

PURSUIT

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Florida Blue 
BetterYou

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You



COVID-19 Has Redesigned Our Normal Life

Natural disaster survivors learn “normal life” is history. Recovery means building a new normal. And the year of COVID-19 requires the same of us. We still don’t know what that means, but we can make the most of every day we have. Here’s how to get started.

Grieve the life you had. COVID-19 meant giving up vacations, proms, graduations and weddings. Gathering with family and friends are few and far between. It’s natural to mourn those losses. At the same time, it’s healthy to:

- Acknowledge your grief and accept it.
- Stay in the present—yes there’s loss but you can feel safe in this moment.
- Allow others to experience loss in their own way because grief isn’t one-size-fits-all.

Accept that “normal” will be different and act to shape it. It’s up to you to find what will give your new normal meaning and purpose.

Practicing mindfulness is the path to meaning and purpose. Mindfulness means being in the moment without judgment. You achieve that by:

- Observing without reacting immediately.
- Paying attention to your senses.

- Being fully present in the experience.
- Focusing on one thing at a time.
- Accepting without trying to control.
- Starting with one or two small daily actions to do more mindfully and build from there.

Develop healthy coping strategies. You can focus on:

- Taking care of your body—meditate, exercise, eat healthy foods and get plenty of rest
- Unwinding through activities you enjoy like painting, hiking, journaling, yoga or reading

Develop an attitude of gratitude. Here are ways to do that:

- Keep a gratitude journal—write down three things that went well and why.
- Write a thank you note.
- Stay connected virtually.
- Pause, appreciate and savor small moments.
- Look for the humor in life.
- Think about the positive aspects of your life.

Working through the loss may not turn life back to normal. But it can be a path to making it good.

Source: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/); [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com/)

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Limiting Risk for Oral Cancer Will Protect Your Smile



At least one person in the United States died of oral cancer today. And yesterday. And the day before. And will die tomorrow. Of the 53,000 cases diagnosed each year, only 57% will survive five years.

Oral cancer includes cancers of the mouth, back of the throat and the lips. Early detection is a key

factor to survival. Symptoms of oral cancer include mouth sores that won't heal, pain that won't go away, white or red patches in your mouth, or a lump or swelling in your neck or cheek. You may have difficulty swallowing, chewing, moving your tongue or jaw. Or you may experience a constant earache or bad breath.

Males are twice as likely as women to develop oral cancer, as are people older than 45. Other risk factors include:

- Tobacco and/or alcohol use.
- HPV (the human papilloma-virus, which is lowering the average age of oral cancer).
- Sun exposure (lips).
- Radiation exposure.
- Previous head or facial cancers.

There are ways to decrease your risk of oral cancer. The first thing is to stop smoking or using nicotine products. Also, if you drink, do it in moderation. That means no more than two drinks a day for a man, one for a woman. Eat a balanced diet, and practice good oral hygiene. And, see your dentist and primary doctor on a regular basis.

Following these steps will lower your risk of oral cancer and help protect your smile.

Sources: oralcancerfoundation.org; nih.gov; medlineplus.gov

RECIPE: Lemon Dill Chicken (Serves 4)

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, (1-1¼ pounds)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, or canola oil, divided
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons flour
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, divided
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Directions

1. Season chicken breasts on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat 1½ teaspoons oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and sear until well browned on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to a plate and tent with foil.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Add the remaining 1½ teaspoons oil to the pan. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Whisk broth, flour, 1 tablespoon dill and lemon juice in a measuring cup and add to pan. Cook, whisking, until slightly thickened, about 3 minutes.
3. Return the chicken and any accumulated juices to the pan;



reduce heat to low and simmer until the chicken is cooked through, about 4 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a warmed platter. Season sauce with salt and pepper and spoon over the chicken. Garnish with the remaining 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill.

Recipe courtesy of EatingWell.com. For nutritional information, [click here](#).

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