

there's support in

# BlueShield



JULY 2015 WELLNESS NEWS • Volume 6 • Issue 7

## Stay Connected



Social isolation is linked to poorer health and increased risk of heart and Alzheimer's diseases. Research shows that a strong social network can help improve health outcomes and increases longevity. Those with social support are more likely to seek treatment, manage stress better, and have a stronger sense of self-worth.

Technology can both hinder and support social wellness. In some ways, we are less engaged as modern conveniences limit interactions, but social media also helps us remain connected to family and friends from afar. Quality time with others is important.

Try the following:

- Volunteer in your community
- Join a gym
- Take a class
- Evaluate your work-life balance
- Foster relationships with family and friends
- Join a local group that shares a similar interest or hobby
- Reconnect with old friends and make a point to stay in touch



## Targeting Ticks

The summer months are perfect for outdoor fun, but they also expose us to ticks and other insects. You can enjoy all that nature offers by understanding the risks, taking precautions, and knowing how to properly handle a tick.

- Clear your yard of fallen leaves. Trim grass and shrubs.
- Treat clothes and shoes with repellent. Wear long sleeves and pants when possible.
- When you come back inside, check your clothing, shoes, and hat for ticks. Place clothes in the dryer on high heat for an hour to kill any ticks you may have missed.
- Take a shower. Check your body for ticks, especially under arms, in and around the

ears, scalp, navel, groin, around your waist, and behind your knees.

- Check your children and pets, too.



### health tip

If you find an attached tick, remove it with tweezers as close to the skin as possible. Clean the area with alcohol or soap and water. Dispose of a live tick by placing it in a container, wrapping it tightly in tape or flushing it down the toilet. Watch for a rash (shape of a bull's-eye) or fever in the days following the bite. Contact your doctor right away if you develop these symptoms.

## Get Fit – Sneak in Fitness

One of the best ways to stay fit for life is to incorporate physical activity into your daily tasks. Here are some great ways to boost your physical activity:

- Garden
- Walk your dog
- Deep clean your home
- Wash the car
- Mow the grass
- Take the stairs

### health tip

Look at your day with an eye for wellness and you may notice opportunities to move more.

## Eat Fit – Healthy Eats while Vacationing

Whether you are planning a relaxing summer vacation or an adventurous getaway, eating right can be a challenge. When eating at restaurants, we are more likely to splurge.

Enjoy some special meals and treats while still making healthy choices:

- **Hydrate** – choose water and unsweetened beverages.
- **Plan** – research restaurants to find those with healthier options.
- **Grocery shop** – stock up on nutritious snacks.
- **Choose produce** – aim for at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.
- **Use apps** – smartphone applications put nutrition information at your fingertips.
- **Eat in** – if possible, try to eat at least one

meal and most snacks at the hotel or pack it to take along.

- **Restaurant requests** – ask for dressings and sauces on the side, stick to lean proteins, avoid fried foods, and make sure half of your plate is vegetables.
- **Pack for the road** – bring snacks like nuts, fresh fruit, granola bars, and hummus or nut butter packs with veggies.
- **Enjoy a treat** – if there's a higher calorie food you want, enjoy it. Just be sure to make healthier choices with your other meals and snacks. Find balance.

### health tip

Increase your physical activity on vacation by walking as often as possible!

## Live Fit – Food Safety Smarts

With picnics and barbecues in full swing, refresh your food safety knowledge to avoid food borne illness and contamination. Temperatures between 40° – 140° are where most bacteria are likely to grow. Cool foods below 40° and cook above 140°.

Follow these precautions:

- Clean produce – wash with water before cutting or eating.
- Travel smartly – use a cooler and ice when transporting food.
- Wash your hands – before and after handling/preparing food and before eating.
- Be cautious with raw meat – clean equipment as well as your hands.
- Serve in smaller bowls – keep extra food cold and replenish the bowl as needed.
- Keep foods at appropriate temperatures – keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Cook thoroughly – cook meat to the right temperature. For details, visit [foodsafety.gov](http://foodsafety.gov).
- Two-hour limit – food should not sit out longer than two hours; if the outside temperature is 90° or above, reduce the time to one hour.
- Thaw correctly – thaw in the refrigerator on a plate, in a bowl of cold water, or in the microwave.

### health tip

Visit [fda.gov](http://fda.gov) for more food safety guidelines.

## Mozzarella, Basil, and Zucchini Frittata



### Ingredients (4 servings):

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1-1/2 cups sliced red onion
- 1-1/2 cups chopped zucchini
- 7 large eggs, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 2/3 cup pearl-size mozzarella balls (4 ounces)
- 3 tablespoons chopped, soft, sun-dried tomatoes
- 1/4 cup sliced fresh basil

### Preparation:

Preheat the broiler.

Heat the oil in a large broiler-safe nonstick or cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and zucchini and cook, stirring frequently, until soft.

Whisk the eggs, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Pour the eggs over the vegetables in the pan. Cook, lifting the edges to allow uncooked egg from the middle to flow underneath, until nearly set, about two minutes.

Arrange the mozzarella and sun-dried tomatoes on top and place the skillet under the broiler until slightly browned. Let stand for three minutes.

Top with the fresh basil, then cut into four slices and enjoy.

### Nutrition information per serving:

292 calories, 21 g fat, 18 g protein, 8 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber

(Source: [eatingwell.com](http://eatingwell.com))

