

Moda Wellbeing Newsletter

Seasonal recipes, resources and tips to build
Happier, healthier, workplaces



Mindset Matters

Embracing Social Balance

The holidays bring plenty of opportunities to gather, celebrate, and connect—but they can also come with crowded calendars, endless invitations, and a constant stream of digital noise. If we're not intentional, the season of connection can leave us feeling more drained than fulfilled. Consider these tips as we head into the holiday season, and beyond:

Balance Connection with Recharge Time

While social bonds are a powerful buffer against stress, downtime is equally important. If your work calendar is clear or obligations have slowed, resist the urge to fill every open space. Give yourself permission to rest, reflect, or enjoy a quiet night in—it's this balance that makes the holidays feel meaningful rather than overwhelming.

Set Boundaries

Choose the gatherings that bring you joy and allow yourself to say *no* to the rest. **Protecting your time** helps you show up fully where it matters most. [Tips to help you say no](#)

Unplug to Reconnect

[Research](#) shows that electronic connections often lack the depth, immediacy, and emotional richness of in-person connection. Without intentional boundaries, we risk exchanging quality for quantity—and miss out on the benefits of true presence. Simple shifts—like a phone-free meal, unplugged holiday lights walk, or a one-day digital detox—create space for deeper conversations and lasting memories.



Health Coaching Hub

Indoor Physical Activity During Cold Months

Find some exciting tips and benefits to working out indoors when the weather is either wet, icy, or you just want to stay indoors with those loved ones.

Workouts indoors during the cooler months offers numerous benefits that can help you stay consistent and motivated with your fitness routine. One of the primary advantages is protection from harsh weather conditions like snow, ice, and freezing temperatures, which can pose safety risks and make outdoor workouts less enjoyable. Exercising indoors provides a controlled environment where you can focus solely on your workout without worrying about slipping or bundling up for the cold.

Additionally, indoor workouts allow for greater flexibility and convenience. You can exercise at any time of day regardless of the weather, making it easier to stick to your schedule. Equipping your indoor home gym or joining an indoor facility with a variety of equipment enables you to diversify your routine—whether it's weightlifting or cardio - without weather constraints. This variety can keep your workouts interesting and help prevent plateaus.

Another benefit is the climate-controlled environment, which ensures comfort and optimal performance. You can warm up quickly and stay comfortable throughout your session. This mental boost helps sustain motivation, especially during the darker, colder months when outdoor activity might seem less appealing.

Moreover, working out indoors can also reduce the risk of injury and exposure to outdoor pollutants or allergens. Finally, engaging in indoor exercise routines can foster social interaction if you join a gym or fitness class, which can further motivate you to stay committed to your fitness goals during the winter months.

Stay in to work out with these home gym tips!

- Dumbbells for strength training and enhancing almost any move. Have a range of weights to fit a range of exercises.
- Yoga mat – Perfect padding for your sun salutations and post-workout stretch. Also consider other yoga tools, like blocks and straps.
- Resistance bands – Wear these bands around your ankles or calves to make squats, bridges, and walks more challenging. Try 2-4 different strengths.
- TRX Bands – Anchor these bands to a wall or door and use them to improve posture, build muscle and strengthen your core.
- Foam roller – Rolling offers a host of benefits, from breaking knots to improving muscle health to an increasing range of motion.
- Kettle bells – Great for deadlifts, swings, and other dynamic strength exercises. Try the adjustable version that allows for a variety of weights.

For Moda Health Members

Eligible Moda Health members have access to one-on-one condition management health coaching at no cost. To enroll or be contacted by a health coach to learn more, please fill out this form: [Disease Management Health Coaching Interest Form](#).

Health coaching helps you identify realistic, impactful actions that support your health and wellbeing – like those listed above – and make a plan to turn goals into reality. Deciding you want to drink more water, eat more fruits and veggies, or spend more time outside is one thing, but making it happen is another. That's where health coaching comes in: we help you put the pieces together, anticipate barriers, brainstorm solutions, and guide you toward achieving your goals, so you don't just survive this season, you thrive!

Contact us for more information! Call 800-913-4957 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific time, or email healthcoachteam@modahealth.com.

