



The UConn Buzz



Keeping it Healthy with Home-Cooking

CT Quit Line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW

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In our fast-paced world, it's increasingly tempting to grab takeout or heat up a frozen meal. But mounting research shows that spending time in your own kitchen isn't just about good food — it's a powerful tool for better health. From lowering chronic disease risk to improving diet quality, the simple act of preparing meals at home can have big benefits. [Harvard Health](#)

Studies consistently find that people who cook more at home tend to eat healthier and consume fewer calories than those who rely on restaurant or processed foods. When you prepare your own meals, you control the ingredients — from the amount of salt and sugar to the quality of fats and the presence of whole foods like vegetables and legumes. This control often translates into lower overall calorie intake and better diet quality, even for people who are not actively trying to lose weight. [Harvard Health](#)

Home-cooked meals are linked with a reduced risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Nutrition experts increasingly

recognize home cooking instruction as a valid strategy to help people manage weight, improve blood sugar levels, and adopt healthier eating patterns that can prevent chronic conditions. One study showed a 14% lower risk of diabetes for those eating 11-14 meals prepared at home from those who ate 0-6 meals prepared at home. [National Library of Medicine](#)

Research also shows that people who cook at home more frequently tend to eat more fruits and vegetables and are more likely to maintain a healthy body mass index (BMI). While more research is needed to prove direct cause and effect, these associations suggest that regular home cooking could play a role in reducing cardiometabolic risk — including risks for heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. [PMC](#)

The good news? You don't have to become a gourmet chef to reap the benefits. Small changes — like swapping highly processed foods for simple home-prepared meals, adding one more

plant-based dish each week, or learning a handful of basic cooking skills — can move you toward healthier eating patterns and lasting lifestyle habits. The National Institute of Heart, Lung and Blood has a bank of easy healthy recipes: [NIH](#). There are many tutorial videos with simple, healthy one-pot recipes too. [PMC](#)

Cooking at home not only nourishes your body but can also boost confidence, reduce food costs, and bring joy to your day. So next time you're deciding between another convenience meal and chopping veggies at the counter, remember your kitchen might.

Source: [Harvard Health](#), [PMC](#), [NIH](#), [National Library of Medicine](#)



HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

Rails to Trails 5K, taking place on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026! Join fellow running enthusiasts in Andover, Connecticut, at 8:30 AM, with registration and number pick-up starting at 7:15 AM at the Andover Ben Franklin Parking Lot, located at 580 Lake Road. This spirited event honors the memory of Jim Hodges, a passionate runner who cherished the joy of running on the beautiful Rails to Trails.

Spirit of Spring Road Race in Tolland Ct, April 11. Through the Spirit of Spring Road Race and the Fun Run, it is hoped that friends, family, local business employees, and folks just wanting to celebrate life and the coming of springtime, will come together to enjoy the feeling of good will that the day represents.

The Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD), through funding from the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant funds, is addressing uncontrolled high blood pressure, a risk factor for strokes and heart attacks. Hypertension (high blood pressure) can be controlled through lifestyle choices & some people will need medications prescribed by their doctor. EHHD is offering educational series throughout the district with a free at-home blood pressure monitor as part of the series. For more information go to the [Hot Topics page](#)

Banana Bread

Ingredients: 3/4 cup unbleached flour * 3/4 cup whole wheat flour * 3/4 cup white sugar * 1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder * 1/2 teaspoon baking soda * 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon * 2 egg whites* 1 cup banana, mashed (3 medium bananas) * 1/4 cup applesauce

DIRECTIONS 1. Preheat oven to 350°

Lightly grease an 8x4 inch loaf pan. 2. In a large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon.

Add egg whites, bananas and applesauce; stir just until combined. Pour batter into prepared pan. 3. Bake in preheated oven for 50 to 55 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into center of loaf comes out clean.

Turn out onto wire rack and allow to cool before slicing.



Good Posture=Better Health

Good posture is more than good appearance — it plays an important role in overall health.

Posture refers to how you hold your body while sitting, standing, or moving. Proper alignment supports your muscles, joints, and spine, helping your body work efficiently and comfortably. Poor posture over time can

lead to **neck, shoulder, and back pain**, reduced flexibility, and balance problems. It can also contribute to **tension-type headaches**, which are often linked to muscle tightness in the neck and shoulders when the head is held forward. Slouching may even affect breathing and digestion by limiting space for the lungs and internal organs.

Maintaining good posture has

real benefits. It can reduce discomfort, back pain, and fatigue.

Be mindful of how you're sitting or standing, adjust workstations so screens are at eye level, take regular movement breaks, and stay active with exercises that strengthen the core and back.

Sources: [NIH](#)

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District with funding from CTDPH. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

