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## Our Mission

Your Bliss Magazine explores the power of overall wellness. We look to push past the boundaries of physical health and explore aspects of mental, financial and spiritual health. Our goal is to bring you information that you can use to live a happy, healthy and spirited life. We find tips for the short term as well as more expansive information for the long term.

With the ever-expanding nature of technology, knowledge and evolution of the healthcare field, there is a growing supply of data to take from. With Your Bliss, we find the information for you and put it all in one place. Every month we bring you new articles on a wide range of topics so you can live a more fulfilled and whole life.

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# Preparing for Cold and Flu Season

By: Victoria H

Cold and flu season is moving in just as quickly as the weather is changing. With the kids being back in school, the germs are in full circulation. As if motherhood wasn't hectic enough, you now have to look out for viruses and germs that are thriving. With a little preparation, you can take the days as they come. Here are a few thoughtful habits you can do to protect you and your little ones, care for yourself, and get through this season with confidence.

Getting physically ahead of the germs is your first line of defense. Frequent hand washing cannot be stressed enough. Make sure everyone thoroughly washes their hands before eating, playing, or holding the baby. Keeping hand sanitizer in your car or at the front door of your home can help you create a routine of keeping your hands clean while out and about and coming home. Newborns are especially vulnerable during this season, so limiting their exposure to crowded enclosed spaces or asking those who aren't feeling well to postpone their visit is perfectly acceptable. As hard as it may be, try your best to keep hands away from your little one's eyes, nose, and mouth if you can avoid it.

Keeping your medicine cabinet stocked couldn't hurt. Some important things to keep on hand are pediatrician-approved children's antihistamine, a fever reducer, and a thermometer. Remember that for babies, rectal thermometers give the most accurate temperature readings. Always consult your child's pediatrician before administering medication and follow the dosage instructions carefully. Having these on hand can help



prevent the stress of having to make a drugstore run with a fussy baby! Having a humidifier can also help keep the air moist and facilitate clearance of congestion.

If your baby does get sick, do not hesitate to call and schedule an appointment with their pediatrician. No matter how mild the symptoms, it is best to get the most accurate care for your little one as soon as possible. If your baby has a fever, has a change in eating habits or bathroom habits, or is unusually lethargic, call the pediatrician right away! It is always better to check if you are unsure. Your doctor will never mind a call from a concerned parent.

In all your concern for your family's health, don't forget about your own! It's easy to neglect your own needs when you are prioritizing the house, your family, your job, and everything else that comes with motherhood.

A strong immune system thrives on the basics: rest, hydration, and a balanced diet. Though difficult, try to rest when you can.

Laying down when the baby naps, staying hydrated, eating full meals 3 times a day, and snacking on healthy foods can make a huge difference in how you heal and recover.

The cold and flu season doesn't have to be full of worry and fear. By enforcing clear boundaries, clean hands, and taking care of yourself, you can create a safer environment for you and your family. Your love, care, and presence are the most beautiful defenses of all and will carry you and your little ones through the season ahead. You got this mama!



# Post-Summer Financial Tune-Up

By: Tayyab Shah

Whether you spent your summer at the beach or treated yourself to too many iced lattes in the Elmwood Village, your wallet probably noticed. Oops, spent again.

According to a Forbes report, fewer than half of Americans took a vacation this summer, with many opting for shorter, budget-friendly trips close to home. But travel or not, the pinch was real: groceries alone had over 60% of Americans feeling financially strained (AP-NORC).

So whether you lost track of your budget after summer travels or stayed on course but want to sharpen your financial habits, you're in the right place. Maybe vacation mode lingered longer than planned, or everyday expenses quietly piled up. Either way, your wallet can finally exhale now that the high-spending season is behind you.

## Deep Breath In: Summer Spending Happens, So Can a Financial Reset

The "BER months," September to December, offer the perfect window to reset with purpose, not panic. Research shows that big-picture thinking/visualization helps you save smarter and resist impulsive spending (short-term gratification).

Just like personal finance blogger Afe Funbi shared in his Medium post "My Financial Reset," who turned post-summer debt into real savings within months, you too can rebuild and get back on track to saving, starting now.

