

# MMHG Beneficial Wellness Newsletter

ISSUE 21

SPRING 2018

## Hot Topics:

**New Summer Incentive for BCBS Members in the works— stay tuned!**

Join the MMHG wellness Community— Follow MMHG Wellness on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [Instagram](#)

Solve the MMHG Puzzle on Page 8

Check out fitness center coupons on page 11!

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## WHY WELLNESS?

Dear MMHG Member,

The rising cost of healthcare has been in the news for several years now. It's a problem that healthcare providers, insurers and politicians have been scrambling to control. One successful method of control, that has taken root across the country, focuses on prevention of future disease or "Wellness".

According to the CDC, chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and stroke account for the majority of healthcare costs in the United States. They also can be stopped in their tracks by positive lifestyle changes. The concept is simple: an increase in healthy behaviors will decrease the impact of chronic diseases.

Over time, these changes can also lead to lower healthcare costs. And, since most Americans receive their health insurance as an employee benefit, employers are beginning to see the value of investing in a healthy labor force.

It's said that old habits are hard to break. However, when a person truly commits to altering their lifestyle, and is supported by programs designed to facilitate healthy decisions, progress is possible.

So where do you go for support? If you're a member of MMHG, all you have to do is go to work! MMHG is proud to offer you and your family an award winning wellness program. Our focus is to educate, support and incent you to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors.

Take a look at the programs that we offer. Find one that interests you and make the decision to participate. Most of the programs are fun and educational. But most importantly, you'll be doing something to improve your health and the health of your family.

Warm regards,  
Maureen Adams,  
MMHG Wellness Committee  
Chairwoman



### Program Ends Soon!

#### Spring Health Assessment Incentive Program:

**March 1– May 31, 2018**

Eligible Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) and Harvard Pilgrim (HP) subscribers enrolled in active non-Medicare plans can earn a gift card for participating in the Health Assessment Incentive Program.

#### **For More Information:**

BCBS Members Click [HERE](#)

HP Members Click [HERE](#)



Sign up to receive future quarterly issues of the MMHG Beneficial Wellness Newsletter by email!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip this form and return to:  
MMHG Wellness  
PO Box 3390  
Plymouth, MA 02361

or send request by email to  
[wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org)

# Healthcare IQ Corner: How to be a Savvy Consumer



The Healthcare IQ Corner is a regular feature of the MMHG **Beneficial Wellness Newsletter**. With medical costs continuing to rise, consumers are challenged more than ever to make informed decisions about their healthcare.

## CompareCare- Great New Website! <https://masscomparecare.gov/>

CompareCare is a collaboration between Massachusetts government health care agencies and health care partners who provide care and coverage for residents of the Commonwealth. According to their website CompareCare's mission is "to provide Massachusetts health care consumers the guidance and tools they need to become active partners in navigating their health care decisions."

CompareCare's new tools are designed to help Massachusetts health care consumers like you:

- Compare costs of medical procedures in different health care facilities and different cities.
- Compare the quality of different hospitals and health care facilities near you.
- Make informed decisions about your

## Important: Reminder for MMHG Members:

**You are required to notify your employer within (30) days of the following events:**

- Divorce/Remarriage
- Medicare Eligibility of yourself or any member on your plan
- Marriage
- Birth of a child
- Adoption
- Legal guardianship
- Dependent loss of status as a dependent (except for turning age 26)
- Change of Address

health insurance and health care.

- Solve problems you are facing with your health care.

## Why is health care transparency important?

Price and quality tools can help you and your family save money, ensure quality care, and make better health care decisions. But it's often difficult for consumers to make informed decisions when it comes to health care because price and quality metrics are either unavailable, incomplete or confusing. CompareCare aims to provide the consumer with cost and quality information, through it's easy to use website that links directly with health plans (including Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and Harvard Pilgrim). You can check the average cost for common procedures, and see how hospitals and surgical centers located near you compare in terms of quality.

## Ask Informed Questions

The website has an excellent [Resource Library](#) with easy to understand conversation guides regarding important topics like [communicating with your health care team](#), and [choosing a behavioral health provider](#). You can also select a particular procedure like [colonoscopy](#), for example, and get lists of questions to ask your provider and your health plan.

