



FREE

Blood Donation

*Health Facts to Consider
Prior to Your Appointment*

New Year Resolutions

*Tips and Tricks to Staying
Motivated in the New Year*

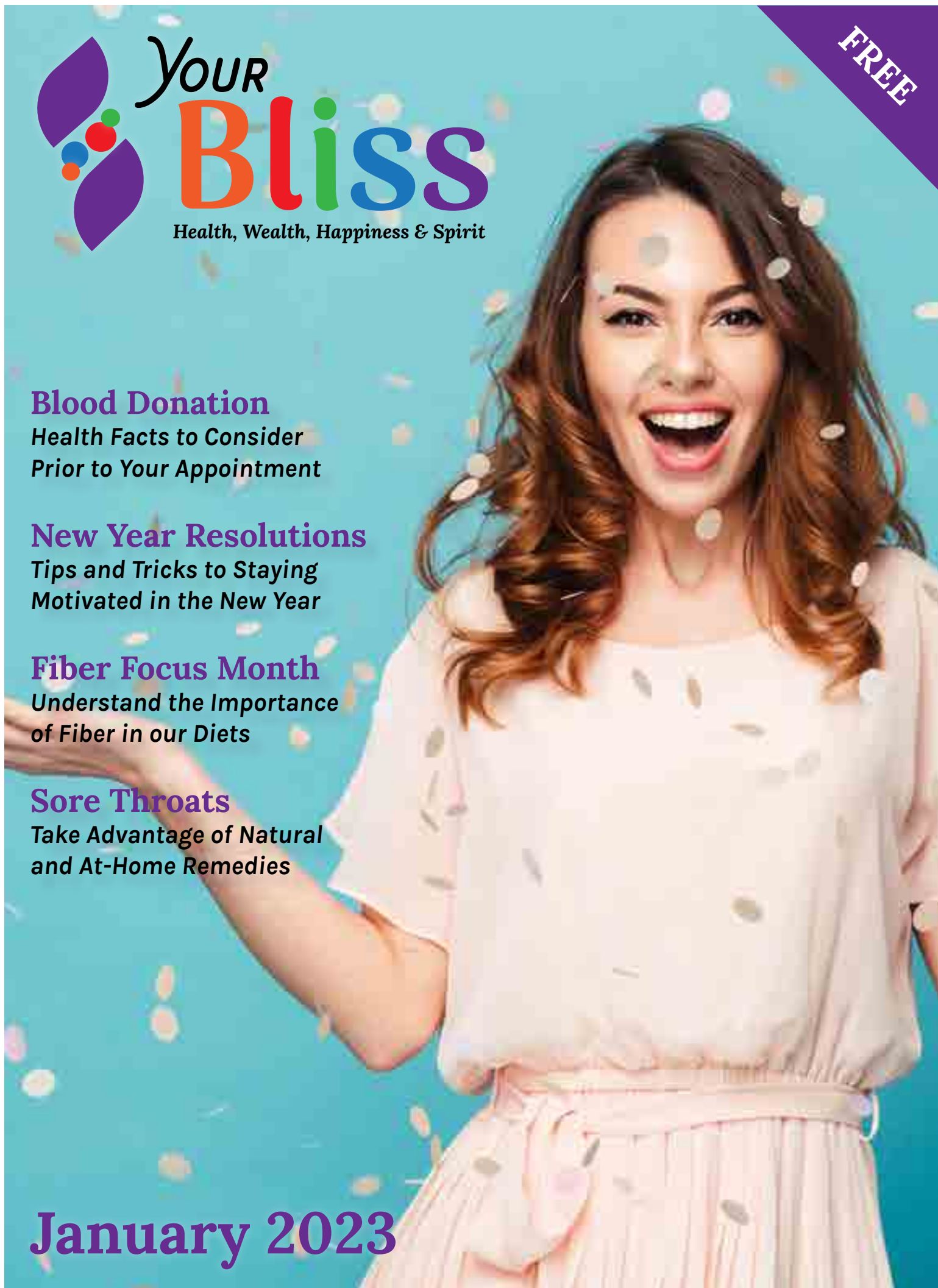
Fiber Focus Month

*Understand the Importance
of Fiber in our Diets*

Sore Throats

*Take Advantage of Natural
and At-Home Remedies*

January 2023





The New Year is here, are you on the right track?

