Embracing Life

Take steps toward feeling your best while improving your health and wellness. Set daily goals, track progress, read articles, and find out more information by visiting us online at www.magellanhealth.com/member.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Gratitude is the heart’s memory.”

- ANONYMOUS

FEATURED ARTICLE

Creative Ways to Show You Care
Go all in this Thanksgiving and show your gratitude in as many ways as you can.

Learn more on page 2

FEATURED ACTIVITY

Write Down What You’re Grateful For: Log 12 Times
Expressing gratitude can make you happier and healthier.

Read more on page 6

FEATURED LIVE WEBINARS

November Live Webinars
CaféWell coaching webinars offer great ways to stay happy and healthy all month long.

Learn more on page 7
Go all in this Thanksgiving and show your gratitude in as many ways as you can. These inspiring ideas will show family, friends—even those you’ve never met—how much you care this thankful season. Send personal notes, connect with a charity or take an enriching walk in the woods with your family. Even something simple can mean something big. Here’s a list of ideas to get you started.

Bake extras.
Recognize community members who give all year but never ask for anything in return, such as hospice volunteers, shelter workers or youth mentors. Gifts of homemade holiday treats, including fresh-baked breads or iced cookies, will look striking in pretty packaging. Fold colorful card stock to create easy containers. Accent with ribbons and tie on a meaningful message.

Broaden the guest list.
Welcome college students, refugees or others who can’t visit family for Thanksgiving into your home. Prepare questions on index cards as conversation prompts—some silly and some serious—to start the dinner table conversation and learn about each other’s upbringing and cultures. Contact your local refugee-support organization or nearby university for help locating potential guests.

Play together.
Give your family one new board game each Thanksgiving, and plan a game night before Christmas. Relish the laid-back break from your holiday schedule.

Know your neighbors.
Invite neighbors you’ve known for years—and those who just moved in down the street—to a holiday get-together, such as an open house, chili cook-off or sledding party. A “give thanks” wreath will let guests know they’re at the right place. Decorate with roses, pinecones, hypericum berries, champagne grapes and hydrangeas (keep flower stems in water picks).
Tag your charity.
Many families share the tradition of drawing names for holiday gift giving. This year, draw charities. Invite family members to create tags that represent their favorite nonprofit organizations. Then donate your time or money to the organization you draw—and look for creative volunteer opportunities.

Share the bounty.
Look for paper take-out boxes in craft stores, and turn leftovers from your holiday meal into take-home treats for guests. Look for fall-theme stamps and natural-tone inks to give the boxes a seasonal look. (Place foil or sandwich bags inside the boxes to prevent leaking.)

Keep in touch creatively.
Have family members who can’t travel for the holidays this year? Consider sending them a photo gift like a custom calendar or set of note cards with family photos and quotes.

Shop locally.
Black Friday shopping might offer bargains—but you have to battle the crowds. Why not trade stressful mall shopping for browsing nearby neighborhood shops? You’ll not only enjoy a more leisurely pace, but also support local businesses.

Pen your thanks.
Make the Thanksgiving meal more meaningful by giving each guest a personal note of appreciation. Present the notes in envelopes as place cards. Or turn them into keepsakes: Print each message on colorful paper and wrap it around a candleholder. (But don’t leave lit candles unattended.)

Start community traditions.
Team up with others in your town to give back in a big way. Consider volunteering for a soup kitchen each season, or get enough people together to prepare and serve a free meal. Many local businesses, churches and groups provide and serve meals in the school auditorium.

Appreciate your ancestry.
Holidays are the perfect time to teach youngsters about their heritage. Make it an activity by cutting out copies of vintage baby photos and arranging them on the wall in a “family tree.” Family members can guess who’s who.
Personalize gifts.
Simple, useful items are transformed into thoughtful gifts with a little bit of monogramming—an easy way to give gifts a just-for-you tone. Follow these instructions to make the gifts—all supplies and tools should be available at crafts stores. Accent plain stationery with letter stamps in holiday-color inks. Make custom coasters by covering the bottom of a plain glass coaster with a computer-printed monogram design. Adhere it to the coaster with decoupage medium, which dries clear, then add a piece of felt to the bottom. Or make personalized glass tumblers by taping a letter stencil to the outside of the glass; coat it with white or frosted-glass spray paint to create a letter shape.

