



# Being Alive

Evolutions in Being P.O. Box 4008 Chelmsford, MA. 01824 Eibeing.com 978-256-0438

---

*Here's to Physical,  
Mental and Financial  
Health in 2023*

---

## Here's to Physical, Mental and Financial in 2023

**FROM AARP**

### **Resolution #1: Walk more, drive less**

If you are lucky enough to live within walking distance of your favorite stores and gathering places, resolve to walk to them more often. You'll save money on gas and reap the [health benefits](#) of walking. Those include lower risks of high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes, stronger muscles and bones, easier weight maintenance and a better mood, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Not sure you are up to walking through your errands? Start with shorter jaunts: Research suggests every minute matters. If you need some help getting going, in some communities you can find walks led by health professionals, through the [Walk With a Doc](#) program (AARP is a sponsor).

### **Resolution #2: Lower your thermostat for better sleep**

You can take a bite out of your winter heating bills and [sleep better](#) by setting your nighttime temperature lower than most people do, research suggests. The Sleep Foundation suggests a range of 60 to 67 degrees, with a sweet spot around 65 degrees.

But Michael Breus, a clinical psychologist and sleep specialist, says that range is too low for many people, including those who sleep nude or with minimal bedding. Also, he says, we tend to feel [colder with age](#), because we lose fat directly beneath our skin, which acts "like a long underwear layer of insulation."

The best idea, he says, is to experiment with lower temps. If you are younger than 65, he suggests trying 65 degrees to start; people over 65 might start at 70 degrees, he says.

[\(Continued on Following Page\)](#)

### **Resolution #3: Drink more water, from fewer bottles**

Water is the perfect health drink. But bottled water is much more expensive than tap water, with no health advantages in places where tap water is safe, as it is in most of the United States. If you don't like the taste of your tap water, are worried about its quality or like fizziness or added flavor, there are simple, inexpensive solutions.

First, you can put a filter on your faucet or under your sink or use a filtered pitcher to remove chlorine, lead and other substances that might affect taste or safety. A pitcher, for less than \$40, is the most affordable option, according to Consumer Reports.

For fizzy water, get a soda-making kit, starting for less than \$60. Though you can buy flavor packs for soda makers, you can more cheaply add your own fruit juice, herbs or other mixers.

### **Resolution #4: Rediscover the library**

[Reading](#) is good for your brain: Studies suggest it can slow memory decline and, if you read fiction, increase your sense of empathy. But buying books and magazines can get expensive.

Luckily, in most U.S. towns and cities, there's a place where the books are free and plentiful: the library. If you haven't been to one lately, give it a try, in person or online. The library is a great source of printed books (including large-print versions), and you can also borrow electronic and audiobooks.

### **Resolution #8: Volunteer at a theater or concert hall**

If the sound of an orchestra tuning up makes you smile, but a glance at ticket prices at your local theater or concert hall gives you pause, consider volunteering as a ticket-taker or usher. You'll get to enjoy the performances and a mental health boost, from both the cultural experience and the volunteer work, studies suggest.

If you don't have time to volunteer, research shows that [simple acts of kindness](#) toward others have multiple health benefits.

### **Resolution #9: Try pickleball**

If you haven't tried it, consider this wildly popular sport to get your heart beating and have some fun with friends. One reason for the craze: The game is easy to learn and costs little to pick up, compared with sports such as tennis and golf, Bryant says. All you need is a paddle, a few people to play with and a court — increasingly available year-round in many gyms and community centers, he says.

In many places, Bryant says, you can play for an hour for \$8 to \$12. Want to give it a try? Here are some tips about how to [get started with pickleball](#).

## Resolution #10: Find your entertainment in nature

Instead of spending a pricey afternoon at the movies or in the mall, go to a park. Soaking up some nature can lower your blood pressure and heart rate, [reduce stress](#) and improve memory, studies suggest. While you are out there, look and listen for birds: One study found that seeing and hearing birds boosted mental well-being, even in people with depression.

## Resolution #11: Plan and grow a garden

Creating your own natural oasis by planting flowers or food can give you a boost. People who garden see reductions in depression, anxiety and body mass index, and increases in life satisfaction, quality of life and sense of community, research shows.

Those who grow food probably save money, too. On average, home gardens produce about \$677 in fruits and vegetables, after subtracting \$238 spent on seeds, soil, watering and other costs (but not labor), according to research from Oregon State University. Here are some tips on [how to get started gardening](#).

## Resolution #12: Practice more gratitude

Feeling thankful can improve sleep and immunity and reduce depression, anxiety and pain, according to the Mayo Clinic. There's an obvious way in which gratitude might improve financial health – by reducing urges to spend money on things that don't make you happy.

“The more grateful we are, the more content we tend to be with what we have,” says Kristi Nelson, executive director of A Network for Grateful Living and author of *Wake Up Grateful*.