As we grow older, it is important to stay on track with every aspect of your well-being. It is reported that only 62 percent of Americans receive their annual physical from their primary care physician.

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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 the aspects of mental health, financial health, and health of the spirit. 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 technology, knowledge, and evolution of the health 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.

Our Team

Staff Writers

Alex Tilton
Faizan Haq
Dr. Riffat Sadiq

Contributors

Rachael Bannen
Ashlie Castre
Roberta Schlehr
Sara Loft
Brody Walsh

Video Coordinator

Brody Walsh
Suniya Arash

Editor-In-Chief Managing Editor Graphic Design Print Publication Copy Editor

Faizan Haq
Katy Siwinski
SunSpin Media
SunSpin Media
Elizabeth Hatcher

Editorial Board

Joe Cirillo
Director of PR, ECMC
Dr. Riffat Sadiq, MD
President, WNY Medical
Dr. Joe Serghany, MD
Western New York MRI
John M. Hatcher, CEO
JMH Advisement, LLC
Elizabeth Hatcher
Tanya Hernandez
Ralph Hernandez

Table of Contents

4 The Gift of Blood Donation

5 Five Tips to Stay Motivated in the New Year

6 Health Benefits of Cinnamon & Ginger

7 Remedies to Help with Sore Throats

8 Recipe of the Month

9 Apna Dera: Open Now!

10 International Creativity Month

11 The Importance of Fiber

12 Media Corner: Wednesday

13 New Year, New Life

14 Events & Sledding Spots in WNY

15 Coloring Corner

The Gift of Blood Donation

A Q&A with Ashlie LeCastre, Phlebotomist, American Red Cross

Have you ever wanted to donate blood, but didn't know the steps to take to prepare for doing so? January is designated as National Blood Donor Month, and it is important to know what to prepare for as you decide to donate. Whether a first-time donor, or a rookie all of your own, it is crucial to take the act of donating blood as seriously as possible.

We sat down and had an interview with Ashlie, a Phlebotomist with the American Red Cross. They explained to us their favorite part of being a phlebotomist, as well as things to consider about your personal health prior to donating.

1) What is your favorite part of being a phlebotomist?

My favorite part of being a phlebotomist is knowing that I have a part in saving lives, where each blood donation can save up to three people. I love meeting different people as well. Being personable is definitely a very important part of the job. You spend about thirty minutes with each donor, and even the simplest conversation can make one's day, and that's what this job is all about, saving lives through donation and conversation.

2) What should one consider about their health before donating blood?

There are many factors that have to be considered

before donating such as height, weight, hemoglobin (red blood cells) level, blood pressure, temperature, and pulse. You must be feeling healthy and well in order to donate and have not had any major health complications within the last 6 months to a year, depending on the condition. It's very important to drink lots of water and eat a full meal about an hour and a half before donating as well in order to have a successful donation.

“
You must be feeling healthy and well in order to donate and have not had any major health complications within the last 6 months to a year.
”

3) How do you handle a distressed patient?

At the American Red Cross, we use something called “heart, head, heart” which is communicating with empathy while also acknowledging their fears and frustrations. If a donor is frustrated, I would say something along the lines of “I understand your frustration. I promise you're in good hands. How would you like me to proceed?” From there on, I'll make my decision accordingly. It's important to always stay calm in stressful situations in order for the donors to stay calm and to reduce the chance of a reaction happening.

4) Are there any side effects to donating blood?

Some side effects to donating include the possibility of a reaction happening such as nausea, dizziness, loss of consciousness or fatigue.



Five Tips to Stay Motivated in the New Year

By: Sara Loft



Well, it's officially 2023! A brand-new year has begun! A new chance to live life differently from the last! Let's face it, making resolutions are commonly made but never fully grasped. Why? Usually, it's tricky to stay motivated. Sometimes, we are bogged down to achieve our goals and/or our dreams, due to circumstances or even our inward fuel is merely dim.

Here are 5 easy tips to stay motivated throughout the year:

1. Record your personal goals. Analyze how you can obtain each one. Review your progress with each one. Don't overwhelm yourself to set a time frame to complete one or some. Staying consistent toward a goal is more beneficial than not achieving any goal(s) at all.

2. Keep your momentum at a high level. Living a routine could help, but boredom could set in place. Discover a new place or develop a new healthy habit/hobby to experience what you're capable of achieving.