## Troubleshoot an Issue

You can also troubleshoot issues like [addressing a problem with your care](#), or [if you need help getting or paying for health insurance](#).

The website directs you to government agencies that can help when you've hit a dead end, need support, want to make a complaint or report suspected fraud.

Check out <https://masscomparecare.gov/> and let us know what you think!

**The information contained in this newsletter can be used to increase your personal awareness of health and wellness.**

**Always contact your health care provider before beginning a new exercise or nutrition program, and when you have questions and concerns about medical issues impacting you and/or your family.**

## 3 Ways to Save Money Now

### Smart Shopper Rewards Program:

Eligible BCBS members enrolled in active non—Medicare plans can earn up to \$250 when they shop for certain health services (like colonoscopy or mammography) in an effort to choose a high quality lower cost provider. Visit [www.mmhg.org](http://www.mmhg.org) for more information.

### CanRx Prescription Drug Program:

MMHG is now offering to non-Medicare HMO and PPO (BCBS & HP) members a new, cost saving international mail order drug program for brand name prescriptions— with no copays! The program is administered by CanaRx and does not replace your current prescription drug plan. Visit [www.MMHGRx.com](http://www.MMHGRx.com) to learn more!

### High Tech Imaging Savings:

The MMHG and Shields Health Care Group are collaborating to help educate members on the cost savings of using a non hospital based provider for high tech imaging. Rate Saver and Benchmark plan subscribers enjoy waived copayments for high tech imaging when they use a non hospital based facility like Shields. (check plan for details). Find a Shields location near you at [www.shields.com](http://www.shields.com) or call 1-800-258-4674.



## Free Identity Protection for BCBS Members!



Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA offers FREE identity protection services to members through Experian. For more information visit [BCBS Member Central](#) or call Member Services at 1-800-782-3675.

# Attention HP Members: Doctor on Demand Available

For Harvard Pilgrim members, Doctor on Demand can treat many common medical conditions through live online video.

- See and talk to a board-certified doctor from your home or office through your smartphone, tablet or computer.
- You and your family get a convenient way to receive care with a cost per visit equal to your PCP- or lowest tier-level cost share.

- You can download the app now and be prepared when someone in the family comes down with a UTI, skin rash, pink eye or influenza.
- Most prescriptions can be instantly sent to your nearest pharmacy.

You'll be glad a doctor is only a few taps away on the day you can barely get out of bed. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare | Dr. DOCTOR ON DEMAND

Don't wait to feel better. See a Doctor Now.

DOWNLOAD APP >

## Blue Cross Members- Meet the MYBLUE Member App

Check out this easy-to-use **newly updated** tool that gives **BCBSMA** members a convenient, secure way to manage their health care. With a couple of clicks, members can:

- **Get access to an interactive ID card, and email a copy of it to their doctor**
- **Direct dial important phone numbers, like Member Service**
- **Review recent claims, doctor visits, and prescriptions**
- **Find nearby doctors, dentists, and hospitals**
- **View information for dependents under 18 and more**

Download the app at no cost from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

## Harvard Pilgrim Members- Get HPHConnect-ed

By downloading the free *HPHConnect* app you'll have direct access to your personal account login screen. You'll be just a few clicks away from the following features:

### Provider search

See a list of your providers or search for a provider by current location or zip code

### Benefits and eligibility

View your member information, including member ID # and PCP, as well as real-time deductible and out-of-pocket limit amounts used

### Personal health record

See information on visits, procedures, immunizations, illnesses and conditions, medication profile, allergies and health tracker

Download the app at no cost from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

## FREE Wellness Workshop Flex, Stretch & Strengthen

Improve the condition of your body with a combination of core training, strength training, flexibility and agility

Kick Up Your Health a Notch— by learning to work muscle groups in patterns that will condition you for the things you do in real life. Join us for this free workshop and you'll receive a "Stretching to Go Kit" to continue the practice at home. You will feel completely energized by the hour's end. **Space is limited— so sign up today!**

**Wednesday May 30th 5:00-6:00 P.M.**  
**Silver Lake High School**

Regional programs are FREE and open to all employees, retirees and spouses. Register at [wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org).



