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Ease Back Into Fitness Without the Stress

Get Back on Track and Feel Stronger Than Ever

Restarting your workout routine after a long break can feel like climbing a mountain, but you don't need to scale Everest on day one. You should start small and start smart. Even one or two weekly workouts can reignite your energy and rebuild your confidence. The key isn't intensity at first, but creating a rhythm you can stick to.

Crush short-term goals.

Small victories spark momentum. Instead of staring at a massive goal and feeling defeated, focus on micro-challenges: Walk an extra 1,000 steps daily, or squeeze in 20-minute workouts three times a week. Every little win builds confidence and sets the stage for bigger achievements, like hitting 10,000 steps daily or finishing a full-length fitness class.

Schedule workouts around your life.

Fitness should fit your life, not disrupt it. Figure out your prime energy hours.

Maybe mornings fuel your focus, or evenings recharge your motivation. Even 15-20 minutes count when you're easing back in. Start where you are, and gradually increase intensity. Remember, your stamina will grow alongside your consistency, not overnight.

Reinforce motivation with retail therapy. A new pair of shoes, a matching workout outfit, or a fancy water bottle can make exercise feel like a reward rather than a chore. Then, try a 30-day challenge to keep things interesting: a mile walk every day, one new workout a week, or short movement breaks during work hours. At the end of the month, reward yourself with a massage, a new gym bag, or a small treat to reinforce your progress.

Buddy up for accountability.

Accountability is a game-changer. A workout buddy or group can push you to show up on lazy days, celebrate your



wins, and keep the process fun. Studies show that having someone alongside you can boost your consistency, motivation, and happiness.

Getting back into exercise isn't about perfection. It's about showing up, celebrating small wins, and making fitness a part of your life again. Start small, plan smart, and enjoy every step of the journey.

Hidden Dangers Beneath Your Gums

WHAT EVERY PATIENT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT RECEDING GUMS

January is the perfect time for a fresh start, but while many of us focus on fitness resolutions, one critical part of your health often gets overlooked: **your gums**. This month, as we observe **Receding Gums Awareness Month**, I want to shed light on a silent issue that can affect your smile, your comfort, and even your overall health. From misaligned teeth that quietly wear down your gums to hidden bacterial infections linked to diabetes and Alzheimer's, understanding gum health is not just about aesthetics; it's about safeguarding your body, brain, and confidence.

The Hidden Cause of Receding Gums

Many people think brushing too hard causes gum recession. In reality, **misaligned teeth are often the main culprit**. When teeth are angled, biting forces are distributed unevenly, much like misaligned tires that wear out unevenly. Over time, this misdirected pressure causes bone loss, and because gums rely on underlying bone for support, they begin to recede.

Recognizing the Signs

- **Longer-looking teeth:** As gums recede, teeth appear elongated.
- **Increased sensitivity:** Exposed roots react to hot, cold, or acidic foods and drinks.
- **Brushing discomfort:** Pain or sensitivity while brushing is a strong indicator, present in nearly 98% of cases I see.

Solutions for Protecting Your Gums

- **Orthodontics:** Invisalign or other realignment treatments redistribute biting forces, protecting bone and gums.

- **Night guards:** These devices absorb pressure from teeth grinding, reducing stress on individual teeth.
- **Early intervention:** The sooner alignment or protective measures are implemented, the more effectively gum recession can be slowed or prevented.

Gum Health Beyond Your Mouth

Receding gums can also result from **periodontal disease**, a bacterial infection that destroys gum tissue and underlying bone. Its impact is far-reaching:

- **Diabetes connection:** Gum disease and blood sugar control influence each other in a bidirectional relationship. Managing one improves the other.
- **Cognitive health link:** Bacteria such as *Porphyromonas gingivalis* associated with gum disease have been found in the brains of Alzheimer's patients, suggesting a strong correlation between oral and brain health.
- **Autoimmune influence:** Chronic inflammation associated with autoimmune conditions can exacerbate gum problems, underscoring the importance of consistent care.

