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JANUARY 2022



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Tall Oaks *beauty salon* gets a makeover



COURTESY OF TALL OAKS

Residents recently celebrated the grand re-opening of the Tall Oaks Beauty Salon with a ribbon cutting and toast. The new, sun-lit design is elegantly appointed with comfortable seating and modern accents.

There was an air of excitement and anticipation as stylist Ana Maria, who has provided residents and family members with high-quality salon services for over 30 years, marked the official opening. Long-time resident Bridget Morrow was the first to book an appointment in the updated space. Bridget's

day included a shampoo and set and a mani-pedi – just a few of the affordable, luxury services available. The Beauty Salon adheres to CDC guidelines and regulations to protect our residents and staff.

The Beauty Salon is just one of many Tall Oaks community spaces that serve as an extension of one's home, allowing plenty of room for arts and crafts, baking, exercise classes, seminars, visiting entertainers, and more. From the library (stocked with plenty of large-print books) and movie theater, to the fitness center and sun porches, residents have room to enjoy the things they love without ever leaving their Tall Oaks home.

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ON THE COVER: BEST FRIENDS ENJOY A BRISK WALK IN THE WINTER SUNSHINE.
PHOTO COURTESY ADOBE STOCK

Do you know the difference in *COVID-19 testing options?*

COURTESY OF BRANDPOINT MEDIA

When you think about efforts to fight the spread of COVID-19, vaccinations, hand washing and masking likely come to mind. However, one important effort that must remain the first line of defense is effective testing. With the holiday season in full swing, we cannot let our guards down. Testing, combined with other defensive measures, is essential to keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe.

You may not realize there are different types of tests, so what is available to you?

The two main types of tests authorized for detecting COVID-19 are polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and antigen tests. Here is what you need to know about both:

Antigen tests

If you have ever taken a rapid strep

test or pregnancy test, antigen tests work similarly[1]. Also referred to as rapid tests or rapid antigen tests, these tests work by quickly identifying protein fragments from a virus - these are the antigens - and providing test results in about 15 minutes[2].

Despite being fast, antigen tests can be less accurate than other testing options because they are less sensitive, meaning that some people might incorrectly be told they don't have the virus[1].

Because no special equipment is needed, antigen tests may be performed in various community settings or at home. This convenience has made antigen tests, particularly at-home options, popular when quick results are needed, as when returning to an office or preparing for an event like a vacation.

However, there is more room for error when self-testing, as opposed to

having a test administered by a trained professional[2]. Further, at-home antigen tests are most accurate if COVID-19 symptoms are present and may require the use of several tests to confirm a diagnosis[3]. It is also important to always follow the manufacturer's directions.

PCR tests

PCR tests are also referred to as molecular tests, viral RNA tests or nucleic acid tests[1]. These require special equipment and are typically sent to a lab, with results often available within 24 hours, depending on location. Some PCR tests provide results in just 20 minutes, however, these tests are mostly available in healthcare environments, such as hospitals[2].

Why would someone use a test that takes longer to get results? The answer: accuracy.

PCR tests have remained a touchstone

in diagnostics due to their heightened accuracy over antigen tests[1]. They are highly sensitive and can detect very small amounts of virus genetic material in a sample, such as viral DNA[1]. These tests have a sensitivity of about 98%, much higher than comparative data for antigen tests[1]. This is why PCR tests can detect active infections nearly every time, and it is rare for someone uninfected to receive a positive test[1].

The future of COVID-19 testing

As the pandemic evolves and holiday gatherings commence, complementary testing options can make effectively screening for COVID-19 even easier. This may include combining antigen and PCR testing for identifying present COVID-19 infections, antibody tests for evaluating past exposure, and multiplex tests, which tests for more than one disease, such as flu and COVID-19.

What to expect in *travel* in 2022

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

After a couple abnormal years, many families are eager and ready to travel together again, and there are indications some pandemic-influenced travel behaviors will persist in 2022.

For example, remote work and virtual school allowed families to travel and combine work and vacation time into "flexcation" getaways, a trend that will continue, according to the 2022 Vrbo Trend Report.

In addition to the 44% of families that said they're more likely to work remotely from a place that's not their home, extended stays are also on the rise. The vacation home site and app has seen a 68% increase in demand for 3-4-week stays over the past year.

