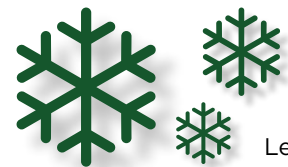


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## SHOULD YOU TRY COLD SHOWERS?

### 5 BENEFITS OF THE VOLUNTARY FREEZE

Let's play a game: Would you rather bungee jump off a bridge or take a 10-minute cold shower every day? Unless

you're afraid of heights, bungee jumping probably sounds more pleasant. But it turns out the shower is the smart choice! Not only are you less likely to get in an accident, but standing under a stream of cold water also has surprising health benefits, according to experts who spoke with Real Simple.

Believe it or not, cold showers can do some amazing things. Here are five:

1. **Boosts Your Energy:** The cold water "wakes up" your body, shocking you into taking deep breaths, which saturates your blood with oxygen. This helps you reach a focused, energized, almost-meditative state.
2. **Strengthens Your Immune System:** As crazy as it sounds, standing in icy water can actually increase your white blood cell count. Since these cells fight disease, this is a huge win for your health.
3. **Helps Keep You in Shape:** Speaking of health, cold showers are also supposed to ramp up your metabolism, which helps keep you slim.

4. **Gives You Beautiful, Shiny Hair:** If you'd love to have lovely, silky hair, cold showers could be better than conditioner. Dr. Debra Jaliman, a dermatologist, told Real Simple the low-temperature water seals your hair cuticles, boosting the shine of your strands.

5. **Freezes Away Your Stress:** Anxiety and depression run away from cold water! It turns out chilly showers increase endorphins and decrease the hormone cortisol, which is linked with stress.

That said, as good as they are for you, cold showers aren't exactly *fun*. Back in 2019, the popular YouTuber Matt D'Avella tried standing under the freezing water every day for 30 days to reap its health benefits. You can watch his hilarious journey — complete with shivering, screaming, and self-empowerment — at [YouTube.com/watch?v=MsSBBPeNNDY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsSBBPeNNDY), part of his "30 Day Experiments" collection.

If you want to try cold showers yourself, Healthline recommends easing into the habit by "slowly lowering the temperature at the end of a usual shower" and then standing in the chilly water for 2-3 minutes. Take deep breaths and gradually push yourself to turn the temperature down earlier and stay in the cold longer.

## I AM A PRO-CANDY DENTIST! THE SMART WAY TO ENJOY YOUR HALLOWEEN TREATS

Being a dentist definitely monopolizes my life, but I believe there's always time to squeeze in some extra fun, especially when it includes my kids. Halloween is the perfect holiday to make that happen. In the past, I've gone all-out designing and sewing epic Halloween costumes for my daughter, Katie.

Katie has outgrown trick-or-treating now, but in middle school and high school, she went as Moana, Wonder Woman, Maleficent from "Sleeping Beauty," and Belle from "Beauty and the Beast." The costumes took hours to design, but it was really cool to bring her ideas to life. We even joked that I could have started a "Designer Dentist" social media account and hashtag following in the footsteps of "Designer Daddy," who creates amazing Disney dresses for kids.

Costumes aren't the only thing I love about Halloween. I'm also a big fan of the candy, especially my favorite, Kit Kats! I know that probably sounds crazy coming from a dentist. Most people are raised to believe they shouldn't eat candy because it causes cavities, but the truth is that you're just as likely to get a cavity from eating a piece of bread as you are from eating a Kit Kat. As far as your mouth is concerned, *pretty much everything is sugar*.

You're probably shaking your head in disbelief, but it's true! Your saliva is full of enzymes, and when they encounter fermentable carbs (like the ones in milk) or starches (like bread and potatoes), they convert those molecules into sugars. That process makes taking a bite of mashed potatoes pretty similar to eating a Snickers. So, I say, "Let them eat cake!"