Practical Oral Care Tips

To safeguard your gums, I recommend:

- **Ultrasonic toothbrushes:** These reach below the gumline to remove harmful bacteria that traditional brushes cannot.
- **Alcohol-free mouthwash:** Brands like **Stellalife** and **Dental Herb Company** maintain a healthy oral microbiome, which promotes beneficial bacteria while keeping harmful bacteria in



check. You can find these products here at our office!

Gum Health and Valentine's Day

January is also a great time to prepare for our February **"Certified Kissable"** campaign, which educates our community about how **cavity and gum disease-causing bacteria can be contagious** (yes, even by kissing). Your oral health doesn't just affect you; it can affect your Valentine, too!

Stay Diligent This Receding Gums Awareness Month

Healthy gums are more than a cosmetic concern; they are a cornerstone of overall wellness. Misaligned teeth, periodontal disease, and inflammation all throughout the body all contribute to gum recession and sensitivity and can lead to more severe conditions down the road.

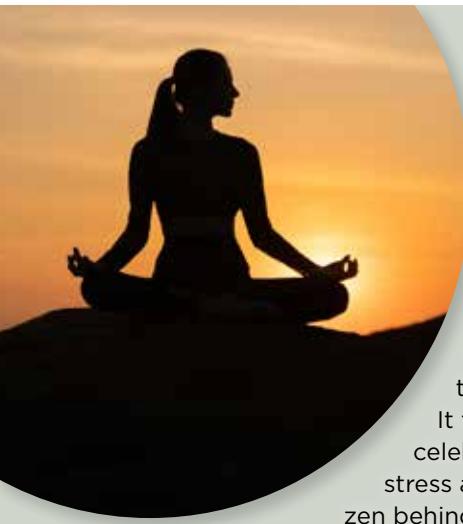
To your great smiles and better health,




Scan code to learn more about gum disease and our treatment plans.

MIND OVER MARQUEE

Meditation Makes Stars Shine Within



Have you ever wondered how Hollywood's stars keep cool under the paparazzi's lens? It turns out that even celebrities deal with stress and have to find their zen behind the velvet ropes and red carpets. For famous names like Oprah Winfrey, Katy Perry, and Sir Paul McCartney, transcendental meditation is the star of the show. This mindfulness practice deepens awareness, requiring you to focus your mind for a set amount of time for better mental and emotional balance. Ready to reach a new level of Oscar-worthy consciousness like the A-listers?

Oprah's Om

Media mogul Oprah Winfrey is known as a trendsetter, and she's often praised the power of meditation. She's such a fan of this mindfulness practice that she curated a collection of meditation and wellness podcasts, retreats, discussions, and content. The star credited meditation for improving her life,

describing it as an exercise that allows you to be still enough to know the difference between "the voice" and you. It helps you resist the messaging that you are not enough. One of her main tips for newbies is to start small, just taking a moment to appreciate the little joys of everyday tasks, like the sound of birds outside or the smell of your shampoo.

Musical Meditators

Musicians often face a lot of pressure, especially when on the road or recording. Pop star Katy Perry said meditation grounds her and helps her be more present, even when performing. Lady Gaga has been very open about her struggles with PTSD and chronic pain from fibromyalgia. For her, meditation is a way to improve her mental health and gain relief from her physical discomfort. Even Sir Paul McCartney of The Beatles fame gains stability and calm from this practice. He's been meditating for over 50 years and said even a few minutes will help. No matter his schedule, he always finds time to gain a "still moment."

Whether you are center stage or just navigating life, taking a few moments to meditate is the ultimate way to keep your cool and shine.

Design Your Dream Days in Retirement

Find Purpose and Passion Beyond Your 9-to-5

After years of structure, responsibility, and hard work, retirement allows you the freedom to create days that belong to you. But with so much free time, it's natural to feel adrift. Gone are the days of planning around PTO and weekends. You only need intention and self-compassion to design a full, joyful, and meaningful life. You never need a job to give you that.

Start with a balanced foundation.

Every fulfilling life rests on balance, during a career or retirement. Think of your foundation as four pillars: financial security, emotional wellness, mental stimulation, and physical health. When you nurture these, it's easier to feel grounded and ready to embrace every day with purpose.

Give your days a gentle shape.

