

GOOD NEIGHBOR SCRIPT™

INSPIRATION FOR LIVING WELL FROM GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY



October is Women's Health Month

Prioritizing Women's Health at Every Age

Between work, home, family and everything else on the to-do list, the modern American woman has a lot on her plate at any given time — and that means she often puts self-care on the back burner. But living your healthiest life isn't as hard as it may seem. Like anything else, it comes down to prioritizing. Here are some of the most important things you can do to help maintain health and wellness through every stage of life:

Young Adulthood (20s and 30s)

You know the drill: good health starts with eating right, exercising regularly and getting enough sleep. But it's also important to regularly check in with your physician. The Health Resources & Services Administration recommends an annual "Well Woman" exam for those in this phase of life to monitor important health variables like weight, blood pressure and cholesterol. This exam also screens for breast and cervical cancer. Beginning at the age of 21, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that women get a PAP smear, a test that screens for cervical cancer, at least every three years.

This is also a time when you can take important steps for your future health. Are you planning to have children? Remember: fertility peaks in your late 20s, and pregnancies in women over the age of 35 are considered "high risk." If you are looking to get pregnant in the future, discuss it with your doctor. He or she can help you plan appropriately. If you are already pregnant, your obstetrician will offer advice to help you and your baby thrive. And if children aren't on your radar right now, your doctor can guide you to the best birth control options for you.

Midlife (40s and 50s)

This phase of life can be one of "in-betweens." While some women may still be expanding their families in the earlier part of midlife, this is also the time of life when women experience the "great change of life," otherwise known as menopause. During midlife, many women start

experiencing symptoms of menopause, such as irregular periods, hot flashes and night sweats. Feelings of depression and anxiety are also quite common. Make sure to talk to your doctor if you are dealing with any of these issues — he or she can help you find the relief you seek. No matter where you are in midlife, annual "Well Woman" checks are still highly recommended, but with a few new screenings on the roster. The American Cancer Society recommends women 45-55 years of age get an annual mammogram to screen for breast cancer. (After 55, you can cut back to once every two years.) And starting at age 50, the USPSTF recommends a colonoscopy to screen for colon cancer. (Luckily, for most women, this procedure is required only every five to 10 years.)

Starting at 45 years of age, your doctor will likely order annual cholesterol checks — and also regular diabetes screening.

Later Life (60s, 70s and Beyond)

According to the Social Security Administration, the average life expectancy of a woman who makes it to age 60 is almost 84.5 years old. With so much life left to live, this is no time to skimp on your health screenings, so continue with regular mammograms, colonoscopies and blood tests. You should also expect your physician to start screening for early signs of dementia or other neurological disease.

In addition, your doctor will likely want to take a closer look at your heart health. Although cardiovascular disease was long considered a male issue, heart disease is the number one cause of death for women. And heart-related symptoms in women can differ significantly from those in men.

Finally, starting at 65 years of age, the USPSTF recommends that all women receive a bone density scan every two years to look for signs of osteoporosis. Women are at a greater risk for the disease due to the hormonal changes that occur in women later in life. But doctors may require the test earlier or more often for those with a family history of bone issues.

With regular wellness visits and age-appropriate screenings, women can optimize their health at every stage of life.

Health & Fitness

Breast Self-Awareness: The First Line of Defense

For years, doctors strongly recommended that women do breast self-exams each month at home. But now, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) says no more: the research suggests it's simply not a reliable way to screen for potential breast cancer. That said, if you're already in the habit of checking your breasts each month, you have the skills to practice what the experts now recommend: breast awareness.

Simply put, breast awareness is knowing your own body — that is, knowing what "normal" looks and feels like for your breasts. Your doctor can give you a demonstration of how to do it during your "Well Woman" exam (aka your annual OB-GYN exam). The Mayo Clinic's instructions for breast awareness are pretty straightforward: Once a month, inspect your breasts visually in a mirror to look for any changes in size or shape, as well as any puckering, dimpling or inversion of the nipples. Experts also recommend you use the pads of your fingers to apply varying pressure as you touch the entirety of your breasts, in the shower and lying down in bed.

According to a 2011 study in the Journal of Women's Health, about 40% of breast cancers are discovered by the patients themselves. So if you do notice any significant differences from month to month, especially if you feel a lump or see bloody nipple discharge, get it checked out by a physician as soon as possible.



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October Recipe Mediterranean Lemon Chicken with Artichoke Ragout

We like to think this easy, one-pan meal conjures up visions of sun-drenched landscapes in Greece. In a delicious mash-up of classic Hellenic ingredients, chicken marinates in fresh lemon juice, garlic and oregano while baby broccoli and olives are quickly cooked alongside meaty artichoke hearts and bell pepper. Lemon — the juice in the marinade and the zest in the vegetables — ties the dish together.