You and the kids don't have to limit your Halloween candy to avoid cavities, but what you should do is rinse your mouth out with water after you indulge. Your smile's biggest enemy isn't sugar; it's the acid that sugar creates. Sugar feeds the bacteria in your mouth (what I lovingly call "the bugs"), and they create acid as a result. When that acid sits on your teeth, it softens them and erodes your enamel, causing discoloration. The longer it sits, the worse the damage is. The worst thing you can do is suck on hard candy throughout the day, because that keeps your mouth constantly bathed in sugar and acid. There's an easy way to prevent this. When you indulge in your candy, it is preferable to rinse your mouth with water afterwards instead of brushing your teeth. If you eat foods with acid, brushing your teeth right away will actually



Katie as Maleficent (yes! Dr. Weddle made the costume) and Matthew as Diaval for Halloween.

speed up the erosion of your enamel. So it's best to get in the habit of just rinsing your mouth with water.

You can also protect your smile by having a dentist like me place sealants on your teeth. Sealants are placed in the natural grooves of your teeth because these spots can be tough to clean! To test whether this would be a good idea for you, go ahead and eat an Oreo, then swish some water around in your mouth and swallow. After that, stand in front of a mirror and open your mouth wide. Can you still see Oreos stuck in the grooves of your teeth? If so, you might want to add sealant to those grooves.

If you love sweets like I do, then this was good news for you! It definitely makes me feel better about indulging in the Carvel Banana Barge, my all-time favorite sweet snack. If you woke me up in the middle of the night and offered me a Banana Barge, I would eat it right there in my pajamas. Then, I'd drink some water and swish it all over my mouth to make sure that I have removed all the sugar and acid sitting on my teeth. This Halloween, make sure you do the same thing with your Reese's, 3 Musketeers, or any of your favorite candy bars!

To your great smiles and better health,

—Dr. Michelle Weddle

## SELF-HELP BOOKS CAN'T DO IT ALL HOW READING FICTION CAN BENEFIT YOU

Many CEOs and other successful individuals continually espouse the benefits of regular reading. Many times, leaders read self-help books to improve their leadership skills and become more successful.

This is all well and good, but even the most successful people in the world could be missing out on the unique benefits that come specifically from reading fiction. But what are those benefits exactly?

### Greater Empathy

When a psychologist analyzed 86 functioning MRI (fMRI) studies, he found that the same parts of the brain that fire up when reading fictional stories also fire up when we're seeking to understand the thoughts and feelings of others. That's because when the characters in the book we're



reading are thinking or feeling a certain way, we tend to think or feel that way with them.

### Less Stress and Better Sleep

When we read fiction specifically, we tend to disengage from the world — and that's a good thing! Our brains can't always be functioning at their peak capacity. We need breaks, or else we'll stress ourselves out and negatively affect other areas of our lives. Stress tends to keep us from sound sleep, but reading fiction before bed engages the imagination, taking us away from the stresses of everyday life before we drift off.

### More Comfort With Uncertainty

Even though many stories (particularly those portrayed in popular movies) have nice happy endings, most people would agree that life sometimes leaves things a little more open-ended. While this fact might stress out some people, researchers have discovered that fiction readers don't need "cognitive closure" as much as nonfiction readers.

### Greater Happiness

Even if none of the benefits of fiction interest you, everyone wants to find ways to make themselves happy — and for many, that is reading fiction. According to one survey, 76% of participants said that reading makes them feel good and improves their lives. So, what are you waiting for? Dust off that novel you've been meaning to read and crack it open!

## FEEL YOURSELF TAKING A TUMBLE?

### TRY THESE TRICKS TO PROTECT YOUR BRAIN!

Taking a fall is one of the most common causes of a deadly traumatic brain injury (TBI). This is a pretty scary statistic, considering 1 in 10 adults fall at least once a year, and we all live in a world filled with tripping hazards!

Not every fall is deadly, but about 1 in 5 can cause a serious injury. Fortunately, you can do a few things to protect your brain if you feel yourself starting to tumble. The insurance company Lawley recommends these:

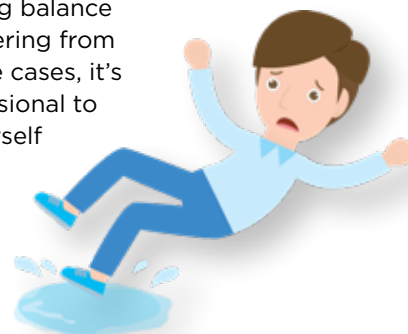
- Tucking your chin and lowering your head
- Turning your head to the side if you're falling face first
- Protecting your head with your arms while keeping your arms and legs bent to spread out the impact (Don't fall on only your arms or hands — you could break them!)
- Trying to land on your side
- Relaxing your body
- Rolling after impact

In addition to TBIs, many falls also cause hip fractures. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports

over 800,000 patients are hospitalized because of fall injuries — almost always for TBIs or hip fractures — every single year. To prevent those, try to make sure your floors at home are clutter-free and be careful on ice during winter.

