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## Take a Hike!

Now that the weather is warming up, it is a great opportunity to spend more time outside to get your exercise in.



One of my favorite ways to exercise is to go for a hike in our awesome [Cleveland Metroparks!](#)

Aside from the physical benefits of exercise, here is how a simple hike can benefit you:

**1) Mental Health:** studies show that spending time in parks and green spaces can improve brain function, reduce stress, and increase happiness.

**2) Social Health:** Next time you want to spend time with a friend, go on a hike together! Your conversation will make the time go by quickly and before you know it, you could be getting in thousands of steps while also improving your social health.

**3) Time to Disconnect:** Going on a solo hike is a great time to unplug from our busy lives. You can spend the time reflecting, appreciating nature, or listening to music/podcasts you enjoy to help you unwind.



## Happy National Nutrition Month!

**National Nutrition Month** was established by the **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** to create awareness of the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and exercise habits in all stages of life.

One of the simple ways to start eating healthier is to model your meals after the **My Plate Method**. This template provides a great balance of nutrients that allows you to feel your best, perform well at work or school, and help prevent significant health issues in the future.

Getting started on this journey to better health can feel complicated or sometimes overwhelming, but there are small things we can do along the way that can help us get there. For example, as a family, you can commit to trying a new fruit or vegetable every week. Also, you could choose one night per week when the whole family helps out with cooking a healthy meal; this helps children improve their skills and create connections with the food which makes them more likely to try new things.



To check out more helpful resources from the Academy, click [HERE](#).



## Myth vs. Fact: Is Fresh Produce Healthier Than Canned or Frozen?

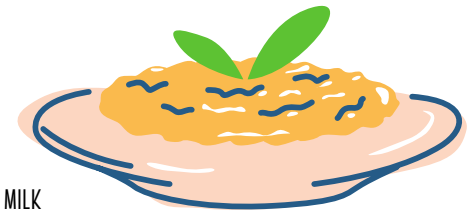
**Myth:** Fresh produce has more nutrients than canned, frozen, or dried produce.

**Fact:** Although fresh produce often tastes better, canned, frozen or dried produce can provide just as much nutrition as fresh produce! Using these alternatives can help save money when fresh produce can get expensive. Something to be mindful of is that canned produce often has added sodium or sugar, so it is best to look for varieties that say "no sugar added" or "low sodium" on the label, or you can rinse them before cooking/eating to remove the extra salt (ex. canned beans).

## RECIPE: GARLIC PARMESAN ORZO

RECIPE ADAPTED FROM THE RECIPE REBEL

- 2.5 CUPS CHICKEN BROTH
- 1.5 CUPS DRY ORZO PASTA
- 2 CLOVES GARLIC
- 1/2 TSP SALT
- 1/4 TSP BLACK PEPPER
- 1/3 CUP HALF AND HALF OR 2% MILK
- 1/4 CUP SHREDDED PARMESAN CHEESE
- 1 CUP SPINACH (OPTIONAL)



- 1) COMBINE BROTH, PASTA, GARLIC, SALT AND PEPPER IN A MEDIUM SKILLET
- 2) BRING TO A BOIL OVER MEDIUM-HIGH HEAT, REDUCE TO MEDIUM-LOW AND SIMMER, STIRRING OFTEN. COOK UNTIL MOST OF THE LIQUID IS ABSORBED AND PASTA IS COOKED
- 3) STIR IN CREAM, PARMESAN AND SPINACH (OPTIONAL)