

# WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

## February 2025

 **WORKPLACE WELLNESS**  
MEMBERSHIP

 **EMPLOYEE WELLNESS**  
SOLUTIONS NETWORK

## HIGHLIGHTS for the [February 2025 Newsletter](#)

**Boost Heart Health in Just 4 Minutes a Day** - No time for the gym? No problem! Just four minutes of vigorous movement could slash your risk of heart disease by nearly 50%. Find out how to make every minute count.

**7 Health Benefits of Intermittent Fasting** - Intermittent fasting isn't just a trend, it's a powerful way to boost metabolism, improve heart health, and even support brain function. Discover how timing your meals could be the game-changer your health needs.

**This is Your Survival Guide to Cold & Flu Season** - Sniffles, sneezes, and sore throats...winter is here, and so are cold, flu, and COVID-19. Learn simple steps to stay healthy, spot the difference between illnesses, and recover faster if you do get sick.

**Y-Axis: Fix Salty Cravings with a Spoon** - Love salty food but trying to cut back? A new high-tech spoon could make your meals taste saltier—without adding extra sodium. See how this tiny gadget may help reduce cravings and support heart health.

**Recipe: Quick & Yummy Omelets** - Start your day with a protein-packed omelet loaded with fresh veggies and melty cheese—all in just minutes! Try this quick and delicious recipe for a warm, healthy breakfast.

**Take the February Health Challenge!** - Build Core Strength: Exercise to strengthen your core. This challenge will help you build a solid foundation with simple yet effective exercises designed to improve posture, stability, and overall strength.

### **Ask the Wellness Doctor:**

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: What are the health benefits of drinking water? Water does more than quench your thirst, it supports digestion, brain function, and even energy levels. Find out how staying hydrated can improve your overall health.



THE Y AXIS



## Fix Salty Cravings with a Spoon

Love salty food but trying to cut back? Grab a spoon.



A new device, called a **salt reduction spoon**, uses a mild electrical current to stimulate your taste buds.

And it makes food taste saltier than it actually is, so you can enjoy your favorite foods without the salt shaker.

Research suggests the 'spoon' may even help reduce sodium intake, control blood pressure and support heart health.<sup>5</sup>

If you're ready to cut back on sodium in your diet, it might be easier than you think. Grab a 'spoon' and see what your taste buds think.

## COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

evan@thehealthycopywriter.com

# Boost Heart Health in Just 4 Minutes a Day

*Picking up the pace of daily activities makes a difference*

Too busy for the gym?

Good news: just four minutes of vigorous daily activity could slash your risk of heart attacks and heart failure by nearly 50%, according to a recent study.<sup>2</sup>

**Here's the secret:** You don't need to hit the treadmill or run track sprints.

♥ Just hustle when you're doing normal daily



activities like:

- Climbing stairs
- Carrying groceries
- Doing household chores, or...
- Playing tag with your kids



**Researchers found that picking up the pace just a few minutes a day helped lower the risk for:**

- A heart-related event by 45%
- A heart attack by 51%
- Developing heart failure by 67%
- Even shorter bursts—just 1-2 minutes per day—reduced heart disease risk by up to 30%.

HEART ►

# 7 Surprising Health Benefits of Intermittent Fasting

*Meal timing can improve your body & mind*

Intermittent fasting is more than a trendy eating pattern—it's a lifestyle shift that can deliver significant health benefits.

**Wondering how it works?**

It's all about timing: You eat during a set window and fast for the rest of the day.

One popular method is the 16/8 approach, where you fast for 16 hours and eat during an 8-hour window,

such as lunch, dinner, and snacks.

Research shows that intermittent fasting may help:<sup>3</sup>

FASTING ►



# This is Your Survival Guide to Cold & Flu Season

*Simple steps to fight colds, flu & COVID-19*

Feeling a little like your body's starring in the next season of *The Last of Us*?

