

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. DR. WEDDLE'S GUIDE TO FILIPINO HOT CHOCOLATE
2. HOW TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM LIKE A CELEBRITY
SHOE SHOPPING? HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
3. WANT TO MAKE YOUR HOLIDAYS A LITTLE EASIER?
SIMPLE VEGAN CAESAR DRESSING
4. HOW 'PREHABILITATION' HELPS IN SURGERY RECOVERY

PHYSICAL THERAPY *BEFORE* SURGERY?

WHY YOU SHOULD MAKE 'PREHABILITATION' A PART OF YOUR RECOVERY

Physical therapy has become a common part of most post-surgery rehabilitation routines. However, did you know that going through physical therapy prior to your surgery can benefit your recovery process as well? Strange as it might sound, strengthening your muscles and joints before surgery — after which they'll most certainly be weaker — can ensure that you recover faster. This is called "prehabilitation," or prehab, and it's a great way to help you get back to doing what you love after an operation.

In general, the healthier you are going into a surgery, the better poised you will be to have a speedy recovery. When you visit our office for prehab appointments, one of our physical therapists can walk you through a series of stretches and exercises focused on strengthening the body part prior to surgery. Prehab exercises benefit your overall health and help reduce post-surgery symptoms,

like swelling and muscular atrophy. This can also help shorten your hospital stay and decrease the time you spend doing post-surgery rehab.

During prehab, our physical therapists can help you prepare to do daily activities post-surgery, such as maneuvering out of bed, using the toilet, walking down stairs, and using crutches. Since your PT will know your current range of motion, they can also help you create goals to get back to it during your recovery. The recovery process can be tedious and frustrating, so it's helpful to have some goals in mind. Doing so will help you track your progress and stay motivated in your recovery.

It should also be noted that, while not incredibly common, sometimes prehab can be so effective that it eliminates the need for surgery altogether. As physical therapists, it's our goal to help our



patients get back to doing what they love by any noninvasive means possible. Sometimes surgery is necessary, and that's okay — but if you could recover without surgery, wouldn't you try?

In order to get the most out of your prehabilitation routine, most health experts recommend starting prehab appointments with a physical therapist at least six weeks before your scheduled surgery. However, starting a prehab routine even two weeks before your surgery can benefit you in recovery. While prehab is beneficial, it's important to know that not every insurance program will cover it. So, check with your insurance provider before you start. Nevertheless, the benefits of prehabilitation make it an option worth seriously considering.



A SWEET HOLIDAY AT THE WEDDLE HOUSE

HOW COOKIES AND HOT CHOCOLATE MAKE MY CHRISTMAS

Have you seen the 1971 movie "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory"? If you have and remember the big assembly lines of chocolate and candy that the Oompa Loompas worked on, then you have a good idea of what my house looks like in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Every year, my husband and kids turn our kitchen into a three-worker cookie factory.

Coming from home after a long day of work and tasting their creations never fails to make my holiday! They bake literally hundreds of cookies to hand out to our friends and family as Christmas gifts. Favorites include classic chocolate chip, ranch cookies (a chunky cookie full of oats and Rice Krispies), three flavors of butter cookies (almond, raspberry, and pistachio), two types of rum balls, and beautiful red, yellow, and green "rainbow cookies" that look and taste like tiny cakes.

On top of all that, my husband usually makes a special batch of cookies for our friend's annual cookie party. To share your cookies at the gathering, you have to use a mystery ingredient that all of the cookie-eaters can guess, the weirder the better. In the past, people have baked cookies with Tang powder, pork belly, and peppers. (Yes, I tried them all!)

In our family, cookies are the perfect gift because we aren't big on material presents. Since we're all so busy, we'd rather just spend some of our valuable time together on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. When I was growing up, we'd usually attend midnight Mass at our church and then come home to a massive spread of Filipino food. Some of my favorite dishes are lechon (charcoal-roasted pig), lumpiang ubod (meat and vegetable-

packed spring rolls), bibingka (sweet rice cakes), and pancit malabon (stir-fried noodles topped with all kinds of seafood).

