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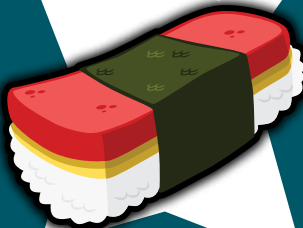
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EARL YOSHII



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aloha members,



During my tenure as CEO of HMSA, we've worked to transform from functioning exclusively as a health plan to being a comprehensive health organization instead.

Although we still perform the critical functions of a health plan, which gives you the security of making sure you have access to and coverage for health care when you need it, as a health organization we are also a community asset that improves the health of our state. This has meant investing in quality, access, and sustainability of care with our delivery system partners, and working with our community partners in "upstream" health, keeping people well and not needing as much acute "sick" care.

Recently, with the care delivery system, we've invested in the John A. Burns School of Medicine by providing the lead gift for learning communities, in Blood Bank of Hawaii's new modern facility, in the doula program with Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, in development of extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) at our hospitals for life-saving capabilities, in the growth of the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center via the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium, in large gifts for infrastructure development at Queen's and Hawai'i Pacific Health to provide the best care for the people of Hawai'i, and much more.

In the community, amongst many other investments too numerous to list, we've partnered with the state and HomeAid Hawaii to build kauhale homes, with Aloha United Way to fund the ALICE cohort, with Project Vision for Maui Medical respite, with the Boys and Girls Club's trauma-informed training, and with the National Fitness Campaign to build fitness courts across the state.

Via our HMSA Foundation, we've incorporated principles of "trust-based philanthropy" by partnering with and providing multiyear operating grants to deserving nonprofit organizations that strengthen community health across Hawai'i.



This year marks our second five-year cohort and includes Hui Mālama i ke Ala 'Ūlili (creating safe and healthy spaces and strong families through education and cultural practices on the Big Island),

Kūkulu Kumuhana O Anahola (supporting education and skill-building empowerment on Kaua'i), Nohona Health (a holistic approach to health, including behavioral health support, on Maui), The Maui Farm (a farm-based transitional housing program for women and children on Maui), Hoa 'Āina O Mākaha (an educational resource center on O'ahu's Leeward coast), I Ola Lāhui (behavioral health services, research, and workforce development, and healthy aging programs serving O'ahu, Maui, and Moloka'i), Kahumana (an inclusive farm-based community providing housing, employment, and resources for homeless families, people with disabilities, and youth in Leeward O'ahu), and Palama Settlement (social, cultural, and recreational support for well-being and health in the Kalihi and Pālama neighborhoods on O'ahu).

Our efforts as a health organization have won us recognition as National Philanthropy Day's Outstanding Corporation and earned us a spot on the list of Hawaii Business Magazine's Most Charitable Companies.

It makes me proud. And it's our responsibility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark M. Mugiishi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S
President and Chief Executive Officer

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- Stan Lawrence
Orchidland Surf Shop, Hilo



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COVER: Article on concussions and children by Earl Yoshii on page 20.
Art by Garry Ono.

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publisher's note

dear friends,

Thank you for your kind comments on our winter issue. It was so nice to hear from you about the cover story and articles. The team in the cover photo includes some of those responsible for the magazine you hold in your hands today and our continuing journey.

I wanted to share with you a little about what the future may hold for us. As we know, health care is complex and dynamic, and our plans adjust constantly, but here are a few things we're excited about working on.

For *Island Scene* magazine and our companion islandscene.com website, we're always looking for ways to help you live your best life. We're working on many changes to our articles in print and online, including:

- Increasing articles on physical and mental health.
- Renewing our focus on simple, healthy, local recipes.
- Taking you behind the scenes with islandscene.com articles and photos of our team at work.

We also launched a quarterly e-newsletter this year to keep you up to date, involved, and connected. To sign up, just head over to islandscene.com.

And we're working on refreshing the design of the magazine and website, so stay tuned. And here's a little secret: We're excited about transforming our popular food section into an interactive



e-cookbook. Recipes will be better organized and searchable, and you'll be able to print recipes to save or share. We've already increased the number of recipes we post on islandscene.com.

There are lots of exciting changes coming and lots of work ahead. If you have any suggestions, we'd love to hear from you. Please feel free to email us at feedback@islandscene.com or you can write to me directly at Island Scene, P.O. Box 3850, Honolulu, HI 96812-3850.

As always, we look forward to hearing from you and thank you for reading *Island Scene* and islandscene.com.

Love and best wishes,

Lisa Maneki Baxa
Publisher and Editor

around the 808

kaua'i

When duty calls

Serenity Kalama is being called a hero for helping save the lives of two Kaua'i residents from a drug overdose. But the Kaua'i Police Department (KPD) officer says she was just doing her job.

Last August, Kalama was called to a home in Lihu'e where she found an unresponsive man and woman. Kalama realized they were suffering from an opioid overdose and quickly administered them naloxone (Narcan), which helped save their lives.

"Rather than being a hero, I was just in the right place at the right time," says Kalama. "I did what we're trained to do as officers – serve and protect."

Kalama was honored at a Kaua'i Police Commission meeting for her outstanding service.

Opioid and fentanyl overdoses can result in death within moments and requires immediate medical intervention. The KPD began training officers to use naloxone in 2019. Since 2021, KPD officers have administered naloxone in 20 reported incidents to prevent opioid overdose.



KPD officer Serenity Kalama was recognized for her life-saving response.



Volunteers of Root and Rise Hawai'i at a lau lau workshop in South Kona

big island

Rising above stigmas

Participants in the nonprofit organization Root and Rise Hawai'i are working to rise above mental health stigmas. Founded by Aliza Gebin and Mona Trenae-Maynard, Root and Rise Hawai'i offers programs and workshops to benefit adults with serious and persistent mental illnesses and has been supporting mental health treatment since 2021.

"The Root and Rise Hawai'i integrative workshops are accessible to underserved populations and include nature- and art-based projects that focus on wellness and service," says Gebin.

"These individuals might not have anyone to connect with except others at a workshop," says Trenae-Maynard. "There are moments in workshops where I see people in the flow and having deep conversations, in a shared space of safety, joy, and acceptance," says Gebin. "Sharing those impactful moments is amazing."

For more information, visit rootandrisehawaii.org, email info@rootandrisehawaii.org, or call (808) 345-4764.

maui, moloka'i, and lāna'i

Growing the future

Seeds of change are sprouting on Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i. Grow Some Good, a Maui nonprofit, strives to cultivate healthy communities by strengthening local agriculture and food security while improving access to nutritious, affordable food.