Winter's here, and with it comes colds, flu, COVID-19, and even allergies trying to take over. But you can fight back and stay in top form with a few smart moves. Here's what you need to know:

**Flu vs. COVID-19:** Both are heavy hitters, causing fever, fatigue, and body aches. But COVID-19 might throw in a surprise plot twist: loss of taste or smell. Test to know for sure.

**Colds:** Think of these as the guest stars—mild with a runny nose and congestion, but no fever or body aches.

**Allergies:** Typical symptoms include sneezing and itchy eyes, usually triggered by dust, pets, or pollen, and aren't contagious.

## Practice prevention to avoid getting sick

**Get vaccinated:** Flu and COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and the best way to protect yourself



Follow these simple steps to fight colds, flu & COVID-19 this season.

and your family.

**Practice good hygiene:** Wash your hands often, avoid touching your face, and cover coughs and sneezes.

**Wear a mask:** Masks help reduce the spread of respiratory viruses, especially in crowded spaces.

**If you do get sick, here's how to feel better faster:**

- **Flu or COVID-19:** Antiviral medications can ease symptoms if taken early—ask your doctor.
- **Colds:** Rest, drink fluids, and try remedies like honey for coughs or a nasal rinse for congestion.
- **Allergies:** Manage symptoms with over-the-counter antihistamines or nasal sprays.



**7 steps to stay well**

<https://tinyurl.com/bdh4unre>

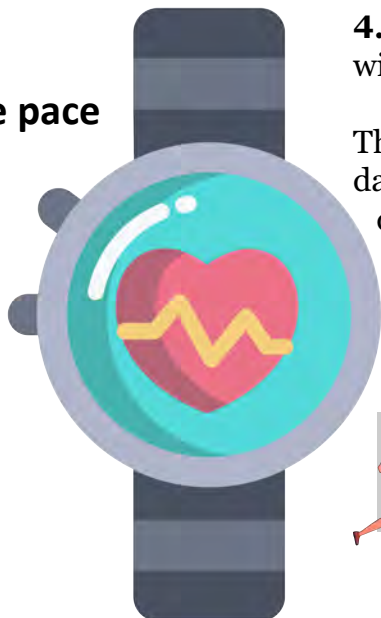
## ► HEART

### 4 simple ways to pick up the pace for heart health

**1. Skip the elevator** and take the stairs.

**2. Walk with purpose**—speed up for a block or two during your daily stroll.

**3. Play like a kid**—chase your dog or play tag with your kids.



**4. Lift & carry**—haul those groceries with a little extra hustle.

The key is consistency. A few minutes a day, almost every day, can make a big difference, protect your heart and improve your health.

Now is always the best time to start.



**7 ways to be more active**

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6b3yss>

# Recipe:

## Quick & Yummy Omelets

Hungry for a warm and healthy breakfast packed with protein and fresh veggies that only takes minutes to prepare? Give this omelet recipe a try.<sup>4</sup>

### Ingredients

1-1/3 T canola oil  
8 eggs  
1/2 C milk  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
2 C filling, e.g., Onions, spinach, tomatoes, peppers or other vegetables, chopped  
1 C low-fat shredded cheese

### Directions

1. Heat 1/2 tsp oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add vegetables. Cook until tender and set aside.  
2. Whisk eggs, milk, salt, and pepper in a bowl



This easy-to-make omelet only takes about 15 minutes to prepare.

until blended.  
3. Heat remaining canola oil in skillet over medium-high heat.  
4. Pour in egg mixture. Gently move eggs around with spatula to cook evenly.  
5. When the top surface of eggs thickens, place filling and low-fat shredded cheese on half of the omelet.  
7. Fold omelet in half with spatula, covering the filling, and slide onto a plate.

Serves 4. 220 calories per serving.

### ► FASTING

**1. Support weight loss:** Fasting reduces calorie intake and boosts metabolism by helping your body burn stored fat for energy.

**2. Regulate blood sugar:** Intermittent fasting can improve your body's insulin sensitivity, reducing your risk of diabetes.

