



December 2016

*It's better to give,
for real!*



Being generous and fair may help to keep your stress level in check.

Dr. Seuss was on to something. In *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*, the Grinch starts out stingy and stressed, and then he turns it all around, for the good of Whoville and his own happiness. There's a lot of truth to that storyline. Being fair and generous — whether with money or emotions — feels good, while being stingy doesn't. It's no surprise that being on the receiving end of unfairness is stressful, but there's an emotional cost to being on the stingy and withholding end, too. In financial-bargaining experiments, people who made fair offers were observed to feel pleasure, whereas those who made excessively low offers felt more stress and guilt. Likewise, couples who are generous with each other—showing kindness, affection, respect and a willingness to forgive faults — tend to be happier and remain together. The lesson here: We're wired for empathy and cooperation. Life is meant to be a flow of give and take. If you sometimes drive too hard a bargain, see how it feels to take a more giving approach.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors



It's not too late to get that flu shot!

But don't wait another day. Peak flu season is upon us.

If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet, don't worry — it's not too late. Since there are still a few months left in the flu season, a "better late than never" approach is especially true in this case. Since flu season tends to peak in January or February, don't wait another day to protect yourself. It takes about two weeks for the vaccine's protective benefits to kick in. Now that flu shots are covered under the Affordable Care Act, there's no reason to put it off. However, if you're still not convinced getting the vaccine is worth your time, here's a final fact you should know: For people with a history of cardiovascular incidents, a flu shot cuts the risk of heart attack or stroke in half. That's no shot in the dark!

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

Start your day with the stork pose to help you

find balance during the holidays.

Yoga's stork pose helps you focus the mind and calm the body.



What better way to center yourself during this busy time than with a yoga pose that promotes strength and balance? Yoga's stork pose helps you focus the mind and calm the body. It's just what you need when your days are filled with shopping, cleaning, cooking, travel and social events. Ready to be flooded with zen? Simply stand tall and focus your gaze at a point in front of you. Gently lift one foot and try to stand on the opposite leg for as long as you can. If you falter, just put both feet back on the ground and steady yourself; then try again. Keep your gaze on that focal point, breathing gently and evenly. If you'd like more of a challenge, rotate your raised ankle and draw circles in the air with your foot. Return your foot to the ground and repeat on the other side. You can even practice stork pose while standing in line at the bank or grocery store. It will help you float through your errands gracefully.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

Healthy Recipe: Every Morning Oatmeal

Enjoy this morning breakfast from Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn Jr.'s book Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease.

Looking for a fast and filling breakfast that isn't loaded with sugar? Warm up with a satisfying bowl of our Every Morning Oatmeal. Unlike most instant breakfast cereals, our recipe is sweetened without sugar. Instead, we flavor our dish with raisins, bananas and apple juice. Not only does it put you on your way to getting your daily produce requirements, it's an easy way to get a healthy dose of cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber, too.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors



Yield: 1 serving

Ingredients:

½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
¼ cup raisins
Dash of cinnamon
Dash of nutmeg
1 medium banana
⅔ cup apple juice

Instructions:

1. Mix oatmeal, raisins, cinnamon and nutmeg in a bowl.
2. Slice banana on top.
3. Heat apple juice until warm (not hot), pour it over the oatmeal mixture, cover, and let sit for 20 minutes. Stir and eat!

**Note: the photo displayed is representational only and does not show this exact recipe.*