

Excuses, Excuses...

Most people make excuses at one time or another, and most of the time they don't even know they are making them. When excuses become the norm, however, life becomes unnecessarily difficult. For instance, some people think that because they've had some failures, they will continue to fail. This excuse will cause them to give up on their dreams and aspirations. They take no action and give up before they even start. The excuse of "I can't because I will fail or make a mistake" is a personal belief that just isn't true. If this sounds familiar, know that if you don't eliminate your excuses, you can count on creating the same results you've always had. Nothing will change – even if you want it to.



People make excuses for many reasons. It's not done on purpose but being aware that it is happening is key to living life to your full potential. Common reasons for making excuses "not to" include:

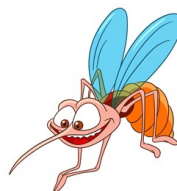
- Having limiting beliefs of who they are and what they can do.
- Not wanting to take responsibility for something.
- Comparing themselves to other people.
- Lack of self-confidence.
- Lack of motivation.
- The fear of making a mistake.

Let's take the excuse of "I can't because I'm afraid I will fail. I've made mistakes before, and I'm afraid I will make them again." First, EVERYONE makes mistakes and has failed at one time or another. You're not perfect. Nobody is. Realize that mistakes and failures are learning opportunities. You can analyze what went wrong in the past and figure out how to do better in the future. Trial-and-error is a great way to work things out. Now, take action and list what you are good at and what you've accomplished in the past - no matter how small... whatever you can think of. This is evidence that you can succeed and the next time you think you can't do something, focus on what you've already accomplished and how you CAN do this.

Home Remedies for Mosquito Bites

Mosquito bites are rarely harmful, but they are most definitely annoying and itchy! They can affect people in different ways from small bumps to welts, and usually when there's one – there's more. If you don't have any antihistamine cream on hand, or don't like it, here are some home remedies to try to help ease the itch:

- Dab of honey
- Lemon – cut it in half and rub on bite
- Aloe Vera (cold is even better)
- Rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer
- Rubbing a basil leaf over the bite
- Mouthwash and toothpaste
- Aspirin (crush and add to a few drops of water for a paste)



Power Pumpkin Seed Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1 Tbs. raw pumpkin seeds
- 1 Tbs. maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/4 cup milk of choice
- 1 cup ice

Oatmeal Pear Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 1 large pear, seeded
- 1/4 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup milk of choice
- 1 Tbs. almond butter
- 2 tsp. maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp. ginger
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 cup ice cubes

Directions:

Blend until smooth. Add more ice if desired. Each smoothie makes 2 servings.

(Human Maintenance, continued from page 1)

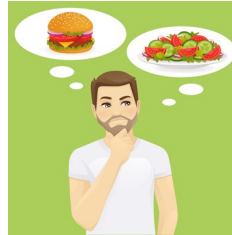
- Tea Tree Oil (dilute a few drops in water)
- Baking soda or meat tenderizer mixed with a little water to form a paste (add a little bit of witch hazel if you have it)
- Apple cider vinegar
- Applying a cold washcloth to the bite

Mosquito bites almost never require a visit to the doctor, but if you seem overly allergic or your bite seems infected, contact your physician.

A Few Tweaks to Eat Healthier

Eat lean protein in the morning instead of a muffin or a sweet.

Lean protein will give you energy that lasts. A sugary breakfast will send your blood sugar crashing and make you tired and hungry again within an hour. Try 2 eggs or egg whites with vegetables and a sprinkle of feta or other low-fat cheese instead.



Taste your food before you salt it. For 2 days, don't add salt to your food at all. This short break can reset your taste buds. Then take a taste of your food before reaching for the saltshaker. If you still need salt, go easy.

Make your own smoothie instead of buying one. Store-bought smoothies are normally quite high in calories. You can make your own from 1 cup iced green tea (unsweetened), 1 medium orange, ½ cup frozen strawberries, ½ cup frozen blueberries, juice from ½ lemon, ½ cup plain fat-free Greek yogurt, handful spinach, 1 Tbs. honey. Total calories: 210. (If too thick, add a bit of cold water.) Mix it up with your favorite frozen fruit (or vegetables.)

Dip your greens instead of smothering them in dressing. Instead of a creamy high-fat dressing, try a small amount of olive oil and vinegar with herbs, or if you must have your Caesar, dip the tines of your fork into the dressing, and then spear your pieces of lettuce.

Choose Greek yogurt over regular yogurt. Greek yogurt is thick and creamy and rich... and healthy! Opt for organic if you can. It is full of active cultures, is high in protein, there are no added sugar varieties, and is made from organic ingredients. We, here, often use the plain, no fat variety as a substitute for sour cream. If we want it sweetened, we use honey.

5-A-DAY. For a week, keep track of how often you eat fruits and vegetables each day. One serving equals one piece of fruit or one-half cup of chopped fruit or most vegetables; for raw leafy vegetables like lettuce and spinach, a serving is one cup. Once you have your baseline, try adding one fruit or vegetable serving a day. Stick to whole fruit vs. juices or canned as it contains an abundance of vitamins and antioxidants as well as fiber and no added sugar. In addition, vegetables and most fruit is low in calories. It will fill you up and keep you healthy!

Choose whole foods over packaged foods. You can't go wrong with this one! Whole foods will always be healthier than pre-packaged foods. If it is convenience that you want, take an hour or two once a week and package up your own grab and go foods with the whole foods that you've purchased.