Consider these 2022 trends spotted by

the travel experts at Vrbo:

Up-and-coming destinations

Spots in Ohio, New York and Alaska saw double vacation rental demand over the past year. Within driving distance of major Midwest metros like Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville, Cincinnati was the year's top emerging destination.

Other up-and-comers include Niagara Falls, a popular choice for those who wanted to experience life at the border. Yorktown, Virginia, the location of the last Revolutionary War battle, allows history buffs to witness a battle reenactment. Adventurous travelers trekked to Matanuska-Susitna, Alaska, to enjoy the wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve, breathtaking glaciers and surrounding mountains.

Chalet all day

You may have heard of Cabincore and

Cottagecore, but chalets are a trending aesthetic that inspires family travel. Chalets saw a nearly 85% increase in demand year over year. Located on lakefronts or nestled in the woods, these charming and idyllic properties are desirable lodging options for many families.

Kids call the shots

After being cooped up at home, it may be no surprise parents are letting their kids have a bigger say in vacation planning. Compared to pre-pandemic times, half of the families surveyed said they're more likely to let their kids decide where they vacation and 43% of parents are more likely to let their kids skip school for vacation.

Traveling with the pack

Many families adopted pandemic pets because they had more time at home to spend with their furry friends. Now more people are bringing Fido and Fluffy along on

vacation; 68% of pet parents have traveled, plan to travel or would like to travel with their pets. What's more, there has been a 40% increase in demand year-over-year for pet-friendly vacation homes.

Early bird bookers

If 2021 was any indication, families will continue booking their vacations further in advance. Booking activity occurred an average of 2-3 months earlier than usual for several major travel seasons. Families booked summer travel in February, holiday trips in July and snowbirds got a head start on booking warm weather stays for 2022. In fact, 60% of survey respondents said they plan to book their vacations earlier than they did in pre-pandemic times with nearly half making plans 3-5 months in advance.

Find more ideas for planning your next vacation, along with the full report, at Vrbo.com.

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Fighting the flu

Three tips to protect your health

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

When most people hear about vaccines these days, the first thing that comes to mind is COVID-19. However, vaccines also help prevent other serious illnesses like the flu, especially for those at higher risk.

According to the American Heart Association, people with underlying risk factors like heart disease, stroke, obesity and diabetes are at high risk of serious flu complications. During the 2018-19 flu season, more than 93% of adults hospitalized for the flu reported at least one underlying medical condition that placed them at high-risk for complications, based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Even so, a survey on behalf of the American Heart Association found 3 in 5 U.S. adults may delay or skip the flu shot this year, despite warnings from health experts the influenza season could be severe after a mild 2020-21 flu season.

“Unfortunately, the flu is back,” said Donald Lloyd-Jones, M.D., Sc.M., FAHA, volunteer president of the American Heart Association. “We’re seeing cases in communities across the country. If you’ve delayed your flu shot, it’s not too late to get one for the current flu season, which usually lasts until late spring. Getting it as soon as possible offers the most protection for you and your loved ones.”

Knowledge gap

A lack of information may contribute to decisions to skip or delay the flu shot. The survey identified a significant knowledge gap, with an overwhelming majority (94%) of adults in the United States incorrectly answering at least one of eight questions about the shot. Younger generations were less informed than their older counterparts, but across all age groups, more than half of U.S. adults answered at least two questions incorrectly.

Despite the knowledge gap, some common misconceptions may be fading.



GETTY IMAGES

ing. Among all respondents, 73% know you can’t get the flu from the flu shot and 88% know you can get a COVID-19 vaccine and the flu shot at the same time.

Flu and heart health

There is a strong correlation between the flu and cardiovascular diseases like heart disease and stroke. Among adults hospitalized with flu during recent flu seasons, heart disease was one of the most common chronic conditions. According to the CDC, about half of adults hospitalized with flu have heart disease. In addition, research published in “The New England Journal of Medicine” showed those who are not vaccinated against the flu are six times more likely to have a heart attack within a week of infection.

Preventing the flu

Take steps to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu this season with these tips from the American Heart Association:

- **Get your flu shot.** Most experts recommend getting your shot early in the season, but it’s not too late to benefit from the protection. The flu shot is available to anyone at least 6 months old. While getting the shot isn’t a guarantee you won’t get the flu, it reduces the chances of contracting a severe case.

- **Wash germs away.** Washing hands frequently and thoroughly helps reduce the spread of germs, including those that cause viruses like the flu. Also make a point to avoid touching your face, since your nose and mouth are natural entry points for germs.