Its Farm to School program reaches over 8,000 students a year by integrating agricultural education into the curriculum, aligning project-based learning, STEM education, and entrepreneurial skills.

The Nā Māla Kaiāulu program tackles climate change in Central Maui by removing fire-prone invasive plant species and replacing it with edible, biodiverse, multi-storied trees and understory.

"Witnessing firsthand how Grow Some Good's initiatives help families access fresh produce, engage in agroforestry, and learn resilience in the face of food security challenges is incredibly rewarding," says Executive Director Scott Lacasse. "Every garden planted, every volunteer engaged, and every partnership fostered strengthens our community's ability to thrive."

Grow Some Good participates in community outreach events such as Maui AgFest, hosts volunteer workdays like Mālama Māla at school gardens across Maui, and welcomes volunteer maintenance days, Corporate Social Responsibility events, and special projects at its community garden and agroforest site (Nā Māla Kaiāulu) at the Maui Family YMCA.

For more information, visit growsomegood.org or call (808) 215-9228.



Grow Some Good promotes sustainable agriculture through youth engagement programs and volunteer outreach.

Have a great story, place, or event that makes your Neighbor Island community special? Share it with us at feedback@islandscene.com or call (808) 948-6839.



Maria Emerick in her garden

gardening: reaping the benefits

Maria Emerick dreamed of having her own garden since she was a child. "I would just daydream about the time I'd get to own my own home with my own yard, just so I could have my own garden and grow all of my vegetables."

words David Frickman

photos Earl Yoshii



The registered dietitian says, "Nourishing food doesn't just come from a grocery store."

Now, Emerick is a registered dietitian in Honolulu who specializes in plant-based nutrition and longevity. She's dedicated to helping her clients cultivate a meaningful connection with the food they eat.

"Incorporating gardening into my own work as a dietitian allows me to demonstrate that nourishing food doesn't just come from a grocery store," Emerick says. "It's something that can be grown, allowing for a deeper connection to the food we eat and its role in supporting long-term health."

Emerick says gardening is an easy hobby to start. "It's not as expensive as you might think to create a beautiful, functional garden. And it doesn't require a green thumb."

As for what to grow, Emerick suggests choosing well-rounded, nutritional foods. "There are many things you could grow," she says.

Here are some of Emerick's suggestions:

- **Leafy greens:** "Kale, lettuce, Swiss chard, and spinach. They grow in abundance, and they're full of vitamins and minerals, which support everything from bone health to immune function."
- **Cruciferous vegetables:** "Broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts are packed with fiber and are powerful antioxidants. This helps detoxify the body and reduce inflammation."
- **Root vegetables:** "Carrots, sweet potatoes, radishes, and beets. These are a rich source of beta carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A, essential for maintaining healthy vision and overall eye health."
- **Nonstarchy fruits and vegetables:** "Tomatoes, peppers, squash, and zucchini, to name a few. These are typically easy to grow, and carry a good amount of hydration, fiber, vitamin C and vitamin A, with good antioxidant properties. The more colorful, the better."


You'll also have a healthier, thriving garden if you incorporate pollinator-friendly plants, Emerick says. "Like marigolds, sunflowers, and lavender, things that attract these pollinator insects so that they could basically propagate and do the work of gardening for you."

There are plants that could be grown indoors to use in your meal prep, she says. "All you need is a space with sunlight and some pots with soil, and then to decide on some easy -to-grow plants, like herbs and leafy green vegetables."

The health benefits of gardening aren't just limited to the food you'll harvest.

"You're bending and kneeling, so it improves flexibility," Emerick says. "You're lifting somewhat heavy things and building strength and overall endurance."

"Digging, planting, weeding, watering, all these things I like to call natural movements that engage various muscle groups and help with coordination and balance, which is super important as we get older. It could also boost heart health and help lower stress levels, which is just fabulous," she says.

"To get started," Emerick says, "you just need some willingness to try something new and maybe a little bit of patience as you watch things grow." 



For gardening tips, resources, and a video of Maria Emerick in her garden, go to **islandscene.com/more** or scan the QR code.



Emerick says gardening also helps your body through exercise.

This is the first of a series of articles on healthy hobbies. Stay tuned for more and send us your ideas for hobbies to feature. Leave a message at (808) 948-6839 or email feedback@islandscene.com.



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kapa'a: kaua'i's biggest small town

words Marvin Buenconsejo



Kapa'a Town



There's just something delightfully different about growing up in a rural community.

This is especially true for a place as wonderful as the small town of Kapa'a on the island of Kaua'i. Just ask Jaime Nakamura, who was born and raised there.

"It's not as stressful here. It's more relaxed and I like the slower pace," Nakamura says with a smile.

Welcome to Kapa'a – population 11,652

Located on Kaua'i's east side, Nakamura grew up in a town that's framed by mauka waterfalls and the ocean. Among its many features, Kapa'a is home to the largest multiuse pathway in the state. The scenic 8-mile Ke Ala Hele Makālae paved pedestrian and bike path hugs the eastern shore for everyone to enjoy.



Ke Ala Hele Makālae Path

But Nakamura's small-kid time in Kapa'a is filled with fun memories a little more inland, riding her bike around the neighborhood, stopping at the mom and pop stores in the area, like the beloved Pono Market, a family-owned, one-stop shop that's been serving the island for close to six decades.

"It's a great shop that has been with the Kubota family for generations," shares Nakamura. "We would stop to grab some poke, fried chicken, and Spam musubis. Growing up we would stop to grab lunch for field trips or an after-school snack and now I go there to grab lunch for my kids."

Nakamura is the assistant manager at the HMSA Center in Līhu'e. She describes her childhood self as the quiet, indoor type who loved to read. That passion for reading meant spending a great deal of time at the friendly neighborhood state library.

"The library is still there. I loved when I got my parents to take me to the library. I would come home with stacks of books, especially *The Boxcar Children* and *The Baby-Sitters Club* books."



Pono Market



Kapa'a Public Library



Sugar cane train tracks

“Here, it’s more about
spending time with
family and being there
for each other.”

: Jaime Nakamura

Long time Kapa'a residents may remember elements of the past now gone: Kapa'a Bakery, Coconut Marketplace Cinemas, and Kapa'a's sugar industry – tracks from the old train system used to transport sugar cane remain intact.

And then, there's the old Kauai Kitchen, which is now home to the produce department at the Kapa'a Big Save Store. Nakamura recalls eating at the popular restaurant where her grandmother used to work.

“Kauai Kitchen had really great food. I used to love the fried chicken, shepherd's pie, sandwiches, and musubi. They also had plate lunches. Of course, they'd sell Kauai Kookies and I used to go eat cookies and hang out with my grandma.”

