

What your body needs to succeed

Discover the art of nurturing your mind, body, and soul. Hone the skill of setting boundaries and prioritizing self-care, uncover the revitalizing advantages of active recovery, and tap into nature's healing essence with herbs for an added boost. Read below for insights on fostering a healthier, more balanced lifestyle.

Make yourself a priority

Learn to say no

Always saying yes can lead to feeling stressed and overwhelmed.

Taking on more than you can handle will cause you to be spread too thin. You won't be at your best for yourself or others. You have limited time and energy, and if you use all of yours for other people, it could lead to burnout.

Be aware of why

Note what might be keeping you from saying no.

You have fear of missing out (FOMO). You'll feel guilty. You are worried about the response. Ask yourself some questions. Do I have the time and energy to do this? Do I want to do this? Separate what is being asked from who is asking. You are saying no to the request, not the person. Balance your willingness to help others with a willingness to help yourself.

Learn to say no

We are all entitled to set healthy boundaries to find balance.

There is no need to feel bad, guilty or defensive. The key is finding a way to say no that feels natural to you. If there's a situation or a person you're apprehensive about facing, role play saying no with a trusted friend or family member. Communicate clearly and be direct. It's OK to say, "I am sorry. I cannot help you because (list your reason)."

Make yourself a priority

It's helpful to make a list of your tasks for the day and prioritize them.

If someone asks you for help, look at your list before answering. Do you have time to squeeze another person's tasks onto your list? The list will help you spell out your needs and limitations. Saying no lets you accomplish your own goals.

Are you a people pleaser? Do you...

- Go out with coworkers because everyone else is going?
- Constantly do unreturned favours for friends or family, derailing your daily tasks?
- Eat unwanted foods because a family member made it "especially for you?"

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may have trouble saying no.

Remember that sometimes saying no to others means saying yes to yourself.



Saying no is a form of self-care

This can help prevent you from feeling overextended and exhausted.¹

Setting healthy boundaries can benefit your mental well-being. It will also help you feel self-assured and empowered.

¹<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-matters-from-menninger/202111/the-power-of-saying-no>



Feel better faster with active recovery

Congratulations! You did it.
Now it's time to treat your hard-earned aches and pains.

On a quest to increase your physical fitness?

Maybe it's for sport, a physical challenge or keeping up with friends and family. Maybe you are working toward your own strength and endurance goals. Reaching your personal best and pushing yourself beyond your limitations are admirable feats.

But what's next? For most people, it is a couple of days of muscle soreness. There could be fatigue and even difficulty moving about. Many of us want to throw in the towel and retire to the sofa until we're better. But you can make your recovery easier.

Trainers and healthcare professionals talk about "rest days" and "recovery days," but what's the difference?

Doesn't rest lead to recovery? Yes and no.

What's a rest day?

Resting your body after a workout is as important as the workout itself. The goal of a rest day is to give your body a break from your regular hard workout schedule. During exercise, your body endures stress. Rest days allow your muscles and tissues to recover and repair. They also let your mind relax. Rest days enable your body and mind to recover by replenishing glycogen or energy stored in your muscles and liver.² A rest day is not about being completely free from movement. Take a walk, do some gentle yoga or take a leisurely swim.

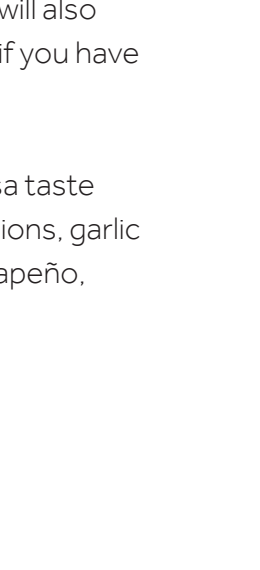
Rest is about spacing out demanding physical activity to reduce fatigue and make your exercise routine more effective.

Consider active recovery³

Active recovery helps you feel refreshed and restored. The goal is to balance the intensity of your workouts. Through low-impact, low-stress activities, you can increase blood flow to your muscles and connective tissue. This will help clear out soreness caused by metabolic byproducts like lactic acid and speed your recovery. Consider it a boosted rest day.