I loved to pile my plate high with some of everything and wash it all down with a mug of Filipino hot chocolate, which we call tsokolata. That hot chocolate is my ultimate comfort food — or maybe I should say comfort drink. Just smelling it makes my blood pressure drop, and honestly, with so many family gatherings and annual plans canceled, I think that's what we all need this year.

In the spirit of spreading some holiday cheer, here is a recipe to make your very own Filipino hot chocolate for Christmas. Yes, I'm a dentist telling you to make dessert, but I'm human, too! Even dentists know that sometimes your soul needs something sweet.

COMFORTING FILIPINO HOT CHOCOLATE FOR ONE

This recipe calls for sweetened cacao tablets, which you can find at most Asian markets. They come wrapped up in rolls (think Life Savers) and look a bit like small chocolate hockey pucks. Don't skip them! You can also make tsokolata with milk instead of water, but I prefer this super-strong chocolate version.

Ingredients

- 1 cup water
- 2 sweetened cacao tablets

Directions

1. In a saucepan, bring the water to a boil.
2. Add the cacao tablets and stir until they start to dissolve.
3. Reduce the heat to a simmer and stir until the tablets are totally melted.
4. Remove the saucepan from the heat and use an immersion blender to froth the liquid.
5. Pour your tsokolata into a mug and enjoy!



To your great smiles, better health, and holiday indulgences,

-Dr. Michelle Weddle

BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM LIKE A CELEBRITY WITH THESE 3 HOT WINTER DRINKS

What do Jennifer Lawrence, Lady Gaga, Angelina Jolie, Taylor Swift, and Khloé Kardashian have in common? Yes, they're all high-profile celebrities, of course, but they're also big fans of hot tea.

According to the entertainment website Yaay, Angelina Jolie likes to make her own garlic tea by steeping fresh cloves in hot water, and Lady Gaga is such a big tea lover that she takes a tea set with her on tour. These famous women might be onto a health and beauty secret because aside from being delicious, tea is a great way to boost your immune system and fend off illnesses.

Drinking hot tea, or another immune-boosting drink in place of hot chocolate, will still give you the cozy winter vibes you crave without compromising your health. An easy drink for beginners is **lemon-ginger tea**, which is a spin-off of Khloé Kardashian's favorite drink. Ginger is a key ingredient here because it's anti-inflammatory, raises the immune system, and may even help fight cancer. You can make lemon-ginger syrup by layering lemon slices, fresh ginger, and raw honey in a jar and letting it sit in the fridge overnight. The next morning,



just add a few spoonfuls of the concoction to your hot water and you'll have instant tea!

Homemade chai tea is another delicious option that will wow you and your guests this winter. There are thousands of chai recipes out there, but MinimalistBaker.com offers a simple and tasty one that's made with cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, ginger, black tea, pepper, and dairy-free milk. If you don't want to grind the spices yourself, you can buy a premade blend. Chai gives you all of the ginger benefits with the added bonus of cardamom, which is said to have antioxidant and antimicrobial properties.

Last but not least, if you're more of a latte drinker than a tea drinker, try **golden milk!** This soothing drink is a darling of health food fanatics because it features honey (a disease-fighting powerhouse ingredient) and turmeric (an immune-booster that lowers cholesterol, combats arthritis, and helps prevent cancer). WellPlated.com offers a delicious recipe that pairs those two ingredients with almond milk, almond butter, vanilla extract, cinnamon, and ginger for a satisfying nightcap.

What are you waiting for — get steeping!