Surprise visitors.
Prepare several small gift baskets with some simple food items, and give them to those you encounter on a regular basis throughout the year, such as your mailman and delivery drivers. Surprise them by handing them a basket next time they knock on your door.

Capture memories.
Start a scrapbook just for the holidays to record your family’s traditions. Let each family member create a page with photos, recipes, journal entries or other holiday mementos. Add to the book every year.

Host a cooking class.
Let Grandma (or the top family “chef”) give the kids a mini lesson in cooking one of the family’s Thanksgiving favorites, such as pumpkin pie. Have fun with it, and record the demonstration as if she’s doing a cooking show. You’ll have the recipe secrets for years to come.

Reconnect with friends.
It’s fine to quickly text old friends or message them through social media. But don’t stop there. Call a friend to catch up, or schedule a coffee date.

Give a nod to Mother Nature.
Show how much you appreciate the outdoors by teaching a new generation to love it, too. Take kids on a woodland scavenger hunt that encourages exploration. List 10 items to find, such as a maple leaf, pinecone and animal tracks. Bring bags (and gloves) to pick up trash along the way.

Treat our troops.
Send a care package for troops overseas through the USO (United Service Organizations). Packages ordered through the USO website can contain comfort foods, books, games and more.

Listen to loved ones.
November 27 is the National Day of Listening, a day for recording family stories. Sit a parent or family member down and ask them to tell stories about your family while you record them using a video camera or your phone. Visit storycorps.org for question suggestions and a how-to guide.
Let pets join the family feast.
Reward four-legged friends with healthy food bites. Pooches will love a small spoonful of real canned pumpkin—not pie filling because of its sugar content. Plain cooked turkey without the skin is a safe occasional treat for dogs or cats. No pets? Make seed ornaments for the birds out of wooden shapes. Coat with peanut butter and sprinkle on birdseed.

Do the turkey trot.
Many cities and towns host 5K runs or walks on Thanksgiving Day. It’s a great way to burn some of those holiday calories and support a charity. Find a race in your area and invite friends and family to join you.

Decorate poetically.
Give the gift of inspiration by printing your favorite poems or quotes in a pretty type (or have a calligrapher do the work for you). Frame separately for a series of wall hangings that becomes a reminder to be thankful all year.

Plant a thankful tree.
Anchor fallen tree branches with sand in a pitcher, and invite dinner guests to write their blessings on paper ornaments. Sign and date each ornament to create an archive as you add to the tree each year.

Gather donations.
Invite guests to bring good-condition winter gear, along with books, canned goods and toiletries, to Thanksgiving dinner. Collect the items in a basket by the entryway. Afterwards, cart the donations to a local charity. Some of the most-needed goods during the holidays include winter coats, children’s clothing and new, unwrapped toys.

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Research shows that practicing gratitude regularly is an effective way to increase happiness, experience fewer physical ailments, exercise more often, have a more positive outlook on life, and increase the likelihood of achieving goals.

Begin by simply writing down at least one thing you are grateful for today. Then, continue the practice on a daily basis. If you keep your grateful thoughts in a journal or notebook, you’ll have a record of positive memories to revisit whenever you need them.

To successfully complete this challenge, log that you’ve written down your grateful thoughts 12 times. ✍️
FEATURED LIVE WEBINARS

In addition to the titles above, you can join Coach Jake to learn how to cope with sore muscles, Coach Doris for strategies to relieve caregiver stress, or Coach Lauren for sessions on cultivating gratitude. Check out the upcoming webinar schedule on CaféWell and pick the sessions that are best for you!

Reserve your space now at www.magellanhealth.com/member.

CaféWell coaching webinars offer some great ways to stay happy and healthy all month long.

Titles include:

- Banish Dry Winter Skin
- Smartphone Stress
- Mindful Eating on Turkey Day