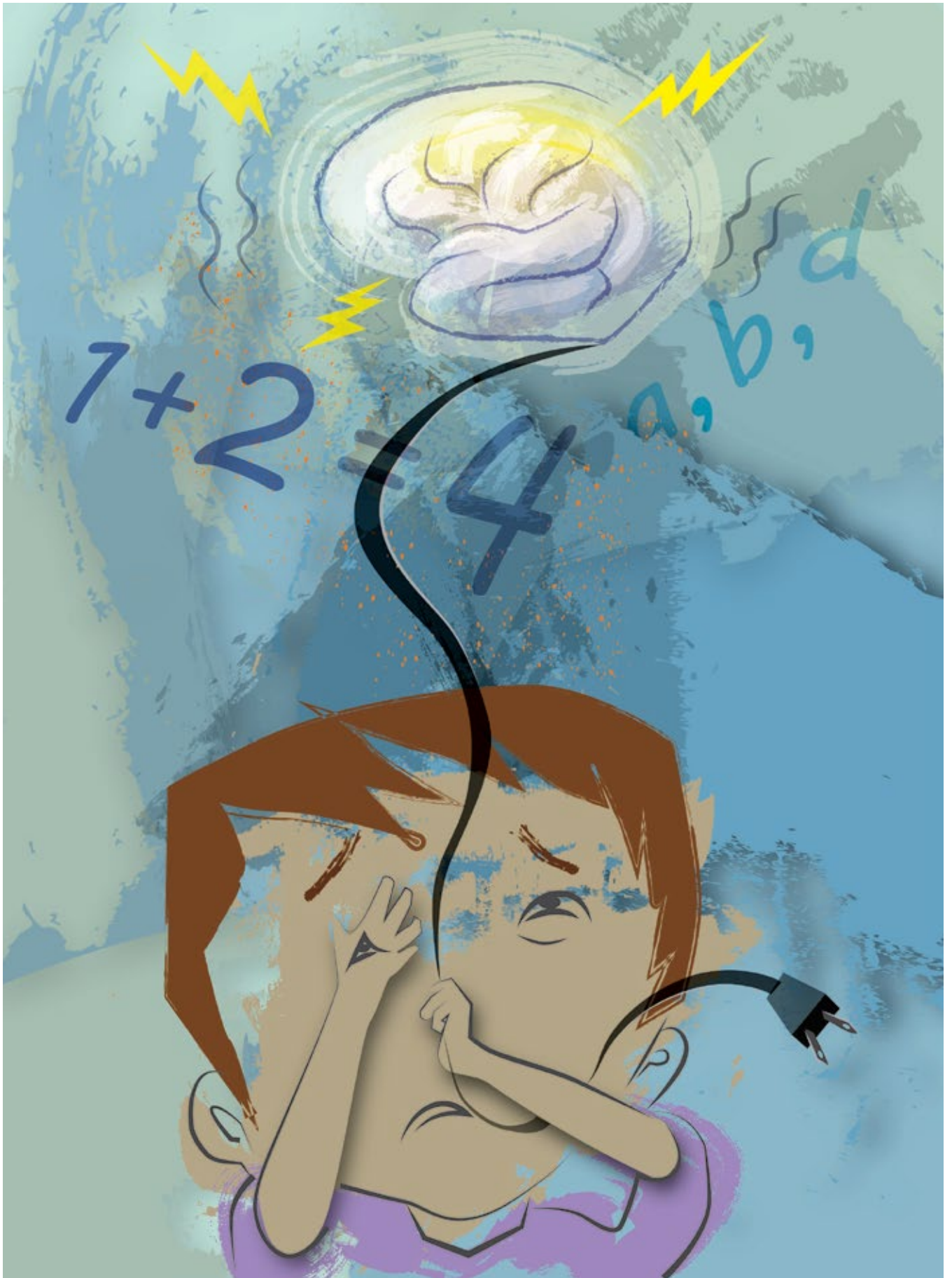
Other than attending the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to earn her degree in accounting, Nakamura has spent her entire life in Kapa'a. She says it'll stay that way.

“This is where I grew up. This is everything I know and I'm familiar with even though a lot has changed,” explains Nakamura. “Here, it's more about spending time with family and being there for each other.” ¹⁵



Jaime Nakamura

This is part of a series of articles on our favorite hometowns in Hawai'i. To nominate your hometown, leave a message at (808) 948-6839 or email feedback@islandscene.com.



concussions and children

words Earl Yoshii

art Garry Ono

The word **concussion** comes from the Latin word **concutere**, meaning to shake violently. But it doesn't always take a major accident to cause one. Even minor hits, like getting elbowed during a basketball game, can lead to a concussion.

Normally, the brain is cushioned by fluid and protected by the skull. But when there's an impact like falling off a bike or bumping heads during a game, the brain can hit the inside of the skull. This can lead to a disruption in brain chemistry due to the interruption of normal brain cell function, causing neurotransmitter surges, ion imbalances, and inflammation.

Jennifer King, D.O., the chief of pediatric sports medicine for Hawai'i Pacific Health and a medical consultant for the Hawaii Concussion Awareness Management Program, explains that a concussion isn't like a broken bone, so it won't show up on an X-ray. The symptoms also depend on which part of the brain is affected, but common signs include dizziness, headaches, confusion, and blurred vision.



Jennifer King, D.O.



Why are concussions worse for kids?

- **Growing brain:** A child's brain is still developing, making it more sensitive to injury. A concussion can interfere with their learning, memory, or emotional development.
- **Weaker necks:** Kids have weaker neck muscles, which means their heads are less stable during contact. This makes it easier for their brains to move around inside the skull, increasing the chance of injury.
- **Being a "team player":** Kids might be hesitant to sit out of games because they don't want to let their team down. But it's important to remind them that being a good teammate means looking out for their own health, too. Playing while injured can hurt the whole team in the long run, and taking time to recover properly helps everyone stay safe.
- **Harder to explain:** Younger kids may not know how to explain how they're feeling. They might not tell you they feel "foggy" or "off," which can make it harder to spot the problem.
- **Second impact syndrome:** This rare but severe condition occurs if a child sustains another concussion before fully recovering from the first. If they experience a second blow, it can cause rapid brain swelling that can lead to severe long-term damage or even death.
- **Impact on academic and social development:** A concussion can make it harder for a child to focus, remember things, and control their emotions. If a child keeps getting concussions, these problems can build up and lead to long-term struggles.