**3. Improve heart health:** It may lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol, and reduce inflammation.

**4. Protect the brain:** Fasting promotes brain-boosting proteins, improving memory and reducing age-related cognitive decline.

**5. Improve cell repair:** During fasting, your body clears out damaged cells, supporting overall health and longevity.



### 4 types of intermittent fasting

<https://tinyurl.com/ej6r4pjh>

**6. Reduce inflammation:** Lower inflammation levels can decrease your risk for chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer.

**7. Prevent certain types of cancer:** Emerging research suggests fasting may slow tumor growth and improve responses to treatments like chemotherapy.

**Start small:** delay breakfast or stop eating after dinner to ease into a fasting window.

However, intermittent fasting isn't for everyone. If you're pregnant, nursing, underweight, or managing health conditions, check with your doctor first.

With benefits ranging from weight loss to heart and brain health, intermittent fasting might be the simple habit that transforms your health.

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**Ask the Wellness Doctor:** What are the health benefits of drinking water?

**Health Challenge:** Build Core Strength: Exercise to strengthen core muscles

# What are the health benefits of drinking water?

## *The surprising health benefits of hydration*

Drink more water. You've heard the advice before. But what's all the fuss about?

In a recent survey, 77 percent of working adults said they don't drink enough water.<sup>1</sup> And that's a problem.

There's the obvious...when you don't drink enough water, you'll start to feel thirsty.

But being dehydrated can also lead to fatigue, poor mood, difficulty concentrating, headaches, and health problems.

## **So how much water should you drink?**

It depends. The old-school rule to drink 8 glasses of water a day (64 ounces) is a good place to start for most people.

**The National Academy of Medicine recommends:** Most adults get 9 to 13 cups (72 to 104 ounces) of water per day.<sup>2</sup>

That's from drinking water

and eating fruits and vegetables that contain water.

You may need to drink more if you're highly active, sweat a lot, or live in a hot climate.

## **Tap into these health benefits of drinking water**

Besides quenching your thirst, there are a lot of reasons to drink water.

Drinking water and staying hydrated support important functions in your body.<sup>3,4</sup>

### **Water helps:**

- Keep the skin soft
- Control body temperature
- Prevent fatigue
- Improve physical performance
- Support joint, muscle, and tissue function
- Improve circulation
- Control blood pressure
- Support brain function
- Remove waste from the blood
- Improve digestion
- Support weight management and metabolism
- Reduce the risk for chronic disease



## **Hydration Habit: 7 simple ways to drink more water**

If you already drink plenty of water, keep it up. If you don't, check out these 7 simple ways to drink more water...

**WATER ►**

▼ **WATER**



**1. Drink water throughout the day**

Have a glass of water in the morning when you first wake up.

Have a glass of water when you get home. And drink water with meals.



**2. Drink water before & during exercise...**

...such as walking, hiking, or biking.

Drink at least every 30 minutes during moderate activity.



**3. Carry a water bottle with you...**

...At work, in the car, and when you're on the go. Drink often.



**4. Drink water before meals**

Water can help suppress appetite if you're trying to lose



Drink more water to improve your health.

weight or maintain a healthy weight.



**5. Fill a water bottle & freeze it**

Then take it with you for an ice-cold drink later in the day.



**6. Drink water in place of...**

...caffeinated beverages, alcohol, and sugar-sweetened drinks.



**7. If you don't like the taste of water...**

...use a filter. Buy bottled water. Or add cucumber, lemon, lime, or other fruit to improve the flavor.

**Thirsty for better health?**

Drink plenty of water.

It's easy. It's inexpensive. And it contains zero calories.

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# Build Core Strength

*Exercise to strengthen your core*

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™:

1. Read “Build Core Strength.”
2. Create a plan to practice core strength exercises daily.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

When Sue Sanders woke up in the morning her back hurt. And she'd groan getting out of bed.

“I was pretty much a couch potato,” says Sue. “My back hurt all the time, and I didn't have any energy. Even little things like tying my shoes were hard.”