Slow Down. Eat slower. Hormones control how hungry you are, how much you eat, and how full you get. These hormones signal your brain when you are hungry or full, but it takes about 20 minutes to register. Eat too fast and you may overeat without realizing that you are already full.

Butternut Squash Soup



This vegan butternut squash soup is the ultimate fall comfort food! Store it in the fridge for up to 4 days or freeze it for up to a few months. Serves 6.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 (3-pound) butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cubed
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 3 to 4 cups vegetable broth
- Freshly ground black pepper

For Serving:

- Chopped parsley
- Toasted pepitas
- Crusty bread

Directions:

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, salt and several grinds of fresh pepper and sauté until soft, 5 to 8 minutes. Add the squash and cook until it begins to soften, stirring occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, sage, rosemary and ginger. Stir and cook 30 seconds to 1 minute, until fragrant, then add 3 cups of the broth. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook until the squash is tender, 20 to 30 minutes.
3. Let cool slightly and pour the soup into a blender, working in batches if necessary, and blend until smooth. If your soup is too thick, add up to 1 cup more broth and blend. Season to taste and serve with parsley, pepitas and crusty bread.

Recipe and photo by <https://www.loveandlemons.com/butternut-squash-soup/>

Painful Knees?

We put stress on our knees daily, but typically our knees are designed for it. Certain bad habits, however, could be causing knee pain or making it worse. These habits are so engrained in daily life, they can be difficult to change, but they CAN be changed! Remember, taking care of your knees now will cost you a lot less time and effort than rehabilitating them down the road.



Healthy BMI. Putting extra body weight on your knees can add up to tremendous pressure and will speed up the breakdown of cartilage. Every extra pound you carry adds up to 3 pounds of pressure on your knee joints when you walk, and 10 pounds when you run.

Exercise. Although you may think exercise is hard on your knees, it's actually essential in keeping them healthy - as long as you're doing the right things. Without exercise, the muscles that support your knees weaken, leaving your joints without the right support. BUT - if you already have bad knees, your best bet is to choose activities with a low risk of knee injury. Daily moderate exercise is much better for your joints than irregular strenuous exercise. Focus on low-impact activities such as yoga, walking, biking, swimming (and water aerobics), and modest weightlifting.

Overuse. Staying active is one of the best things you can do to protect your knees, but you should avoid repetitive strain. Listen to your body; when you feel pain or discomfort when doing repetitive activities, don't ignore it. In the meantime, stay active by focusing on other activities that do not stress the injured joint. *If the pain does not go away in 2 weeks, see your healthcare provider.*

Alignment. Bad posture, body alignment, and biomechanics can cause unneeded stress on the knees. General principles of correct standing posture:

- Your back should be straight. Don't slump forward at the shoulders or waist.
- Your knees should be slightly bent - they should not be locked.
- Your core muscles should be tight - gently hold in your abdominals and glutes.
- Your head should be centered over your body – not jutting forward or leaning back.
- Your weight should be evenly distributed between your feet; don't shift your weight from one knee to the other.

Footwear. Some shoes can unevenly distribute weight, putting extra stress on your knees. Flat or rigid arches, uneven leg length, and bowed legs are common problems and should be considered when picking shoes. Purchase at least one of your main pairs of shoes or sneakers at a specialty store where the staff can advise you on foot type and support. High-heeled shoes might add to the risk of osteoarthritis or other knee problems: A Harvard University study found that women who wear high heels regularly have stress across the part of the knee where osteoarthritis usually develops.

If you have an Occupational Athletic Trainer, he or she can help you assess your biomechanics and teach you proper standing, sitting, walking, running, and lifting techniques that can help spare your joints from extra wear and tear.

At the Gameplan for Living, we know that the future of healthcare is in the prevention of illness and injuries.

It is our mission to provide preventative care utilizing sports medicine principles and lifestyle modification training to create an atmosphere of health, safety, and performance to allow employees to enjoy an enhanced quality of life and reach their retirement—and beyond—SUCCESSFULLY!

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Questions / Support:
info@gameplanforliving.com



Loaded Cauliflower Casserole

Ingredients:

- 3 slices bacon
- 1 medium/large head cauliflower cut into bite-size pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 4 scallions, sliced, divided

Directions:

- **Step 1:** Gather all the ingredients. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
- **Step 2:** Place bacon in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat; cook until crisp, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate and let cool. (Reserve the drippings in the pan.)
- **Step 3:** Combine cauliflower, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, 1/4 teaspoon salt and the bacon drippings in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Roast, stirring twice, until tender, about 35 minutes.
- **Step 4:** Meanwhile, combine 1 cup cheese, 2/3 cup sour cream and half the scallions in a small bowl.
- **Step 5:** When the cauliflower is tender, stir the cheese mixture into the cauliflower in the pan. Sprinkle with the remaining 1/4 cup cheese. Bake until hot, 5 to 7 minutes more.
- **Step 6:** Chop the cooled bacon.
- **Step 7:** Sprinkle the hot casserole with the bacon and remaining scallions.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1/2 cup. Per Serving: 150 calories; protein 7.9 g; carbohydrates 7.6g; dietary fiber 2.5g; sugars 3g; fat 10.5 g

Recipe and Photo by <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/269135/loaded-cauliflower-casserole/>