3. Engage in your circle. It is good to surround yourself with a sociable and/or supportive group

of people that value your authenticity, energy and time. Stressful moments can occur at work, home, in your relationships, and more. However, being around positive people can help you oversee the stress and tension itself.

4. Take more steps. Keep moving around. Walk around your neighborhood or nearest park. Instead of the elevator, take a few flights up and down the stairs. Exercising benefits us in several ways such as mood enhancement.

5. Practice self-care. Establish some time to yourself. We all get busy with work, taking care of our family, running errands and so forth. Make sure you still visit your doctor(s). We all need a breather or refreshing moment because our mental health is just as important and may prevent us from accomplishing something that we have to do.

“
Being around positive people can help you oversee the stress and tension itself.
”

If you are still struggling to stay motivated, don't hesitate to reach out for professional help. There are plenty of resources that can help you obtain a healthier and happier lifestyle. In addition, it's okay to reward yourself because positive reinforcement encourages us to stay motivated!

Health Benefits of Cinnamon & Ginger

By: Dr.RS



Cinnamon

Cinnamon is a spice that has been used in traditional medicine around the world for thousands of years. It is used in cooking, baking, and added to many foods. Cinnamon is an excellent source of several vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that are vital for your health. These include manganese, calcium, iron, Vitamin K, Fiber, zinc, dietary fiber, omega 3 fatty acids, and more among other important nutrients. In addition, cinnamon only has 19 calories per serving, plus, has zero fats and sugars.

Cinnamon has benefits towards the health of our skin. It can improve our skin elasticity and firmness. Furthermore, the use and consumption of Cinnamon in our diets promotes collagen, wound healing and even treats hyperpigmentation.

Also, cinnamon can help control insulin levels and help the body burn stored fat. It can even increase our metabolism and suppress our appetites.

The benefits of cinnamon even include our brain's health. Cinnamon can reduce cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease. It can also help activate neuro-protective proteins that help shield cells of the brain.

Ginger

Ginger comes with a long history of use in Asian, Indian, and Arabic herbal traditions. Ginger is most well known for its ability to soothe your stomach, especially when dealing with nausea or bloating. When ingested, ginger is doing a lot for your stomach, including promoting weight management and improving your health. Ginger appears to reduce inflammation in the gut and helps the body to be, more responsive to insulin, helping improve blood sugar control and reducing weight gain.

Some other benefits from ginger include:

- curbs cancer growth
- lowers blood sugar
- fights germs
- keeps your mouth healthy
- calms nausea
- soothes sore muscles
- ease arthritis symptoms

Ginger can also work as a skin toner balancing spot treatment, a nourishing hair mask that targets hair loss and dryness. It can even reduce appearance of wrinkles and fine lines; fade scars, make cellulite less noticeable and improve acne symptoms.



Natural Remedies to Help with Sore Throats

By: Dr.RS



Sore throats are extremely common, especially during the winter. And they can come from infections related to the common cold, or something more severe like strep throat or the flu. Sore throats typically will go away in about a week. There are several remedies that we can use just from products and food in our homes: Including honey, lemons, garlic, and tea.

1. Honey

Honey helps in killing bacteria, fighting viral infections, reducing inflammation, and overall helps in the healing process.

2. Lemons

Lemons can contribute to helping break up mucus, provide pain relief and are also a great source of vitamin C which helps boost the immune system.

3. Garlic

Taking Garlic supplements can both help treat and prevent respiratory infections. Garlic contains natural antibiotic properties within it. For example, containing allicin, which fights infections.

4. Tea

Tea is a great remedy for sore throats, and different teas offer different effects as for example: Chamomile tea is an anti-inflammatory, has antioxidant properties, and stimulates the immune system. Peppermint tea also is an anti-inflammatory. It also contains anti-bacterial and antiviral properties. Furthermore, the menthol in peppermint also helps break up mucus.

“
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Check out the Dr.RS channel on YouTube for more information on food as medicine.

