



## JFK for Life Bariatric Support Group Newsletter

*Spring 2020*



### **In the News....**

From *The World Obesity Federation* –

Obesity-related conditions seem to worsen the effect of COVID-19; indeed, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that people with heart disease and diabetes are at higher risk of COVID-19 complications.

Given the extremely high rates of obesity around the globe we expect a high percentage of the population to be at greater risk of contracting coronavirus. Furthermore, persons with obesity who become ill and require intensive care present challenges in patient management as it is more difficult to intubate patients with obesity, it can be more challenging to obtain diagnostic imaging (as there are weight limits on imaging machines), patients are more difficult to position and transport by nursing staff and, like pregnant patients in ICUs, they may not do well when prone.



Special beds and positioning/transport equipment are available in specialized surgery units, but may not be widely available elsewhere in hospitals and certainly not in all countries. In general health systems are already not well set up to manage patients with obesity and

the current crisis will expose their limitations even more.

This global pandemic is also quickly becoming a global economic crisis, which will disproportionately affect the world's most vulnerable population. In many countries this same segment of the population is also the one at higher risk of obesity, which might worsen the obesity crisis in the future.



In addition to that, the current pandemic might contribute to an increase in obesity rates as weight loss programs (which are often delivered in groups) and interventions such as surgery are being severely curtailed at present – and this is likely to go on for a long period of time. The measures introduced in some countries (e.g. not leaving the home for several weeks even for those who are not sick) will have an impact on mobility and enforced physical inactivity even for short periods of time increases the risk of metabolic disease.

Finally, the current crisis and the need for self-isolation is prompting many to rely on processed food with longer shelf life (instead of fresh produce) and canned food (with higher quantities of sodium) and we might see an increase in weight if this persists for a longer period of time.



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Congratulations to those who celebrated  
their 1<sup>st</sup> Surgi-versary in 2020

**KB BQ AS BL DL SP EL**  
**CC JN MM AK MK**  
**JW RS MA UA AR**  
**YM ER MB EM**

*Together they have lost a total of*

***1,816lbs!!!***

**★ OUTSTANDING ★**

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**Thank you to everyone** who has participated in our  
virtual Support Group meetings via **ZOOM**.

We will continue to hold meetings several times a  
month through the magic of the internet until all  
social distancing regulations have been lifted.

If there is a specific topic or area of concern you are  
interested in, please let Pat or Kelly know about it.

If you are not on the Support Group email list and  
wish to be added, please email me:

[Patricia.sullivan@hackensackmeridian.org](mailto:Patricia.sullivan@hackensackmeridian.org)

For more information on obesity and COVID19, go  
to **YouTube** and listen to a presentation by **Aram  
Jawed, MD FACS**

**COVID19 and OBESITY: A Major Risk Factor**

**Yes, we are OPEN!**

The current health crisis has compelled  
the surgeons to adopt new methods of  
providing care. The surgeons who are  
part of the JFK for Life Bariatric  
program, Dr. Alexander Abkin, Dr.  
Aram Jawed and Dr. Anish Nihalani  
are all conducting telemedicine visits.  
This includes follow up care, medically  
supervised weight loss sessions and  
consultations for new patients. Virtual  
visits or phone consultations with a  
registered dietitian are also available.  
If you wish to schedule an appointment  
or you know someone who is interested  
in having surgery, call the JFK for Life  
office at 732-744-5955.



## The Benefits of Controlled Breathing

Breathe. Exhale. Repeat. Take a deep breath, expanding your belly. Pause. Exhale slowly to the count of five. Repeat four times.

Congratulations. You've just calmed your nervous system.

Sounds pretty simple, right?

Controlled breathing, like what you just practiced, has been shown to reduce stress, increase alertness and boost your immune system. For centuries yogis have used breath control, or pranayama, to promote concentration and improve vitality. Buddha advocated breath-meditation as a way to reach enlightenment.

Science is just beginning to provide evidence that the benefits of this ancient practice are real. Studies have found, for example, that breathing practices can help reduce symptoms associated with anxiety, insomnia, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and attention deficit disorder.