- **Seek medical attention.** If you get sick, seeing a doctor can bring relief and help shorten your illness. If the flu is detected early enough, you may be able to take an oral antiviral treatment that reduces the length and severity of your symptoms.

Learn more about protecting your heart health and preventing the flu at heart.org/flu.



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Make mealtime *easy* with simple ingredients

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

Maintaining healthy habits and managing schedules for the entire family is often easier said than done. When you're strapped for time, look for food and ingredients with versatility that allow you to balance nutrition with flavor.

Plan ahead by meal prepping

Start by looking at recipes that highlight ingredients you have on hand. Meal prepping allows you to plan for a week of healthier choices and think creatively about using the same bulk ingredients in multiple ways - stretching your grocery budget while eliminating food waste.

Add something whole

Adding fruit is a smart wellness strategy, but some options are better for you than others. One example without any added sugar is Sun-Maid Raisins - a whole-fruit, nutrient-dense option with 0 grams of added sugar per 1/4-cup serving. Easily added to savory and sweet dishes and snacks, raisins are reliably delicious.

"Raisins do a lot of favors for your body and help keep a body strong," said Wendy



Reinhardt Kapsak, MS, RDN, president and CEO, Produce for Better Health Foundation. "The whole fruit contains fiber, vitamins and minerals, and they aid in digestion, too. Raisins also add flavor and can act as a better-for-you ingredient. Whole fruits like raisins are a fabulous addition to breakfast cereal, yogurt, salads, fancy party trays and trail mixes, and they are a convenient on-the-go snack that travels well."

Swap recipe ingredients

Substituting ingredients for more nutrition and less sugar can transform your favorite dishes into healthier versions. Using lean protein in place of a higher fat alternative or switching traditional pasta for zucchini or squash noodles are two popular options for main dishes. You can also make better-for-you baked goods by replacing oil with an equal amount of applesauce in muffins and quick

bread or half as much applesauce as oil in a recipe for a cake or cookies.

Practice smart snacking

Choosing snacks that are nutrient-dense and fulfilling can give your body the energy it needs between meals. As a result, you'll be less tempted to nibble on empty calories or sit down for a meal feeling overly hungry, which makes it harder to practice portion control. Portable snacks like dried fruit and trail mix are good for an on-the-go pick-me-up.

Clean out the kitchen

Kids and grownups alike tend to gravitate toward what's simple, tasty and accessible. As you get into routines, use a critical eye to take a look at the choices in your cupboards, pantry and fridge and see where you can make some changes. While an occasional treat is perfectly fine, filling your kitchen with healthy amounts of tasty and nutritious ingredients and snacks makes it easier to form healthier habits that will stick.

Find more inspiration for easy and tasty ways to improve your family's nutrition at sunmaid.com.

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These 4 simple choices help create a more *eco-friendly* kitchen in the new year

COURTESY OF BRANDPOINT MEDIA

Environmental protection is always capturing headlines, but you might wonder what you can do as an individual to make a difference at home. Do your small efforts even matter in the big picture of a greener world?

The truth is every eco-minded effort counts, no matter how small it may seem. One of the best places to start is at home in your very own kitchen. Some of the simplest, most cost-effective changes can have the biggest cumulative impact in the new year.

Looking for ideas? These simple, everyday habits will help you create a greener kitchen and eco-friendly household:

Prevent food waste

Food waste is estimated at between 30-40% of the food supply in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Billions of pounds of food is wasted every year, often due to spoilage, which is why preserving food properly is essential. Dry goods should be sealed air tight and out of sunlight, ideally in a cool and dry location. Fresh foods can spoil, so it's important to store produce properly. Look for storage options created specifically for fresh foods to keep the proper air and moisture ratio for optimum freshness. Most produce should be stored in the fridge, but some items like bananas, pears, avocado, melons and tomatoes last longer when not refrigerated. When it comes to food waste, consider composting at home or through a curbside program, which creates a trickle-down effect that can benefit you as well as the environment. When in doubt, do your research to

understand the different options.

Get trash bags made with less plastic

While reducing waste is important, you probably will still need to use trash bags in the kitchen. Research options and find a greener bag. Glad's drawstring kitchen trash bags use less plastic than leading competitors* without sacrificing performance. Glad's ForceFlexPlus Recovered Materials Bag is the brand's most sustainable bag. They have the same trusted Glad strength you can depend on but are made with 50% recovered plastic - 20% recycled plastic, 30% reclaimed plastic - and are made with 100% renewable energy (in Glad's North American plants) and come in 100% recyclable packaging (in Glad's North American plants). Learn more at Glad.com/Sustainability.