YouTube: Dr. RS
TikTok: Dr.Riffat Sadiq
Instagram: DR.RS001
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Broccoli Wild Rice Casserole

Recipe Source: thepioneerwoman.com

Ingredients

- 2 c. uncooked wild rice
- 10 c. low-sodium chicken broth, more if needed for thinning
- 3 heads broccoli, cut into small florets
- 1 lb. white button or crimini mushrooms, finely chopped
- 1/2 c. butter
- 1 whole medium onion, finely diced
- 2 whole carrots, peeled and finely diced
- 2 stalks celery, finely diced
- 4 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 1 tsp. salt, more to taste
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1 c. panko breadcrumbs

Directions

1. Add the wild rice into a medium saucepan with 5 cups of the chicken broth. Bring it to a boil over medium high heat, then reduce the heat to low and cover the pan. Cook the rice until it has just started to break open and is slightly tender, about 35 to 40 minutes. Set it aside.
2. Meanwhile, blanch the broccoli by throwing the florets into boiling water for 1½ to 2 minutes, until bright green and still slightly crisp. Immediately drain the broccoli and plunge it into a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. Remove it from the ice water and set it aside.
3. Heat a large pot over medium-high heat, then melt 6 tablespoons of the butter. Add the onions and the mushrooms and cook, stirring them occasionally, for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the liquid begins to evaporate. Add the carrots and celery and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the vegetables are soft and the mixture begins to turn darker in color.
4. Sprinkle the flour on the vegetables and stir to incorporate it, then cook for about a minute. Pour in the remaining 5 cups of broth and stir to combine. Bring the mixture to a gentle boil and allow it to thicken, about 3 minutes. Pour in the heavy cream, stirring to combine. Let the mixture cook until it thickens. Season with the salt and pepper, then taste and adjust the seasonings as needed.
5. Add half the cooked rice to the bottom of a 3-quart baking dish, then lay on half the broccoli. (You can do one layer of each or two layers of each. Using a ladle, scoop out the vegetable/broth mixture and spoon it evenly all over the top. Continue with the rest of the sauce, totally covering the surface with vegetables.
6. Melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter, then pour it into a separate bowl with the panko breadcrumbs. Toss the mixture together to coat the breadcrumbs in butter, then sprinkle the breadcrumbs all over the top.
7. Cover with foil and bake the casserole for 20 minutes, then remove the foil and continue baking for 15 minutes or until golden brown on top.



A New Year means _____
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International Creativity Month

By: Roberta Schlehr



Creativity. Do you have it in you? Is this something that can be taught? Let me also ask if you like puzzles. Or are you a problem solver?

If your answer is no regarding being creative but yes to puzzles or problem solving – guess what? You are creative. Creativity comes in many forms and levels. Most people think being creative means artistic ability, like drawing, painting, or sculpture. Graphic artists, web designers, engineers, interior designers, teachers, and scientists have a creative mindset. Creativity can be free-flowing or follow a very structured path with steps and processes. Think about an abstract painting, or creating an object from colored bricks, or solving a chemistry or calculus problem.

Problem solving is an everyday event – sometimes we need to think outside the box. Most people don't realize how many problems we solve each day. It is the What-if question that you ask yourself about a situation. Take the What-if and apply it to something that you think is creative and out of your reach. Start at solving a solution, what would you need to complete the task, don't worry about the how, yet. Look around and you will see creativity everywhere! Logos, packaging, book covers, and even the bakery. Anything that is created starts with a concept. A concept is an idea that starts with a thought.

Here is an exercise for you to practice your creativity. Let's say you want to make a present for a friend. Start with a box. What are some supplies or ideas that pop into your head as soon as I said that you will start with a box? Take a moment and pause here before reading

on. Think or write down your thoughts about creating a box as a gift.

Thoughts of how you can make the box look better, with paint, ribbon, pictures, or paper might be where you started. Or maybe you started with what is the purpose, what is this box going to be used for? You see, here are two possibilities and we're just getting started. There are multiple ways to accomplish the same task. Each person will have their idea. If you consult with another person, you may brainstorm ideas together for even more options.

Thinking about the person this gift is for, think about what they like or activity interests. Personalize the box to make it special and meaningful. If this is a shoebox, cover it in a brown shopping bag, paper, or wrapping paper that can be colored with markers or crayons. Decorate with photographs, buttons, or any other item around the house that can be glued on. The possibilities are endless. Have fun! Be creative!

To answer the question, can creativity be taught? I think yes, we all have a creative side. We need to nurture and help it to grow. Don't judge yourself (or others), keep an open mind, and don't give up. Find activities that start small and are not overwhelming. Take a class or watch a video to learn something new or to expand and develop skills.