How controlled breathing may promote healing remains a source of scientific study. One theory is that controlled breathing can change the response of the body's autonomic nervous system, which controls unconscious processes such as heart rate and digestion as well as the body's stress response, says Dr. Richard Brown, an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Columbia University and co-author of "The Healing Power of the Breath."

Consciously changing the way you breathe appears to send a signal to the brain to adjust the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system, which can slow heart rate and digestion and promote feelings of calm as well as the sympathetic system, which controls the release of stress hormones like cortisol.

Many maladies, such as anxiety and depression, are aggravated or triggered by stress. "I have seen patients transformed by adopting regular breathing practices," says Dr. Brown, who has a private practice in Manhattan and teaches breathing workshops around the world.

When you take slow, steady breaths, your brain gets the message that all is well and activates the parasympathetic response, said Dr. Brown. When you take shallow rapid breaths or hold your breath, the sympathetic response is activated. "If you breathe correctly, your mind will calm down," said Dr. Patricia Gerbarg, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at New York Medical College and Dr. Brown's co-author.

Controlled breathing may also affect the immune system. Researchers at the Medical University of South Carolina divided a group of 20 healthy adults into two groups. One group was instructed to do two sets of 10-minute breathing exercises, while the other group was told to read a text of their choice for 20 minutes. The subjects' saliva was tested at various intervals during the exercise. The researchers found that the breathing exercise group's saliva had significantly lower levels of three cytokines that are associated with inflammation and stress.



**"When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on!" Franklin D. Roosevelt**



Here are three basic breathing exercises to try on your own:

### **Coherent Breathing**

If you have the time to learn only one technique, this is the one to try. In coherent breathing, the goal is to breathe at a rate of five breaths per minute, which generally translates into inhaling and exhaling to the count of six. If you have never practiced breathing exercises before, you may have to work up to this practice slowly, starting with inhaling and exhaling to the count of three and working your way up to six.

1. Sitting upright or lying down, place your hands on your belly.
2. Slowly breathe in, expanding your belly, to the count of five.
3. Pause.
4. Slowly breathe out to the count of six.
5. Work your way up to practicing this pattern for 10 to 20 minutes a day.

### **Stress Relief**

When your mind is racing or you feel keyed up, try Rock and Roll breathing, which has the added benefit of strengthening your core.

1. Sit up straight on the floor or the edge of a chair.
2. Place your hands on your belly.
3. As you inhale, lean forward and expand your belly.
4. As you exhale, squeeze the breath out and curl forward while leaning backward; exhale until you're completely empty of breath.
5. Repeat 20 times.

### **Energizing "HA" Breath**

When the midafternoon slump hits, stand up and do some quick breath work to wake up your mind and body.

1. Stand up tall, elbows bent, palms facing up.
2. As you inhale, draw your elbows back behind you, palms continuing to face up.
3. Then exhale quickly, thrusting your palms forward and turning them downward, while saying "Ha" out loud.
4. Repeat quickly 10 to 15 times.





## How to Keep Practicing Mindful Eating

The social isolation and quarantine resulting from the COVID19 pandemic has created new challenges. It is a time of increased stress for everyone. Daily routines are disrupted. Children are at home 24/7. Fitness centers are closed. The support systems people rely on are no longer accessible.

During times of stress, people tend to revert to their past coping strategies. For those with eating disorders, these often include eating disorder behaviors.

The mindful eating approach is a powerful tool for the bariatric patient and anyone who struggles with disordered eating.

There is a wonderful online resource for tips on mindful eating and also meditation exercises to perform daily or during times of stress.

The following is from their website:

*Mindful is a mission-driven non-profit. We're dedicated to inspiring, guiding, and connecting anyone who wants to explore mindfulness—to enjoy better health, more caring relationships, and a compassionate society.*

*Mindful is the voice of the emerging mindfulness community. We're the place to go for insight, information, and inspiration to help us all live more mindfully.*

*Our activities support people seeking to learn more as well as those leaders working to bring genuine mindfulness practices into the mainstream.*

*We all have the innate ability to be present, composed, and to pause before we overreact to the challenges of our busy lives—and that's the ground of mindfulness. With some guidance and training, mindfulness can develop into a way of living that brings greater focus and effectiveness as well as kindness and caring into everything we do. Both science and experience demonstrate how being mindful brings positive benefits for our health, happiness, work, and relationships.*

Go to [www.mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org) for more information.