You don't need a rigid schedule anymore. Instead, imagine your day

as a gentle rhythm. Mornings could be for reading or learning something new, afternoons for a walk in the sunshine or coffee with a friend, evenings for creative hobbies or quiet reflection. This flow keeps life balanced while leaving room for surprise and spontaneity.

Rediscover what lights you up.

One of the greatest gifts of retirement is the chance to explore passions you may have set aside. Maybe it's painting, gardening, joining a book club, or volunteering for a cause close to your heart. These activities aren't "filler"; they fuel your sense of purpose and joy.

Care for your body and mind.

You deserve to feel vibrant. Gentle movement like yoga, swimming, or walking daily can bring energy and strength. Paired with mental workouts like puzzles, brain games, meditation, or even learning new technology, to keep



your mind sharp and engaged. Your body and spirit thrive when given daily care.

Embrace flexibility with kindness.

As you plan your days, remember that this is not about perfection. It's about creating a life that feels both nourishing and flexible. At the end of the day, reflect on what brought you joy and what you'd like to carry into tomorrow. And if plans shift? That's okay. Retirement is your chance to live life on your terms.

With a little structure, a spirit of curiosity, and a focus on well-being, each day can feel like a new adventure filled with purpose and possibility.

IS THAT HOT DOG WORTH IT?

HOW YOUR DIET IMPACTS YOUR CANCER RISK

Around 40% of Americans develop some type of cancer in their lifetime. That's a staggering number! You've likely known many people who have been treated for cancer, and it's almost always a surprise when you learn of anyone else getting the diagnosis. Even as we learn about new carcinogens and take action to cut obvious risks, such as quitting smoking or cutting down on alcohol, cancer diagnoses remain steady. This has led many to wonder what they can do to further reduce their risk of developing cancer.

As seen with many other aspects of health, what we eat directly affects how we feel. Recent research shows just how instrumental diet is in cancer prevention. A steady diet of hot dogs, bacon, deli meat, and other processed meats can increase your risk for cancer. Even red meat can play a role, so limiting your consumption is important.

However, while no food can completely prevent the development of cancer, some can help fight against it and reduce your risk. You want to look for foods with a high

concentration of phytochemicals, a natural plant compound that helps prevent disease. It contains berries, broccoli, cauliflower, garlic, grapes, grapefruit, leafy greens, pears, oranges, tomatoes, and sweet potatoes. And you can take it even further by pairing your fruits and vegetables with healthier protein options, such as fish, lean chicken, turkey, tofu, chickpeas, and eggs.

If you worry about getting cancer and want to take action to reduce your risks, one of the best things you can do is plan your grocery shopping. Make a comprehensive list that includes healthy options while avoiding cancer-causing foods. As grocery prices soar, consider looking for the less expensive options, which is perfectly okay, as long as you make healthy choices. Compare labels and choose options with the fewest ingredients. The more complicated the ingredients get, the less likely you know what you're consuming.



You are what you eat, so make sure to eat healthy food! It may help you live the longest, most fulfilling life possible.



KOREAN GROUND BEEF

INGREDIENTS

Sauce

- 1/4 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp honey, or a liquid sugar-free sweetener
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes

Stir Fry

- 2 tbsp avocado oil
- 1 lb lean ground beef, 85/15
- 1 tbsp fresh garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger root, minced

Finishing Touches

- 1 tbsp toasted sesame oil
- 1/4 cup green onions, thinly sliced

Inspired by HealthyRecipesBlogs.com

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce, honey, cornstarch, and red pepper flakes. Set aside.
2. In a large skillet, heat avocado oil over medium-high heat. Add beef and cook, stirring, until no longer pink, breaking it into crumbles as you cook, about 5 minutes.
3. Drain the beef and return it to the skillet. Add garlic and ginger and cook, stirring, for 1 minute.
4. Stir sauce into the beef, then cook for 2 more minutes, until heated through and the sauce thickens.
5. Off heat, drizzle the dish with sesame oil, sprinkle with sliced green onions, and serve over white rice (if desired).

TAKE A BREAK!



So ... now can I play with the giant stick?



I hope my neighbor's New Year's resolution is to throw out the pumpkins on their porch.