“
**We all have
a creative side.
We need to nurture
and help it to
grow.**
”

**Creativity is for everyone!
Look around and ask, what if?**

The Importance of Fiber in our Diets

By: Brody Walsh

It's all too common to hear the advice: "eat more fiber," but usually we don't hear much about why it's such an important part of our diet. January is Fiber Focus Month, so what better a time to learn more about what fiber does and how you can increase your fiber intake.

What is fiber?

Fiber is essentially the part of plant-based foods that your body doesn't digest and is usually broken down into two types of fiber: insoluble and soluble. Both are incredibly important for the health of your gut and usually high fiber foods are high in both types. Insoluble fiber is not digested at all, simply passing through your intestines without being absorbed by your body, which can help with conditions like constipation. Soluble fiber is not digested by your body, but rather by the bacteria in your gut, which fosters a healthy microbiome and can have a wide range of positive impacts on your gut health.

One important thing to be aware of is how much fiber you need day to day. The recommended amounts of fiber will vary slightly for men and women and will also

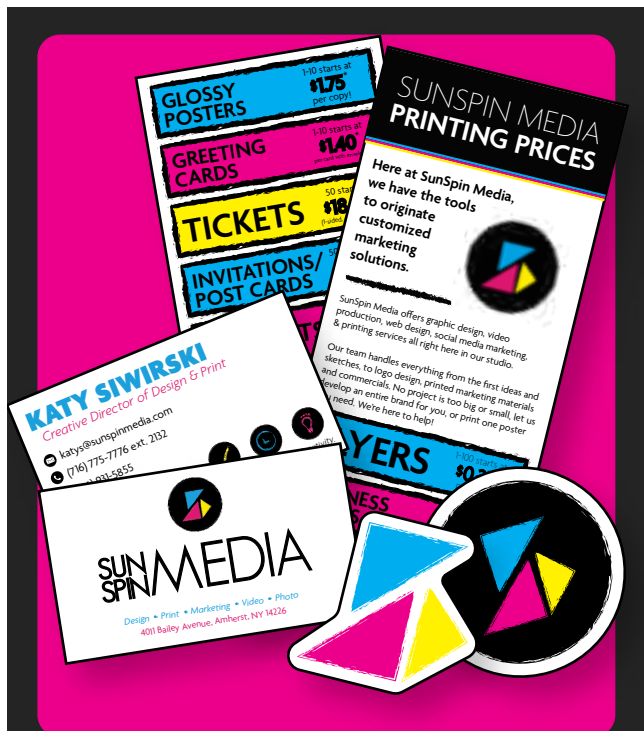
depend on your age. If you're under fifty, a man needs 38 grams of fiber daily, and a woman 25 grams of fiber daily. For those over fifty a man and a woman will need 30 and 21 grams respectively.

How can we increase our daily intake of fiber?

Fiber is found primarily in fruits, vegetables, and other plant-based foods. Adding beans or lentils to certain dishes you eat can help introduce high fiber foods into your diet without changing your eating habits too much. Switching to whole grains over white breads and pastas will also be an easy switch that can increase fiber. In general, making sure you're getting the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables is also critical, as most people in the United States simply aren't eating a balanced enough diet to reach their recommended fiber intake.

Hopefully you better understand how and why "eat more fiber" is such common advice. Be sure to foster a balanced and healthy diet and pay attention to the contents of what you're eating; your body will thank you for it!

“
The recommended amounts of fiber will vary slightly for men and women.
”



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A Review of Wednesday, a Netflix original series

By: Alex Tilton



You can tell a lot about a show from its poster.

Aside from obvious visual indicators about production value there's the style of the art, the writing of the taglines, the title and the names of the stars. As an indicator of overall quality, it's not perfect, but it's not bad either. Unless you're talking about Netflix, a company that has perfected the art of concealing a crappy product with good looking cover art. Consequently, I didn't know what to think when I first saw 'Wednesday' in the Netflix queue.

It looked decent, but then again so did *Gunpowder Milkshake* and a whole lot of other McNetflix shelf filler garbage. But, I was sitting on my parents couch in Arizona having run out of things to do the day before Thanksgiving, so I suggested watching it. And my family responded with a resounding cry of, 'Ok, sure.'

It did not hook me instantly. But part of that was my prejudice. It looked and smelled an awful lot like a 'Young Adult' title and it took two episodes for the show to convince me that it was an honest effort at a campy, family-friendly dark comedy horror series. My overall verdict is that it's very worth watching, but it's far short of amazing. Tailor your expectations accordingly.

