

# Berkshire Health Group

## WELLNESS CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

### Personalize your Plate

Written by Sarah Hawkins, Wellness RD

This year the theme for National Nutrition Month in March 2021 is “Personalize Your Plate” brought to you by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Celebrating whole foods, the nourishment they provide, and their therapeutic value every day – not just during one month of the year. This year’s theme brings awareness to the fact that we are all unique individuals with different food tolerances, preferences, and nutritional needs.

There is not, and should never be, just one diet for everyone. Personalizing your plate is about exploring your own nutritional individuality, learning about what foods fit into your lifestyle, and how the foods you choose can support your personal health journey. National Nutrition Month is a celebration of our nutritional uniqueness and diversity, this year it is about finding ways to expand our meal inventory to include variety, color, culture, and enjoyment. You are invited to explore how food makes you feel and then choose the foods that energize and inspire your mind and body. Here are a few insights and tips to help personalize your plate:

- Trial a food and mood journal for a few days or weeks. Taking note of the time of meals, as well as your mood before and after can give you insight as to how food makes you feel, and then you can adjust food choices to enhance your mood and overall wellness.



#### TAKE A PEEK AT WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Personalize your Plate Cont'd
- Spring Into Good Health Recipe
- Upcoming Wellness Initiatives and Your Wellness Benefits

- Explore the cuisine of a culture or country that you find interesting (maybe your own country of origin). Research the culture and try a recipe with a friend, family, or partner. Examples: Indian, Asian, Mexican, Thai, Italian (Mediterranean)
- Pick a new spice – maybe one from a country that you have been researching and find ways to incorporate that spice into a meal or a beverage. Spices provide unique flavors as well as powerful nutritional compounds. Example: Turmeric – in a rice (or cauliflower rice) stir fry or a golden milk latte.
- Choose produce by color and see how many different colors you can eat in a week or a day. Example: Purple/blues – purple cabbage, blueberries, Reds - Tomatoes, pomegranate, strawberries, White/tan- Onions, garlic, ginger, nuts, and seeds
- Create a recipe group (similar to a book club), pick a recipe or even a food, create a meal, then report back or have a discussion (video chat) to share your feedback and any substitutions etc.
- Add a splash of color and taste to your water bottle with pieces of fruit (orange, lemon, watermelon, berries) or vegetables (cucumber, ginger, mint)
- Try a new grain or seeds such as black or red rice, millet, faro, chia seeds, ground flax seeds, red, tan, or black quinoa.
- Create your own smoothie recipe or smoothie bowl, (acai) using fruits and vegetables and incorporate a protein source like chia seeds, flax meal, pumpkin seeds, nut butter, or yogurt.
- Create a theme dinner: Meatless Monday, Taco Tuesday, Wild West Wednesday, Thai Thursday, Fish Friday, Sweet potato Saturday, Savory/Spiced Sunday

Create a breadless sandwich: use blanched, collard greens or savoy cabbage, fill with quinoa, vegetables, avocado, tuna, curried chicken.

On the 10th of March we also recognize and celebrate that the Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RD or RDN) are the food and nutrition experts that can translate the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living. They can help support you on your nutrition journey to wellness and help personalize your plate. Talk to your doctor if you feel that you could benefit from a nutrition consult with an RDN.

Medical Nutrition Counseling Services provided by a Registered Dietitian are available with a physician referral on an outpatient basis within the BHS network. To schedule an appointment please call: (413) 447-3100 or email [Wellnessatwork@bhs.org](mailto:Wellnessatwork@bhs.org) Also, check out the “find an expert” page at <https://www.eatright.org/find-an-expert>





## *Strawberry Apple Chicken Salad*

A quick and tasty salad, filled with spring flavors!

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- Servings: 4 LARGE SALADS
- Ingredients
- 3 cups boneless skinless cooked chicken, chopped
- 6-8 cups baby spinach or baby kale/baby spinach mix
- 1 apple, thinly sliced (any yellow-red apple will do great)
- 1½ cups quartered strawberries
- ¼ cup chopped almond
- salt and pepper to taste

**Source:** <https://www.kimscravings.com/favorite-strawberry-apple-chicken-salad/>

### **FOR THE DRESSING:**

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons plain, nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1/2 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 2 teaspoons poppyseeds
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- Place all ingredients into a mason jar. Then, screw the lid on and shake until fully combined.

**Source:** <https://fitfoodiefinds.com/homemade-poppy-seed-dressing/>

If making salad ahead of time, toss the salad without the dressing, then add the dressing and toss immediately before serving OR you can serve the dressing on the side.



# Berkshire Health Group

## WELLNESS INITIATIVES AND BENEFITS

### *21 Day Healthy Lunch Challenge*

March 8th-April 5th



When it comes to lunchtime, many of us like to take advantage of the workplace cafeteria or grab a quick bite at a fast food restaurant, but packing your own lunch can actually help you save time, money and tons of extra calories and fat. In fact, making your own lunch every day can save you approximately \$2,500 a year! With so many benefits, there is no reason not to get in the habit of brown bagging your lunch each day, and we've got just the push you need with our 21-day challenge.

### *Teams of Two Challenge*

May- June

Even the most motivated people still need a little nudge in the right direction every now and then. Having a partner travel the road to healthy living can make success easier...and much more fun! Studies have shown that social interactions have an overwhelmingly positive effect on physical and emotional well-being and behaviors are influenced by the people surrounding an individual, which is why it's so important to associate with people whose values and habits support a healthy lifestyle.

Since healthy habits can be contagious, this challenge has participants use the power of partnership to take their health to the next level and compete against other teams of two.



# Wellness Incentive Programs

## One-On-One Wellness Coaching

Earn up to \$250



Get started on a healthier path for 2021! Work with a certified Wellness Coach to help you set personal goals and make positive changes in your life. You will meet with your coach 4 times within 3 months. Appointment dates and times will be scheduled between you and your coach during business hours. This is the best option for employees needing flexibility.

All participants need to complete a wellness check-in over the phone or biometric screening first.

## Diabetes Care Program

Earn up to \$360

This program is designed to reward you for managing your diabetes. If you are Diabetic, Pre-Diabetic or concerned about your blood sugar or increased A-1c levels, you are invited to participate in the program and below are the reasons why: Managing your diabetes helps to improve your health Managing your diabetes helps to reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke. Completing the program steps allows you to receive a gift card for \$180 (every 6 months) to help off-set the cost for your prescription co-pays. That's \$360 each year for taking good care of you. The program runs yearly, and you can join at any time.



## Take Advantage of Additional Wellness Benefits

Colonoscopy Incentive Program- Earn \$50

BCBS Fitness Reimbursement- Earn up to \$300

BCBS Weight Loss Reimbursement- Earn up to \$150

BHG 2021 Wellness Program Menu

**Visit [Berkshirehg.com](http://Berkshirehg.com) for more info**

For more information regarding any BHG Wellness Programs, please contact:  
Beth Piantoni, CPT, CHWC, BHG Wellness Coordinator,  
[epiantoni@bhs1.org](mailto:epiantoni@bhs1.org)  
413-445-9327



Stay connected and like  
Berkshire Health Group Wellness  
on Facebook