Preventative Care Hub

Keep Your Heart Healthy This Holiday Season

The holiday season is filled with preparations, time with loved ones, and delicious meals. Amid all the joy, don't forget to take care of your heart — the powerhouse that keeps your body going and keeps you energized. Do these 3 things to support your heart this season:

Blood Pressure Check: Regular monitoring helps detect issues early and prevent complications. See the chart below to know what the blood pressure values mean:

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (top number)	and/or	Diastolic mm Hg (bottom number)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less than 80
Hypertension Stage 1 (High blood pressure)	130-139	or	80-89
Hypertension Stage 2 (High blood pressure)	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (call 911)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

If it's been a while or your blood pressure has increased, schedule a check-in with your provider.

Exercise: Physical activity strengthens your heart, lowers blood pressure, improves circulation, and boosts your mood. Refer to the previous page for some tips or try this [10-minute at home workout](#) from American Heart Association.

Did you know? Many health insurance plans offer discounted gym memberships, be sure to call your plan's customer service or look in your member portal!

Diet: A heart-healthy diet helps manage cholesterol, blood pressure, and weight.

- Balance holiday treats with protein and fiber-rich meals. Great seasonal ingredients include squash, beans, brussels sprouts, nuts, green beans, and apples.
- Try to limit saturated fats. Turkey is a great lean protein choice.

Need inspiration? Check out these heart-friendly recipes: [Recipes | American Heart Association Recipes](#)

Medication: If you have been prescribed a heart medication, taking it as directed by your provider can help prevent heart attacks, strokes, and other complications. When you miss doses, your medicine might not work as well. This could mean more doctor visits, more bloodwork, or more medications.

If you're traveling this holiday season and take heart medications like statins or blood pressure meds, make sure to refill them about a week before traveling or long weekends. Only pack enough medication to cover your trip, plus one or two extra days, in case you run into unexpected travel delays.

Want to reduce the amount of time you spend at the pharmacy every year? Ask your pharmacy about 90-day supply or mail-order delivery options.

Did you know? Some medications may interact with over-the-counter cold remedies, supplements or alcohol. Always check with your pharmacist or provider to make sure that you can take these with your prescribed medication(s) safely.

Remember, no matter where you are at, you can do things to support your heart, and Moda is here if you need coaching, resources, or have any questions about your plan or benefits.

Festive Bites: Wild Rice Pilaf

Serving size: 4 people Total time: 1 hr 10 min

Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups wild rice blend
- 1 small leek
- 1 bell pepper- diced
- 1 carrot- grated
- 1/3 cup white wine
- ½ dried cranberries, and 1/3 cup for garnish
- 3 cups low sodium vegetable stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 1 sprig sage
- 8 sprigs fresh thyme
- 3 sprigs fresh oregano
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- 1 splash water (or 2tsp olive oil)

Recipe source: [Wild Rice Pilaf -Veggie Society](#)



Instructions:

Sauté Leek

- Cook chopped leek in water or olive oil with salt until soft.

Add Herbs & Carrot

- Stir in grated carrot, thyme, oregano, sage, rosemary, bay leaves, red pepper flakes. Add rice and toast briefly.

Add Veggies & Cranberries

- Mix in bell pepper and cranberries. Pour in wine, reduce, then add stock and salt.

Simmer

- Cover and cook on low for 50 min. Let sit off heat for 10–15 min.

Finish

- Remove bay leaves/herb stems. Fluff rice, garnish with cranberries and herbs. Serve warm or cold.

Beyond the Bite: Be Safe, Not Sorry!

Eating leftovers provides a quick and convenient meal option, saves money, and reduces food waste. Whether you enjoy leftovers after a holiday meal or eat leftovers from last night's dinner, there are important food safety rules to follow. If leftovers are not stored and handled properly, they can cause food borne illness. Here are some food tips to help safely consume and enjoy delicious leftovers.



- Move leftovers into fridge or freezer within two hours of cooking to prevent bacteria growth.
- Store leftovers in smaller shallow containers to help it cool more quickly.
- Remove stuffing out of turkey before storing it in fridge or freezer.
- Consume refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days.
- Consider freezing leftovers in single serving portions for quick meals and easier defrosting and reheating.
- Reheat leftovers to an internal temperature of at least 165°F.