Prevention and recovery

The best way to deal with concussions is to prevent them in the first place. Ensure that adults create safe environments for kids for play and sports. While helmets will not prevent concussions, they will prevent skull fractures and bleeding in the brain. Teach kids to tell someone if they hit their head. If a concussion is suspected, getting medical attention, a little bit of rest, and getting back to a regular schedule are very important.

A concussion might not seem serious at first, but it is. Taking it seriously and giving the brain time to heal is the best way to make sure kids recover fully and stay healthy for the long run. ¹⁵

This is the first of a series of articles on concussions. Watch for more articles in future issues.

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how to combat a sedentary lifestyle

words Summer Nakaishi

photo illustration Brandon Young

Many of us aren't active enough, partly because our jobs often require prolonged sitting. According to a National Institute of Health study, nearly one in four Americans spend 70% or more of their waking hours in a sedentary position.

"The population, in general, struggles with being active," says Kaipo Pau, M.D., a doctor specializing in interventional pain management (focuses on identifying and treating pain with minimally invasive procedures) and a registered dietitian at the Queen's University Medical Group. "Whether it be the rigors of work, child care, or excessive time in front of the screen, it takes commitment to movement to avoid a sedentary lifestyle."

Prolonged sitting can have harmful effects. Spending six or more hours a day sitting or reclining can increase risk of chronic conditions like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and some cancers. Studies have also linked sedentary behavior to increased depression and anxiety.

"Our bodies were made to move, and all able-bodied individuals should take advantage of their ability to be active, within their own limitations," says Dr. Pau, who shares helpful tips and tweaks to combat a sedentary lifestyle.



Kaipo Pau, M.D.



Move at work

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- On an escalator, climb steps during the ride.
- Park farther from your destination to increase steps.
- Walk to a farther water cooler or restroom.
- Try a stand-up or treadmill desk or lower body machines such as a stationary foot pedal exerciser.

Dress the part

- Wear footwear that supports walking and comfortable clothing so it's easy to move.
- Use a device or app that tracks activity and encourages you to stay active.

Move at home

- Wake up earlier and exercise first thing in the morning.
- Keep an exercise journal and strive to improve activity levels.
- Do active chores around the house.
- Safely exercise when watching TV or using devices. Start by doing exercises during commercials or between episodes.

Find a friend

- Participate in a program or have regular exercise dates with a workout partner.
- Join an exercise group.
- Share your activity goals with people who will hold you accountable.

Other lifestyle changes

- Quit smoking or vaping and limit alcohol intake.
- Try a plant-based diet with adequate protein.
- Strive to lose 5%-10% of your body weight, which significantly reduces cardiovascular risks.
- Get adequate sleep for your physical and mental well-being.
- Find ways to manage stress. Stress can not only decrease motivation to stay active but also has negative effects on our body, including the cardiovascular, immune, gastrointestinal, and endocrine systems.

Combating a sedentary lifestyle by making small changes to increase your physical activity can benefit your entire body, including improving your mental health and lowering your risk of premature death. Remember to check with your doctor before starting or changing an exercise routine. **15**

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- Phone: 1 (800) 368-1019; TDD users, call 1 (800) 537-7697

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For complaint forms, please go to hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html.

Hawaiian: E NĀNĀ MAI: Inā ho'opuka 'oe i ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, loa'a ke kōkua manuahi iā 'oe. E kelepona iā 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

Bisaya: ATENSYON: Kung nagsulti ka og Cebuano, aduna kay magamit nga mga serbisyo sa tabang sa lengguwahe, nga walay bayad. Tawag sa 1 (800) 776-4672 nga walay toll. TTY 711.

Chinese: 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1 (800) 776-4672。TTY 711。

Ilocano: PAKDAAR: Nu saritaem ti Ilocano, ti serbisyo para ti baddang ti lengguahe nga awanan bayadna, ket sidadaan para kenyam. Awagan ti 1 (800) 776-4672 toll-free. TTY 711.

Japanese: 注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1 (800) 776-4672 をご利用ください。TTY 711。まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

Korean: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1 (800) 776-4672 번으로 연락해 주시기 바랍니다. TTY 711 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

Laotian: ກະລຸນາສັງເກດ: ຖ້າທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາລາວ, ການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອຈາກພາສາ ບໍ່ມີຄ່າໃຊ້ຈ່າຍ, ແມ່ນມີໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທ 1 (800) 776-4672 ພຣີ. TTY 711.

Marshalllese: LALE: Ñe kwōj kōnono Kajin Majōl, kwomaroñ bōk jerbāl in jipañ ilo kajin ñe am ejjelōk wōñāān. Kaalōk 1 (800) 776-4672 tollfree, enaj ejjelok wonaan. TTY 711.

Pohnpeian: Ma ke kin lokaian Pohnpei, ke kak ale sawas in sohte pweine. Kahlda nempe wet 1 (800) 776-4672. Me sohte kak rong call TTY 711.

Samoan: MO LOU SILAFIA: Afai e te tautala Gagana fa'a Sāmoa, o loo iai auaunaga fesoasoan, e fai fua e leai se totogi, mo oe, Telefoni mai: 1 (800) 776-4672 e leai se totogi o lenei 'au'aunaga. TTY 711.

Spanish: ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

Tagalog: PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1 (800) 776-4672 toll-free. TTY 711.

Tongan: FAKATOKANGA'I: Kapau 'oku ke Lea-Fakatonga, ko e kau tokoni fakatonu lea 'oku nau fai atu ha tokoni ta'etotongi, pea teke lava 'o ma'u ia. Telefoni mai 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

Trukese: MEI AUCHEA: Ika iei foosun fonuomw: Foosun Chuuk, iwe en mei tongeni omw kopwe angei aninisin chiakku, ese kamo. Kori 1 (800) 776-4672, ese kamo. TTY 711.

Vietnamese: CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.





Mars, our doggy for the day, ready to explore Hale'iwa

borrow a doggy for a day

words and photos Michelle Liu

I've always wanted a dog, but growing up, my family couldn't get one because my dad was allergic. And while my husband and I have discussed adopting a furry friend of our own, we haven't made the commitment because of how often we travel.

Enter the Doggy Day Trip program, where people can sign up to share an adventure with a shelter dog for a day. Hosted by the O'ahu Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (O'ahu SPCA), participants can take a pup on a hike, visit a dog-friendly park, or bring them home to cuddle.

"It brings our shelter pets, and the people who take them out, so much joy," says Kristen Hudson, director of marketing and development at O'ahu SPCA. "This allows our shelter pets to get out of the kennel for the day while you enjoy their love and companionship."

