

# LIVE WELL



# WORK WELL

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Presented by Holmes Murphy & Associates

## Monitor Physical Activity with a Fitness Tracker

**W**earable technology fitness trackers are becoming more popular as people make an effort to lead active lifestyles.

A fitness tracker is a wearable device that tracks physical activity throughout the day. Most models are worn around the wrist, and they range in appearance from a simple wristband to a stylish watch. Fitness trackers can count steps, monitor heart rate, add up calories and even track sleep. A number of options are available to accommodate a wide variety of budgets and fitness goals.

A fitness tracker can be especially useful for monitoring progress with a new exercise routine or weight loss program. Wearing a fitness tracker to monitor your physical activity can help motivate you to be more active and reach your fitness goals.

## Sleep and Your Health

Many people fall short of the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep per night. With busy schedules, it may be tempting to stay up late, but sleep is an important factor in overall health. A good night's sleep allows bodies to rest, repair cells and fight off illness.

The body undergoes certain changes during sleep. Heart rate and breathing slow, body temperature drops, and yet the brain remains incredibly active. In fact, sometimes the brain is even more active during REM sleep (a state of deep sleep usually associated with dreaming) than it is during the normal waking state.

Insufficient sleep can cause many negative side effects, including drowsiness, loss of productivity and impaired judgment. In addition, losing sleep can affect mood and increase the risk of accidents and injury. Long-term side effects of not getting enough sleep include weight gain, obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Your lifestyle, your schedule and stress can affect how much sleep you get each night. However, if you are having trouble sleeping, there are several steps you can take:

- Stick to a schedule to help regulate your body's internal clock.
- Exercise.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine.
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine, such as reading.
- Keep the TV out of your room as bright light can interfere with your natural sleep cycle.
- Have comfortable bedding and pillows.
- Keep your bedroom temperature between 60 and 67 degrees.

Getting enough sleep will boost your immune system and help you stay alert and productive throughout the day. With cold and flu season just around the corner, it's now more important than ever to make sleep a priority.

# Health Benefits of Oatmeal

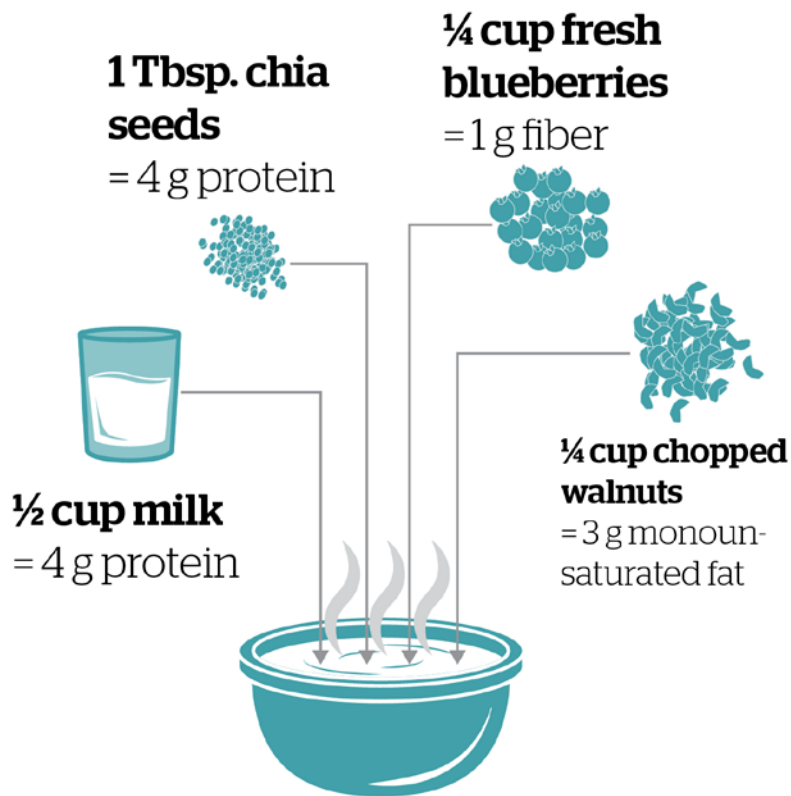
Oct. 29 is Oatmeal Day, and fall is the perfect season to enjoy this healthy grain. Oatmeal is high in soluble fiber, which regulates blood sugar and slows digestion. Not all oats are created equal, though. The level at which oatmeal is processed impacts its fiber content and health benefits. Consider the following types of oats:

- **Steel-cut oats** are minimally processed and chopped by steel cutters to retain the entire oat grain and oat bran.
- **Rolled (or old fashioned) oats** are de-hulled, then steamed to shorten cooking time.
- **Instant oats** are similar to rolled oats but are steamed for longer and often contain flavoring or sweeteners.

A half cup of oatmeal each day is all you need to reap its benefits.

## Popular Oatmeal Additions

Oatmeal offers many health benefits on its own, but you can make it even healthier and more delicious by adding a few extra ingredients to your bowl. Here are some popular oatmeal additions.



## Oatmeal Muffins

These healthy muffins are rich in fiber and make the perfect grab-and-go breakfast for fall.

- 1 cup low-fat bakery mix
- 1/2 cup crushed oat cereal
- 1 1/2 cups oats
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 egg
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 Tbsp. applesauce
- 1/2 cup fat-free milk

Preheat oven to 375 F.

In a large bowl, combine the bakery mix, cereal, oats, sugar and cinnamon.

Stir in the egg, oil, applesauce and milk (batter will be lumpy).

Spoon batter into muffin cups.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the muffins are browned.

Yield: 12 servings. Each serving provides 140 calories, 4 g of fat, 0.5 g of saturated fat, 150 mg of sodium, 3 g of protein and 2 g of fiber.

Source: USDA