She chalked it up to having kids and gaining weight. But there were other lifestyle factors at play.

She spent most of the day sitting at work. She watched a lot of TV after work. Her diet included a lot of high-calorie foods and drinks. And she wasn't active.

## But then something happened...

- She changed her diet by eating fewer calories and healthier foods.
- She started drinking more water instead of soda.
- And she started exercising.

When her personal trainer said **building core strength** could help reduce back pain, she was determined.

At first she could barely hold a plank for a few seconds. But she kept going.

Within a year, she lost about 100 pounds. And her core strength improved. Her personal best for a plank...3 minutes!

“I have so much more energy now,” says Sue.

“I feel better, and I can actually get out and do stuff like hike, walk, or work in the yard.”



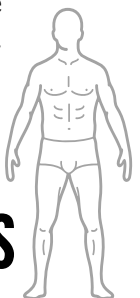
Take the month-long Health Challenge to Build Core Strength.

*“I have so much more energy now. I feel better, and I can actually get out and do stuff like hike, walk, or work in the yard.”*

Fun fact...Strong core muscles improve balance, stability, and make everyday living easier.

**Ready to build a stronger core?** Take the month-long challenge to Build Core Strength.

## 5 Surprising Reasons Core Strength Matters



Strengthen your core. You've heard the advice before from a friend, at the gym, in a magazine, or online.

But what does it really mean? Core strength is sometimes misunderstood as a code word for six-pack abs. But it's not. Core strength can help you in at least 5 surprising ways.

### ✓ 1. Keep your back happy

Exercises like curl-ups, leg raises, planks, and push-ups improve core strength and help reduce neck and back pain.<sup>2</sup>



You can build core strength by lifting weights or doing bodyweight exercises like crunches, planks, push-ups, squats and lunges.

#### ► CORE

### ✓ 2. Protect the lines of communication

Your brain and spinal cord control the central nervous system.

- Strong core muscles help stabilize the spine.
- They also help protect the spinal cord used to help the brain and body communicate.<sup>3</sup>

### ✓ 3. Be steady & strong

What if you did a few simple core-strength exercises a day for 4 weeks?

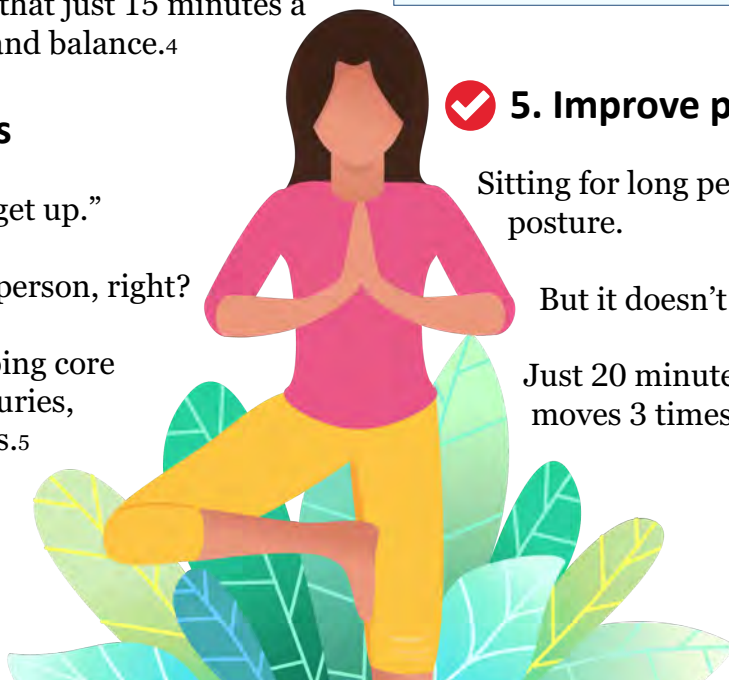
- One recent study found that just 15 minutes a day improved strength and balance.<sup>4</sup>

### ✓ 4. Prevent injuries

“I have fallen, and I can’t get up.”

