



# Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc.

## Health and Wellness News

ISSUE 38



JULY 2023

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## Eating "Whole" Foods

It is hard to get through a grocery store without purchasing items that have ingredients not found in any home kitchen. Go to the bread aisle and try to find a product that does not contain DATEM, "enzymes," and perhaps worse, potassium bromate or azodicarbonamide. Do you keep these ingredients in your pantry? Have you ever added them to a loaf of bread? What are they and why are they abundant in our food supply?

Food manufacturers will argue that they are needed to produce a shelf-stable, palatable product and that they are harmless to human health. The Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, the agency whose job it is to oversee our food supply, is much less stringent than similar agencies in other countries when it comes to banning food additives. We are far behind the European Union and other countries when it comes to what we allow in our food--many of these additives have already been banned for years in Europe and other countries.

New York and California have recently proposed banning certain food additives based on their questionable safety. The five additives that state legislatures are proposing to ban as food additives are titanium dioxide, potassium bromate, propylparaben, brominated vegetable oil, and red dye #3. These additives have been linked to a number of health concerns, including cancer, neurodevelopmental issues and hormone dysfunction.

Red dye #3, for example, was banned for use in cosmetics by the FDA in 1990, because it is a known animal carcinogen. However, it is still used in red-colored food products, such as candy, icing, and maraschino cherries.

Titanium dioxide was recently banned in the EU due to evidence that it may damage DNA and affect the immune system. It is used in the US as an anticaking agent in foods such as baked goods, cream-based salad dressings, and candy.

Brominated vegetable oil is banned as a food additive in the EU, Canada, India, and Japan.

It is used in the US as an emulsifier in juice drinks and cola, despite evidence that it is likely an endocrine disrupter and may also affect the reproductive system.

Propylparaben has been shown to have similar effects in numerous studies and is found in baked goods, tortillas, and cosmetics, although it has been banned in the EU since 2006.

Lastly, potassium bromate has been deemed a possible human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, yet it is still in use in products such as cookies, cakes, chips, and tortillas. It is banned in the EU, Canada, Brazil and China.

Food manufacturers and lax government agencies say that the tiny amounts of these additives found in foods is negligible in terms of health. However, if the average person eats multiple sources of these additives throughout the day and throughout their life, the accumulative effects may not be so inconsequential.



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## Eating “Whole” Foods (cont.)

Additives in our food do not just affect our physical health, but also our mental health. Studies have shown that consumption of what are described as “ultra-processed foods” or UPFs, is associated with anxiety, depression, and cognitive decline. UPFs are described as foods that contain ingredients rarely found in home-cooked foods, such as high fructose corn syrup, hydrogenated oils, artificial flavors, emulsifiers, etc. Approximately 70% of the packaged food available in the U.S., such as frozen meals, fast food items, and shelf-stable snacks, qualify as ultra-processed. Scientists are still investigating this link between poor mental health outcomes and ultra-processed foods, but one hypothesis is the effect these foods have on gut health. UPFs tend to be low in fiber and high in chemicals, a one-two punch to our gut bacteria which thrive on high fiber foods and may be adversely affected by artificial sweeteners, emulsifiers, and other novel substances not naturally found in real food.

Until the FDA begins to regulate food manufacturers more stringently, it's up to the consumer to avoid potentially harmful food additives. You can do this by choosing “whole” foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts, unprocessed meats, eggs, and dairy. Some convenience foods are fine, but read ingredient lists. Whenever you see something that would not be found in your home kitchen, reconsider that product. And the shorter the ingredient list, the better.

Another good approach to grocery shopping is “shopping the perimeter.” Most stores are organized so that the inside aisles are the most shelf-stable, and therefore most processed, foods. Think about your local

grocery store: the outside aisles probably contain produce, dairy, meats, fish, and the bakery. These foods tend to be less processed, fresh, whole foods. The inside aisles are the snacks, shelf-stable breads, bottled drinks and sodas, and other canned and boxed foods. Again, some of these foods are fine, such as dried pasta, rice, beans, and canned items like tomatoes and sea-food like tuna, salmon, and sardines. But sticking to the outside aisles as much as possible is an easy way to buy fresher food with fewer additives. And if cost is an issue, remember that frozen vegetables and fruits are often just as nutritious as fresh, so don't skip the frozen food aisle!

It is a best practice of our Dietary Departments to choose products that have as few additives as possible. At our annual Dietary Directors Conference this summer, we reviewed the information included in this

article, explored options for selecting natural foods through our food vendors, and discussed additives to avoid. We strive to serve our persons served and staff the same food we would serve to ourselves and our families.





## Staying Hydrated this Summer!

In these dog days of summer, when the sun is high in the sky and we spend long hours outdoors, it is important to remember to stay hydrated. Age, medications, and activity level can also affect how much liquid we need. The best source of hydration is of course, water. It is cheap, calorie- and additive-free, and available from any faucet. Still, some people struggle to drink enough plain old water.

### Spa Water

Spa water sounds fancy, but it is really just water with fruit, vegetables, or herbs added for flavor and eye-appeal. Ice is also added to keep everything cold and fresh. Not quite an agua fresca, in which the ingredients are usually blended and a little sweetener is added, spa water has just a subtle hint of flavor and little to no added calories. Try these combinations or make up your own. Keep a pitcher in the refrigerator, serve it at mealtime, or keep a beverage dispenser out for everyone to use.

***Try these refreshing flavors this summer!***



- ◆ **Strawberry, Lemon, & Basil**
- ◆ **Cucumber & Mint**
- ◆ **Citrus combinations, like lemon, lime, orange, grapefruit**
- ◆ **Melon & Mint or Basil**

## Hydration Station at Sonoma County Healing Center!

Sonoma County Healing Center is serving up Wellness Meals and featuring a hydration station! The hydration station is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays and features many types of refreshing beverages, such as agua fresca de melon (cantaloupe). A recipe suggestion box is available to keep flavors fresh!