From **ASMBS** – *American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery*

### **Diabetes and Bariatric Surgery**

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes, accounting for approximately 95 percent of all cases. Obesity is the primary cause for type 2 diabetes and the alarming rise in diabetes prevalence throughout the world has been in direct association with increase rates of obesity worldwide. Type 2 diabetes leads to many health problems including cardiovascular disease, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, neuropathy, amputations, impotency, depression, cognitive decline and mortality risk from certain forms of cancer. Premature death from type 2 diabetes is increased by as much as 80 percent and life expectancy is reduced by 12 to 14 years.

Current therapy for type 2 diabetes includes lifestyle intervention (weight-loss, appropriate diet, exercise) and anti-diabetes medication(s). Medical supervision and strict adherence to the prescribed diabetes treatment regimen may help to keep blood sugar levels from being excessively high and medications and lifestyle changes may cause remission of the disease. However, type 2 diabetes often worsens with time, requiring even greater numbers of medication or a higher dosage to keep blood sugar under control. For this reason, type 2 diabetes has been considered a chronic and progressive disease.

### **Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery and Type 2 Diabetes**

Nearly all individuals who have bariatric surgery show improvement in their diabetic state. Bariatric surgeries performed in more than 135,000 patients

were found to affect type 2 diabetes in the following ways:

#### **Surgery improves type 2 diabetes in nearly 90 percent of patients by:**

- lowering blood sugar
- reducing the dosage and type of medication required
- improving diabetes-related health problems

#### **Surgery causes type 2 diabetes to go into remission in 78 percent of individuals by:**

- reducing blood sugar levels to normal levels
- eliminating the need for diabetes medications

#### **Health Improvements**

- Cause the improvement or remission of type 2 diabetes that lasts for years

[EscapeDiabetes.org](http://EscapeDiabetes.org) is a new patient education resource from ASMBS. Patients can read about surgery for diabetes, calculate their risks for complications due to type 2 diabetes, and find a provider to learn more about the benefits of surgery for type 2 diabetes. Visit [EscapeDiabetes.org](http://EscapeDiabetes.org) for more information.

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***If you are “on a diet” you are already admitting that you plan to go off it!***



*Thank you to Support Group member Lee  
For sharing the following:*

## HEALTHY COPING TOOLS TO GET THROUGH SHELTERING AT HOME



1. **Breathing.** (Worth Repeating!) Deep breathing always helps decrease stress, anxiety, fear, and anger. Why? Because when we experience intense emotions, our physiology speeds up. We want to run or fight or expend energy. And when our energy is intense, we often react rather than respond. Breathing deeply and slowly calms our anatomy. When our bodies are calm, we are better able to make better, more rational and logical choices. So slow down and breathe...
2. **Set healthy intentions/Pray.** Throughout the day, take moments to send positive thoughts into the universe or say a prayer. This is a way to do something good and kind and loving and sending into the universe or to the heavens. It always helps to focus on others and since we are all better off staying home, it's good to know there's a way to help others.
3. **Get outside.** Not only does the change of scenery from your own four walls (even if you have dozen rooms in your house) gives you a chance to change your view, but your attitude, your perspective, and your thoughts, as well. Sometimes fresh air gives you a fresh start.
4. **MOVE your groove thing.** Exercise helps us burn more than calories. Burn off some steam, or boredom, or unhealthy cravings, by dancing, walking, cycling, yoga-ing (is that a word?), or squatting! Work off the energy, then you'll be better able to make healthy decisions and choices.
5. **Give gratitude.** Tell someone one or two things about them that you appreciate. When you're super worried or anxious or upset, make a list of things that are right in your world and smile about those things.
6. **Use mantras.** Come up with a list of trite, but very true sayings and repeat them as needed: "This, too, will pass," "Focus on what I can do," "A day at a time," and "In this moment, all is well."
7. **Laugh.** Do things that bring you happiness and cause you to laugh. Watch your favorite comedy, read a funny book or simply have a conversation with a three-year-old! You'll feel better for sure!
8. **Get busy.** We all have a closet that needs to be cleaned and a junk drawer that needs to be sorted. We never have time to sew those hems or finish that project. Re-pot your plants, sort through your pictures and send some old-fashioned snail mail.
9. **Download some incredible apps.** Since things are what they are, I shall share my gratitude about having some super apps to offer positive messages, uplifting podcasts, encouraging meditations and lessons on everything from mindfulness, yoga, creative writing and a thousand other things!
10. **Imagine your awesome future.** Create a vision board with tremendous plans for your future. Dream big! Include small joys. Smile as you engage in the unique architecture of your future.