HOLIDAY HACKS FOR THE BUSY PROFESSIONAL

4 TIPS FOR A LESS EXHAUSTING HOLIDAY SEASON

The holidays are an incredibly busy time of year. Between work and home, it can feel like there isn't enough daylight to get everything done. We have projects to complete, emails to answer, dinners to plan, gifts to buy — *and* family is coming in from out of town. Is it possible to take care of everything and not be completely exhausted by the end of it? While we can't answer that definitively, we can share a few "holiday hacks" to help you get more out of your time.

Put work aside. Give yourself blocks of time to focus on one thing at a time. You may be tempted to multitask, but for your mental health, don't do it. Focusing on one thing at a time produces better results (this applies equally to cooking as it does to client work) and you'll feel better through the process.

Delegate — at home! You delegate assignments at work, so why not do the same at home? Start with your

immediate family and work your way out. Give everyone a task: Someone does the grocery shopping. Someone is in charge of a main course dish. Another is on side-dish duty. Others get dessert. Don't forget to assign a clean-up crew. Save yourself for the tasks you REALLY want to do.

Take frequent breaks. When you have a lot going on, frequent 5-10 minute minibreaks can go a long way in easing the mental pressure. Don't hesitate to take brain breaks throughout the day. Go for a quick walk around the building or neighborhood. Read a chapter of your book. Play a quick game on your phone.

Say no to the kitchen. When your time is precious, why spend a lot of time in the kitchen? While some find cooking a joy, others find it burdensome. If you're in the latter group, it's okay to go the boxed or prepared meal route when time is short. Boxed meals can still be



prepared with love, and you can get high-quality frozen dishes or freshly prepared meals from your favorite grocery store. The time and energy you save is worth the investment.

In 2020, we have more options than ever to make life easier. So, enjoy the holidays a little more by doing the things you love and using these tips to make the most of your time and energy this season.

PERFECT FIT 4 TIPS TO BUY THE RIGHT SHOES FOR YOU

Buying the wrong shoes can have a profound impact on your feet, ankles, knees, hips, and lower back. If you don't get the right support, it can affect the health of several areas throughout your legs. Adversely, buying good shoes can help you maintain better health through these same areas. It just comes down to finding the "right" shoes.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to shoe-buying because everyone has unique feet and shoe needs. It's not as easy as just stopping by the shoe store, finding a pair you like, and calling it a day. You need shoes for specific activities that give you ample support and comfort. Here are four steps you can take on your journey to find that perfect fit.

Consult your PT. Your physical therapist is a gait specialist. They understand walking and how your motor systems can work effectively and efficiently. They can tell you what you need to know before you buy a pair, and they can work with you to get the most out of those shoes.

Consult a shoe expert. If there is one reason to visit a brick-and-mortar sporting or shoe store, it's to consult with a shoe expert. You want to work with someone who will actually help you find the right shoes and isn't just interested in making a quick sale.



Take your time. It's okay if you don't immediately find the right shoes. You may have to visit more than one store before you find the ideal pair. You may be tempted to buy a pair of off-the-shelf orthotics in order to call it a day, but even that can be problematic.

Consider custom orthotics. Buyer beware: There are a lot of bad orthotics out there. Once again, consult with your PT to determine your best next steps when it comes to shoe orthotics. You don't want to spend money on something that won't help in the short term and long term. Your PT can help ensure you're getting the proper foot and complete leg support you need.

TAKE A
BREAK!

WHEN YOU CAN'T GET WITHIN 6 FEET

OF SANTA CLAUS AT THE MALL

WE ARE SO
2019 RIGHT NOW!



SIMPLE VEGAN CAESAR DRESSING

Inspired by MinimalistBaker.com



Nothing pulls together a salad quite like a delicious Caesar dressing. This easy vegan recipe takes just five minutes to make and keeps for 5-7 days in the fridge.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup hummus
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp spicy mustard
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp lemon zest
- 2 tsp capers, minced
- 3 tsp caper brining juice
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Hot water, as needed

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, add all ingredients and whisk to combine.
2. If needed, add a bit of hot water to thin the dressing until it will pour.
3. Serve with salad or refrigerate for later!