

Recognizing Mental Health Month

Mental Health Month, observed each May, is an opportunity to recognize the importance of mental well-being, reduce stigma, and encourage open, supportive conversations. This month invites reflection, education, and action, reminding us that mental health is an essential part of overall health.

Mental Health Month also serves as a reminder of how common mental health challenges are and why awareness matters. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, nearly 1 in 5 U.S. adults experiences a mental illness each year. Yet, research shows that only about half of those individuals receive treatment. These numbers highlight the importance of continued education, open dialogue, and access to support. Recognizing Mental Health Month in May helps normalize conversations around mental well-being and reinforces the idea that seeking help is not only acceptable but essential to long-term health.

One meaningful way to recognize Mental Health Month is by prioritizing your own mental well-being. This may look like setting healthier boundaries, practicing mindfulness, moving your body in ways that feel good, or allowing yourself adequate rest. Small, intentional habits, such as checking in with your emotions or taking breaks when you feel overwhelmed, can strengthen emotional resilience over time.

May is also an ideal time to expand awareness and understanding. Learning more about mental health conditions, stress management strategies, and available resources helps dispel misconceptions and fosters empathy. Sharing reputable articles, personal reflections, or workplace resources can encourage others to engage in conversations they might otherwise avoid.

You can also recognize the month through action and advocacy. Supporting mental health organizations through donating, volunteering, or participating in community initiatives contributes to broader change and improved access to care.

Finally, Mental Health Month reinforces the message that seeking help is a strength. If you or someone you love is struggling, reaching out to a mental health professional is an important step toward healing.

Spring Into Self-care

Self-care, especially mental health care, is deeply personal. It involves intentionally choosing activities that support emotional balance, resilience, and overall well-being. The National Institute of Mental Health defines self-care as taking time to do things that help you live well and improve both your mental and physical health. Spring, a season associated with renewal and growth, offers a natural opportunity to refresh your mental health routines as days grow longer and outdoor access increases.

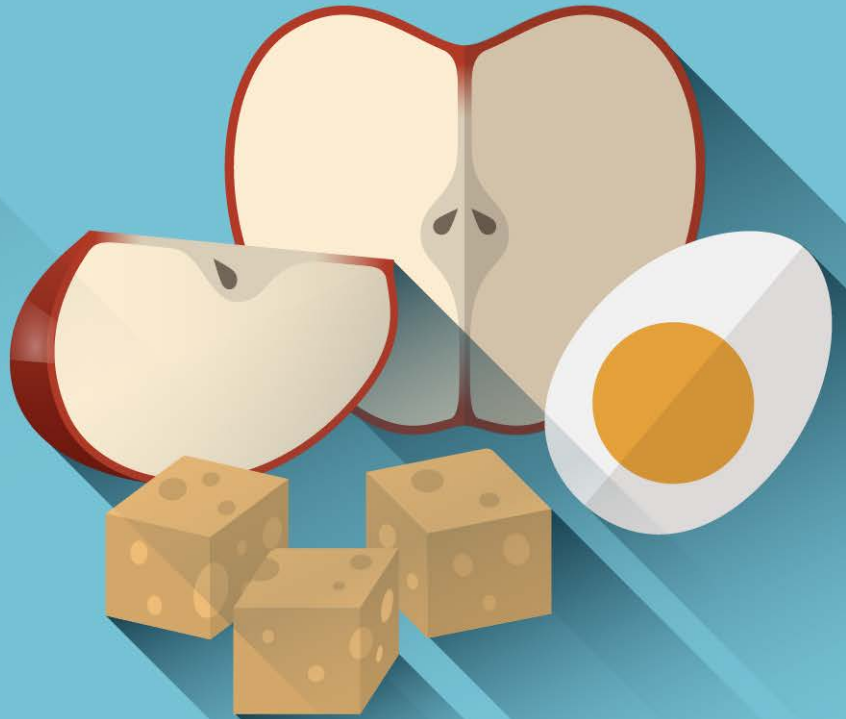
Spring self-care is about building small, sustainable practices into daily life. Even simple actions, such as a 30-minute walk outdoors, can help reduce stress, improve mood, and increase mental clarity. Exploring different self-care approaches during this season helps you discover what genuinely supports your emotional well-being, rather than relying on habits that no longer serve you.

Because self-care looks different for everyone, a bit of experimentation is often helpful. Consider these spring-inspired ideas:

- **Embrace outdoor movement.** Time in nature can calm the nervous system and boost mood, whether through walking, yoga, or cycling.
- **Practice mindfulness or meditation.** Setting aside quiet moments to focus on your breath encourages emotional awareness and inner balance.
- **Declutter your space.** Clearing physical clutter can ease mental overwhelm and restore a sense of control.
- **Limit screen time.** Stepping back from constant notifications can help quiet racing thoughts and create space for rest and connection.
- **Express creativity.** Writing, painting, crafting, or trying a new hobby fosters emotional expression and a sense of growth.

Spring self-care is a journey, not a checklist. Reach out to a trained mental health professional if you or someone you love is struggling.

100 CALORIES OR LESS



Did you know that one snack-sized bag of potato chips has about the same number of calories as an apple and one cup of strawberries and one cup of carrots with low-calorie dip?

When trying to lose weight, one of the important points to consider is eating fewer calories than you did previously. But this doesn't mean that you necessarily have to eat less, just smarter. Filling up on healthier alternatives can satisfy your hunger while still monitoring your caloric intake.

Consider some of these healthy options with 100 calories or less next time you're hungry for a snack:

- 2 cups raspberries
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 medium-sized apple
- 1 hard-boiled egg
- 6 ounces fat-free yogurt
- 1 handful roasted peanuts
- 1 stick string cheese
- 1/4 cup fat-free pretzels or 5 pita chips with 2 tablespoons hummus
- 2/3 cup whole grain cereal with 1/4 cup fat-free milk