ASK THE EXPERT

What Type of Butter Is Best to Use?
by Vanessa Mitchell, RDN

Butter has been hotly debated for decades and we’ve heard seemingly ever-changing advice. I believe it’s best to view one’s diet as a whole, in totality. When it comes to the part about fats, monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats appear to still provide the greatest health protection, such as olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds. So, whenever possible use plant oils rich in mono- and polyunsaturated fats. But when you are seeking the taste of butter, perhaps the way to go is to split the difference—use half the amount of butter and replace the other half with olive oil or avocado oil or canola oil. You can very easily blend your own half butter, half oil spread or purchase a butter blended with oil spread.

What Health/Wellness Podcast do You Recommend?
by Freddie Holmgren, MS, ACE Personal Trainer, Intrinsic Coach

The Greater Good Science Center, based at the University of California, Berkley, researches social and emotional wellbeing and provides practical research-based applications. They have an awesome 20-minute weekly podcast called The Science of Happiness about what it takes to live a happier life. They put research-based strategies into practice and share the science behind them. In the first 10 minutes the host interviews a person who tried out the practice in real life. It’s fun and insightful to learn about their experiences. The episode closes with a brief discussion on the research behind the strategy. Episode topics are wide-ranging, such as why music soothes us, the case for believing in yourself, and what happens when we play.

The Science of Happiness is available wherever you get your podcasts, or at https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/podcasts/series/the_science_of_happiness
This month we will continue our bodyweight series by focusing on exercises targeting the muscles in the arms. The muscles in the arms are often thought to only include the Triceps and Biceps, but in fact include the muscles of the shoulder, and forearm.

Below are two bodyweight exercises for the arm muscles. These movements can be done alone to shape, tone and strengthen, or can be added into an existing exercise routine.

**Shoulder Taps:** This exercise will specifically challenge the muscles of the shoulders, triceps, and forearms as well as the core muscles.

1. Begin in a push-up position, with palms flat on the floor.
2. Tighten all muscles through your legs, glutes, and abdominals. Maintain a straight spine from your head to your heels.
3. Bring one hand up and across your body to the opposite shoulder, briefly touch and hold, bring hand back to the floor and repeat using other hand and shoulder.
4. If you're new to this movement it's best to do it in front of a mirror to make sure you're maintaining a neutral position.
5. This movement can be timed with increasing durations for added difficulty, or by setting increasing totals of touches on either side.

**Dips:** Also known as “Tricep dips,” this movement will especially target the three heads (medial, lateral, long) of the Tricep.

1. Sit on the edge of a chair, step, or weight bench and place your hands just outside of your hips gripping the edges.
2. Fingers should be pointed towards your feet, legs extended in front of you about hip width apart with heels touching the ground.
3. Press through your palms so that your body slides forward far enough that your bottom extends beyond the front edge of the chair.
4. Slowly lower yourself until your elbows are bent to 90 degrees. Control the movement throughout the full range of motion.
5. Pushing through your palms and pressing feet into the floor, lift yourself back up slowly until your arms are almost straight and repeat.

To find more beginner core bodyweight exercises visit

Exercise Database & Library | Featured Exercises from ACE at [acefitness.org](http://acefitness.org)
For many folks, lunch presents a fantastic opportunity to jam-pack the meal with an array of delicious, nutrient-rich, on-plan foods. If you don’t have to worry about catering to certain likes and dislikes at lunch time from those in your circle, it’s the perfect meal to take advantage of eating what best supports you.

**Tip #1:** A little planning and preparation go a long way to maximizing lunch-time potential. In no way is this new news, but it’s so foundational to making your lunch goals a reality! Batch cooking, for example, can pay off in a big way.

**Tip #2:** Plan for/pack a lunch that you look forward to eating. If it’s rather tasteless and boring you are greatly increasing the likelihood of finding yourself ordering food from a restaurant or cafeteria.

**Tip #3:** Invest in the right kind of tools, such as clear containers with tight-fitting lids, right-size ice packs, a bento-style lunch box and/or an appealing and functional lunch tote.

**Tip #4:** For maximum hunger control well into the afternoon or all the way to dinner, anchor your meal with great-tasting protein-rich foods, fiber-rich foods (which include a hearty amount of non-starchy vegetables) and heart-healthy fats.

**Tip #5:** Are there others in your workday who have similar lunch-time goals and interests as you that you can partner with? Split up foods to bring, share taco Tuesday or salad bar Thursday, or alternate days of supplying big pots of soups or stews to share with each other, or… use your creativity and imagination!

**Tip #6:** Leftovers are the best for lunch! They’re the ultimate fast food. Plan to prepare plenty to allow for leftovers. You’ve already done the work—all you have to do is pack leftovers in containers when cleaning up after dinner to then grab and go the next day.
STRESS AND MINDFULNESS

What’s Stressing You: Technology

by Kathleen Connelly, BA, ACE Certified Personal Trainer and Health Coach

Advances in technology create improvements in how we live, work and play. However, technology is changing so rapidly, keeping up with it has become that much harder. Like most things, there are pros and cons, and how technology affects our health is no different.

Recent research studies have discovered technology can have negative effects on our health including increasing stress, symptoms of depression, sleep disorders and anxiety. Specifically, technology can increase stress by:

• Making you rush through things; there is pressure to be more productive.
• Trying to keep up with evolving technology makes us have to continuously adapt our methods.
• Comparing ourselves to others creates pressure to make connections.
• Affecting our sleep; light from screens can affect melatonin production and interrupt circadian rhythms; this can make it harder to fall asleep and can prevent deep restorative sleep.

Increased stress can increase your risk for certain health conditions including high blood pressure, heart disease, digestive problems, headaches, muscle tension/pain, anxiety, and depression.

How do you reduce your stress from technology, use it less! Try one or more of these simple suggestions.

• Turn off notifications and try to carry your phone only during certain times of the day.
• Set dedicated times during the day for email, reading news, and social media and stick to those time limits.
• Use a watch, alarm clock and even a notebook for task lists instead of your phone.
• Delete apps you don’t need. Arrange apps in a certain way to limit temptation. For example, position social media or game apps farther away from your home screen.
• Use the grayscale setting on your phone to decrease the marketing through colors.

If you are interested in going bigger, participate in No Screen Week, May 2-8, 2022. Visit screenfree.org for the pledge, support, and resources to achieve a weeklong screen free challenge.