## Do You Really Need 10,000 Steps?

It is widely acknowledged that 10,000 steps a day has become the gold standard for many people. That number has sold many step-counting devices and inspired interoffice competitions. Those who find the goal daunting and do not achieve it, may be prone to giving up altogether. Take heart! There is limited scientific basis for this number.

Dr. I-Min Lee is an associate epidemiologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital, a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, and a researcher on physical activity. She and her colleagues wanted to look at the basis for 10,000 steps and its validity.

### Where does 10,000 steps a day come from?

The magic number "10,000" dates back to a marketing campaign conducted shortly before the start of the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games.

Dr. Lee discovered that the origins of the number can be traced to a Japanese company which made a device named *Manpo-kei*, which translates to "10,000 steps meter." It was a marketing tool that has become ingrained in our health consciousness.

### What was the research?

The research looked at 16,741 women ages 62 to 101 (average age 72). Between 2011 and 2015, all participants wore tracking devices called accelerometers during waking hours. The central question was: are increased steps associated with fewer deaths?

### What did the research find?

Key findings from the study include these:

- Sedentary women averaged 2,700 steps a day.

- Women who averaged 4,400 daily steps had a 41% reduction in mortality.
- Mortality rates progressively improved before leveling off at approximately 7,500 steps per day.
- There were about nine fewer deaths per 1,000 person-years in the most active group compared with the least active group.

So, if mortality — death — is your major concern, this study suggests you can reap benefits from 7,500 steps a day. That's 25% fewer steps than the more common goal of 10,000 steps.

### What's the bigger picture?

While the scope of this study is narrow, Dr. Lee draws some bigger-picture findings.

- Exercise recommendations are often measured in time: at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity a week has been the federal government's recommendation since 2008. People who aren't active may find it difficult to know exactly how long they've been moving. Quantifying exercise by counting steps can feel more doable and less overwhelming.
- If you're sedentary, add 2,000 more daily steps so that you average at least 4,400 daily steps. While 2,000 steps equals one mile, it's not necessary to walk it all at once. Instead, try to take extra steps over the course of each waking hour.

She offers good advice for everyone, particularly those looking for extra steps:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park at the first empty space you see, not the one closest to the entrance.
- Get off the bus one stop earlier than your destination.





- At home, break up chores. Make more than one trip to bring the dinner dishes into the kitchen, or when bringing groceries in from your car.

“Those little things collectively add up,” Dr. Lee says. “Don’t be intimidated or dissuaded by the 10,000 number.”

**RECALLED!**

The popular weight-loss drug Belviq has been recalled.

In February, the manufacturer of the weight-loss medication lorcaserin (Belviq, Belviq XR) voluntarily withdrew the drug from the US market at the request of the FDA. This was a result of emerging data showing that people who had taken the drug as part of a large clinical trial had an increased occurrence of cancer five years later.

### **What were the findings about Belviq, and why did this information come to light now?**

Lorcaserin was approved by the FDA in 2012. As part of the approval process, the FDA reviewed a series of clinical trials that looked at its effects on weight and its safety profile, compared to a placebo.

Based on these studies, the drug was approved, but a larger study to assess its cardiovascular safety was mandated by the FDA. In that subsequent study, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, 12,000 people with overweight or obesity and cardiovascular disease (CVD) or risk factors for CVD took either lorcaserin or a placebo. During the three-year follow-up, as published in 2018, those who took lorcaserin had more weight loss and comparable rates of cardiovascular events compared

to those who took a placebo. So from a cardiovascular safety perspective, the study was reassuring.