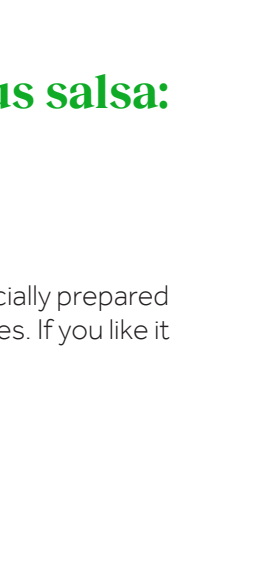
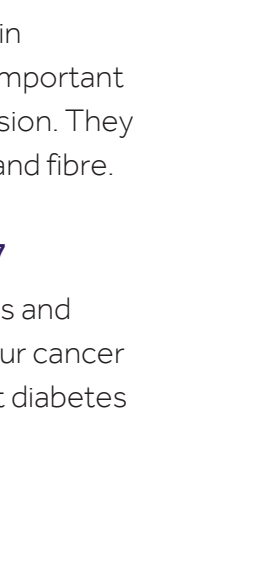
These active recovery methods may help you avoid burnout and injury from overtraining:

- Walking—out in nature or on a treadmill
- Cycling, rowing, or elliptical—warm up, find your pace and cool down
- Yoga—for strength, balance and flexibility
- Body-weight exercises—squats, lunges, planks and more
- Swimming or aqua workout—light resistance plus cardio
- Stretching—with or without resistance bands



Recovery treatments to feel better

- Foam roller—relieves aches and increases blood flow
- Massage therapy—reduces muscle tightness and assists with circulation
- Sauna or steam room, hot tub or spa—soothes aches and pains and increases heart rate
- Compression clothing—promotes blood flow
- Cryotherapy—a minute or two in a cold pool, bath or shower may help reduce pain
- Percussion therapy—otherwise known as a massage gun



As always, before you start any new exercise routine, talk to a doctor to make sure it's safe for you.

Whichever methods of recovery are right for you, the goal is to feel good and be the healthiest, injury-free version of you.

¹<https://www.runnottawa.ca/rest-done-right>

²<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29742750/>



Grow your own garden of health

When it comes to flavor, fruits and vegetables coming straight from the garden are the best.

Gardening provides the freshest produce you'll eat. Plus, you'll feel (and taste) a sense of accomplishment.

Planting a recipe-specific garden—like a salsa garden—is an easy and fun way to get started. Each ingredient can be grown in its own container on a windowsill, balcony or patio. They will also thrive planted together in a raised bed if you have the room.

Plant what you think will make your salsa taste best. Start with tomatoes, peppers, onions, garlic and cilantro. If you like it spicy, add a jalapeño. Anaheim or poblano chili pepper plant.

Consider the healthy benefits your salsa garden will bring:

Healthy heart⁴
Cilantro is rich in natural antioxidants called flavonoids, which are good for your heart.

Visual health⁵
Red bell peppers contain anthocyanins that are important for maintaining good vision. They also contain vitamin C and fibre.

Manage cholesterol⁶
Raw tomatoes are rich in lycopene, which can help lower your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Cancer protection⁷
The flavonoids in onions and garlic can help lower your cancer risk and protect against diabetes and heart disease.

Enjoy your homegrown veggies with this delicious salsa:



Vegetable salsa

With zero fat and much lower sodium than commercially prepared salsa, this is a great way to get kids to eat their veggies. If you like it spicier, add more jalapeño to your taste.
Makes 16 servings | Prep: 30 min

- Ingredients**
- 1 cup diced zucchini
 - 1 cup chopped red onion
 - 2 red bell peppers, seeded and diced (about 2 cups)
 - 2 green bell peppers, seeded and diced (about 2 cups)
 - 4 tomatoes, diced (about 2 cups)
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
 - 1 tsp ground black pepper
 - 1/2 cup lime juice
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 Tbsp finely chopped jalapeño (optional)

Preparation
Wash vegetables and prepare as directed. In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients. Toss gently to mix. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes prior to serving to allow the flavors to blend.

Nutrition information | Serving size: 1/2 cup

Calories: 16 | Total fat: 0 g | Saturated fat: 0 g | Sodium: 19 mg | Cholesterol: 0 mg
Total carbs: 4 g | Fiber: 1 g | Sugars: 2 g | Protein: 1 g | Potassium: 108 mg

⁴<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7211351/>

⁵<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17617941/>

⁷<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2017/06/red-onions-pack-cancer-fighting-punch-study-reveals/>

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