

# FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

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## In this issue:

- The Power of Positive Thinking
- October is Breast Cancer Awareness
- How to Keep You Immune System Healthy
- October Birth Flowers
- Apple Cinnamon Baked Oatmeal Recipe
- 9 Tips for a Long-Lasting Jack-O'-Lanterns

## The Power of Positive Thinking

Source: [Hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-power-of-positive-thinking](https://hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-power-of-positive-thinking)

Here's heartwarming news: People with a family history of heart disease who also had a positive outlook were one-third less likely to have a heart attack or other cardiovascular event within five to twenty-five years than those with a more negative outlook.

That's the finding from John Hopkins expert, Lisa R. Yanek, M.P.H., and her colleagues. The finding held even in people with family history who had the most risk factors for coronary artery disease, and positive people from the general population were 13 percent less likely than their negative counterparts to have a heart attack or other coronary event.

Yanek and her team determined "positive" versus "negative" outlook using a survey tool that assesses a person's cheerfulness, energy level, anxiety levels and satisfaction with health and overall life. But you don't need a survey to assess your own positivity, says Yanek, "I think people know how they are."

### Hope and Your Heart

The mechanism for the connection between health and positivity remains murky, but researchers suspect that people who are more positive may be better protected against the inflammatory damage of stress. Another possibility is that hope and positivity help people make better health and life decisions and focus more on long-term goals. Studies also find that negative emotions can weaken immune response.

What is clear, however, is that there is definitely a strong link between "positivity" and health. Additional studies have found that a positive attitude improves outcomes and life satisfaction across a spectrum of conditions—including traumatic brain injury, stroke and brain tumors.

### Boost Your Bright Side

A positive personality is something we're born with and not something we can inherently change. Yanek says, there are steps you can take to improve your outlook and reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

### Simply Smile More

A University of Kansas study found that smiling—even fake smiling—reduces heart rate and blood pressure during stressful situations. So try a few minutes of YouTube humor therapy when you're stomping your feet waiting in line or fuming over a work or family situation. It's difficult not to smile while watching a favorite funny video.

### Practice Reframing

Instead of stressing about a traffic jam, appreciate the fact that you can afford a car and get to spend a few extra minutes listening to music or the news, accepting that there is absolutely nothing you can do about the traffic.

### Build Resiliency

Resiliency is the ability to adapt to stressful and/or negative situations and losses. Experts recommend these key ways to build yours:

- Maintain good relationships with family and friends.
- Accept that change is part of life.
- Take action on problems rather than just hoping they disappear or waiting for them to resolve themselves.



**October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.**

Breast Cancer awareness is important, but so is breath health awareness.

**Download free ebook: Breast Problems.**

<https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-cancer-awareness-month>



## How to Keep Your Immune System Healthy

Source: eatright.org/health

Reviewed by Esther Ellis, MS, RDN, LDn

Published October 23, 2018

Reviewed March 2020

Although you may not be able to fully prevent an illness this season, a healthy immune system is one way to give your body extra protection. Focusing on nutrient-rich foods and healthy lifestyle behaviors can help you and your family stay a step ahead.

### Immune-Supporting Nutrients

The following nutrients play a role in the immune system and can be found in a variety of foods:

- **Beta Carotene** is found in plant foods, such as sweet potatoes, spinach, carrots, mango, broccoli and tomatoes.
- **Vitamin C**-rich foods include citrus fruits, berries, melons, tomatoes, bell peppers and broccoli.
- **Vitamin D** is found in fatty fish and eggs. Also, milk and 100% juices that are fortified with vitamin D.
- **Zinc** tends to be better absorbed from animal sources such as beef and seafood, but also is in vegetarian sources such as wheat germ, beans, nuts and tofu.
- **Probiotics** are “good” bacteria that promote health. They can be found in cultured dairy products such as yogurt and fermented foods such as kimchi.
- **Protein** comes from both animal and plant-based sources, such as milk, yogurt, eggs, beef, chicken, seafood, nuts, seeds, beans and lentils.

### Focus on Balance

To help keep your immune system healthy all year long, focus on a balanced eating plan, adequate sleep and stress management.

Aim for five to seven servings of vegetables and fruits daily to get vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that may support immune health.

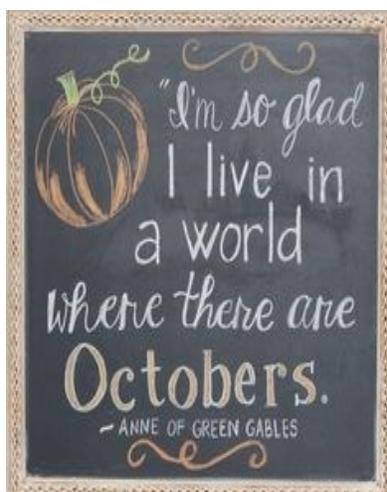
Good hygiene and hand-washing help prevent the spread of germs. Remember to wash produce before eating or using in recipes. Clean glasses, forks, spoons and other utensils to reduce the spread and growth of bacteria.