## Start With a Simple Reflection

You're ready. Grab a piece of paper and spend 10 minutes listing your summer spending, no apps, no stress, and just honest notes. Think iced lattes and impulse buys. Writing by hand helps you process habits.

This isn't about guilt. But if you skip this step, you might be reading this same advice next year! So let this be the start of your saving season.

## Picture Your "BER Months" Ahead

Cozy sweaters, pumpkin spice, school shopping, Halloween, holiday gifts, travel plans, energy costs, and Christmas is coming. So take control now. Turn the year's final stretch into your smartest saving season yet.

You have reflected: Now Rebuild & Get Back on Track to Saving. Summer spending? Faced it. Fall goals? In sight.

Now let's take action. Here are three smart steps to reset and rebuild.

## Step 1: Clean Up Your Spending

Do a 30-day Financial Cleanse: track every expense and cut non-essential spending by 20%. Sort expenses into:

- Fixed (rent, utilities)
- Variable (groceries, gas)
- Discretionary (dining out, entertainment)

Why it matters: Cutting discretionary spending frees up cash you can redirect into savings. Small shifts = big momentum.

## Step 2: Knock Out Debt with Momentum

Try the Debt Snowball Method:

- List debts from smallest to largest
- Pay off the smallest first
- Roll that payment into the next debt

Why it matters: Each win clears mental and financial space, boosting your ability to save consistently.

## Step 3: Make "Money Night" a Weekly Habit

Set aside one hour weekly for Money Night: review spending, pay bills, and set goals.

Why it matters: Weekly check-ins keep you focused and uncover hidden savings opportunities

## BONUS: Define and Track Your Savings Goals

Give your savings a goal and timeline. Are you building an emergency fund, saving for a trip, or peace of mind?

Write down:

- Your savings goal
- Amount saved so far
- Target date
- Weekly or monthly contributions

Pro tip: Use a visual tracker/spreadsheet to see your savings grow; progress fuels motivation.

Daily Actions = Real Progress

Reflection? Done. Cleanse? Started. Debt? Tackled. Habits? In motion. You're not just recovering; you're taking bold steps to get back on track to saving. No overwhelm. Just smart, doable actions leading to lasting financial change. This is not just a tune-up; it is your savings comeback.





# Healthier Substitutes for Sugar

By: Aroosham Kashif

Excess sugar consumption has been associated with a variety of health issues, including obesity, diabetes, and tooth damage. As a result, there is a growing interest in developing healthy sugar replacements that can give sweetness while minimizing harmful health impacts. This article discusses some of the most popular natural sugar substitutes and their possible health advantages.

## Natural Sweeteners

**Stevia:** Stevia is a natural sweetener derived from the *Stevia Rebaudiana* plants. It is 200 -300 times sweeter than sugar, making it popular choice for individuals looking to reduce sugar consumption.

- Stevia has very little influence on blood sugar levels and may even help decrease blood pressure
- It comes in several forms including powder, liquid and granules.
- Stevia has a licorice-like aftertaste that some people dislike.

**Honey:** Honey is a natural sweetener produced by bees from floral nectar. It contains antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and antibacterial qualities.

- Honey has a lower glycemic index than sugar, which suggests it may help manage blood sugar levels.
- It comes in a variety of forms including raw, filtered, and flavor-infused.
- Honey can be used to sweeten drinks, baked goods, and meals.

**Maple syrup:** Maple syrup is a natural sweetener derived from the sap of maple trees. It contains minerals such as manganese and zinc and has a



distinctive flavor.

- Maple syrup has a lower glycemic index than sugar, which may help control blood sugar levels.
- It is offered in several grades, including Grade A (lighter flavor) and Grade B (darker, more robust flavor).
- Maple syrup can be used to sweeten baked goods, as well as to top pancakes and waffles.

**Monk Fruit Sweetener:** Monk fruit sweetener is a natural sweetener derived from a melon known as *Siraitia grosvenorii*.

- It is 150-200 times sweeter than sugar and has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for millennia.
- Monk fruit sweetener contains antioxidants and may help relieve inflammation.
- Monk fruits sweetener has a sweet, fruity flavor and is commonly used in drinks and pastries.