Applying for a Doggy Day Trip is easy. We filled out the online application form, and the adoptions and volunteer manager emailed us the next day to confirm a time. We were all set for the upcoming weekend!



Visiting dog-friendly beaches is encouraged on Doggy Day Trips.



"It brings our shelter pets, and the people who take them out, so much joy,"

: Kristen Hudson

Gearing up for adventure

We drove to the shelter in Wahiawā on a sunny Saturday morning. When we arrived, we knocked on the door to let them know we were outside. Shelter staff gave us some paperwork to fill out, as well as a backpack filled with the day's necessities like a water bottle, poop bags, and treats.

And then we met our shelter pup for the day. Mars greeted us with the energy of a puppy and happily licked us. After he jumped into our car, he settled in the back seat, looking curiously outside the window as we drove to the North Shore.

Mars rover

Once we parked in Hale'iwa, Mars knew it was time to explore. He loved meeting new people, and his "adopt me" bandana and bright yellow leash became conversation starters: We shared that he was up for adoption at O'ahu SPCA, and others told us about their experiences with doggy field trips on the Neighbor Islands, including with the Kaua'i Humane Society and Maui Humane Society.

"Going out gives dogs a break from the stress of shelter life and offers mental and physical stimulation," says Hudson. "It also helps them get ready for adoption. Meeting and spending the day with a variety of people is a great socialization tool, and it often helps them come out of their shell."

Since the program launched in 2023, Doggy Day Trips have helped lead to 10 adoptions and several foster home placements.



Top: Mars enjoying a car ride

Bottom: Going on a walk with Mars, equipped with all the day's necessities




Paw-sitive impact

While Mars enjoyed a day of running on the beach and walking around Hale'iwa shops, we also benefited from the day trip. Being with him brightened our day, and his joy brought us joy. According to the Mayo Clinic, having a pet can also protect your heart health, slow cognitive decline, improve stress management, and reduce loneliness.

On the drive back to O'ahu SPCA, Mars took a nap. His sweet face looked peaceful after a day of meeting new people, exploring, and cuddling. Shelter staff can see the difference in the dogs when they return. "They're often better behaved and more relaxed as a result of their day out getting loved on and spoiled," says Hudson.

Drop-off was quick. We filled out a Doggy Day Trip report card, sharing highlights from the day. Then it was time to say goodbye to our new furry buddy as he rejoined his friends inside O'ahu SPCA.

"Shelter life is tough for dogs; they get bored, and there's a lack of stimulation and exercise. We try our hardest to give them the absolute best care possible, but at the end of the day, they're still at a shelter and not in a loving home," says Hudson. "So, Doggy Day Trips can brighten their days while they wait for their perfect family." 

If you'd like to take a dog out for a day, visit oahusPCA.org. A minimum \$25 donation is required, and the money goes toward running the program and caring for all shelter pets.



Top: A happy pup after a day of adventure!
Middle: A shelter dog is happy to head out on a hike.
Bottom: O'ahu SPCA in Wahiawā



brush up on dental care

Oral health is not just about white teeth and fresh breath. Your mouth can also be a window to your overall health and well-being. We asked Honolulu dentist Robert Ornelles, D.D.S., how to maintain healthy teeth and gums. And why you shouldn't be embarrassed to brush your teeth at work.

words Craig DeSilva

illustration Garry Ono

How important is dental health?

When I look into someone's mouth, I have a good sense of their overall health. Inflammation and bleeding can lead to bacterial invasion that can increase your risk of a heart attack or stroke. Studies show that inflammation and an infection in your mouth can take a toll on your body.

How often should we brush our teeth?

The American Dental Association (ADA) says brushing twice a day is enough to knock off all that plaque within a 24-hour period. Ideally it should be the first thing you do in the morning and the last thing you do at night. It's even better when you can brush three times a day or after every meal. If you can, go ahead and brush. Why not?

Should we brush our teeth right after we eat?

Not necessarily. The ADA recommends that you wait about 60 minutes after a meal. The acid in food weakens the enamel on your teeth. It takes about an hour for your saliva to naturally wash away the food particles and rebuild the enamel on your teeth. So, if you brush too soon after eating, you might scrub away more enamel and wear down your teeth. It's OK to rinse your mouth but wait awhile before you start brushing.

Does it matter if we use a toothbrush with hard or soft bristles?

Yes, it matters. Some of my patients who brush really hard with a hard bristle wear down their gum line and create little notches in their teeth. It looks like a mon-goose bit into their teeth. They're not cavities, but they can get into the nerves and lead to a root canal. A softer bristle is less abrasive and won't wear down your enamel.

How often should we change our toothbrush?

If you're going to the dentist every six months and your dentist gives you a toothbrush after every visit, that's a good time to toss out your old one. But if you see your bristles all kapakahi and bent before six months, then it's a good idea to switch it out. Also, change your toothbrush after you recover from a cold or the flu.


Should we also be brushing our gums?

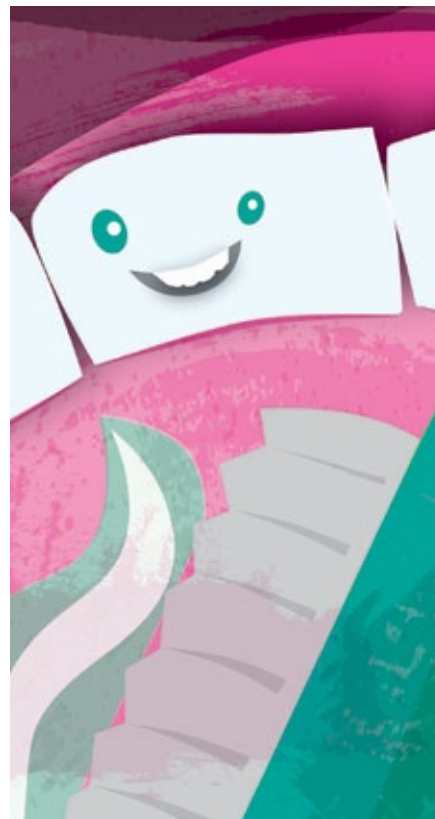
Yes, because plaque tends to collect in the gum pockets. I recommend using the Bass brushing technique. Hold the bristles at a 45-degree angle below the gum and use short circles and little strokes for 10 seconds to knock the bacteria off. If you only scrub back and forth, the bristles don't get in between the teeth and under the gums.

How effective are electric toothbrushes?

I was reluctant about electric toothbrushes at first, thinking they were more hype. But now I'm a true believer. Studies show that even when the brush isn't touching the tooth, the vibration causes liquid to loosen bacteria from the mouth. Although it's more expensive, it's worth the money. It's great for older patients who have arthritis because the width makes it easier to hold than a skinny toothbrush.

