



THE Y AXIS



## Try THIS Gut-Friendly Easter Treat

Thinking about candy from the Easter bunny this month?



There's sweet news for your gut.

Researchers created a new type of chocolate made with corn, cinnamon, orange, and gut-boosting probiotics.<sup>5</sup>

This "healthy chocolate" helps good bacteria survive longer in your digestive system.

**Translation:** better digestion, better health, and still delicious.

While you may not find this exact chocolate in your Easter basket (yet!), your challenge is to choose dark chocolate (70% cocoa or more) when you reach for a treat.



## COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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# One Step at a Time: 4 Body & Mind Benefits of Exercise

*Aim for 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week*



Every April, more than 30,000 runners take on the Boston Marathon. It's the most famous 26.2-mile marathon in the world.

Watching these runners push their limits can be inspiring. But you don't need to run a marathon to experience the powerful benefits of physical activity.

Even a little exercise can make a big difference. Aim for at least 150

minutes of moderate-intensity exercise

per week.<sup>1</sup> That's just 30 minutes a day, five days a week. It's worth the effort.

## Regular physical activity helps:

- **Lower** the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers
- **Boost** your mood and reduce stress
- **Improve** sleep quality and brain

**EXERCISE ►**

# Coffee: When You Drink Matters More Than You Think

*Why your coffee habit might need a schedule*

The alarm goes off. You hit snooze...twice. You shuffle to the kitchen, eyes half-closed, brain still loading.

Then that first glorious sip of coffee kicks in, and suddenly, the day feels possible.

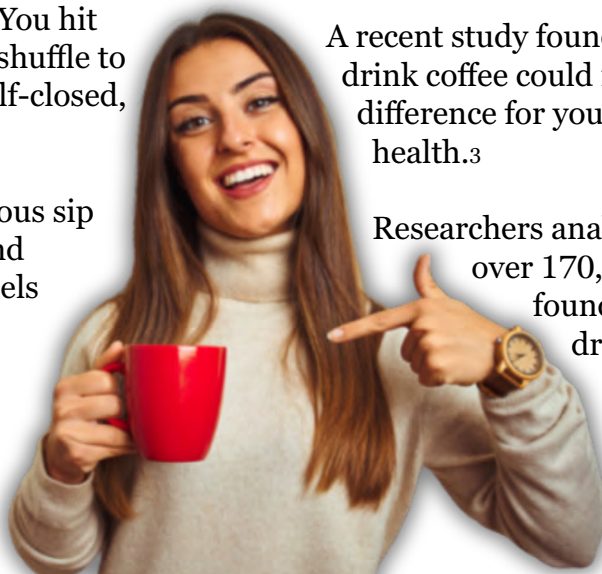
Sound familiar?

OK, not everybody drinks coffee. But about 7 in 10 U.S. adults do. And for many, it's a must-have morning ritual.

A recent study found that when you drink coffee could make a difference for your long-term health.<sup>3</sup>

Researchers analyzed data from over 170,000 adults. They found that those who drank 1–2 cups of coffee in the morning had a

**COFFEE ►**



# Can Being a Night Owl Mess with Your Mood?

*Study: Night-owl behavior linked to depression & anxiety*

Are you a night owl? You know...you prefer to sleep in and stay up late. And you struggle to wind down before midnight while a lot of other people are already in dreamland.

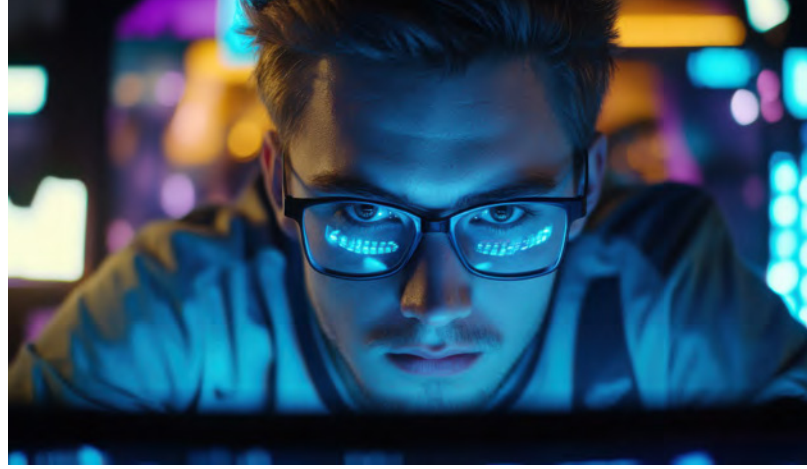
Sound familiar? Here's the thing...new research suggests that night-owl behavior could be taking a toll on your mental health.<sup>2</sup>

In the study, researchers found that people who stay up late (and sleep in late) are more likely to report symptoms of depression and anxiety compared to early birds.