**Yacon Syrup:** Yacon syrup is a sweetener derived from the root of the yacon plant. It includes prebiotic fibers that may improve digestion health.

- Yacon syrup has a low glycemic index, which may help control blood sugar levels.
- Yacon syrup tastes sweet and molasses-like and can be used as a sweetener in baking and cooking.

Each of the alternatives has unique properties, benefits, and applications. When selecting sugar alternatives, think about your particular preferences, dietary requirements, and health goals.



# Mindful Wellness for Fall

By: Megan Plevniak

A new season is approaching, ushering in crisp cool air, shorter days, and leaves that artistically fall with ease. The seasons begin to change, the sun sets earlier, and brisk air arrives before you. You may have guessed it—the season is Fall. As Fall approaches and the months ahead unfold, consider whether you are ready for this seasonal transition. In this article, I will provide insights and strategies for practicing mindful wellness, essential routines, and beneficial adjustments to thrive in this environment.

When individuals hear the word Fall, they generally become delighted. They anticipate the arrival of cooler days, observing the captivating leaves as they fall, sipping some hot cider, and of course—hoodie season. While most people are typically excited for this time of year, others may struggle. Reduced daylight hours result in decreased vitamin D levels due to diminished sunlight exposure, and seasonal depression may start to creep in.

Practicing mindfulness and maintaining a generally healthy lifestyle, both physically and mentally, is essential for achieving overall happiness. There are numerous ways to achieve this goal, including proper nutrition, altering your daily routine, reducing screen time, engaging in exercise, taking walks, journaling, and practicing meditation. If your serotonin levels are low, you may begin to feel gloom, melancholy, or depressed. Consuming foods that are high in vitamin D can elevate serotonin levels and assist in maintaining a balanced mood.

Sunlight is the most natural form of vitamin D there is, but with these shorter days ahead, how can we ensure we receive enough sun? A great start is making key changes to our daily routines. In the coming months, try to make an effort to wake up earlier. Studies show waking up earlier may enhance your overall mood and well-being—and you can be confident that you will allocate time for that natural vitamin D. Alternative methods to obtain this essential vitamin in our bodies include our dietary choices. Salmon, tuna, eggs, dairy, mushrooms,

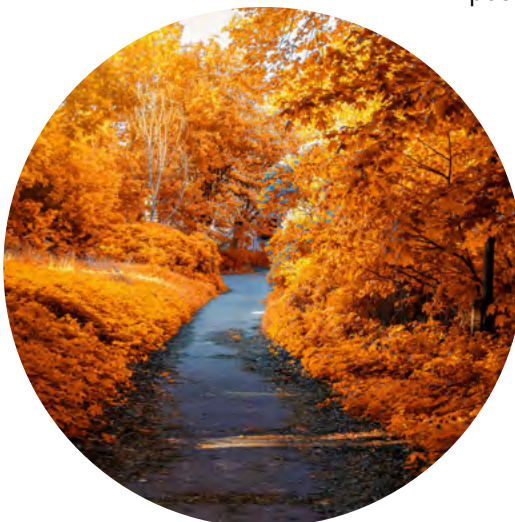


and yogurt are just some of the foods that contain substantial amounts of vitamin D.

In addition to upholding a balanced diet, various other elements contribute to the elevation of serotonin levels. Engaging in physical exercise is among the most significant activities that enhance an individual's mental well-being. This may come in the form of walking, performing yoga, lifting weights, and hiking. Regardless of your chosen form of exercise, maintaining consistency will help you keep that dreary mood at bay.

Autumn is an enchanting and picturesque season. Numerous individuals take pleasure in enjoying the trails, watching the leaves change color, and engaging in fall festivities. A crucial element in overall mindfulness is prioritizing less screen time. Did you know that around 5.6 billion individuals globally utilize mobile phones and devices? Over fifty percent of people—ordinarily teenagers admit to being addicted to their devices. How can we overcome these habits and guarantee that we invest in our mental well-being?