Find healthy and appropriate ways to cope with stress, such as meditation, listening to music or writing. Physical activity is also a great way to help manage stress and may help reduce the risk of some chronic diseases that could weaken your immune system further.

Lack of sleep contributes to a variety of health concerns, such as a weakened immune system. Seven to nine hours are recommended each day for adults, and children need eight to fourteen hours, depending on their age.



Did you know that **October Birth Flowers** are the cosmos and the calendula/marigold? Cosmos is a symbol of joy in life, love and of peace. The calendula represents winning grace, grief or chagrin in the language of flowers.



Source—The Old Farmers Almanac





### Apple Cinnamon Baked Oatmeal Recipe

Source: [eatright.org](http://eatright.org)  
 Review by Taylor Wolfram, MS, RDN, LDN  
 Published January 08, 2018  
 Reviewed April 2020

This make-ahead dish is handy to heat up and have for a quick healthy breakfast or snack. You can add a touch more brown sugar if you like it sweeter and a splash of milk for more creaminess.

#### Ingredients

- 1<sup>1/2</sup> cups fat-free milk or soy milk
- <sup>1/2</sup> cup packed brown sugar
- <sup>1/2</sup> cup egg substitute or egg whites
- 1 tablespoon melted trans-fat-free margarine
- <sup>1/2</sup> teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups rolled oats (not instant)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1<sup>1/2</sup> cups chopped apples

#### Directions

Before you begin: Wash your hands.

1. Preheat oven to 350° F (176°).
2. In a small bowl mix the milk, brown sugar, egg substitute/whites, margarine and cinnamon.
3. In a large bowl combine the oats and the baking powder.
4. Pour the wet mixture into the bowl with the oats; add the apples and stir to combine.
5. Spoon the mixture into an 8-by-8-inch pan coated with cooking spray and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, until the top is firm and a toothpick comes out clean in the center.

#### Nutrition Information

Serving size: 1 square, serves 9  
 Calories: 160; Total fat: 3g; Saturated fat: <1g; Sodium: 80mg; Total  
 Carbohydrate: 30g; Dietary Fiber: 3g; Sugars: 18g; Protein 4g; Vitamin A:  
 248 IU; Vitamin C: 1.5 mg; Calcium: 56mg.



*As we welcome October and the cooler air, we also say hello to pumpkins and pumpkin carving!*

#### 9 Tips for a Long-Lasting Jack-O'-Lanterns

1. **A stem is a lifeline**—the ideal pumpkin has a good length of firm stem that is still attached, and this should not be shriveled. It is still being nourished by this portion of the vine, making it less vulnerable to rotting than it's stemless counterparts.
2. **Blemishes are red flags**—Bruises, cuts and scars are stress indicators that may mean an early decline. For the longest possible life, your selection should have the least blemished skin.
3. **Go green**—An unripe fruit or vegetable lasts longer than a ripe one, so pass on the orange and go for the greenest one you can find, for a fresh look.
4. **Squeaky clean**—When you get home, wash the skin with an antibacterial dish detergent or hand soap and thoroughly dry it, to remove rot-inducing debris and bacteria.
5. **A back door instead of a lid**—instead of slicing off the top to reveal the “guts” inside, cut an opening in the back of your pumpkin. Remove the piece and notch a thumb-sized hole in the edge for easy grasping and convenient access to the cavity. By leaving the stem in place, nutrient feeding continues for the bulk of the vegetable.
6. **Simplify designs**—The techniques of thinning and removing skin, as well as making many intricate cuts, increase vulnerability to rotting. The first to go will often be the ones with the least holding them together.
7. **Freshen up with baking soda**—To absorb moisture and odors, place a cup of baking soda inside the clean cavity. For safety, remove it while the pumpkin is lit with a candle. You may leave it in if you're using battery-operated lighting.
8. **Elevate on a plate**—Instead of putting your Halloween masterpiece directly on the ground, put it on an old plate to prevent moisture absorption and insect burrowing.
9. **Let Jack sleep indoors**—To avoid exposure to excess moisture from morning dew and frost, bring your carved creation inside for the night. Keep it in a cool, dry location until you wish to display it outdoors again.



Source: [Gardenerspath.com](http://Gardenerspath.com)  
 Source: picture—[gardenerspath.com](http://gardenerspath.com)