Why? It comes down to this...  
The body is wired to follow a natural rhythm (called a circadian rhythm)

When you go against it, things can get out of sync. Think: foggy mornings, low energy, cranky moods, and restless nights.

The good news? You don't need to become a



Night-owl habits may be linked to depression and anxiety.

full-blown morning person to feel better. A few small tweaks can help reset your internal clock and boost both your sleep and your mood.

Try this:

- **Move** your bedtime up by just 15–30 minutes each night until you're closer to a 10–11 p.m. window.
- **Get** morning light. Open the blinds or take a walk outside within an hour of waking up.
- **Avoid** bright screens an hour before bed (yes, that includes doomscrolling).
- **Keep** a consistent sleep schedule, even on weekends.

Little changes can have a big impact on how you feel during the day. So, if you're burning the midnight oil and waking up groggy, it might be time to flip the script.



Harvard's sleep hygiene habits  
<https://tinyurl.com/54dr48hp>

## ► COFFEE

lower risk of death, particularly from heart disease.

Late-day coffee drinkers didn't see the same benefits. And may even disrupt sleep, mood, weight, and heart health.

### 4 ways to sip smarter:

- ☕ **1. Drink it early.** Aim for your last cup before noon.
- ☕ **2. Stick to 1–2 cups** per day. That's the sweet spot.



- ☕ **3. Cut the sugar.** Go easy on sweeteners and heavy creamers.
- ☕ **4. Stay hydrated.** Balance coffee with water throughout the day.

So yes—enjoy that morning brew. Just time it right. Your heart (and your sleep) will thank you.

7 ways to wake up without coffee  
<https://tinyurl.com/mt9vhf3n>



 **WellNotes**  
APRIL 2025

# Recipe: Whole-Grain Toast with Avocado & Egg

Hungry for a healthy breakfast to kickstart your day?

Give this easy-to-make recipe a try.

In just a few minutes, you can turn three simple ingredients into a tasty morning meal.<sup>4</sup>

## Ingredients

- 2 slices whole-grain bread
- 1/2 avocado, thinly sliced
- 2 eggs, scrambled

## Directions

1. Toast bread slices in toaster.
2. Slice half avocado into thin slices.
3. In small bowl, whisk eggs together. Pour egg mixture into small pan. On medium heat, stir frequently until scrambled. Then divide scrambled eggs in half.



Make this healthy breakfast with just three ingredients.

4. Place avocado slices on toast, and top with eggs.

5. Sprinkle salt and pepper to taste.

*Serves 2. Calories per serving: 215.*

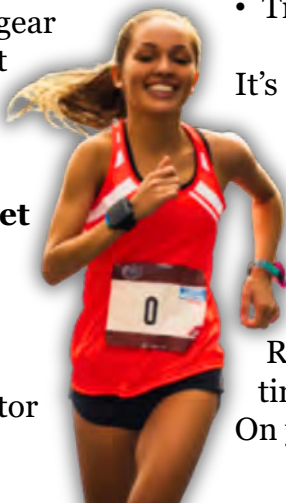
## ► EXERCISE

- function
- ☒ **Increase** energy and strengthen muscles and bones

The best part? You don't need fancy gear or a gym membership. And you don't need to sign up for a race. Start small and build up.

## Here are a few simple ways to get moving:

- Go for a brisk walk
- Dance while doing chores
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator



## 30 ways to be more active

<https://tinyurl.com/cxbhxuf6>

- Follow a short workout video at home
- Try a walking meeting with a coworker

It's not about perfection, it's about progress.

Every step counts. So while the Boston Marathon may be out of reach for some people, building a consistent habit of movement is a race you can win.

Ready to move more? Now is always the best time to get started.  
On your mark, get set, go!

## References

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4. Jacobson, M. (2024). Avocado Toast with Egg. South Dakota State University Extension. From: <https://tinyurl.com/csv536v7>
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**Ask the Wellness Doctor:** Allergy Season: Can a cleaner home help you breathe easier?

**Health Challenge:** Develop Digital Detox Habits: Unplug to improve focus, sleep, mood & health



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