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- More consumers are seeking “clean” beauty products, “natural” household cleaners and products with less added chemicals. These specialized products can come at a greater cost though. Read the article below to learn about green cleaning substitutes you can easily make at home. Check out the Q&A section for information about parabens and why some people are choosing to avoid them.
- Ever heard of a phytochemical? Read the Food for Thought article to learn more about these essential compounds, how they benefit the body and where to get more of them!
- For an easy and nutritious summer snack, check out this month’s Featured Recipe. It is perfect for picnics, get-togethers or a warm afternoon.

SWWC
LIVE WELL

GO GREEN WITH YOUR CLEANING

By: Kim Aanestad

The amount of cleaning products in the household cleaning aisle can be overwhelming. The cost of these items can be just as overwhelming. You may wonder, do I really need a separate cleaning product for every surface in my house? And what are all these chemicals in my cleaning products anyways?

In reality, there is no need to spend a lot of money on multiple types of cleaning products. You can simply use a few common items that you may already have around your house to create your own cleaning products. Not only will you be saving money by making your own products, you will also help your health by not breathing in and exposing yourself to unwanted chemicals.

Baking soda

Baking soda works as a mild abrasive, helping to gently scrub things. The benefit of scrubbing with baking soda is that it will not scratch or damage delicate surfaces. Baking soda also works well to remove smelly odors. This common household item can also be used as a stain remover or to soften loads of laundry.

Lemons and lemon juice

Lemons are great for scrubbing the bottom of pots and pans. The acid in the juice works to clean and shine the pans. You can also use lemon juice on greasy messes. The essential oil of lemon not only smells amazing but is great for adding to all-purpose cleaning products or air fresheners.

Vinegar

Vinegar can be used as a fabric softener in the rinse cycle of your washing machine. Vinegar is also an inexpensive way to keep your floors and counters clean - mix some water and vinegar and your floors will shine! If you do not like the smell of vinegar, consider adding a few drops of your favorite essential oil to the mix. Combining vinegar with baking soda also makes a great sink and toilet cleaner.

Tea tree oil

Tea tree oil has antimicrobial properties that make it an excellent cleaning agent. Tea tree oil effectively fights many types of bacteria, viruses and fungi. To use tea tree oil for cleaning, dilute the oil in a spray bottle for disinfecting hard surfaces.

Homemade All-Purpose Cleaner

- ½ - 1 cup filtered water
- 1/2 cup white or apple cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. baking soda
- 10 drops tea tree, lavender, or lemon essential oil (for their disinfectant properties)

Directions:

Using a clean 12 oz spray bottle, mix the vinegar, essential oils and a little water before adding baking soda. Then fill to top with water. Gently shake to mix ingredients, spray surface, and wipe with a cloth.



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that manufacturers are not obligated by U.S. law to list all ingredients in consumer products, including household cleaners? Cleaning products that are labeled "green" do not necessarily mean they are safer. Chemicals found in most household cleaners can contribute to chronic respiratory problems, allergic reactions and headaches. The American Lung Association advises to keep the area well ventilated when using cleaning or household products. Open windows and doors. Never use cleaning products in a small, enclosed space.

By: Julia Miller

Q: WHAT ARE PARABENS AND ARE THEY 'BAD' FOR YOU?

A: Parabens are a type of preservative used in many cosmetics products such as:

- Makeup
- Moisturizers
- Hair care products
- Shaving products

These products often contain biodegradable ingredients. Parabens are added to prevent and reduce the growth of harmful bacteria and mold, extending the product's shelf life. Some studies have found parabens in almost all individuals' urine samples taken. There is concern that absorbing these preservatives can cause disruptions in the body, such as:

- Hormone disruption
- Fertility and reproductive issues
- An increased risk of cancer

The FDA does not have any regulations of these preservatives in products. As of now, they do not have sufficient information to show that parabens have a negative effect on human health. Think about it. . . if these products did not have parabens, harmful bacteria would be able to grow. So instead of a few preservatives you would be putting on a face full of bacteria and mold – gross!

Everyone is going to have their opinions, so decide for yourself. If bacteria is a no-go for you, pick your everyday products. If preservatives are not preferred, go organic – there are options for everyone! If a product has parabens in it, it will be labeled with the ingredients on the back of the packaging.



EXERCISE ANYWHERE

Regular movement is fundamental to good health. Moving or changing postures every 30 minutes is recommended. Exercise Anywhere provides you with basic stretching and strengthening exercises to incorporate throughout your day.

Squat



Stand with legs hip width apart. Maintaining a neutral spine and keeping knees over ankles, slowly lower hips back and down, then slowly stand up.

ORGANIZING AND YOUR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

By: Rachel Priest

Did you know being organized may benefit your mental and emotional health? Putting in the time and effort to get organized may help reduce stress and anxiety, give you the ability to focus your time elsewhere, improve relationships and sleep.

