

HEALTH AT A GLANCE

Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude

Giving thanks is in the forefront of most people's mind during November, but have you considered making thankfulness part of your daily routine **ALL YEAR?**

Being Grateful is Good for You

The colors of fall are around us, pumpkin-inspired food and drinks are everywhere, and a big turkey dinner is on the horizon. Yes, tis the season to be thankful, and the feel-good effect that comes from it isn't the only perk you'll experience. Research shows that grateful people:

- **Report greater levels of happiness and optimism.** Being thankful has also been shown to help reduce anxiety and depression.
- **Take better care of themselves.** A recent study found that grateful people exercised more, slept better and had a greater sense of well-being.
- **Reap health benefits.** Research has tied thankfulness to lower blood pressure and stronger immunity.
- **Extend kindness.** Thankful people are more likely to do something nice for someone or offer them emotional support.
- **Handle difficult circumstances better.** Being grateful can help you manage stress better, cope with adversity and be more resilient.
- **Gain relationship perks.** Thankfulness increases feelings of belonging and helps build strong relationships.

Turn Thanksgiving into Thanksliving

If this inspires you to make thankfulness a habit all year long, try a few of these ideas to help you cultivate an attitude of gratitude:

- **Reflect:** At the end of each day, state one good thing that happened to you. You can also take this to the dinner table: go around the table and have each family member share something good he or she experienced that day.
- **Keep a gratitude journal:** A few times a week, take time to list, or even journal about, three things that you are thankful for. An alternative is to make a list of things you are thankful for and add to it as you think of more; start each day by reviewing these or put the list in a highly visible place: next to your computer, on your bathroom mirror, nightstand or refrigerator.
- **Pick up a pen:** Write a letter to someone you are grateful to, but have never told them. Short on time? Even a quick email or text can be effective.
- **Embrace this season of life:** It's easy to get so caught up in life's daily demands that we don't take the time to relish them. Whether you're a busy mom changing diapers and cleaning up messes or a dad that feels like a taxi driver as you take kids from one activity to another, soon these crazy days will only be a memory. So make it a good one and cherish these moments.
- **Say thank you:** Take a moment to thank a co-worker, client, friend or family member for something that you might overlook or take for granted. For example, thank a spouse for taking out the trash, a co-worker for helping you with a project or a stranger for holding the door open for you. These seemingly simple two words will impact both you and the recipient.
- **Change your perspective.** Be grateful for the challenges you face in life. While difficulties are not necessarily enjoyable, these situations provide the opportunity for learning and growth, both of which can help you become a stronger person in the end.