One thing she suggests: When you wake, think immediately of a few things that make you grateful. You might focus, she says, on the parts of your body that work well or the fact that you slept or “that the sun is rising, no matter where you are.”

[https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2022/healthy-cost-cutting-resolutions.html?cmp=EMC-DSM-NLC-MEM-MB-1531900-1907504-7886240-NA-12272023-MemberBenefitsUpdate-MS1-Healthy\\_Living\\_Guide-BTN-S99A-Health&encparam=DbPoeRDQoK0ndchowfXklvaPMzutWffEI7lWSVrJ3rg%3d](https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2022/healthy-cost-cutting-resolutions.html?cmp=EMC-DSM-NLC-MEM-MB-1531900-1907504-7886240-NA-12272023-MemberBenefitsUpdate-MS1-Healthy_Living_Guide-BTN-S99A-Health&encparam=DbPoeRDQoK0ndchowfXklvaPMzutWffEI7lWSVrJ3rg%3d)

## Streetcar Museum

LOWELL — The National Streetcar Museum is open every Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 25 Shattuck St. General admission is \$3, seniors and youth ages 3-12 are \$2, and children under 3 are free. To purchase tickets, go to [bit.ly/3VsBid4](http://bit.ly/3VsBid4). For information, email [info@trolleyuseum.org](mailto:info@trolleyuseum.org).

## Bicycles for Kids

LOWELL — The mission of the Bike Connector is to provide the Greater Lowell Community with safe and affordable bicycles. In its 2023 year-end review, the nonprofit noted that it had collected 2,200 donated bikes and distributed over 2,000 bikes - a 20% increase over 2022.

Hundreds of high school and middle school students earned a bike, more than 160 elementary school kids participated in bike rodeos to learn safe riding skills and more than 500 bikes were given to kindergartners and preschoolers. Many bikes were distributed to new immigrants and refugees.

The organization is on holiday break until Monday, January 8, when it resumes its regular Tuesdays through Thursdays, 1 to 5 p.m. schedule at its 47 Lee St. location and Wednesdays by appointment only. The nonprofit also runs do-it-together workshops on how to maintain and fix bikes. The shop provides all the tools, parts and knowledge for students, as well as an earn-a bike program for teens and adults and a learn-to-ride workshop for younger bicyclists. Residents can donate used bikes to the Bike Connector's recycle and reuse program. For information, visit [bikeconnector.org](https://bikeconnector.org), call 978-502-3919 or [email info@bikeconnector.org](mailto:info@bikeconnector.org).

## HELP KIDS: Decorate Valentines for us to deliver to Congress!

This Valentine's Day, we're telling Congress: "Don't go breaking our hearts. Pass policies that families LOVE!" That's right, it's past time for Congress to show their love for our families and pass policies that are sweeter than a heart-shaped box of chocolates—policies that lift children, families, businesses, and our economy.

[https://action.momsrising.org/survey/valentine\\_2024/?t=11&akid=19329%2E91739%2E1EUmQa](https://action.momsrising.org/survey/valentine_2024/?t=11&akid=19329%2E91739%2E1EUmQa)

## Look for These 9 Red Flags to identify Food That is Ultra-Processed

By [O'Connor](#)

January 2, 2024

So how can you free yourself from the grip of ultra-processed foods? Start by reading the labels on the foods in your fridge, pantry and the grocery aisle. We've created a simple guide to help you spot nine red flags that signal a food probably is ultra-processed.

More than three ingredients

Many ultra-processed foods have long lists of ingredients that can sound like a high school chemistry experiment. If you like bread, for instance, choose a brand that contains only simple

ingredients, such as wheat flour, barley flour, sourdough starter, salt, nuts or raisins. Many ultra-processed breads contain sugar, vegetable oil, artificial sweeteners, and multiple preservatives, emulsifiers and shelf-life extenders such as sorbic acid, calcium propionate, datem, and monoglycerides.

[\(Continued on Following Page\)](#)

“You can still buy the foods you want,” said Stephen Devries, an adjunct associate professor of nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the executive director of the educational nonprofit Gaples Institute. “But you should find the least-altered version of those foods with the fewest ingredients possible.”

### **Thickeners, stabilizers or emulsifiers**

Look for ingredients such as soy lecithin, guar gum, xanthan gum, carrageenan, mono- and diglycerides, or carboxymethylcellulose. Ultra-processed foods often contain dyes to make them look appealing, preservatives to give them a long shelf life, and thickeners, stabilizers and emulsifiers to improve their texture or to keep their ingredients from separating as they sit on store shelves for weeks or months at a time.

### **Added sugars and sweeteners**

Try to avoid foods with corn syrup, cane sugar, malt syrup or molasses on the label. If you want extra sweetness, add your own sugar or honey.