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Opt for the dishwasher

If you wash dishes by hand instead of in the dishwasher thinking you're saving water, you may be mistaken. This is particularly true if you're like most people and run the hot water for rinsing continuously as you do dishes. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, newer EnergyStar dishwasher models use 6 gallons or less per wash cycle, plus save on electricity. You can maximize savings further by only running the dishwasher when it's full.

Recycle

Last but not least, prioritize recycling throughout your day. Know what can be recycled in your area and be sure to place those items as indicated in the recycling bin rather than the trash. Unsoiled paper products can typically be recycled, as



well as many glass containers, metal lids and plastic containers that have been rinsed well.

Whether you live in an urban setting or far out in the country - or one of

the many places in between - Mother Nature serves an important role in your life. These simple steps that you can do in your very own kitchen make a big difference.

How to improve your *financial health*

COURTESY OF FAMILY FEATURES

Your financial health is just as important as your physical and mental health. Money affects almost every aspect of your life and can be the determining factor in many of your day-to-day decisions.

Being financially healthy isn't just about how much money you have in the bank. It also encompasses your financial capability and how you feel about money or how money makes you feel.

Start by doing a self-check to determine your financial health. Look at where your accounts currently stand, including the statuses and balances. The balances in your accounts can be used to calculate your net worth, which is a numerical indicator of your overall financial health from an accounting standpoint.

Also consider your feelings and relationship with money, including the emotions you experience when someone

brings up topics involving money. Then determine if you are a saver or spender. Understanding how you feel about your finances and why you have these feelings can help you improve your overall financial health along with these tips from the financial experts at kinly, a financial services company helping Black America build generational wealth.

Set financial goals

To improve your financial health, start by setting short-term, mid-term and long-term financial S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time bound) goals. S.M.A.R.T. goal setting can help you be more specific, provide a way to measure your progress, allow you to create a plan to make things more achievable, ensure your goals are in line with other objectives and provide deadlines, so your financial goals don't get lost in the shuffle of day-to-day life.

Create a money plan

A money plan is a guide that details how you want to use your income monthly.

This plan should consider the money you want to save and the money you want to spend. As you add your list of expenses, use this opportunity to review where your money is going and if your spending is in line with the financial goals you've set. This is also an opportunity to look for ways to reduce or eliminate spending so your money can be used for things that are important to you, like saving for a down payment on a car or home, or purchasing an item from your wish list.

Expand your financial knowledge

Explore ways to become more comfortable with money and take control of your financial future. Your relationship with money and how you feel about it make up your money story. Money stories involve emotions, beliefs and experiences with money from childhood to adulthood. Start by spending 10-20 minutes each day exploring topics around money or personal finances to help build your knowledge base. You can do this by listening to podcasts, reading books, browsing

reputable personal finance websites or exploring financial education resources provided by your financial institution.

If you need a more personalized approach to developing a better relationship with your finances, explore working with a financial coach. Your financial coach can work with you on a range of fundamental money management skills. For example, a financial coach can help you overcome financial anxiety or come up with a debt repayment strategy. The coach can help guide, teach, empower and challenge you to grow into a savvy money user.

When determining your financial health, remember personal finance is personal. The financial decisions you make today impact your overall financial health. Determine what financial success looks like for you and incorporate mindfulness, resources and other financially beneficial strategies to help improve your relationship with your finances. Find additional advice and resources to help you manage your money at [bekingly.com](https://www.bekingly.com).

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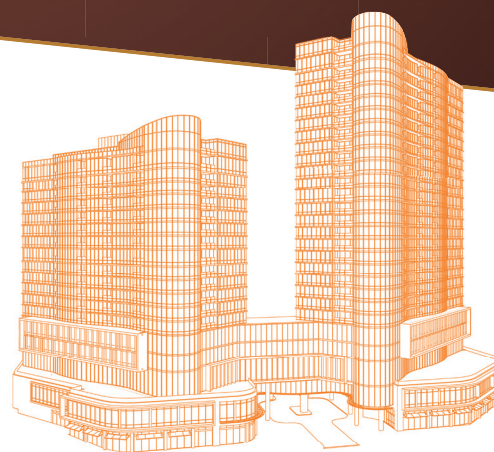
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