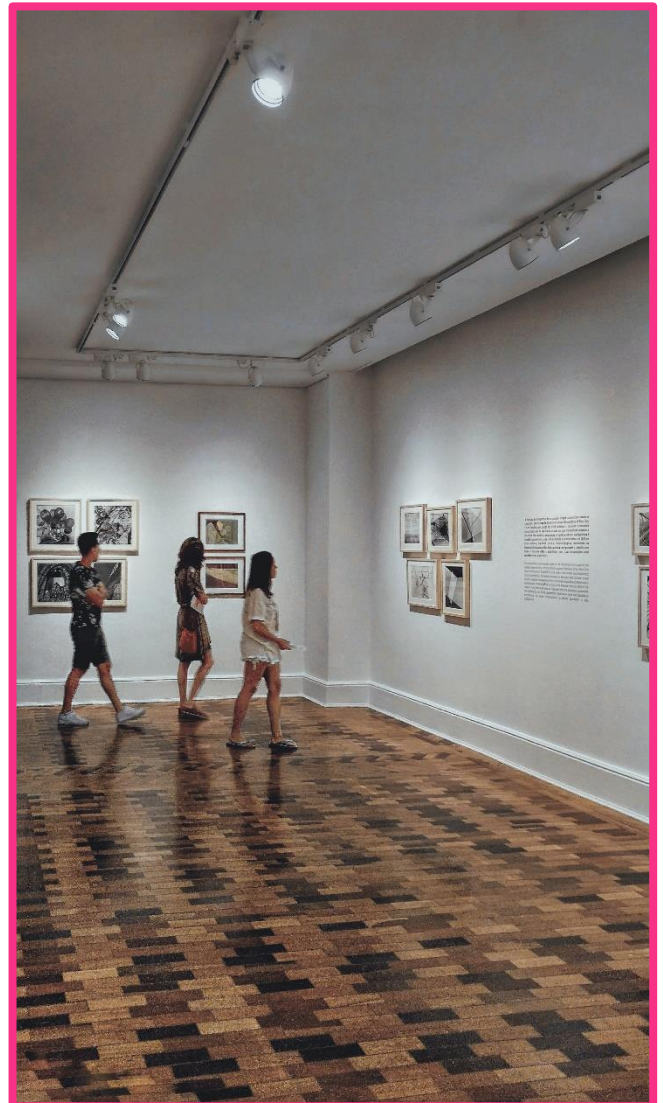
Plan activities that don't revolve around drinking. One of the easiest ways to spend time with friends without alcohol is to plan activities that don't involve drinking. For example, visit an art exhibit, see a movie, try a new restaurant, attend a sporting event, or try a fitness class. Alcohol tends to make it feel easier to bond and connect with others, but connecting over a mutual activity will lead to a more meaningful connection.

Be upfront with your friends about your preferences. If you're trying to cut back on drinking or prefer not to drink, it's important to be upfront with your friends. Let them know you're happy to spend time with them but would rather not drink. You might find that some of your friends are also looking for alternatives to drinking and are happy to try out new activities with you. Like anything, you're more likely to succeed with a support system.

Find like-minded people. If you're struggling to find friends who are interested in spending time without alcohol, try branching out to find like-minded people. Joining a club or group that focuses on a particular interest can be a great way to meet new people who share your values and interests. For example, you could join a hiking group, a book club, or a sports team.

Enjoy the benefits of socializing without alcohol. There are many benefits to spending time with friends without alcohol. You'll likely have more meaningful conversations and make deeper connections. Without the distraction of alcohol, you may also have an easier time remembering the details of your conversations and developing stronger bonds with your friends.

Connecting with friends without alcohol is as fun and rewarding as socializing with alcohol. So, the next time you want to spend time with friends, try to think outside the box, explore some non-alcohol-related activities, and reap the benefits.



Women's Health

Top 5 Health Concerns and How to Get Screened

Dawn Koch – Wellworks For You

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the top five leading causes of death in women are:

Heart Disease Heart disease risk factors for women include diabetes, stress/depression, smoking, inactivity, and menopause. According to Mayo Clinic, symptoms in women can look different than in men. Therefore, it is important to know what to look for, i.e., neck/jaw/shoulder/arm(s) pain, nausea/vomiting, dizziness, sweating, heartburn, and fatigue.

Cancer According to the American Cancer Society, some cancers that most often affect women are breast, colorectal, endometrial, lung, cervical, skin, and ovarian. Knowing your chances for each is essential to help reduce your risk of cancer.

Stroke According to CDC, four out of five strokes are preventable. High blood pressure is the leading risk factor for stroke. Unique risk factors for women include hypertension during pregnancy, certain birth control medications, and depression.

Chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD) CLRD is a group of conditions that affect the lungs, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other chronic conditions. Typical symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing, increased mucus, chronic cough, racing heartbeat, and fatigue.

Alzheimer's Disease According to Harvard Health, women are more prone to Alzheimer's than men, mainly because women live longer. Another reason may be that women's immune systems are more robust, and the amyloid plaque that causes Alzheimer's is part of the brain's immune system to fight infections.

Regular annual wellness exams with your primary care physician are vital for detecting these conditions early. Have open dialog regarding your family history, symptoms, and concerns. Your doctor will order appropriate bloodwork and additional tests which can provide clues to your current risk. Overall, it is important to have regular checkups and cancer screenings recommended by your doctor.

Source:

[Leading Causes of Death – Females – All races and origins – United States, 2018 | CDC Women's Health](#)
[Cancer Facts for Women | Most Common Cancers in Women Women and Stroke | cdc.gov](#)
[Why are women more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease? - Harvard Health](#)



FEATURED RECIPE

Cucumber Salad with Honeydew and Burrata

6 Servings

Vegetarian, Gluten-Free, Egg Free, Low Carb, Nut Free



INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ teaspoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- 4 cups lightly packed baby arugula
- 4 cups cubed honeydew melon
- 1 ½ cups cucumber batons (2-inch)
- 1 burrata ball (3 ¾ ounces), sliced
- ¼ cup toasted pepitas

DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk lemon juice, oil, honey, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Stir in basil.
2. Place the arugula in a large bowl. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the vinaigrette; toss to coat. Transfer to a platter. Scatter honeydew and cucumbers over the arugula; top with burrata slices.
3. Sprinkle pepitas over the salad, then drizzle with the remaining vinaigrette.

NUTRITION

Per Serving:

Calories: 171	Protein: 6g
Carbohydrates: 15g	Dietary Fiber: 2g
Fat: 12g	Saturated Fat: 4g
Calcium: 139mg	Magnesium: 24mg
Potassium: 370mg	Sodium: 188mg

Source: [Cucumber Salad with Honeydew Melon & Burrata \(eatingwell.com\)](http://eatingwell.com)