Additional resources: [Holiday Food Safety: From Planning to Leftovers](#), [5 Things to Do With Thanksgiving Leftovers](#)

Let's Learn! Resource Spotlight

The Heart Health Challenge

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., according to the American Heart Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Fortunately, there are many healthy behaviors and lifestyle choices that people can engage in to help support a healthy heart.

For this 10-day challenge, the heart-healthy behaviors you will be tracking include:

1. Add a vegetable or fruit to your meal or for snack (leafy green vegetables, berries, tomatoes)
2. Include foods with healthy fats into your diet (avocado, fatty fish, walnuts, olive oil)
3. Exercise (walking, strength training, swimming, biking, etc.) each day for 30 minutes
4. Practice a stress management strategy (meditation, gratitude, self-care, breathing exercises)
5. Take any prescribed medications daily for healthy heart and blood vessels (including blood pressure, statin medication, or other).

Instructions:
In the heart tracking sheet below, put an "X" for each behavior that you complete (limit one "X" per behavior per day). Each "X" is considered one point. The goal is to try to get as many points as you can throughout the next 10 days.

Vegetable or fruit	Healthy fats
Exercise	Stress Management
Blood pressure check	Daily Medication Tracker
Refill medications	

Sources:
- www.cdc.gov/nchs/heartdisease/leading-causes-of-death.htm
- www.heart.org/en/about-us/heart-and-stroke-association-statistics
- www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/how-to-help-prevent-heart-disease-at-any-age

Access free health coaching
As a Moda Health member, you have access to free, confidential health coaching to help support you and your health goals. To learn more, visit modahealth.com/health-coaching or email healthcoach@modahealth.com.

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HEALTH

Moda Health Monthly Mini Challenges

Mini Challenges are a great way to encourage a healthier way of living! They're designed to create lasting change through small, simple steps, while also providing a fun activity that fosters friendly competition, teambuilding, and a supportive workplace culture.

- **NEW Heart Health Challenge:** In this challenge take simple steps to support your heart. Each day, focus on eating a fruit or vegetable, including healthy fats like avocado, or olive oil, getting 30 minutes of exercise, practicing stress management, and taking prescribed medications. Track your progress by marking an "X" for each healthy habit you complete and see how many points you can earn by the end of the challenge. [Click here](#) to access the challenge. Learn more about heart health on page 3!
- **Burning Bright Without Burning Out Challenge:** This challenge encourages you to find balance between social connections and personal downtime. Over 10 days, choose two or three self-care activities to focus on such as relaxing hobbies, gratitude practices, or simplifying your schedule. Each day you complete an activity, color in a section of the flame to track your progress and remind yourself to recharge and keep your inner light shining. [Click here](#) to access the challenge.

November is National Diabetes Month

November is National Diabetes Month, a time to learn about the impact of diabetes and the steps we can take to prevent or manage it. Approximately, more than 1 in 10 Americans live with diabetes, and many more are at risk without realizing it. The good news is that small, consistent lifestyle habits can make a big difference.

[Type 2 diabetes](#), also known as adult-onset diabetes is a chronic condition where the body does not use insulin effectively or does not produce enough insulin. Insulin is a hormone that helps glucose (sugar) from food to enter cells for energy. Over time, high blood sugar levels in type 2 diabetes can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves, and heart.

Type 2 diabetes is largely influenced by habits such as nutrition, activity level, and stress management. Focus on eating a variety of [whole foods](#), such as fruits, vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains and limiting sugary drinks and highly processed foods.

Movement is another powerful tool for prevention. Strive for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week such as walking, cycling or swimming and add short bouts of movement throughout the day. Even a brisk 10-minute walk after meals to help your body use insulin more effectively and support stable blood sugar levels.

Stress management is another key factor in prevention. Chronic stress can increase blood sugar levels and make it harder for the body to regulate insulin. Incorporate strategies such as mindfulness meditation, deep breathing exercises, yoga, or simply taking time each day to relax and recharge.

It's also important to know your numbers. Schedule a wellness visit and ask about your A1C, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Early detection and lifestyle changes can go a long way towards preventing complications.