How long should we brush our teeth for?

At least two minutes. I know it takes some time and people get bored just looking in the mirror. I tell my patients to watch TV or listen to the radio. Do anything to keep you occupied. Brushing for just 10 seconds is not enough. 



Get more dental tips from Robert Ornelles, D.D.S.,
at islandscene.com/more.

motivation myths

words Courtney Takabayashi



We're well into the new year. How are those resolutions coming? Here are some myths and facts about motivation that can help.

Fact or fiction? Some people are motivated, and some people aren't.

Fiction. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), everyone is motivated, but it depends on the topic and situation. For example, you may be motivated to exercise daily because you have a family history of heart disease. If you're trying to motivate yourself to do something, examine the reasons why and remember those reasons when you don't feel like doing it.

Myth or reality? A reward is all you need to motivate yourself.

Myth. Many of us like to treat ourselves when we finish a large task at work or offer a reward when our child gets good grades. However, according to Wendy Grolnick, Ph.D., coauthor of *Motivation Myth Busters: Science-Based Strategies to Boost Motivation in Yourself and Others*, rewards as a motivation are nuanced.

We're doing something for an external reward instead of taking pride in a job well done or working hard to understand a subject in school. Instead, try to understand the value of the task. For example, excelling at your job can lead to professional satisfaction or perhaps a raise. These intrinsic motivators are more powerful than external motivators or rewards.

Yes or no? We don't need motivation to start a task.

Yes. Instead of waiting for motivation to strike, take charge and create a routine. James Clear, author of the popular book *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones*, says that he had a pregame routine that helped put him into the right physical and mental state to play baseball whether he felt like playing or not. He encourages people who want to motivate themselves to develop their own routine in three steps:

1. **The first step should be so easy, you can't say no.** Examples include getting a glass of water before writing or putting on shoes before exercising.
2. **Your routine should ideally get you physically moving to your end goal.** If you're moving, you're likely mentally engaged and energized! The next step in your writing routine could be walking the dog. Or your pregame exercise routine could be preparing your post-workout snack.
3. **Be consistent.** If you follow the same series of events that lead you to a task, you'll be mentally and physically prepared to do that task.

skin cancer

words Keely Kalama-Lakey



In the U.S., more people are diagnosed with skin cancer than all other cancers combined. Hawai'i has one of the highest rates in the country.

Most skin cancers are caused by ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. Damage builds over time, even if you can't see it right away. Skin cancer is preventable, and damage done in childhood can affect the rate of skin cancer later in life. Prevention should be a daily priority.

What is skin cancer?

Skin cancer occurs from the abnormal growth of cells in the skin tissue. There are three major types. Squamous cell carcinoma occurs in the outermost layer of skin. Basal cell carcinoma is found deeper in the skin tissue. Both are common types of skin cancer. Melanoma is less common and occurs in the melanocytes, cells that produce melanin. Melanoma is the most dangerous since it's more likely to spread to other parts of the body.

What causes skin cancer?

"The most common cause is exposure to ultraviolet radiation, and there are two types we're exposed to in Hawai'i," explains Kevin Cassel,

DrPH, MPH, president of the Hawai'i Skin Cancer Coalition and associate professor at the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. "UVA causes the skin to wrinkle and promotes aging. UVB causes the skin cells to actually burn. That's what causes sunburn."

Who's at risk?

While anyone can get skin cancer, some factors may increase your risk. Cassel says, "People who have fair skin, red or blond hair, or burn easily are at risk for basal and squamous cell skin cancers." A history of sunburns and a family history of the disease are risk factors for melanoma skin cancers.

How can people protect themselves?

"People are at higher risk for overexposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. You need to protect yourself. Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, hats, and UV-protected sunglasses when outside for long periods," explains Cassel. "Use sunscreen and seek shade as much as possible. The most important feature about sunscreen is that it can be reapplied often, every hour during athletic activities and every two hours for normal use."

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. There are special formulas available, like a sunscreen stick that is less likely to get in your eyes, wristbands that change color when you need to reapply sunscreen, and SPF setting sprays that can be used over makeup.

Regular self-exams are necessary to detect any concerns early. To learn how to do a self-exam, visit aad.org/public/diseases/skin-cancer/find/check-skin. If you find something suspicious on your skin, contact your dermatologist or primary care provider.

Another good resource is the UH Cancer Center. Visit their website at uhcancercenter.org, email info@cc.hawaii.edu, or call (808) 586-3010. 

Founded in 1995, the Hawai'i Skin Cancer Coalition's mission is to provide clear, concise messages on skin cancer prevention and early detection for the public and health professionals. Visit hawaiiiskincancercoalition.org to learn more.

Early detection of skin cancer can help you survive

The American Academy of Dermatology says to check your skin regularly and look for changes, which they call the ABCDEs of melanoma.



Asymmetry: One half of the spot is unlike the other half.



Border: The spot has an irregular, scalloped, or poorly defined border.



Color: The spot has varying colors from one area to the next, such as shades of tan, brown, or black, or areas of white, red, or blue.



Diameter: While melanomas are usually greater than 6 millimeters, or about the size of a pencil eraser when diagnosed, they can be smaller.



Evolving: The spot looks different from the rest or changes in size, shape, or color.

health matters



Is Alcohol Beneficial?

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and a good time to see what's new. There was a time when alcohol in moderation was promoted as good for your health, and some still believe it's true. However, health experts say it's more complicated than that.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025 defines alcohol in moderation as one drink a day for women and two for men. But even in moderation, alcohol has been shown to increase risks for some cancers and interfere with certain medications. Heavy drinking adds

many more health risks. If you don't drink, don't start because you think it will improve your health. There are other ways to achieve health benefits without the risks, like exercising and eating a healthy diet.

Don't Forget to Use Your Muscles

In recognition of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month in May, remember to include strength training, also known as resistance training, in your exercise routine. It's especially important for those over age 30 since that's when you start to lose muscle mass. Strong muscles are a key part of maintaining your ability to do activities you love and live independently.

Strength and resistance training include working out with resistance bands, free weights, and weightlifting machines, and body weight exercises, such as pushups and squats. To find ideas and tips, visit the fitness section of islandscene.com or use the QR code.



Move to Improve Your Mood


May is Mental Health Awareness Month, so get moving to celebrate and to improve your mental health. Experts say just 10 minutes of physical movement can improve mood. Professor of neural science and psychology at New York University, Wendy Suzuki, Ph.D., says physical movement is like a bubble bath for your brain, releasing neurochemicals that can elevate your mood.