## Healthy Tip: Finding Work/Life Balance

In a 2010 study 46% of people said their job demands often interfere with their family life and overall 89% said achieving a work-life balance was a problem. The demands of a career and personal life will always be a juggling act. However, you can learn to set limits and take control of your time. Here are a few ways that can help:

- ⇒ Manage Your Time— Create a to-do list, then cut the activities you don't enjoy or have time for.
- ⇒ Learn to say no— it's okay to say no to extra work or projects so you can focus on activities that are more meaningful to you.
- ⇒ Leave work at home— Technology makes it easy to stay connected to work. Commit to separating work time from personal time.

# Time to Rethink Your Drinking?



Content Source: National Institutes of Health

Visit [alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov](http://alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov)

Experts estimate that millions of Americans could benefit from treatment for an alcohol problem, but most don't get the help they need.

To make it easier to find help, NIH's National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism developed the [NIAAA Alcohol Treatment Navigator](#). An online tool that you can use to find help for

yourself or a family member or friend.

Alcohol use disorder is a health condition that can improve with treatment. But the same treatment path doesn't work for everyone. Searching for the right treatment can be complicated.

The navigator makes this complicated process easier by explaining what you need to know to recognize and choose quality care. It describes how to find addiction therapists, treatment programs, and board-certified doctors.

The navigator also offers tips for spotting the signs of quality treatment. It can help you become an informed consumer when considering which alcohol treatment services are right for you.



## IMPORTANT LINKS:

[NIAA ALCOHOL TREATMENT NAVIGATOR](#)

[DRINKING TO EXCESS](#)

[BIOLOGY OF ADDICTION](#)

[ALCOHOL CALCULATORS](#)

[RETHINKING DRINKING: ALCOHOL AND YOUR HEALTH](#)

[ALCOHOL USE DISORDER](#)

[ALCOHOL TREATMENT: MANY ROUTES TO RECOVERY \(INFOGRAPHIC\)](#)

# Online Wellness Resources for BCBS & HP Members

## Blue Cross Blue Shield Members:

[www.bluecrossma.com/ahealthyme](http://www.bluecrossma.com/ahealthyme)

The [ahealthyme](#) website is your own personal wellness planner and resource for health information.

### Create your own action plan:

- A health assessment that gives you a personal wellness score
- Self-paced workshops on topics like healthy eating and quitting smoking
- Nutrition and exercise trackers to keep you motivated
- Fitness Benefit info— get up to \$300 to join a gym!

### Learn about health your way:

- Read articles, tips and the Healthy Times newsletter
- Watch videos, listen to podcasts
- Take quizzes, risk assessments and more!

Whatever your health goals are— from losing weight to managing stress— [ahealthyme](#) can help get you there.

## Harvard Pilgrim Members:

[www.harvardpilgrim.org/wellnessaccount](http://www.harvardpilgrim.org/wellnessaccount)

Harvard Pilgrim's online wellness program offers you access to health resources, wellness workshops, tracking tools and more!

- Learn about important topics affecting your health
- Access preventative care guidelines
- See educational resources on condition and disease management including cholesterol, blood pressure, asthma, ADHD, depression, diabetes, cancer and heart health.
- Take a health quiz
- Look up health topics A-Z
- Check out health and wellness publications
- Search online resources via a web library
- Take a health questionnaire and learn your score
- Fitness Benefit info— get up to \$300 to join a gym!

Visit [www.harvardpilgrim.org/wellness](http://www.harvardpilgrim.org/wellness) for well being support based on where you are in life.

# Preventing Tick Bites

Content Source: [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)

Tick exposure can occur year-round, but ticks are most active during warmer months (April-September). Know [which ticks are most common in your area](#).

## Before You Go Outdoors

Know where to expect ticks. Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.

Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remain protective through several washings.

Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. EPA's helpful [search tool](#) can help you find the product that best suits your needs. Always follow product instructions.

⇒ Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old.

⇒ Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.

## Avoid Contact with Ticks

Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.

Walk in the center of trails.

## After You Come Indoors

Check your clothing for ticks. Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.