The first problem the show has is that it takes a while to define its world. Does the general public know about the supernatural crowd or don't they? The show eventually clarifies this but it's confusing for a while until it sinks in. The next problem they have is some mildly cringy dialogue and teen stereotypes. But this too stops being a problem once you get it through your head that the campiness is self-aware and intended to be fun.

By the end of the third episode, they'd done enough worldbuilding that I was acclimated and I felt comfortable with it and I was fully hooked. But it was

iffy for a while there. They needed to do a better job introducing their world and making you give a damn about the characters. Slow-burn is a legitimate way to go, but this was too slow.

As for the casting I have no real complaints. Jenna Ortega is a strong lead and she carried the show very well. It'll be a career making role for her and she deserves it. Catherine Zeta-Jones did a fine job as Morticia, but I felt like she needed to pick a lane rather than treading the line between motherly and threatening. Eventually I warmed up to it though. I didn't like Luis Guzman's interpretation of Gomez, but it wasn't a terrible stylistic choice. Just not the one I enjoyed. I was particularly pleased at both the writing and acting of the Sheriff character. He manages to do what the plot needs him to do without coming off like a tired cliché. He's a foil for Wednesday, but he's not a villain. He doesn't overact just to be a jerk and when the situation changes he reacts intelligently and believably.



The supporting cast is a mixed bag. They all did a fine job but some of them didn't have much to work with. I feel a little bad for Emma Myers, who plays Wednesday's roommate Enid. Her character is just way, way too much of a stereotypical boy-crazy high school girl. Growing out of that does seem to be part of her character arc, but it was still eye rolling to watch for the first few episodes. Then again, this is a show aimed at families and I am a deeply cynical middle-aged man.

Continuing on the subject of character arc, Wednesday has a good one. It's not shockingly original, but it does work well. She's sent to a new school, hates it at first, hates it later, continues hating it, and then eventually finds her place and decides to stay. And there was one thing in particular that I liked about how they handled her development. While Wednesday is working on figuring out the big mystery, she makes a number of wrong conclusions and bad accusations. And this doesn't get hand waved or ignored later. The people she screwed over hate her for it, and it takes some real effort to get past it.

So, *Wednesday* does seem to be a winner overall. The buzz in the media is that it's one of Netflix's most popular English language series ever so a second season feels like a safe bet. All in all, I was satisfied.

Image source: whats-on-netflix.com

New Year, New Life

By: Faizan Haq, Editor-in-Chief & Publisher, Your Bliss



Every coming moment gives us an opportunity for self-renewal. Every tomorrow is the beginning of a new year. However, there remains a significance to the change of the last digit in the number of years that has passed in reference to an historic event that took place a couple of thousand years ago. The Christian calendar uses Anno Domini, after the birth of Christ, to mark the years. There are many calendars in the world, and every calendar measures time from the occurrence of a significant incident.

From Chinese to Islamic and Lunar years, the measure of time remains grounded in an event that changed the course of history. Whether that event was real or imagined is irrelevant. The most relevant reality is that human beings are fascinated in counting, measuring and referring to time; perhaps they do that because there is a finite value to time in everyone's life. The question is how they use that value to benefit themselves or the world around them. It is important to understand that the betterment of self is the betterment of all. The gain of one is not the loss for another. Everyone, can start a new life by a simple decision. The beginning of the year is a great time to give yourself a rebirth, not just items in your bucket list but ones that may have an impact on your life and may benefit someone around you both near and far. Speaking a few kind words with those you haven't spoken with, gifting a portion of your earnings to an organization that is engaged in uplifting humanity and perhaps softening your heart for those who have done you wrong. Take the time this new year for a self-renewal; you and the world around you will be better for it.