Organize your home or work environment

Not only could a cluttered area be physically dangerous, but it may affect you mentally, causing stress and anxiety. Think about the last time you could not find what you were looking for. How did you feel? Maybe you felt stressed because you were already running late for an important event or anxious because you thought you lost it. Taking time to declutter may prevent these stressful situations.

Organizing your home or work environment may also help increase productivity. In 2011, researchers at Princeton University found that clutter can actually make it more difficult to focus on a particular task. Specifically, they found that the brain can be overwhelmed by nearby objects not related to the task being worked on, making it harder to pay attention and work efficiently.

Organize your time

Organizing your time can improve your personal and work relationships. One way you can do this is by organizing your schedule. Try not to over-book yourself and write down deadlines. Say 'no' to plans or tasks that you know you do not have the time for or that will cause you stress.

Remember to schedule in some time for yourself. If you are always running around, you can tire yourself out and forget basic self-care actions. In this way, organizing your time may improve your sleeping and eating habits.



Organizational help

There are plenty of tools out there that can help you get organized. Pinterest is full of tips and tricks to organize your home, work and life. There is also a website called flylady.net that features products, tips and organizational strategies to help you declutter.

Being organized does not have to take a lot of effort or time. Just by consistently making time to organize your home or workplace, you will likely develop a new habit of organizing that can improve your physical and mental health.

QUICK CLICK

PROJECT NOAH

Project Noah is an interactive field guide that allows users to go on missions to discover local flora and fauna. You can upload photos of your finds to learn what interesting species have been found in your neighborhood. This is a great way for kids to learn about nature in their area and learn more about environments elsewhere!

By: Rachel Priest

CHALLENGE OF THE MONTH

DECLUTTER ONE AREA

Challenge yourself this month to declutter and get organized. It can be overwhelming to clean and organize your entire home, so start simple with one space. Pick your own space or choose one from below:

Purse, briefcase or backpack

Dump the contents from your daily bag. Only add the items you use back in. Let go of the rest.

Closet or drawers

Sort through your clothes or junk drawers. It can just be one drawer! Donate any items that you do not wear or need anymore.

Nightstand

Make the space near where you sleep simple and peaceful.

By: Kim Aanestad

EAT THE RAINBOW

By: Leigh Pomnitz

Have you ever been told to “eat the rainbow”? No, I am not talking about Skittles. I mean, being told to fill your plate with colorful produce at each meal or snack because naturally colorful foods are good for you.

But have you ever wondered what those colors from natural produce do for your body? Eating fruits and vegetables of different colors gives your body a wide range of valuable nutrients.

White fruits and vegetables: provide dietary fiber. Fiber helps reduce LDL cholesterol levels, supporting heart health.

Red pigmented produce: contain antioxidants anthocyanin and lycopene, which support heart health.

Orange and yellow foods: contain beta carotene, which your body converts to vitamin A, a vital nutrient for healthy bones and skin.

Green vegetables: provide vitamins C, K and E, which help support the immune system, healthy eyes and bones and reduce your risk of chronic diseases.

Blue and purple produce: contain anthocyanins and have anti-inflammatory properties.

Here are some ways to get more colorful produce into your diet:

- When grocery shopping, aim to buy at least one fruit or veggie of each color of the rainbow.
- Buy local, in-season produce to guarantee variety in your diet year-round.
- Aim to eat 5-7 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Add fruits and veggies to each snack and meal.
- Give fruits and vegetables the largest share of your plate.
- Add a variety of fruits and vegetables to a smoothie.
- Try spiralized zucchini as an alternative to pasta.
- Instead of a bread wrap, use lettuce.
- Make a soup by pureeing steamed vegetables in a blender.
- Eat fruit for dessert.



FEATURED RECIPE

INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE DRESSING:

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- Kosher salt and black pepper

FOR THE SALAD:

- 3 plum tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 red onion, finely diced
- 1 can black beans, rinsed
- 1 can black-eyed peas, rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups fresh corn kernels (from about 2 to 4 cobs) or thawed, drained frozen sweet corn
- 1 red, green or yellow bell pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and finely diced
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro leaves
- 1 scallion, chopped, for garnish (optional)
- Tortilla chips, for serving

DIRECTIONS:

1. Make the dressing: In a medium bowl, whisk the olive oil, vinegar, garlic, sugar, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper to combine.

2. Add the tomatoes, red onion, black beans, black-eyed peas, corn, bell pepper, jalapeño and cilantro. Toss to combine and season with salt and pepper to taste. Option to cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours before serving.

To serve, toss well and season to taste. Sprinkle with scallions and cilantro. Serve with tortilla chips.

PREP TIME: 20MINS

YIELDS: 8 CUPS

COWBOY CAVIAR



Nutritional Info (per 1 cup serving)

Calories	142
Fat (g)	5
Carbohydrates (g)	22
Fiber (g)	6.5
Protein (g)	5.5