Remember to make it fun. And if you have kids, include them to support their mental health, too. Go for a walk, dance in your living room, or play in the yard. Any movement is better for you than sitting. Start with 10 minutes and work toward 30 minutes a day to gain even more mental and physical health benefits.

fiery step forward

words Justin Martin





While some people “live to work,” many others “work to live” and dream of an early retirement. Those in the latter group may be part of the increasingly popular FIRE (Financially Independent Retire Early) movement, but what can they do about health care before they reach age 65 and qualify for Medicare?

Here are some options for those who are considering a FIRE plan:

Add on

If you’re married and your spouse will continue to work after you retire, you’d likely have the option to be added to their health plan. Check with your spouse’s company’s benefits manager to find out more.

Best fit

In 2010, the Affordable Care Act was signed into law and put into action in 2014. This created the ACA Marketplace, which provides individual, out-of-pocket, age-rated health plans. Go to hmsa.com/aca-plans or use the QR code to find the best ACA plan to meet your needs.




Long term

Retiree health coverage plans may offer a longer-term solution. Some companies – typically larger ones – allow you to remain on your company’s plan after you retire. However, these plans are trending to have less coverage every year and may offer a different plan from what you had while employed. Bottom line: Keep abreast of your employer’s retirement health coverage plan. For more details, check with your company’s benefits manager.

Other options

Companies that have 20 or more eligible employees offer a continuation of benefits called Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). While these plans may be good for someone retiring mid-year who has already maxed their deductible, this can be an expensive option. A much more affordable alternative for those in Hawai’i who meet income requirements would be QUEST, a Medicaid program. Find out more about COBRA from your company’s benefits manager. For HMSA QUEST information, visit hmsa.com/quest.

Whichever option you choose, consider this advice from Mary Ann Sanchez, HMSA’s Sales manager. “If you retire on the first day of the month, you’ll have coverage for the remainder of the month. Also remember to budget for what your out-of-pocket health care expenses will be. Finally, do your homework so that you can know before you go.” 

The search is over

When you're feeling under the weather, don't look up your symptoms online.

Instead, find a doctor you can count on.

Meet HMSA's newest providers — for more options.



Hawaii Island

Robert Stanley Bermudez Jr.
Jay H. Charles
John R. Engle
Brian Erickson
Shenell D. Evans
Theresa R.W. Hasting
Kaidden G. Kelly
Jessica L. Kennedy
Olivia Kimble
Kaydee H.K. Medeiros
Kimberley T. Moyer
Leroy P. Rise
Victoria Anne Scala
Wallace R. Shrinski
Gaku Yamaguchi
Laylah Rose Zelko

Kauai

Lisa Batterton
Alysha D. Enbom
Heather M. Grant
Divya Thekkethala Winovich
Amanda K. Tolen

Maui

Natasha Leigh Bailey
Shaun Brandon Chang
Kaidden G. Kelly
Jillian E. McAlear
Siera Janae McNallan
Hannah N. Otoole
Monique A. Popovac

Molokai

Rebecca Anne Biersbach
Jonathon Ralph Mason
Erin C. Nakamura
John Hugh Granville Ward

Oahu

Sana F. Anas
Megan L.A. Araujo
Dustin M. Arnold
Stephen C. Aston II

Adriene L. Avripas
Foeata S.F. Baclayon
Claudia Q. Baliscao
Lisa Batterton
Samoeutroeutteana M. Beckett
Miranda Belsher
Kristen K. Benevides
Jeanie Bohall
Sandra Kuuipo Bunnell
Emma C. Burrows
Lauren Byrne
Crystal L. Calloway
Kelly R.J. Carll
Kapono I.L.M.L.K. Chang
Shaun Brandon Chang
Hyeran Choi
Jeffrey D. Coira
Rochelle Bonilla Coloma
Kelli Cortes
Solee R. Cowley
David Yaw Amoah Dadey
Kendall L. Davis
Christa E. Degrazia
Christina Lynn Demaria
Michael J. Doria
Nicole M. Dorsey
Grace M. Dubick
Emily R. Dunn
Graciela B. Dyangko
Maria Emerick
Yiwen Fu
Ashley-Rae N.V. Fujie-Fukuki
Aaron T. Fujimoto
Lisa M. Ganz
Yun Gardner
Joseph Raymond T. Go
Angela Jori Gordon
Julia M. Greene
Cecilia Gregory
Nicole M. Harrison
Brandi N. Hicks
Kristien Hollingsworth
Sarah B. Hoolihan
Melissa A. Hoskins

Kasey E. Huff
Jamie C. Humes
Agnela T. Isaías
Jodene Jensen
Shelbi C. Jim On
Franc N. Kahn
Lauren Kapp
Stephen Timothy Keithahn
Kaidden G. Kelly
Kori K. Kiesel
Lisa M. Krekler
Brenda M. Lagrimas
Jennifer Magee
Larsen-Evans
Jane J. Leng
Sydney Elizabeth Lewis
Tyler B. Lords
Yuki Crystal Loyd
Susan M. Magorno
Reid C. Mahoney
Sarah Elizabeth Marosi
Sanayah V. Marriott
Dasmier L. Mason
Kyler Jordan Masonheimer
Aspen P. Matheson
Candace L.V. McGee
Timothy J. McLaughlin
Michelle Medeiros
Mirna Mejia
Andrea Maile Moniz
Rui Morimoto
Megan Victoria Morisada
Terry-Ann T. Mose
Erin C. Nakamura
Andrew D. Newhouse
Andrew L. Niles
Deirdre Oneill
Kresta K. Painter
Vanessa C. Pasion
Alexander Petro
Ksenia Pillai
Lindsay Price
Faheda Rasool
Barbara K. Rix
Kylee C. Romero

Katherine E. Rorer
Whitley Rose
Jenna S. Saito
Justin Sion Salandanan
Annahita Sarcon
Benjamin C. Schnakenberg
Natalie A. Schwab
Crystal L. Scurr
Sarah A. Sharp
Taresa J. Spade
Laura Beth Stephenson
Stefanie M. Strong
Ranjit Suri
Yasmin Tamayo
Kaylee N. Torres
Alia Seaira Weiss Tseng
Darah E. Wallsten
Joanne Patricia Williams
Stanley E. Wipfli
Victoria A. Antoinette
Wright-Adams
Devin M. Yuen

**These providers joined
HMSA's network between
Sept. 21 and Dec. 20, 2024.**

**For a complete list of HMSA
participating providers,
contact information, and
plans accepted, visit Find
a Doctor on hmsa.com or
scan the QR code.**



palliative care for QUEST members

words David Frickman



Rae Seitz, M.D.