Shower soon after being outdoors. Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease and may be effective in reducing the risk of other tick-borne diseases. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and it is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

Check your body for ticks after being outdoors. Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.

MMHG Wellness & Plymouth County Extension Present  
a Free Workshop:  
[Ticks & Tick-borne Diseases](#)

Thursday May 31st 5:00-6:00 P.M.  
Kingston Town Hall

Join Plymouth County Extension entomologist Blake Dinius for an important discussion about the ticks living in our backyards and the risks they pose. Blake will review basic tick biology, scientifically proven protection methods, and bust any commonly held myths.

[Register at wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org)

Check these parts of your body and your child's body for ticks:

- ⇒ Under the arms
- ⇒ In and around the ears
- ⇒ Inside belly button
- ⇒ Back of the knees
- ⇒ In and around the hair
- ⇒ Between the legs
- ⇒ Around the waist

Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and daypacks.

## Yikes- I Found a Tick! Now What?

Content Source: [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)

If you find a tick attached to your skin, there's no need to panic—the key is to remove the tick as soon as possible. There are several tick removal devices on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers work very well.

### How to remove a tick

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it

alone and let the skin heal.

3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet. Consider saving the tick (in sealed container) to have it tested.

Avoid folklore remedies such as "painting" the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible—not waiting for it to detach.



**PREVENT  
LYME  
DISEASE!**

### Follow-up

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.



**The UMass Amherst  
Laboratory of Medical  
Zoology (LMZ) tests  
ticks to determine**

**whether or not they carry the pathogens that cause Lyme Disease and ten other tick-borne pathogens.**  
Click [HERE](#) for more information.

**In the Spotlight**

# MMHG Wellness Spotlight— B.A.T.

**Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT) is a model for a successful employee wellness program. In this “MMHG Spotlight” BAT Wellness Coordinator Glenn Geiler answers a few questions about why wellness is working for them.**

**Q)** When and why did BAT begin focusing of employee wellness?

**A)** In 2016 BAT was awarded a Working on Wellness grant, provided by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health. Part of the grant application process was an online survey that asked employees what their health risks were and areas of interest. Based on the information from the survey, we began to focus on how we could utilize the grant to enhance ongoing MMHG events and target specific areas of interest.

The feedback from the survey was that BAT was ready to move more and sit less! That’s just what we did. We formed a Wellness Committee and used the MMHG Spring Walking Challenge as a kickoff event at Borderland State Park.

**Q)** What kind of employee wellness programs has BAT offered employees?

**A)** BAT participates in the MMHG Walking, and the Maintain Don’t Gain Challenges. We always take advantage of the annual MMHG Wellness Grant to host worksite wellness seminars and classes like T’ai Chi. We’ve even offered employees one on one health coaching. In addition many BAT employees attend MMHG regional workshops, like the organic gardening and stretching classes.

Last year we kicked off the MMHG Spring Walking challenge with a “Fit Trip” to Borderland State Park. We provided each staff member with water bottles, New England Hiking Guides, and local street maps. The Working on Wellness Grant we received provided funds for new sneakers or hiking boots, and fitness trackers (like Fitbit’s).

The Working on Wellness Grant provided reimbursement for a number of exercise classes. BAT Staff participated in: 10 charity races, 76 water aerobics classes, 53 yoga classes, 1 jazz dance lesson, 36 spin classes, and 20 cycle training sessions...and we’re still counting!

**Q)** What has been the most popular employee wellness program?



**Brockton Area Transit Authority employees have embraced workplace wellness.**

**A)** Our staff really loved the sneaker and Fitbit program! Staff who never thought about getting a fitness tracker, like a Fitbit, are loving it. We are a competitive and love tracking our steps, participating in challenges amongst ourselves and we love watching our steps add up in the MMHG walking challenges against other groups.

*BAT spotlight continues on page 7*

**“This is a cool graphic of everything we accomplished in FY17 and FY18!”**

**-Glenn Geiler, B.A.T. wellness coordinator**



“Our employee wellness programs are successful due to the encouragement of BAT leadership.”

-Glenn Geiler BAT

## BAT Spotlight (continued from page 6)

Q) Has the BAT workplace culture changed since you began offering these programs? In what ways?