Typically, there are features available to monitor your screen time and usage on mobile devices. Another crucial suggestion for reducing screen time is to establish a daily alarm at a specific time. This will serve as a daily reminder for you to pause your current activities, take a break, and engage in a mindful activity. Maintaining consistency and adhering to routines is crucial for constructing positive changes.



I, along with numerous individuals, have encountered seasonal depression, fluctuations in mood, and dreary days as a result of the transition between seasons. Research has demonstrated that reduced exposure to sunlight can lead to challenges in mental health for individuals. By adhering to these tips and tricks addressed in this article, you may enhance your serotonin levels, resulting in an improved lifestyle. With days becoming shorter, and the transition of seasons approaching, your happiness is closer than you realize.





# AI-Powered Wellness & Personalized Health Tools

By: Usman Mehmood

Previously, when trying to stay healthy, people would use generic diet maps found in an issue of a magazine and steal workout routines from a friend. Although these methods were well-meaning, they seldom took into consideration that an individual's body, lifestyle, and health requirements are never the same. Nevertheless, unlike the quiet revolution today, the guesswork is no longer the driving force, but rather artificial intelligence. AI is entering the wellness universe, and it will be a part of the development of exclusive health portals that will become a part of our everyday routine.

What about getting up in the morning and having an app that understands your body and its nutritional needs more than you do? It suggests a balanced breakfast that will depend on what you are doing, your eating habits, and even how good you slept last night. No longer wondering what exactly is the right thing to eat, your AI computes the answer, and thus, your plate is not only full but also is filled with precisely what is best suited to your needs. This was science fiction; this is now.

The mechanism of action of AI-powered wellness tools is that they aggregate and interpret the data that is provided by wearable devices, applications,

and personal entries. One can then utilize this data to create a diet to balance nutrients, portions, and calories specific to you. In other words, considering you have a rainy week during which your activity levels are reduced, your AI wellness app may subconsciously decrease your level of carbohydrate intake to stay balanced. Otherwise, when it detects that you feel tired, it may recommend iron-containing food plans and reminders to stay hydrated.

AI can do more than just transform mealtime; however, it is also transforming transportation. Sportsmen are not the only ones who should have individualized fitness programs. AI fitness gadgets will know your fitness status, monitor your technique using motion sensors, and adapt any exercise routine as you go about your exercise. You might be injured, and in a scenario where such events are being put forward with a proposed AI, it may imply other insignificant sorts of events. It may be able to challenge you effectively, in a safe, controlled manner, once it figures out you want to be challenged.

The possibility of making health more consistent is one of the largest benefits of using AI in wellness. The fact is that motivation is very volatile. You sometimes feel that you can pound out a great workout day, and



other times you can't get off the sofa. The AI tools will have the capacity to smooth such differences, giving you lifelike alternatives in which you will not lose track and at the same time not be pressured. Such flexibility implies you are more inclined to maintain your regimen in general over an extended period because you have made it a lifestyle as opposed to a temporary fix.

It is also advantageous in the emotional aspects. There is no shortage of information overload around health, with competing and confusing dietary recommendations, infinite fitness trends, and an endless stream of get-healthy-in-one-shot health hacks and gimmicks to keep track of. AI sweeps out the clutter, leaving you with good, data-backed advice that you can trust. In a way, it can be your health coach, which is always there, never forgets things, and it is all about you.



Naturally, AI cannot substitute a professional medical consultation, but it is a mighty ally in maintaining daily well-being. It makes individuals become responsible for their health without making complex and unrealistic recommendations. AI can make recommendations that can be followed by the general population, so that they can actually monitor themselves.

It is not only convenient to incorporate AI in our health routines, but it also enables people. It is about utilizing technology to facilitate a seamless transition from intention to action, ensuring we live healthier and more balanced lives without the guesswork. Wellness in the future will not simply be personal, but it will be smart, as we have already done the same with AI at our side.