“Most people would add less honey or sugar than you will find in the packaged versions,” said Devries. “That’s much healthier than relying on the yogurt company to determine how much sugar or honey or additives you should eat.”

### **Ingredients that end in ‘-ose’**

Examine the label for sucrose, maltose, dextrose, fructose or glucose. These are other names for added sugars.

### **Artificial or ‘fake’ sugars**

Look for aspartame, sucralose, acesulfame-k, saccharin or stevia. Sweeteners and artificial flavors are another hallmark of ultra-processed foods. Sugar and sweeteners often are added “to mask the off-putting taste from the preservatives and other ingredients that are added in,” said Avena, author of the new book “Sugarless.

Many store-bought English muffins, for instance, contain an array of emulsifiers, preservatives and sweeteners. But you wouldn’t know that unless you looked at the ingredients. “They don’t taste sweet and yet they have added sugar,” said Avena.

## Health claims

Ultra-processed foods often have buzzy marketing claims on their packages. Many products that are marketed as nutritious are actually laden with sweeteners and other additives. These products include breakfast cereals, granola, flavored yogurt, snack bars, salad dressings and canned soups.

(Continued on Following Page)

## Low-sugar promises

Does the label say that the product is low in added sugar? That can be a red flag, because manufacturers often replace the added sugar in their products with artificial sweeteners.

## Instant and flavored varieties

“When it’s instant, it’s usually mechanically altered in a way that degrades it,” said Devries. If you like oatmeal for breakfast, buy the product that has only oats in it and nothing else.

Don’t be tempted by foods offered in a variety of fruity or other flavors. If you like fruit-flavored yogurt, buy plain yogurt and add your own fresh fruit. Many fruit-flavored yogurts contain not just fruit but [several other additives](#) such as cane sugar, cornstarch, “natural flavors” and juice concentrates. Yogurt should have just two ingredients: Milk and cultures (i.e. probiotics).

## Could you make it in your kitchen?

When in doubt, look at the ingredient label and ask yourself whether you could make it at home. **Ultra-processed foods** contain additives that are not typically used in home kitchens. They are often transformed into textures and shapes not found in nature – things like frosted cereals, doughnuts, hot dogs and chicken nuggets.

To be sure, you don’t have to avoid all processed foods. Instead, think of food processing as a spectrum, ranging from *minimally* processed foods all the way to *ultra*-processed foods. **Minimally processed foods** come from plants or animals with minimal alteration. Think whole grains, vegetables, eggs, milk and meat. **Processed culinary ingredients** are used to cook and season food in homes and restaurants. They include butter, sugar, spices, salt, and olive oil.

**Processed foods** include items such as canned vegetables, bacon, cheeses, smoked fish, canned tuna and freshly made breads. Most processed foods are things you can make in your own kitchen. They typically contain two or three ingredients, but they’re still recognizable as versions of things found in nature. Some examples would be a jar of unsweetened apple sauce, tofu, hummus, tomato sauce, and frozen fruits and vegetables.

Most ultra-processed foods are found in the middle aisles of a grocery store. Shop the perimeter where stores stock fresh, whole foods, said Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, a professor at Northeastern University and a lecturer at Harvard Medical School who [studies ultra-processed foods](#). “Most of the foods that are fresh are good for you,” he said.

If you choose to buy ultra-processed foods, avoid “family size” and choose single serving items. Large packages are designed to make you overeat, said Marion Nestle, an emeritus professor of nutrition, food studies and public health at New York University and the [author of “Soda Politics.”](#) “If you can’t stop eating from big packages, don’t buy them,” she added.

*Do you have a question about healthful eating? Email [EatingLab@washpost.com](mailto:EatingLab@washpost.com)*

## Sunday, January 21

"Each soul entering the material experience does so for those purposes of advancement towards that awareness of being fully conscious of the oneness with the Creative Forces."

CCL 2632-1

## Monday, January 15

"Stay close to nature, close to those activities in every form of exercise that breathes in the deep ozone and the beauty of nature. For you may breathe it into your own soul, as you would a sunset or a morning sun rising."

Edgar Cayce reading 3374-4

## Thursday, January 4

"Not that any soul is to be goody-goody, but good FOR something; not merely to supply material needs. For man lives not by bread alone, not by apparel, nor by homes, nor by that which is of the earth-earthy, but rather by the spirit of truth."

Edgar Cayce reading 2583-1

## Friday, January 5

"The law of cause and effect is as the law of time and space - for cause and effect are one, and each creates its own recompense by the application of same, and in the application of any law (which is love - law being love, LOVE being law) the truth, the effect, the cause is seen."

CCL 2842-2



---

# Evolutions in Being

P.O. Box 4008  
Chelmsford, MA 01824