But the study subjects continued to be followed, and what recently came to light is that at five years, the group that took the drug has had a slight increase in the occurrence of cancers. Increases in several different types of cancers were observed, including pancreatic, colorectal, and lung.

### **Where does the recall leave people who are currently taking Belviq?**

Based on the evidence we have now, it is still uncertain whether lorcaserin truly increases the risk of cancer. And we don’t know anything about the mechanisms of how this drug could have such effects. That said, people taking lorcaserin are advised to stop taking it and contact the doctor who prescribed it for guidance on next steps. The FDA is not recommending any special cancer screening or other testing at this time.

### **Do the new findings mean all weight-loss medications are unsafe?**

These new findings do not in any way reflect the safety of other weight-loss medications on the market. Weight-loss medications have a storied history with safety recalls, and lorcaserin is not the first weight-loss medication to get pulled off the market after many years of patient use — fenfluramine/phentermine (Fen-Phen) and sibutrimine (Meridia) are other examples.

Still, it is unsettling to learn that a widely used, FDA-approved medication demonstrates serious safety concerns. On the other hand, it is important to underscore that, as in the case of lorcaserin, the FDA evaluates safety outcomes, and continues to rigorously monitor products on the market. This is in contrast to weight-loss supplements, which are not regulated by the FDA. Americans spend millions of dollars every year on these unregulated weight-loss products, which tout incredible results with no credible studies and no ongoing safety monitoring,



and which can have serious adverse health consequences.

Anyone considering weight-loss medications or products should work with licensed health care professionals. The experience with lorcaserin is a good reminder to use only interventions that have scientific studies that evaluate safety as well as benefits. Bariatric Surgery remains the most effective long term obesity treatment.

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*Are you stuck at home? Bored? Cannot binge watch another Netflix series? Here are some suggestions for exercising both your mind and your body.*



#### **ONLINE LEARNING:**

Have you dreamed of one day going to an Ivy League School? Well, now you can!

**Open Yale Courses** provides free and open access to a selection of introductory courses taught by distinguished teachers and scholars at Yale University. The aim of the project is to expand access to educational materials for all who wish to learn.

<https://oyc.yale.edu/>

Free online courses from other Ivy League schools such as **Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Penn, and Princeton** are available through:

[www.classcentral.com](http://www.classcentral.com)

**Harvard University** offers over 60 free online classes covering a wide range of subjects including:

- The Health Effects of Climate Change
- Shakespeare's Life and Work
- Contract Law
- Backyard Meteorology: The Science of Weather
- The Birth of Opera

<https://online-learning.harvard.edu/catalog/free>



#### **ONLINE EXERCISE:**

Even if you do not have a membership at a fitness center or gym, you may have the option to exercise via online classes FREE.

A number of fitness trainers and gyms are offering free online workouts to help everyone to stay fit and connected during the current period of physical isolation.

**UNITED WE MOVE!** Planet Fitness is hosting a series of free fitness classes streaming live on its Facebook page daily at 7pm EST. Each class is 20 minutes long and led by a Planet Fitness certified trainer. The sessions may also be viewed on YouTube once the live broadcast is completed.

#### **Pamela Reif Workouts**

Pamela is a popular fitness guru who offers a wide variety of video exercises on YouTube! Tone your arms, legs, abs, and more in under 20 minutes!

#### **Pop Sugar Fitness**

Enjoy hundreds of free Zumba, dance, HIIT, cardio, yoga, kickboxing and toning workouts.



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*From the desk of Kelly DiFabio, MS, RDN*

## Oh-So-Delicious Cheese and Garlic-Rich Chicken Florentine Meatballs

### Ingredients:

- 2 eggs lightly beaten
- 1 cup spinach chopped and cooked
- ½ cup yellow onion chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup fat-free grated parmesan cheese
- ½ cup whole wheat panko breadcrumbs
- 1 pound ground chicken

### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray baking sheet with nonstick spray and set aside.
2. Combine all ingredients together and mix well. Form into 1 inch balls and place on the prepared baking sheet. Bake, uncovered, for about 20 minutes or until golden brown and cooked through. Serve alone or over your favorite pasta, zoodles, or spaghetti squash.