A) We are a small office and the Wellness Program has really provided us the opportunity to get to know one another better. We talk more about being active, how our workouts are going; we also ask each other if we want to take walks during our breaks. I have

also noticed that because of the seminars and nutritional counseling, most are bringing or buying healthier lunches and sharing healthy eating tips!

Q) Why do you think your programs have been so successful?

A) Our employee wellness programs are successful due to the encouragement of BAT leader-

ship. BAT Administrator, Ray Ledoux, has participated in all of the Wellness Program activities and encourages the staff to do the same.

Ray has been very supportive! Upcoming wellness-related activities and healthy eating tips are posted on a Wellness Program section of our bulletin board too. As we have all made changes to be healthier we have also motivated each other.

## Community Matters—

What is your town or school doing to improve health and wellbeing and the environment in your community? We'd love to hear from you! Send us an email at [wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org)

## Inspired by Andrew

*MMHG Wellness asked Town of Hanover teacher, Elizabeth Downs, to share a few words about what inspired her to run the 2018 Boston Marathon.*

By Elizabeth Downs

A few months ago I decided to run the Boston Marathon as part of the Special Olympics Xtra Mile team. My reason was to honor my cousin, Andrew Lawson. Andrew passed away February 2018 after a two year battle of cancer. Andrew and I had a truly amazing bond. He inspired me to pursue a

career in education. He taught me, and thousands of others, the meaning of inclusion and acceptance. He made everyone better for knowing him.

My journey to the Boston Marathon has been incredible. The love and support that I have received from my family, friends, and school has been incredible, and it all started because of Andrew. He will continue to leave his mark here, inspiring others to do amazing things.

*We will continue to be Lawson Strong!*



**Hanover teacher Liz Downs at the finish line of the 2018 Boston Marathon!**

## Plant a Kitchen Herb Garden

*Herbs to grow in your backyard (or in pots on your deck or patio): basil, oregano, mint, thyme, sage, dill, parsley, rosemary, lavender*

Fresh herbs are a delicious way to add flavor and nutrition to your diet. Super-market herbs are expensive and spoil quickly. Growing your own backyard culinary herb garden is easier than you think and once established perennial herbs will come back each year.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

### Location:

Find a sunny spot in your yard with good soil drainage.

### Prepare the space:

Clear and dig up the ground. Your garden should be big enough to accommodate the number of plants you want to grow. Figure on a couple of feet in diameter per plant.

Amend the soil with compost prior to planting.

### Get planting:

Visit your local garden center or farmer's market to purchase seedlings. Once planted, water frequently until established.





Solve and return the completed puzzle to us no later than June 20th (be sure to include your name and email address) and you'll be entered in a random drawing to win a Wellness Goody Bag!!

Email—  
wellness@mmhg.org  
Mail—  
MMHG  
PO Box 3390  
Plymouth, MA 02361  
FAX— 774-773-9403

Congratulations to Pamela Carlin from Marshfield. Pamela wins a wellness goody bag for solving the "Focus on Fiber" word scramble puzzle in the winter newsletter!

**Healthy Tip:**

Rinse vegetables before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub vegetables briskly with your hands to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. Dry with a clean cloth towel or paper towel after rinsing.

# Solve the MMHG Puzzle: Leafy Greens for the Win!

"Dark green leafy vegetables are great sources of nutrition. Salad greens, kale and spinach are rich in vitamins A, C, E and K, and broccoli, bok choy and mustard are also rich in many of the B-vitamins. These vegetables also contain an abundance of carotenoids-antioxidants that protect cells and play roles in blocking the early stages of cancer. They also contain high levels of fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium and calcium. Furthermore, greens have very little carbohydrates, sodium and cholesterol." [USDA Agricultural Research Service](#)



**Get your Greens Smoothie Recipe (serves 2)**

**Ingredients:**

- 2 cups chopped fresh kale, thick stems removed
- 2 Cups frozen mango
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 banana
- 1 tablespoon of your favorite protein powder (optional)

**Method:**

In a blender, combine ingredients Blend until smooth.