Of course, these techniques are a last resort. Ideally, you should prevent falls long before you feel yourself teetering: Strengthen the muscles that help you balance on your feet, like your core, lower back, and legs with simple home exercises. You can visit [NHS.uk/Live-Well/Exercise/Balance-Exercises](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/balance-exercises) for an easy visual guide or turn to a physical therapist for help.

If you're young and athletic, you may not need a PT, but physical therapy can be a great option for older adults already experiencing balance problems or people recovering from an illness or injury. In these cases, it's best to work with a professional to ensure you don't hurt yourself in your quest for better balance! They'll create a customized treatment plan for you, which will protect you from overdoing it.



## THE TASTIEST WAY TO SAVE THE PLANET

### 3 REASONS TO EAT SEASONALLY — STARTING WITH SQUASH

The hashtag #SeasonalEating has been shared more than 140,000 times on Instagram, and it's a movement that goes beyond social media. Chefs, farmers, and environmental activists are all jumping on the bandwagon! Here are just a few reasons why they might tell you to consider choosing fall produce at the grocery store this month.

#### 1. It's good for your taste buds.

Imported produce is often picked green and gassed with ethylene to produce the signature color. So, it's no surprise it doesn't taste quite right! Eating seasonally will ensure that your produce is fresh and flavorful.

#### 2. It's good for your health.

According to the Fairfax Times, studies have shown that foods

grown and eaten in-season have better nutrient composition. "One study that examined vitamin C content in broccoli found that broccoli grown in-season during the fall had twice as much vitamin C as broccoli that was grown out of season in the spring," the paper reported.

**3. It's good for the planet AND your wallet.** Foods grown in-season require fewer energy- and pollution-intensive inputs like heating and fertilizer, making them more eco-friendly. It's also more likely to be grown in your area, meaning it traveled fewer CO<sub>2</sub>-producing "food miles" to get to you. For the same reasons, seasonal food is often more affordable for you to buy and for your local farmers to grow!

The first step to eating seasonally is to look up seasonal foods in your area on a website like [SeasonalFoodGuide.org](https://SeasonalFoodGuide.org) or to visit your local farmers market. In many parts of the U.S., squash is one of the tastiest, most affordable fall vegetables out there — and cooking with it is a great place to start.

If you can get your hands on butternut squash, try making the "Butternut Squash Soup with Crisp Pancetta" from [FoodAndWine.com](https://FoodAndWine.com). If delicata squash is more your speed, check out [LoveAndLemons.com](https://LoveAndLemons.com) for a great recipe for "Roasted Delicata Squash With Apples and Sage." Last but not least, pick up a copy of "Squash: 50 Tried and True Recipes" by Julia Rutland for a full guide to cooking with squash. The crisp autumn sky is the limit!

## TAKE A BREAK!



## SLOW COOKER SQUASH, KALE, AND SAUSAGE SOUP

Inspired by [SugarAndSoul.co](https://SugarAndSoul.co)



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 Italian chicken sausages, sliced to bite-size pieces
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 onion, chopped
- 6-7 cups butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 3 cups kale, chopped
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add sausage and cook 4-5 minutes, stirring often, then remove from the pot and set aside.
2. Add garlic and onion to the pot. Sauté 4-5 minutes. Add squash, salt, and pepper. Sauté 8 minutes.
3. In a slow cooker, combine sautéed vegetables, sausage, chicken broth, and seasonings. Cook on low heat for 3 hours and 30 minutes.
4. Open the pot and add the kale. Cook another 20 minutes, then add the red wine vinegar and stir to combine. Cook 10 more minutes, then serve and enjoy!