

# PURSUIT

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Florida Blue   
BetterYou

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

## Get Strong: It Does a Body Good!

As you age, your muscle mass naturally decreases. And unless you do something to replace the muscle you're losing, it will be replaced with fat.

Strength training is a great way to stay lean and keep weight off. It also can enhance your quality of life. When you have more muscle, it's easier to lift your carry-on and tuck it in the overhead bin on a plane. Suddenly those bags of mulch don't feel as heavy. Plus, adding weight to your exercise routine makes your bones stronger, which can help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

It's important to stay safe as you begin to build more muscle mass. Read on for tips, and then get your strength on!

### Safety Tips for Strength Exercises

- Breathe when you exercise! Breathe out as you lift or push, and breathe in as you relax. If you're doing leg lifts, for example, breathe out as you lift your leg, and breathe in as you lower it.



- Use smooth, steady movements to lift weights into position. Don't jerk or thrust weights.
- Keep arm and leg joints slightly bent. Avoid "locking" your arm and leg joints in a tightly straight position.
- Take 3 seconds to lift or push weight into place, hold the position for 1 second, and then take another 3 seconds to return to your starting position. Control the movement, and don't let the weights drop.
- If it's difficult to hold hand weights properly, try using wrist weights.
- If you are starting an exercise program or your arms feel tired after several repetitions, complete the exercise by using one arm at a time. Alternate sides, and then work your way up to using both arms at the same time.
- A steady rate of progress is the best approach. Over-exercising can cause injury.
- Challenge yourself, but listen to your body, and use common sense when you exercise.



**Always consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.**

Resources: [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org), [nia.nih.gov/Go4Life](http://nia.nih.gov/Go4Life)

IN THIS ISSUE

Get Strong: It Does a Body Good!

Keep It Healthy on the Grill

Recipe of the Month



## Keep It Healthy on the Grill

Nothing says summertime like an old-fashioned cookout. Here are a few tips to keep it healthy on the grill.

**Marinate.** Antioxidants in the marinade can lower the chance of carcinogens forming. Spices known to be high in antioxidants

include curry powder, ground cinnamon, ginger and dried oregano.

**Precook.** By partially cooking larger cuts of meat ahead of time in the microwave or stove, you'll cut down on the time your food spends on high heat outside.

**Trim the fat.** Use lean cuts if you can, and trim any fat you can

see—which will keep flame or flares to a minimum.

**Add more veggies and fruits.** Grilling fruits and veggies doesn't produce any carcinogens! Bonus: eating more of them lowers the risk of cancer. Try skewers for an easy way to increase your veggie intake.

**Try not to char your meat.**

This is where more of those carcinogens can be found.

**Wash hands after handling raw meat.**

**Resource:** [Cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org); [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



## Recipe: Marinated Barbeque Vegetables

These tasty vegetables can be cooked on skewers or thrown straight on the barbecue. Serve them hot or at room temperature. As cold leftovers, they're great with crusty bread.

### Ingredients:

- 1 small eggplant, cut into 3/4 inch thick slices
- 2 small red bell peppers, seeded and cut into wide strips
- 3 zucchinis, sliced
- 6 fresh mushrooms, stems removed
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh basil
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced

### Directions

1. Place eggplant, red bell peppers, zucchinis and fresh mushrooms in a medium bowl.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, basil and garlic. Pour the mixture over the vegetables, cover and marinate in the refrigerator at least 1 hour.
3. Preheat an outdoor grill for high heat.
4. Place vegetables directly on the grill or on skewers. Cook on the prepared grill 2 to 3 minutes per side, brushing frequently with the marinade, or to desired doneness.

*Recipe and photo courtesy of Allrecipes.com. For nutritional information [click here](#).*

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