D B D M P Q W Y O K C B S M A  
M A S R Z A O A A S R R J U R  
L E N M A H R L P O A Q P S U  
V U E D C H E S C T O O S T G  
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K C O E I L O S R E I A R R L  
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Y A J V I M W O P I A D L G L  
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| <b>ARUGULA</b>          | <b>KALE</b>           |
| <b>BOK CHOY</b>         | <b>MUSTARD GREENS</b> |
| <b>BROCCOLI RABE</b>    | <b>PARSLEY</b>        |
| <b>COLLARDS</b>         | <b>SPINACH</b>        |
| <b>DANDELION GREENS</b> | <b>SWISS CHARD</b>    |
|                         | <b>WATERCRESS</b>     |

**Quick Parsley Spinach Salad (myrecipes.com)**

Add sliced strawberries for a seasonal twist.

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 5 cups baby spinach leaves
- 1 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 3 tablespoons chopped pistachios (or other chopped nut)

How to Make It Combine lemon juice, olive oil, salt, pepper, and Dijon mustard in a medium bowl. Add spinach and parsley; toss to coat. Top with pistachios.



**FUN FACTS**

There are 7,755 farms in Massachusetts working on over 523,000 acres to produce \$492 million in agricultural products. At nearly \$48 million, the state ranks 5th in the nation for direct market sales and 3rd in the nation for direct market sales per operation. Direct market sales account for 10% of the state's total sales of agricultural products.

(<http://www.mass.gov/agr/massgrown/>)

Click [HERE](#) to find local agricultural resources including a farmer's market guide and local food guide.

Click [HERE](#) for a Massachusetts- Grown produce Availability Calendar.

May & JuneFarmer's Market Finds:

Asparagus, lettuce & other leafy greens, mung beans, mushrooms, potatoes, scallions, spinach, sprouts, strawberries, beets, arugula, cauliflower, peas, radishes, bok choy & more



# It's Farmer's Market Time Again!



## Farmer's Markets- for Health, Community & the Environment

By: Nicole Bonomi MMHG Wellness Committee Vice Chairwoman

Medical professionals tell us to eat more fruits & vegetables. Community leaders urge us to shop at small businesses to boost the local economy. We know that caring for the environment is important too.

Shopping at the local Farmer's Market is a great way to choose healthier food, give back to the community, and be environmentally conscious.

### Fresh, Tasty and Nutritious Produce for Better Health

Produce imported from far away has traveled on trucks or

planes, and sat in warehouses before it gets to you. Locally grown produce means a shorter time between the farm and your table. That means better taste, more nutrients, and a longer shelf life. When fruits and veggies taste better we are likely to eat more of them. It's easy to make extra space on your plate for freshly picked native corn, red ripe tomatoes, purple eggplants and crunchy cucumbers!

### Support & Strengthen Local Communities

At the farmer's market you will find colorful displays of just-harvested fruits and vegetables from local farms as well as an array of other locally produced items, like freshly baked breads, blueberry jam, maple syrup, local honey, freshly made cheeses, flowers, eggs and more.

Some markets provide musical entertainment and special programs for children. Shopping at the farmers market gives you the opportunity to connect personally with your local farmer, food or craft artisan and to meet other members from

the community.

Purchasing fruits and vegetables from farmer's markets supports local family farms, giving them the valuable capital they need to keep operating. According to the [American Farmland Trust](#), farms support local economies, create jobs and typically generate more revenue for local governments than they demand in services.

### For the Environment

By purchasing locally grown foods you help maintain farmland and green and/or open space in your community. Well-managed agricultural land provides food and cover for wildlife, helps control flooding, and absorbs and filters storm water. Well-managed farmland also traps carbon in the soil, benefiting the environment.



## Eat This Not That— Strawberry Nice Cream

Craving ice cream? You won't believe how delicious and easy it is to make a healthier soft serve "nice cream" treat with no added sugar and way less calories. All you need are a few ingredients and a food processor or blender.

