Who could argue that the University of Richmond’s campus isn’t gorgeous this time of year? The cherry blossoms are blooming, flowers are beautifully planted in all corners of the campus, and the grass is starting to green again. But with all of this beauty comes a wealth of allergies and a thick dusting of yellow pollen. Try these tips so that you can enjoy the beautiful campus and clear sinuses as well.

1. Eat foods that are rich with antioxidants so that your body can fight inflammation.

2. Compliment your regular allergy regimen with a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement to help reduce allergy symptoms.

3. Keep air conditioning and furnace filters clean. Change the filters at least every three months to reduce the amounts of pollen and mold that can come through.

4. Run the air conditioner. While fresh air is always nice, this time of year, leaving doors and windows open is a quick way to let pollen and other allergens into your house.

5. A doormat with natural fibers, such as rope, can help trap dirt, mold, and other allergens that can be tracked in.

6. Spring cleaning is key. Pick a weekend to deep clean your home. Throughout the winter dust has been gathering in hidden places. This can have a big impact on allergens that are located in the house. Tackle one room at a time and bust that dust!

7. Similarly, check the bathroom for mold that may be hiding behind the toilet to make sure condensation hasn’t caused mold, be sure to wash your bathmat frequently, and keep the vent running when you shower to avoid condensation.

8. Shower and wash your hair before bed. This gets rid of the pollen and other allergens you may have picked up during the day and will keep them out of your bed.

9. Wear sunglasses when outside to protect your eyes from pollen.

10. Avoid outdoor activities when pollen is at its peak.

Source: http://www.rd.com/health/wellness/spring-allergies/
Educational Corner: Alleviate Stress with Exercise

Have you ever tried to get rid of a bad mood by going to the gym, or going on a long walk? Chances are you succeeded in boosting your mood. Research has shown that there is a strong link between exercise and mental health. This research shows that exercise can help improve long-term and short-term mental health troubles such as:

1. **Reversing Stress.** Exercise can provide you with immediate relief from stress and frustration. Even twenty minutes can help release endorphins to help fight stress.

2. **Building self esteem.** Achieving fitness goals, no matter the size, can build confidence. Setting goals and reaching them is one way to motivate yourself to be a little better each day.

3. **Lifting depression.** Exercise releases positive endorphins that can counter the chemicals in the brain that worsen depression. Though it is difficult to counter the effects of depression, research shows that many individuals with mild depression have seen results when exercising for 30-40 minutes most days of the week. Mind–body exercises such as yoga have also been found to have beneficial results.

Exercise provides immediate results when it comes to mental health. While it can take weeks to see physical goals such as weight loss, stick with your exercise routine and remember to think about staying mentally fit too, not just physically fit!


Healthy Cooking: Carrot, Kale, and Cabbage Salad

**Ingredients:**
- 1/2 cup pumpkin seeds, roasted
- 4 tsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 1/8 tsp salt
- Pinch of pepper
- 2 cups raw kale, ribs removed and leaved chopped
- 2 cups cabbaged, finely sliced into ribbons
- 1 cup carrots, peeled and coarsely grated
- 1/2 cup cranberries

**Method:**
1. Preheat the oven broiler on high. Evenly spread the pumpkin seeds over a baking sheet and place on the middle rack in the oven. Broil the seeds for about 1-2 minutes, checking frequently to avoid burning. Remove when evenly toasted and let cool.
2. In large mixing bowl, whisk together vinegar, oil, lemon juice, honey, salt, and pepper.
3. Toss Kale and cabbage in the dressing. Add carrots, cranberries, and roasted pumpkin seeds. Toss to combine.

Source: [theLiveFreeGroup.com](http://theLiveFreeGroup.com)
VITA: Virginia Income Tax Assistance

Individuals and families who earned less than $54,000 in 2016 are invited to visit UR Downtown now through April 18 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45–7 p.m. and the following Saturdays from 9:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m.: April 8, and April 15. Taxpayers may use My Free Taxes to enter and e-file their own taxes with guidance from a trained coach or have their taxes prepared by a certified volunteer. This site schedules appointments and accepts walk-ins on Thursdays and accepts walk-ins only on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Source: http://downtown.richmond.edu/programs/VITA.html

Anthem Corporate 5k: Sign up for the training team!

The Anthem Corporate Run, formally known as the Corporate 4-miler has been slightly altered to a shorter 5k distance. Though the distance has been changed, everything else remains the same: good times with your friends and coworkers from all over RVA, a little healthy exercise (runners and walkers welcome!), and a good old summer night party afterwards. This year’s event will take place on Thursday, June 8th, at 7pm at Innsbrook.

Interested in training? We’ve got you covered! Whether you’re already an avid walker/runner, or just looking to get started, our Corporate 5k Training Team will help you reach your goals. The 6-week program costs $20 and will include Tuesday/Thursday morning (7am) and evening (5:15pm) group workout options as well as a detailed, progressive program you can follow for all of the other days of the week. To register, please visit services.recreation.richmond.edu (credit card payments), or the Member Services desk at the Weinstein Center (cash, check and SpiderCard payments). Registration is open now and training begins May 2nd!
National Park RX Day is celebrated across the United States to promote the growing movement of prescribing parks and nature to patients to improve human health. It encourages everyone to envision their visits to parks and public lands as very important parts of their physical and mental health.

Source: https://www.nps.gov/shen/ride-the-drive.htm

Shenandoah National Park invited bicyclists (and other non-motorized vehicles) to enjoy Skyline Drive’s north district on April 23, 2017 from 7:00am – 5:00pm. During those hours the portion of the Drive from Front Royal (mile 0) to Thornton Gap (31.5) will be open to non-motorized vehicles only.

The event is a celebration of National Park Week and National Park RX Day. National Park Week is America’s largest celebration of national heritage. It’s about making great connections, exploring amazing places, discovering open spaces, enjoying affordable vacations, and enhancing America’s best idea—The National Parks!

Karen’s Korner, Karen Hensley, UR Dietician: Staying Hydrated—Staying Healthy

Making sure that your body is hydrated helps your heart pump blood through the blood vessels to the muscles easier. It also helps the muscles work more efficiently. Dehydration can be a serious condition that can lead to a host of health problems from swollen feet or a headache to more serious and life-threatening illnesses such as heat stroke.

Your goal is to be hydrated throughout the day, which means carrying water with you and drinking fluids frequently. The amount of water a person needs varies from person to person and depends on climatic conditions, clothing worn and exercise intensity and duration. Thirst is not a good indicator of when you need to drink. If you get thirsty, you’re already dehydrated. The easiest way to tell if you are hydrated is to pay attention to the color of your urine. Pale and clear urine means you’re well hydrated. If it’s dark, drink more fluids.

For most people, water is the best thing to drink to stay hydrated. Don’t forget that some foods contain water also, such as fruit and vegetables. Try to avoid soft drinks and fruit juices as they are loaded with sugar.

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