### Nutrition:

Serving: 5 meatballs

Calories: 188kcal

Carbohydrates: 9g

Protein: 19g

Fat: 8g

Saturated fat: 3g

Cholesterol: 121mg

Sodium: 203mg

Potassium: 528mg

Fiber: 1g

Sugar: 1g

Calcium: 99mg

Iron: 2mg

### \*Tip for Extra Tender Meatballs

You can add some milk to the panko breadcrumbs to create a *panade* (a mixture of starch and liquid). Adding this to ground meat will keep the size and shape of the meatballs intact while retaining their moisture and tenderness.





# Brain Food

A **cryptogram** is a type of puzzle that consists of a short piece of encrypted text.

WA'Q DBKN AD TKXX KCKEA  
QDOHAWOHQ. AKIDQ TKXX KCKEA  
KLM YH QAWXX XDZH AGHO.



And here is your hint:

B = K

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## Navigating Grocery Shopping during Coronavirus

- Create a shopping list before you go. This will enable you to get in and get out once you arrive to the store.
- Sanitize:
  - ✓ Your hands before going into the store
  - ✓ Your shopping cart before touching it
  - ✓ Your hands before and after touching fresh produce.
  - ✓ Your hands when you get back inside your car.
- Keep a safe distance from others in the store and on the checkout line.
- Consider using an online shopping service  
Ask for curbside drop off.

## Did You Know?

This is a TRUE story –

One of the most famous epidemics in history was the “dancing epidemic” that struck Strasbourg in 1518. It was started by one woman, Mrs. Troffea. According to numerous accounts, the woman began to dance uncontrollably in the streets, without any ability to stop. Instead of an isolated incident, though, this proved to be the start of a shocking behavioral plague. Men, women, and children began to dance compulsively around the region in the weeks that followed, and it was estimated by the time the epidemic tapered off it had affected approximately 400 people. Many people were taken to a “healing shrine” to try and cure them (if they had survived the ordeal).

This wasn’t the first dancing plague in European history. A set of similar events hit villages along the Rhine in 1374, spreading as far as Italy and Luxembourg. Various explanations have been offered for the dancing, from religious fervor, mass poisonings and trance-like states, but no one was ever able to confirm them.



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## Basic Summertime Grilling

### Chicken:

1. Spray skinless chicken breasts with cooking oil
2. Sprinkle on your favorite spices
3. Turn grill on high. Grill until a nice golden brown color and use your meat thermometer to check internal temperature

### Fish:

1. Use a 2 inch deep, 9x9 disposable aluminum pan
2. Spray pan with cooking spray
3. Place salmon or cod skin down in tray
4. Dab with a bit of oil and lime juice, sprinkle with seasoning
5. Cook until the fish looks done and check to see that the internal temperature has reached 145 degrees F with a meat thermometer or that the fish is opaque and easily flakes with a fork.

### Side Dishes:

Trade your traditional mayo-heavy coleslaw for a salad of freshly grated carrots, raisins, apples and plain Greek yogurt

### Vegetables:

1. Wash and chop peppers, broccoli florets, cauliflower, eggplant, mushrooms zucchini, asparagus or any other veggies you like into similar sized cubes
2. Mix the veggies together in a medium sized bowl with olive oil, garlic salt and seasonings of your choice
3. Place all veggies in a single layer on a sheet of aluminum foil packet or a grill basket
4. Place on grill when the temperature is around 450 degrees F. Let cook for approximately 12 minutes or until soft.
5. Remove from grill and place on platter. Lightly sprinkle salt/pepper to taste and a little Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

### Dessert:

1. Use a grill basket or skewer to grill peaches, plums, pineapple, mangoes or any other fruit.
2. Sprinkle them with cinnamon or toss with a small amount of vanilla extract before or after grilling
3. Serve alone or with vanilla yogurt



*Looking for an activity  
to do with your kids that keeps you  
moving?*

*Create a neighborhood scavenger hunt.  
While you are outside taking a walk check  
off each item as you spot it.  
Here is a sample you can cut out or create  
your own.*





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Center+  
Bariatric

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Answer to the puzzle:

*It's okay to fall apart sometimes. Tacos fall apart and we still love them.*

*This newsletter does not provide medical advice. It is intended for informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.*