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Event Calendar

WNY · January 2023

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 [KeyBank Center Buffalo, New York](#)

Date : 01/09/2023 Time : 4:00 - 6:00 PM

Get autographs, take photos, and skate with some of your favorite Buffalo Sabres

Price: raise minimum of \$25 in pledges

For More Info & to register visit: sabahinc.org/skateathon

Wild Wednesday

 [Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve](#)

Date : 01/11/2023 Time : 4:30 PM

For children in grades K-5 with their caregivers

Price: Free

For More Info & to register: reinsteinwoods.org


Dancing with the Stars Live

 [Shea's Performing Arts Center](#)

Date : 01/24/2023 Time : 7:30 PM

For More Info & to purchase tickets: Sheas.org

The Disco Biscuits

 [Town Ballroom](#)

Date : 01/19/2023 Time : 6:30 PM

Price: \$45

For More Info & to purchase tickets: townballroom.com

Sledding Spots

to check out in Buffalo

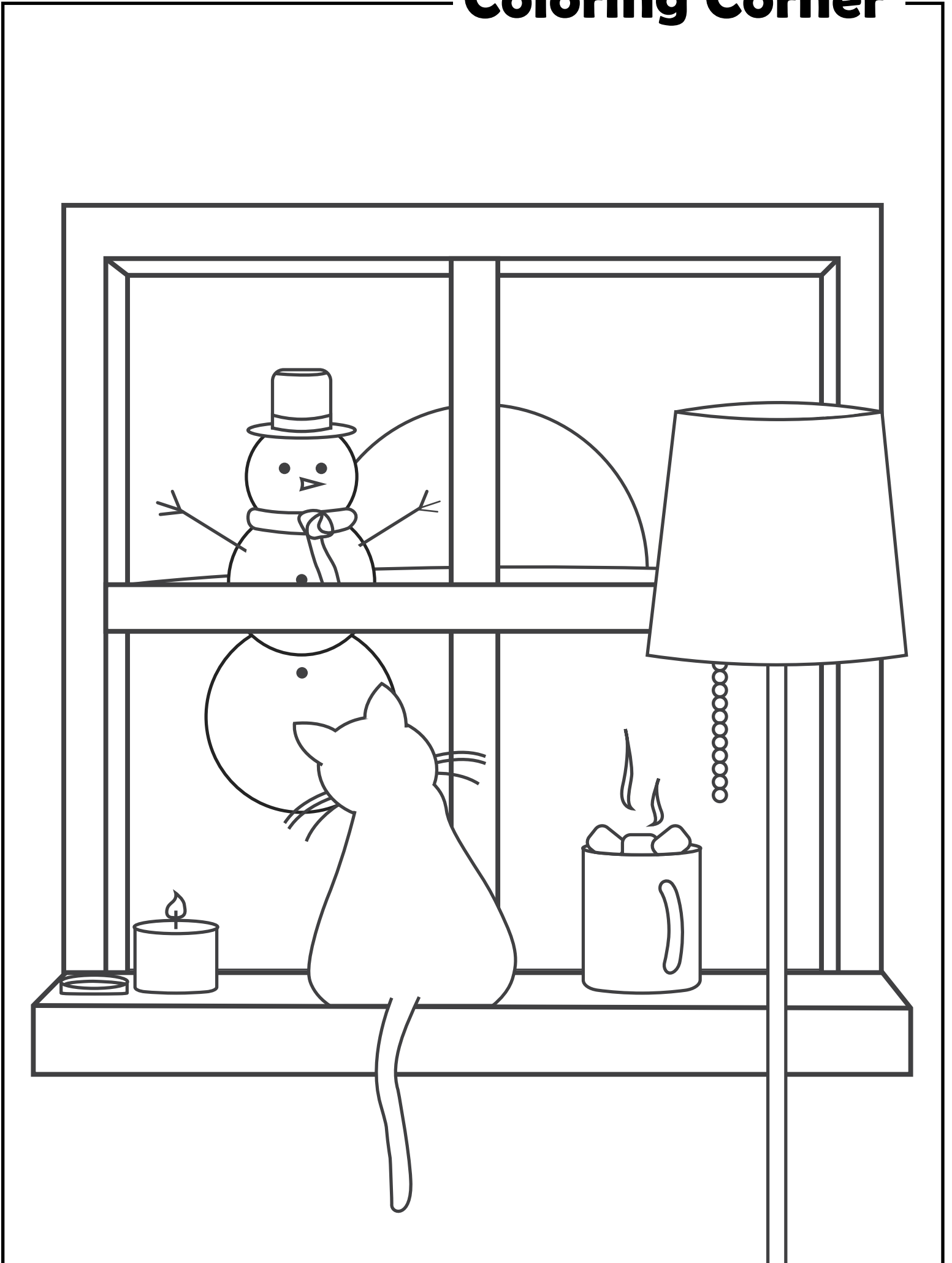
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