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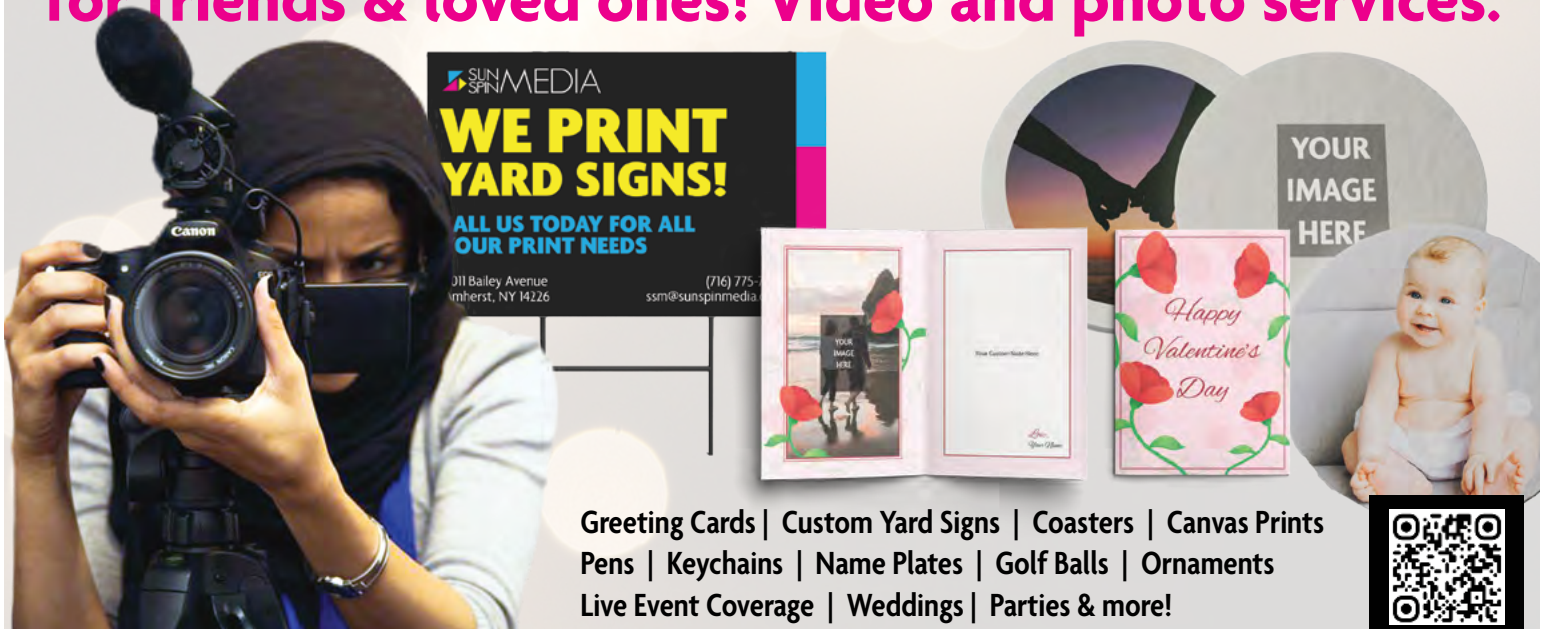
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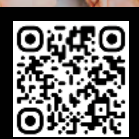
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# Evolving Organizations

By: Faizan Haq, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, Your Bliss Magazine  
President & CEO, Manage Your Business LLC



Evolving individuals shape evolving organizations. The evolution of mankind has proven that our species has a special skill for adapting and advancing its quality of life based on its own inventions and discoveries. It is only natural that the collective achievements of our species exceeds its own capacity to learn at an individual level. Organizations are groups of individuals working together to achieve a certain goal or a purpose.

Every passing day changes us irreversibly, as chronologically we are growing. Consciously or subconsciously, our daily interactions accumulate as behavioral-shaping learning experiences. These behavioral patterns set habitual reactions to situations we face. This process starts early on as a child and continues until our last breath.

Our future brings us endless opportunities to start new patterns of behavior based on conscientious effort to accumulate effective interactions with our working and/or living environments. Let's take one example; setting our schedule to eat or drink. What time, what items, what amount, what type, how frequently we should be eating or hydrating ourselves are the questions we must answer. Second tier questions deal with the quality or the content of what we need to consume. Many diet programs, keep providing answers to these questions based on the latest research of what needs to be done to make our diet healthier.

