



## March: National Nutrition Month

The latest dietary guidelines for Americans emphasize balance; it's not all or nothing. As such, eating right doesn't need to be complicated. Healthy eating starts with nutritional food choices, which include plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein and dairy. A balanced diet also leaves room for personal preferences. This is a good time to assess your eating habits and educate yourself about the best ways to fuel your body. It comes down to making informed food choices and developing sustainable, healthy eating and physical activity habits.



Visit [myplate.gov](https://myplate.gov) for healthy recipes.

## A Daily 5-minute Walk Could Make a Difference

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by fitness trends or goals. While research shows that 11 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous exercise daily may lower your risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease or premature death, another health expert is praising the accessible exercise form of walking. The National Jewish Health's director of cardiovascular prevention and wellness expressed that even a short amount of walking—just five minutes—has health benefits and supports future exercise goals. Walks improve the body's blood flow and boost creativity and productivity. Like any other exercise, walking also helps strengthen muscles and delivers oxygen to the brain and muscles. How to Walk More Each Day Fortunately, walking can easily be implemented into a routine. Consider the following tips for including more walking into your daily routine:

- Make small goals. For example, you could take a five-minute walk at lunch each day. Doing so makes you more likely to succeed in maintaining a new walking habit.
- Walk with friends. This encourages you to keep the habit because you know others are counting on you, and it also keeps the walks from becoming monotonous.
- Set reminders. Decide when to walk during the day and set reminders. It's easy to forget to take a break when you get into your work.
- Diversify your routine. Change your walking routes to prevent boredom, or try walking at different speeds throughout your walk.
- Listen to your body. Don't be afraid to take time off or modify your routine. Pay attention to your body's signals and take care of yourself so you can maintain your new routine.

The key is to make movement a regular part of your day, even if it's a five-minute walk. Talk to your doctor and discuss what works best for you to learn more about creating an active routine.

# The Practice of Holding Space

“Holding space” has become a viral phrase lately, but it’s not a new concept. Holding space is about being present for someone in a way that allows them to feel seen, heard and valued. Mental health professionals say this practice involves being fully present with someone else without trying to solve their problems or minimize them. This is a healthy practice that can help reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Holding space is important because it provides a sense of safety and acceptance. It allows individuals to process their emotions, gain clarity and feel supported. This practice can be especially beneficial during times of grief, stress or personal growth. Holding space allows you to help others navigate their challenges and find solutions.

Here are some ways to practice holding space for others:

- Be present. Give the person your full attention and remove distractions like your phone.
- Listen actively. Your goal is to listen to understand, not to respond. Show engagement by nodding, maintaining eye contact, and using phrases such as “I see” or “That sounds tough.”
- Avoid judgment. Make the person feel safe to share by creating a judgment-free space. It’s also best to avoid making assumptions and offering unsolicited advice.
- Validate feelings. Acknowledging their emotions and letting them know it’s okay to feel what they’re feeling is important.
- Offer support. Ask how you can support them. Sometimes, just being there and listening is enough, but other times, people might need help or advice.
- Respect the process. Everyone processes emotions differently, so respect their pace and avoid rushing them to feel better or move on.

In today’s fast-paced world, finding someone who truly listens and supports without judgment may be challenging. As such, holding space is a compassionate practice that can make a significant difference in someone’s life.

For further guidance or support, contact a mental health professional.

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**Mark your calendar!**

**Financial Wellness**

**Check-in with Braxton Towery**  
April Dates to be announced

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## Preparing for Tax-filing Season

Tax season is here, so if you haven’t done so already, it’s time to gather all the appropriate information you need to file your 2024 tax returns.

**The federal tax return deadline is Tuesday, April 15, 2025.**

However, due to federal disaster relief, millions of Americans have extensions this year. Taxpayers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, and parts of Alaska, New Mexico, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia have until May 1 to file their returns and pay taxes. The IRS also

extended the deadline to Oct. 15 for victims of California wildfires.

Many people elect to file their tax returns electronically. This can be done in various ways, such as using tax preparation software or consulting a tax professional. If you are filing with a paper form, there are certain documents you must include. The documentation needed may vary based on your employment status over the past year. If you have questions about your tax-filing situation, consult with a tax professional.

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

**The Wellness Committee values your opinions and ideas!**

**To contact us, send an email to:**

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