Ingredients

- 2 to 4 boneless skinless chicken thighs (about 10 ounces total)
- 1 organic lemon
- 1 or 2 cloves organic peeled fresh garlic
- 3 sprigs organic fresh oregano
- 10 ounces organic baby broccoli
- 1 organic red or other bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons pitted Kalamata olives
- ½ cup cooked quartered artichoke hearts
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Olive oil

Tools

Fine-toothed grater, garlic press, optional, 2 medium bowls, large frying pan

1. Prep and marinate the chicken

- Pat the chicken dry with a paper towel; season generously with salt and pepper.
- Zest and juice the lemon, keeping the zest and juice separate. Set the zest aside for the vegetables.
- Finely chop, press or grate enough garlic to measure 1 teaspoon; set aside half for the vegetables.
- Strip the oregano leaves from the stems and coarsely chop half; set aside the remaining whole leaves for garnish.

In a medium bowl, combine the chicken, lemon juice, half of the garlic and chopped oregano and turn to coat.

While the chicken marinates, prepare the vegetables.

2. Prep the ragout ingredients

- Trim about 1 inch from the ends of the baby broccoli; cut any larger stalks in half lengthwise.
- Remove the stem, ribs and seeds from the bell pepper; cut the pepper into strips and then coarsely chop.
- Coarsely chop the olives.

3. Cook the ragout

In a large frying pan over medium-high heat, warm 1 teaspoon oil until hot but not smoking. Add the baby broccoli and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly charred, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the artichoke hearts, bell pepper and remaining garlic, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the broccoli is just tender and the artichokes and pepper are warmed through and starting to soften, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the olives and cook until warmed through, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the lemon zest. Transfer to another medium bowl. Do not clean the pan.

4. Cook the chicken

In the same pan used for the vegetables, warm 2 teaspoons oil over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking. Working in batches if needed, add the chicken and marinade and cook, turning once, until the chicken is lightly browned and cooked through, 4 to 6 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate. Add more oil between batches if needed.

5. Serve

Transfer the chicken and vegetables to individual plates, garnish with the oregano leaves and serve.

Total time range: 30 to 45 minutes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes

Kids Can!

- Juice the lemon.
- Press the garlic (if you have a press).
- Strip the oregano leaves.
- Garnish with the oregano.



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Ask a Pharmacist What women's health issues can my pharmacist help with?

A pharmacist can play a major role in teaching, reinforcing and educating female patients about health issues such as reproductive health issues, pregnancy and lactation, bone health, obesity, pre- and post-menopausal symptoms, cardiovascular health and important immunizations, such as the HPV vaccine, which can help decrease the likelihood of cervical cancer.

Many of my patients are concerned about breast cancer, and we talk about prevention, detection and treatment. I take this time to remind them about the importance of cardiovascular health and the fact that they are eight times more likely to die from a cardiovascular-related event than from breast cancer. This conversation is a natural transition to also talk about vitamin supplementation and the importance of medication synchronization and adherence.

Another key health topic I discuss with my female patients is pre- and post-menopausal symptoms. Having this insight allows me to work closely with their healthcare provider so I can offer customized options in compounded hormonal replacement therapy uniquely created just for their needs.

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Kevin DeMass
Pharmacist
The Apothecary Shoppe
Salt Lake City, Utah

Local Love Q&A North Village Pharmacy

YANCEYVILLE, NC



What do you think your pharmacy means to your community?

North Village Pharmacy embodies the visions, values and passions of our people. Our pharmacy is a local haven where folks from all walks of life can come for advice, friendship and exceptional health care without standing in line or meeting a stranger. North Village is a safe place where the people of Caswell County and surrounding areas can trust you with their lives and their families' lives.



What does your community mean to you?

Our local community means everything to us and persistently drives us every day, while also inspiring us to get out of bed every morning. The people of the community that we serve are the lifeblood of North Village Pharmacy's mission, vision and core values because we recognize that as a small rural community, we all need each other every day to thrive as a whole. Therefore, we take pride in keeping our community healthy so that the people of the community can continue thriving.

How do your pharmacy and staff go above and beyond simply filling prescriptions to care for the patients in your community?

Here at North Village Pharmacy, we do so much more than just fill prescriptions for our patients. We ensure that they fully understand why they are taking the medication and answer any questions that they may have. Our staff also works with each patient to ensure that they can afford any medication. On top of that, we provide several packaging options for folks who experience poly-pharmacy or who just want to be compliant in taking their medications. Additionally, we provide and encourage our patients to participate in our medication therapy management practice to ensure that they are staying on track with their medications. Last, we provide immunization clinics and comprehensive drug utilization reviews and monitor patients' blood pressure or blood sugars to help them stay on top of their health goals, as well as anything else they need.

How have you and your team incorporated innovative practices that differentiate your pharmacy as a leader in patient care?

Over the past few years, we have increased our use of robotics to package and span our medication packs to the people in our community, as well as across the state. We now have a range from Morganton, North Carolina, to Raleigh, North Carolina, which spans nearly 200 miles! Additionally, we are in the process of implementing a diabetes clinic for the local folks of our community that involves reviewing their medications, eating habits and blood glucose readings.