

Moda Wellbeing Newsletter



Welcome to Moda Wellbeing, a newsletter designed to share seasonal recipes, resources, and tips to build happier, healthier workplaces.

Mindful Moment - Play the Stress Away

Have you ever wondered when the act of "playing" transitioned into something that you maybe felt self-conscious or embarrassed engaging in? While play may seem frivolous - or even possibly silly - it's actually vital to our well-being! UW Health psychologist Shilagh Mirgain, PhD, [explains](#) that play helps relieve stress, boosts creativity, improves our mood and outlook and keeps our minds sharp. It also improves our relationships with others. Read more about play in adulthood [here](#).

We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing. — George Bernard Shaw

Pause and reflect on the last time you played. Did you smile and laugh? Feel elated then relaxed? This is dopamine, serotonin, endorphins, and oxytocin at work, often referred to as our "happy hormones". While these produce positive emotions that we typically notice, our brain is benefitting subconsciously as well.

Play aids in brain fitness for numerous reasons- one being [neuroplasticity](#). When we engage in various experiences, the brain changes and adapts by strengthening or weakening pathways. Neuroplasticity enables us to learn and improve brain function.

Go ahead and laugh uncontrollably, dance, explore, learn, be silly and free-spirited. You might even start to notice those around you doing the same; enjoyment of life is contagious!

Additional Resources: [Burnout: How to Unlock The Stress Cycle - Zoom Using Play to Rewire and Improve Your Brain Playfulness- UMN Ext.](#)



Better Bites Fruit Kabobs

As we jump into the season of summer where gatherings, BBQ's, and picnics are regular occurrences, we tend to snack more often! Fruit kabobs are an excellent addition to every event as they are playful, fun, and healthy. Fruits are an excellent source of essential vitamins and minerals, and they are high in fiber and antioxidants. They also help reduce the risk of developing heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and inflammation. To read more on the benefits of fruits (and vegetables!) head [here!](#)

Fruit Kabobs

Author: Kristyn Merkle; Time: 20 minutes; Yield: 12 Kabobs

Ingredients

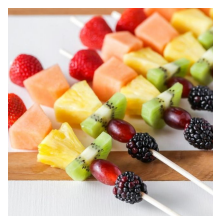
- 12 kabob sticks
- 1 cup strawberries, tops off
- 1 cup cantaloupe, cubed
- 1 cup pineapple, cubed
- ½ cup kiwi, peeled and sliced
- ½ cup red grapes
- ½ cup blackberries

Instructions

1. Prepare all fruit by washing and cutting or cubing.
2. Add fruit to the skewers in rainbow order, piercing through the sharp side of the skewer- strawberries, cantaloupe, pineapple, kiwis, red grapes, and blackberries.
3. Place on a platter and cover with saran wrap and refrigerate till ready to serve.

To view the full recipe and see additional ideas on fruit options and shapes, click [here](#).

For additional resources and to learn more about nutrition and mental health [check out this](#) Moda Health Workshop.



Let's Learn! Resource Spotlight



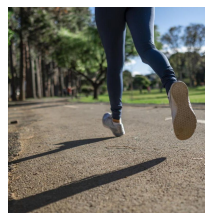
Moda Health Monthly Mini Challenges

Mini challenges are a great way to encourage a healthier way of living. They're designed to create lasting change through small, simple steps, while also providing a fun activity that fosters friendly competition, team building, and a supportive workplace culture.

Check out Moda Health's mini challenges for May and June:

- **Mindset BINGO! Challenge:** For this challenge, try to complete as many activities in a row on the Mindset Matters BINGO card as you can. Engaging in these healthy activities and behaviors is good for our mind and emotions. Complete five activities in a row to score a BINGO! Click [here](#) to download the mini challenge.
- **Step It Up Challenge:** In this 10-day challenge, the goal is to walk an average of 10,000 steps a day for 10 days. Use the step tracker to record your steps each day. Look for new and fun ways to get those steps in! Click [here](#) to download the mini challenge.

Additional Resources: Care Programs ([Moda Health](#)), Lifestyle Coaching ([Moda Health](#)), 12 Months of Better: Get Active ([Moda Health](#))



Moving Our Body, Changing Our Mindset

The month of May observes Mental Health Awareness month and National Physical Fitness and Sport month. It fits that these events are observed at the same time because they're interconnected. Physical activity positively impacts our mental health as well as our physical health! ([CDC](#))

Research shows people who are physically active have lower rates of anxiety and depression than those who are sedentary. We're still learning why, but the theory is physical activity releases chemicals that improve our mood. Physical activity also helps us better manage stress and improves memory and cognition. Find more information [here](#).

How much physical activity is needed? Find the CDC's recommendation [here](#). If the recommendations are overwhelming, break up the time up into smaller intervals. Even 10-15-minute intervals make a difference! If physical activity is new for you, start slow and build up slowly. Always check in with your doctor before starting a new exercise regimen.

When physical activity is fun and playful, you'll likely be more inclined to be active. Below are some ideas to make physical activity more fun!

- Attend a dance class or have your own dance party
- Try a new activity such as martial arts, barre, or yoga
- Invite a friend or family member
- Join a team sport like volleyball or pickleball
- Find a local park or trail and explore

Additional Resources: [Walk, Run, Dance, Play, What's Your move?](#)

The HealthyYou Activity Challenge

Aim to get about 30 minutes of activity each day for 28 days, and log your minutes on the HealthyYou portal. The challenge starts May 4. Register by May 11. [Click here](#) to register.

Community Connections Benefits of Volunteering



Volunteering not only makes a large impact on others, but did you know it also benefits your own health? Karli Stoudamire-Phillips, Moda Health Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Community Relations Lead says, "Volunteering quite simply is exhilarating! Volunteering gives you a sense of achievement and offers purpose. There is just something special about knowing that you are making a difference. It does not matter if it's big or small, it just matters that you are sharing of your most precious commodity, your time".

Research has shown it can improve your physical and mental health, provides a sense of purpose, teaches valuable skills, and nurtures new and existing relationships. To learn more about the benefits of volunteering, check out this [article](#).

Volunteer Opportunities to explore:

- neighborhood/beach clean up
- tree planting
- contact a local parks/rec facility to learn about volunteer opportunities
- Meals on Wheels
- local senior/retirement center
- pet shelter
- YMCA or Boys and Girls Club
- coaching sports leagues

Check out [this site](#) to find specific volunteer opportunities in your region.