## Spirituality Corner: Spirituality Practice through Art

Have you ever seen a painting or listened to a piece of music that you connected with so emotionally it brought tears to your eyes? It's no wonder art can be a tool to a spirituality practice to connect with the dimensions of our human experience. What's more, we can discover and connect with something the artist might not have intended. In addition to appreciating art made by others, we can also tap into our own creativity and imagination to create our own art. When we create our own art it can foster a certain vulnerability and truth which allows us to connect with something deep within us. That openness and honesty also makes it easier to connect with other people because it removes barriers and allows us to see each other more clearly. Art, whether created by us or appreciated by us, offers a means to connect to ourselves, to others, or to something bigger than ourselves.

Art comes in a variety of mediums, one of which is music. It's pretty incredible that rhythm, repetition, patterns, and harmony organized in a particular way can release powerful emotions within ourselves. It can even have meditative effects. Music, of course, is long associated with more traditional



forms of spirituality, like hymnals, spirituals, Gregorian chants, and bhajans. The Smithsonian says, "Music and spirituality are intricately related, with spirituality often being the inspiration for the creation of music, and music so often creating the desired atmosphere for a spiritual occasion. While spirituality is not necessarily experienced through religion, many people use religion as a conduit for their everyday spirituality." For example, a spiritual experience may arise in the members of an orchestra as they work together to perform a piece, each individual with their contribution resulting in a powerful performance. Equally, an audience member listening to the orchestra may also experience a connection to performers, performance, or something bigger than themselves.

**If you're interested in integrating art into your spiritual practice, here are some simple ways to get started:**

- ◆ Contemplative reading (literature, poetry, etc.) or listening (music, spoken word). Read slowly or listen carefully, and then reflect in order to cultivate deeper awareness and understanding.
- ◆ Write a poem
- ◆ Listen to music
- ◆ Sing a song
- ◆ Take a photograph
- ◆ Visit an art gallery, exhibit, or museum
- ◆ Explore art online; many museums' websites provide online access to some of their collections
- ◆ Explore community murals
- ◆ Visit community parks and gardens, contemplate statues and plants
- ◆ Explore easy art projects on YouTube and try one
- ◆ Slowly write a word that is meaningful to you in your best handwriting.

See if art is a practice that helps you connect more deeply with your spirituality. Set aside time regularly to participate in a way that inspires you and makes you feel good.



*This article was contributed by our Wellness Ambassador, **Erin Lubniewski**, Occupational Therapist at Crestwood Treatment Center Fremont. (If you are interested in becoming a Wellness Ambassador for your campus, please contact Margaret at [mclayton@cbhi.net](mailto:mclayton@cbhi.net).)*

*"Every artist dips his brush in his own soul and paints his own nature into his pictures."*

**-Henry Ward Beecher**

## No-Knead Bread

Fresh bread is leaps and bounds better than store bought sliced bread, free of harmful additives, and it is easier to make than you might think. No-knead bread recipes abound on the internet, and they require a lot less work, just a little more time. When it comes to baking, there is little room for recipe changes, so I will give credit where credit is due--my favorite no-knead bread recipe, and the one I have found to be most-foolproof, is Mark Bittman's. It can be found on his [website](#) and in his cookbook "How to Bake Everything." I like to make it with the suggested substitution of wheat flour. I have even had pretty good results with a 3:1 ratio of wheat flour to white flour, but Mr. Bittman suggests the ratio of 1:1 below. There is nothing quite like a warm, toasty loaf of bread, still crackling as it cools in your kitchen. Enjoy!

### Ingredients

2 cups white flour  
2 cups whole wheat flour  
1/2 tsp instant yeast  
2 tsp salt  
2 tbsp olive oil  
Handful of cornmeal, semolina, or wheat bran



Combine the flour, yeast, and salt in a bowl. Add about 2 cups of room temperature (about 70°F) water. Add the oil. Mix to combine. The dough should be wet and "shaggy". If it seems too dry, you can add a bit more water. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for 18 hours.

When the dough is ready, it's surface will look bubbly. Lightly flour a work surface and turn the dough out onto it. Fold it over on itself a few times, then cover again with plastic wrap (I use the same wrap from the bowl) and let sit for 15 minutes.

With floured hands, shape the dough into a ball. Dust a cotton kitchen cloth or silicone baking mat with cornmeal, semolina, or wheat bran, and roll the dough, seam-side down, onto it. Dust generously with more cornmeal, then cover with another cloth or more plastic wrap.

After 1 ½ hours, heat your oven to 450°F, and put an OVEN SAFE, 3–4-quart pot with a cover inside. Dutch ovens are perfect for this. After 30 more minutes (a total of 2 hours rising time for your dough), remove the pot from the oven carefully—it will be hot! Lift the towel your dough is on and roll the dough into the pot. Cover (make sure to use an oven mitt!) the pot and return it to the oven.

Bake, covered, for 30 minutes, then remove the lid and bake for another 20 to 30 minutes. Remove from oven and carefully remove bread from pot to cool. It should be deep brown, crusty, and crackling. Let it sit for about 30 minutes before slicing.

**"Good bread is the most fundamentally satisfying of all foods; and good bread with butter, the greatest of feasts."**

**-James Andrew Beard**

### Any Health and Wellness News Questions?

Contact Margaret M. Clayton, M.S. at:  
[mclayton@cbhi.net](mailto:mclayton@cbhi.net)