



November 2017

Happy Thanksgiving

Health Benefits of Thankfulness

It's almost Thanksgiving, so it's a good time to pause for a moment to consider the importance and benefits of thankfulness, also called gratitude.

Research has shown that being thankful is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness, as well as better physical and mental health. The list of potential benefits is almost endless. Here are just a few of them.

It boosts mental health. Being constantly mindful of all the things you have to be thankful for is linked with a brighter outlook, a greater sense of positivity and higher life satisfaction.

It makes you a better friend to others. Gratitude can boost pro-social behaviors, such as helping other people who have problems or lending emotional support to another person.

It helps you sleep better. When people jotted down what they're grateful for before bedtime, they fell asleep faster and stayed asleep longer.

It can strengthen your relationship. Being thankful for the little things your partner does can positively benefit the relationship.

It benefits the heart. Appreciation & positive emotions are linked with positive changes in heart rate, which may help in treating high blood pressure and in reducing the risk of sudden death in patients with congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease.

It's been linked with a better immune system. Grateful people tend to be more optimistic, a characteristic that researchers say boosts the immune system by producing more immune-boosting blood cells.

It can help us better manage stress. Feelings of thankfulness have tremendous positive value in helping people cope with daily problems, especially stress.

Cultivating Thankfulness

People who have faced losses early in life tend to have higher levels of optimism, suggesting that adversity can promote personal growth over time. But you don't have to wait for a tragedy to grow your feelings of gratitude. You can start today. Here's how:

- **Keep a gratitude journal.** At least once a week write down all of the things you are thankful for.
- **Create a list of benefits in your life.** How much do you take these for granted? This can be a concrete visual way to maintain mindfulness of your gratitude.
- **Talk to yourself** in a creative, optimistic, & appreciate manner. Reflecting on things for which you're thankful or, if you're facing a challenging situation, think about how it can ultimately be beneficial. For instance, having to cope with difficult people in your job can improve your patience and understanding.
- **Reframe a situation** by looking at it with a different, more positive attitude. For example: Rather than seeing his 6-year-old daughter as cranky, irritable, and troublesome, a father might reach the conclusion that the youngster is tired and needs rest.

Not convinced these simple gratitude strategies can improve your overall health and well-being? There's one way to find out.....Try it out for yourself.

Word Window — Definition

Gratitude, from the Latin for *gratia*, which means grace or thankfulness.

The quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

"she expressed her gratitude to the committee for their support"

Synonyms: gratefulness, thankfulness, thanks, indebtedness.

Space Heater Safety Tips



Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires in the United States, causing more than 65,000 home fires each year. These fires result in hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property damage.

Portable electric space heaters can be a convenient source of supplemental heat for your home in cold weather. Unfortunately, they can pose significant fire and electric shock hazards if not used properly.

Safety should always be a top consideration when using space heaters. Here are some tips for keeping your home safe and warm when it's cold outside:

- Make sure your space heater label shows that it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Before using any space heater, read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels carefully.
- Inspect heaters for cracked or broken plugs or loose connections before each use. If frayed, worn or damaged, do not use the heater.
- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep, and don't let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Space heaters are only meant to provide supplemental heat and should never be used to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas and test them once a month.
- Proper placement is critical. Heaters must be kept at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including papers, clothing and rugs.
- Locate space heaters out of high traffic areas and doorways where they may pose a tripping hazard.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which could overheat and result in a fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet as the heater.
- Place space heaters on level, flat surfaces. Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture, or carpet, which can overheat and start a fire.



Butternut Squash with Pumpkin Seeds and Cranberries

Here's a delicious butternut squash recipe that's just right for a fall meal or to go with your Thanksgiving turkey. Total time to prepare: 15 minutes. Serves 4.

Ingredients:

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| ◆ 1 lb. butternut squash, cut into 1/2-inch dice | ◆ 1/8 tsp. kosher salt |
| ◆ 2 tsp. Dijon mustard | ◆ 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil |
| ◆ 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar | ◆ 1/3 cup pumpkin seeds, toasted |
| ◆ 2 Tbs. pomegranate juice or orange juice | ◆ 3 Tbs. dried cranberries |

Directions:

1. Steam the squash until tender, 3-5 minutes. Drain any water.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the mustard, vinegar, juice, salt, and oil.
3. Toss the squash in the bowl with the dressing.
4. Sprinkle with the pumpkin seeds and cranberries.



Nutrition Information: Per Serving (3/4 cup):

Calories: 190 ♦ Fat: 12 g ♦ Saturated Fat: 2 g ♦ Protein: 4 g ♦ Carbs: 9 g ♦ Fiber: 3 g ♦ Sodium: 50 mg

Fit Tip

Take the stairs. Several work-site studies have found that people who simply began using staircases (instead of elevators) improved their overall physical fitness by 10 to 15%. A person climbing stairs at a rate of two steps per second uses, on average, 18 calories per minute, or 360 calories in just 20 minutes.