You don’t want to be that person, right?

- Research shows developing core strength helps prevent injuries, muscle strains and spasms.<sup>5</sup>
- It also helps reduce hip and knee strain.



## Quiz: Strong to the Core



How much do you know about the benefits of core strength? Take the quiz to find out.

T F

1. ☐ ☐ You can strengthen your core with just 10 minutes of exercise a day.
2. ☐ ☐ When you are physically active, good core strength can help prevent injuries.
3. ☐ ☐ You don’t really need core strength to do simple things like put on your shoes, turn to look right or left, bathe, or sit in a chair.
4. ☐ ☐ Studies show that improving core strength can often help reduce lower back pain.
5. ☐ ☐ You can make your balance and stability better by developing core strength.

#### How did you do?

Your core muscles include your abs and all the other muscles that help stabilize your spine.



Research shows developing core strength improves balance, mobility, and posture, and lowers your risk for injuries.<sup>1</sup>

Answers. 1 True. 2. True. 3. False. 4. True. 5. True.

### ✓ 5. Improve posture

Sitting for long periods can lead to poor posture.

But it doesn’t have to.

Just 20 minutes of core strength moves 3 times a week can help.<sup>6</sup>

#### ► CORE



# 4 Easy Ways to Build Core Strength

Developing core strength helps protect your back, improve posture, and prevent injuries.

*Use these moves to strengthen your core muscles in just a few minutes a day*

Wondering how to build core strength?

FYI...Sit-ups aren't on the list. Here are 4 easy ways to build core strength:

## 1. Breathe

Take a deep breath. Go ahead, suck it in.

- Hold your breath.
- Count to 10.
- Breathe out.
- Repeat.



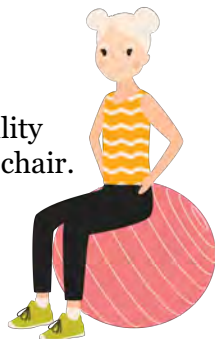
This is a simple exercise you can perform to improve core strength anytime.

## 2. Replace Your Chair...

With a stability ball. Use a stability ball instead of the typical office chair.

Why? Sitting on a chair can weaken your core muscles.

Using a stability ball forces



your core muscles to work harder.

## 3. Straighten Up

Sit up straight. Walk tall.

When you keep your spine straight and in alignment, you're using core muscles.



## 4. Do Core-Strength Exercises

Developing core strength is a lot easier than you might think.

▶ **Give this core-strength workout a try** (<https://tinyurl.com/y258nyzj>). It only takes a few minutes:

- Plank
- Dead Bug
- Pointing Dog
- Back Extension
- Good Morning
- Reverse Crunch
- Superman
- Russian Twist
- Windshield Wipers



▶ CORE

## ► CORE

### Build Core Strength Anytime

Add a few core strength exercises to your gym workout.

Or do them while watching TV. It won't take long for your core muscles to get stronger.

Core strength can have a big impact on your overall health and quality of life.

**Make the effort to strengthen your core every day.**

- You'll have better strength, balance, and stability.
- You'll lower your risk for injuries.
- You'll feel better too.

#### More to Help You Build Your Core

**How to build a better core**

<https://tinyurl.com/3h9asey9>

**Core strength to reduce back pain**

<https://tinyurl.com/nndh44v>

**21 core strength exercises**

<https://tinyurl.com/kdtzgac>



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# Build Core Strength

*Exercise to strengthen your core*

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| SUNDAY        | MONDAY        | TUESDAY       | WEDNESDAY     | THURSDAY      | FRIDAY        | SATURDAY      | NOTES |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------|
| HC<br>■       | HC<br>■       | HC<br>■       | HC<br>■       | HC<br>■       | HC<br>■       | HC<br>■       |       |
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\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I did core strength exercises.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

**Other wellness projects completed this month:**

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**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_



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