### Strawberry Nice Cream

Adapted from [Nutritionfacts.org](http://Nutritionfacts.org)

#### Ingredients:

4 ripe bananas, peeled, cut

into chunks and frozen  
2 tablespoons of almond butter (you can use 2 tablespoons of almond milk instead)

1 cup of fresh sliced strawberries

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

#### Preparation:

Combine the frozen bananas and almond butter in a food processor and blend until smooth and creamy. Add the strawberries and vanilla and

pulse to mix well, leaving a few solid bits of strawberry throughout.

Transfer the nice cream to an airtight container and freeze for 30 minutes for a soft texture or for 1 to 2 hours for a firmer texture.

If the nice cream becomes too hard to scoop, let it stand at room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes before serving.



## MMHG Wellness Upcoming Events

Here's a listing of upcoming wellness events. MMHG regional programs are **FREE** and open to all employees, retirees & dependents of MMHG member units. For more details, including program descriptions, go to [www.mmhg.org](http://www.mmhg.org) and click on the Wellness tab. Register at [wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org) or call 774-773-9306. You can also make a copy of this page, put a check mark next to the events you'd like to attend (include name(s) email address, and telephone number) and return to MMHG PO Box 3390 Plymouth, MA 02361 or by email at [wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org). See you there!

May 24,31, June 7,14,21,28

4:30-5:30 PM Bridgewater Town Hall

Yoga

May 30th 5:00 P.M. Silver Lake High School

Flex, Stretch & Strengthen

May 31st 5:00 P.M.

Ticks & Tick-borne Diseases

June 4th 5:00 P.M. Hanover Town Hall

Gardening— Beyond the Basics

June 7th Plymouth County Retirement Assoc.

Destress with Paint Night

### Benefits of Regular Physical Activity:

Click on links for more information:

- [Control your weight](#)
- [Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease](#)
- [Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome](#)
- [Reduce your risk of some cancers](#)
- [Strengthen your bones and muscles](#)
- [Improve your mental health and mood](#)
- [Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult](#)
- [Increase your chances of living longer](#)



### Did You Know?

Your Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts or Harvard Pilgrim health plan can save you up to \$300 annually in qualified health club membership fees.

For more information on your fitness benefit and weight loss benefits and discounts visit [www.mmhg.org](http://www.mmhg.org) and click on the wellness tab.

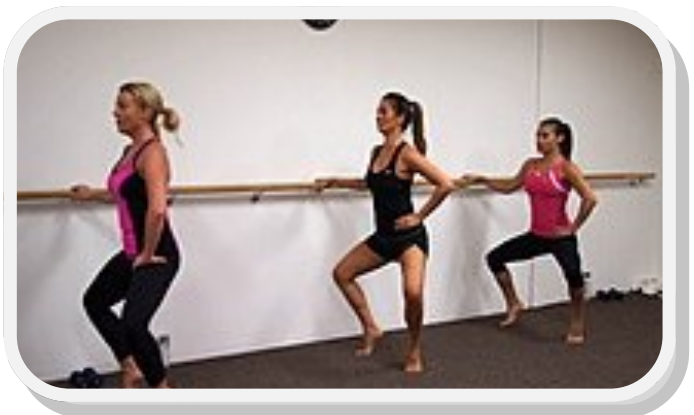
## Have You Tried Barre?

Barre is a trendy workout that incorporates postures from ballet, yoga, and pilates, often choreographed to motivating music.

Barre classes blend cardio, strength training, flexibility, balance and core conditioning in a total body workout that targets the hips, glutes, abs, and arms. Most classes incorporate a ballet barre and may include other props like resistance bands, small exercise balls and hand weights.

Barre classes can improve your balance, build strength, make you more flexible, burn calories, and improve stability through a stronger core. Barre workouts are also an excellent cross-training option to pair with other exercise like running, or cycling, because they strengthen the muscles needed for these exercises without being too stressful on the body.

Most fitness centers offer barre classes, and there are studios that specialize specifically in barre classes. You can also find ballet-inspired workouts on YouTube or DVDs that can be done at home.





**Mayflower Municipal Health Group**  
 www.MMHG.org P.O. Box 3390 Plymouth, MA. 02361

**Wow! Check out the exclusive local fitness coupons for MMHG members.**



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**TRY THE Y Guest Pass**

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 For Employees of Mayflower Municipal Health Group Member Units

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