The most important question we need to ask is, "Why to do all that?" The answer to "why" is the key to consistently performing those actions that will shape the behavior of the individual or the organization for the better. Our actions create habits that are based on our reaction to situations. Habits are the behavioral patterns which we develop while learning from our reactions to our environment.

Hence, if we want to be an evolving individual that helps in the evolution of an organization, we should always be embracing evolution. Evolution is change. Change is inevitable. One must control one's own evolution by deciding and setting up new patterns of behavior and learning experiences. When we do this exercise as an organization we turn our organization into a positively evolving organization. The advancement and the progress of the organization is, then unstoppable.



# Media Corner: Review of Wednesday, Season 2, Part 1

By: Alex Tilton

## Some spoilers ahead.

For those who haven't seen season 1, *Wednesday* is a dark action/comedy *Harry Potter* clone aimed at young adults. *Harry Potter* wasn't the first 'wizard school' series, it just happens to be the one that mushroomed into a freakish success and blotted out the sun. Regardless, *Wednesday* was a huge hit for Netflix and turned Jenna Ortega into a household name. I thought it was good, but not great.

Three years later the first half of second season has finally dropped. There was much joyful squealing among the fans, and some skeptical cynicism from me. *Wednesday* is probably their highest priority behind *Stranger Things* so it seemed reasonable to hope a good result, but it would take a strong will to resist the temptation to play it safe with a story designed to suck up to the squealing, obsessed, unpleasable fandom.

Thankfully they went the opposite way with it. Almost the first thing that happens in season 2 is Wednesday encountering her own (in universe) superfans, making it clear that she holds them in the deepest contempt, and promptly moving on. I appreciated that. But, is the show in general any good?

I'm giving it an A-. The story is good, as is the acting, the pacing and most of the writing, but very little has changed since season 1. Wednesday still thinks she knows better than everyone else because of her psychic visions, and she hurts a lot of feelings along her well-intentioned path of destruction. Her roommate Enid is still a boy crazy werewolf girl dealing with relationship issues and still frustrated over her complicated friendship with Wednesday. The other students at this 'definitely-not-Hogwarts-inspired' Nevermore Academy have their own side plots. The best one involves Bianca, the siren, who gets pressured by the new principal into using her mind control skills to raise money for the school. The worst one involves Wednesday's brother Pugsley and his pet Zombie.

My problem with this is the inconsistency. Season one kicks off with Wednesday dropping a bag of piranhas into a swimming pool, causing a student to get mutilated as revenge for bullying Pugsley. Her 'punishment' for this is to be expelled and sent to court ordered therapy. Ok. Fine. If those are the rules of this fictional universe we can roll with that. She gets threatened with expulsion all the time in season 1. It's the all-purpose punishment for assault, kidnapping,

stealing evidence, vandalism, breaking and entering, grave robbing etc... she doesn't get caught for everything she does, but when she is caught, expulsion is always mentioned. In season 2 her brother Pugsley accidentally resurrects a flesh-eating zombie which starts killing people...and he gets an afternoon in detention stuffing envelopes.

The show does remember to provide an excuse for this; the new principal of Nevermore (Steve Buscemi) openly hates 'normies'. But he's also obsessed with keeping the school's board of governors satisfied by raising money, which is hard to reconcile with assigning detention as a punishment for negligent manslaughter.

**::sigh::**

Later on, for various reasons, Wednesday carries out a raid on the local asylum where many outcasts (anyone with superpowers) are being experimented on, and because of this the Zombie breaks out of its cell and kills six people; four disposable guards, the head doctor and a catatonic (but formerly evil) inmate. I realize that in TV logic it's ok to do horrible things to bad people because they're bad. But I would appreciate it if they set the bar just a little bit higher. The zombie's first victim is the driver's ed teacher whose only crime was to be mildly obnoxious.

I have some other complaints, while we're at it. I wish Steve Buscemi's character was written better. It works well enough as a ruthless, two-faced bureaucrat but I found myself rolling my eyes and making a little 'get on with it' gesture whenever he started talking. Pugsley's character doesn't have enough to do and his side plot is functional at best. Gomez doesn't have much to do either, but he's not trying to be a part of the main story so it doesn't matter. Morticia and her mother have an interesting thing going on, and it works well because Wednesday herself is heavily tied into it. But as much as I appreciate the show giving the secondary characters a life of their own, a lot of it just isn't interesting enough to justify the time they spend on it.

That being said, I enjoyed most of it. And I especially enjoy the fact that I can cancel my Netflix subscription (again) next month after the second half comes out.

**Image Source: Netflix.com**





# Benefits of Probiotics and Prebiotics

By: Dr. Riffat Sadiq, CEO of WNY Medical PC, Channel Creator



When it comes to supporting your gut health, it can be beneficial to include prebiotics and probiotics in your daily supplement intake. There are a number of simple, yet effective ways you can obtain these supplements. I believe that the inclusion of these additions into your daily intake can improve gut health, aid with digestion, and keep you feeling young and well.

Prebiotics are non-digestible supplements that microorganisms in your gut can break down. These components can be found in plant-based foods that are rich in fiber. Some of these foods include, but are not limited to; apples, bananas, avocados, broccoli, cauliflower, beans, nuts, and seeds. They may also be added to food, or taken as a supplement.

The easiest way to check for probiotic foods are to read the nutrition label. It will distinctly say the statement

“live and active cultures.” Reading the nutritional information of foods is so significant in every aspect of life. Remember, many, but not all fermented foods are considered probiotic. According to the National Institutes of Health, some fermented foods go through a process that can kill living microorganisms. They can also be added to non-fermented foods, too.

The benefits of probiotics and prebiotics go hand in hand for improved gut health. These supplements increase helpful bacteria in your gut, while alongside decrease the number of harmful bacteria. Doing so aids with better digestion, less inflammation, regular bowel movements, and overall nutrient absorbency. There are no specific serving suggestions for prebiotics and probiotics. Instead of aiming for a specific number, begin including these healthy foods into your regular consumption and intake.

Prebiotics and probiotics are excellent resources to aid with healthier digestive systems and overall gut health. If you wish to add these into your diet, I would recommend to start slow to see how your body reacts. Too much of anything is never a good thing. Moderation is important in restoring your true self.



**Dr. Riffat Sadiq: Restoring Self**

*Want more tips on improving your wellness and restoring yourself?  
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# Marry Me White Bean & Spinach Skillet

Recipe Source: [eatingwell.com](http://eatingwell.com)

## Ingredients

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup finely chopped shallots

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, chopped

4 medium cloves garlic, minced  
( $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons)

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup dry white wine

2 (5-ounce) packages baby spinach

2 (15-ounce) cans no-salt-added cannellini beans, rinsed

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup unsalted vegetable broth

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup heavy cream

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided

1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil or small basil leaves

Crusty whole-wheat bread for serving (optional)

## Directions

### Step 1:

- Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
- Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shallots and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sun-dried tomatoes.
- Cook, stirring often, until the shallots are softened for about 3 minutes

### Step 2:

- Add minced garlic and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt.
- Stir until fragrant for about 30 seconds.

### Step 3:

- Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup white wine and increase heat to medium-high.
- Cook, stirring often, until the wine is almost fully reduced for about 2 minutes.

### Step 4:

- Add 2 (5-ounce) packages baby spinach.
- Cook, stirring, until spinach begins to wilt for about 2 minutes.

### Step 5:

- Add rinsed white beans and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup broth.
- Cook gently, stirring, until heated through and spinach is fully wilted for about 2 minutes.

### Step 6:

- Remove skillet from heat.
- Stir in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cream and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup grated Parmesan.

### Step 7:

- Sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons of Parmesan.
- Top with 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil. Serve warm, optionally with crusty bread on the side.







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6970 Erie Road

**East Amherst \*NEW\***  
8600 Transit Road, #102

**Niagara Falls \*NEW\***  
909 Pine Avenue

**Lackawanna**  
2600 South Park Avenue

**Orchard Park**  
3320 N. Benzing Road