Access to palliative care is expanding for vulnerable populations in the state.

Last year, Hawai'i became the first state to offer palliative care through Medicaid for people with serious illnesses.

"Palliative care helps patients better cope with a serious illness and greatly improves their quality of life and health outcomes," says Rae Seitz, M.D., a former HMSA medical director and current chief executive officer of Hui Pohala, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving access to high-quality palliative care.


Those efforts got a big boost from a \$3.6 million grant to Hui Pohala from the Hawai'i Department of Human Services' Med-QUEST Division last year.

"Palliative care currently is underutilized and not well understood," says Dr. Seitz. "When people develop a serious illness or condition and find themselves needing more health care services, they often encounter a system that's difficult to navigate and doesn't speak in normal everyday language. All of that adds up to health care that's less than what we should expect. Patients and their families deserve better."

The grant is helping to provide training and resources, Dr. Seitz says, so physicians and other health care professionals can help their patients and family caregivers when they're struggling with serious illness.

"We're building more awareness about palliative care," Dr. Seitz says, especially among those who might best benefit from receiving palliative care, including children with serious illness. "We want to help providers and others understand what a valuable asset it is for patients and families."

The grant will also go toward improving coordination among care providers, she says. "Doctors, nurses, social workers, family caregivers, health plans, and case managers all need some degree of skill in negotiating a patient's treatment options." This group of professionals is expanding under this project to include community health workers and emergency medical technicians.

Dr. Seitz admits that it's an ambitious effort, one that will be aided by the development of an online resource hub, to be completed this year. "It will be a place where people can go if they have specific questions or issues or want to educate themselves about how to provide care appropriately." 

For more information on palliative care, visit huipohala.org or email info@huipohala.org.

for your benefit



Keep Smiling

National Smile Month is May 12-June 12, which is a good reminder that caring for your teeth and gums helps keep your smile beautiful and your whole body healthy.

If you have a qualifying medical condition, the **Oral Health for Total HealthSM** program offers enhanced dental benefits to members with an eligible HMSA dental plan. Qualifying medical conditions include:

- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- Coronary artery disease.
- Diabetes.
- End-stage renal disease.
- Metabolic syndrome.
- Oral, head, and neck cancers.
- Pregnancy.
- Sjögren's syndrome.
- Stroke.

These benefits include two additional cleanings or periodontal maintenance visits each year at no additional cost. Other benefits such as additional exams, fluoride treatments, or periodontal scaling may also be included depending on the member's condition.

To find out if you qualify for Oral Health for Total Health or for more information, visit hmsadental.com/members/oral-health-for-total-health or call (808) 948-6440 or 1 (800) 792-4672.

For more information on dental health, see the article on page 32.



Manage Your Diabetes

Free HMSA classes are available each month for members who want help with managing their type 2 diabetes.

The two-part **Diabetes Education and Management** classes are held the second and third Wednesday of every month in person on O'ahu and online so you can attend the classes from home.

Whether you're newly diagnosed or have been living with diabetes for decades, these classes, facilitated by a diabetes educator, registered nurse, and health coach, will give you the tools you need to successfully manage your diabetes.

Call 1 (855) 329-5461 for more information or to register.

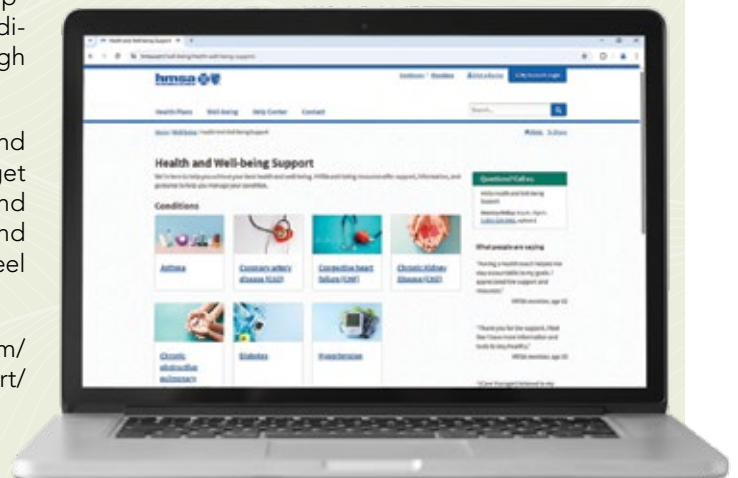
Health and Well-being Support

We have a place online where you can get help to be the healthiest you can be. The Health and Well-being Support site includes resources to help you manage conditions such as asthma, heart disease, diabetes, or high blood pressure.

There's information on eating healthy, staying active, and getting support for pregnancy. You can learn how to get personalized assistance to help reach your health and well-being goals from a team of clinicians, coaches, and educators who can help you manage your health and feel better every day.



You can find the site at hmsa.com/well-being/health-well-being-support/ or use the QR code.





EARL YOSHII

Suma Metla and her son enjoy playtime outside.

child physical development: what's normal?

words Courtney Takabayashi

Watching our keiki grow can bring great joy, but it may also bring questions: Are they developing normally? Are they on the right track? Is there anything we can do to help them? We talked to Suma Metla, DPT, of Three Little Ducks, a pediatric physical therapy practice based on O'ahu, to learn about simple tips for engaging with your child, why building community is so important, and what to do if your child is falling behind.



Suma Metla, DPT

Three tips for the early years

While parents have access to more resources than ever, thanks to the internet and social media, sometimes it can feel like information overload. Metla understands this and starts with three pieces of advice:

1. **Tummy time starts on day one.** "You don't have to wait until they're two months or their umbilical cord falls off," she says. "You can even start with lying them on your chest." Tummy time helps lay the foundation for important skills like rolling, sitting, and crawling, and supports mental and physical development.
2. **Talk to your child.** "You may feel silly since it may seem like they can't understand you," Metla says. "But it's so beneficial for their brain development. Hearing you speak exposes them to words and sounds, stimulates the brain's language processing areas, and helps build a bond between you and your child."
3. **Give them your attention.** This may seem like a given, but if you put your child on their tummy and then walk away, maybe that's why tummy time isn't their favorite. "Get down on the floor with them and narrate your day," Metla says. "Your baby wants you, your attention, and your space."

Metla also suggests not giving into the pressure of buying all the toys for your child. "Your baby wants to move their body. They need space, not stuff," she says. "I recommend choosing five to 10 toys. More than that is overwhelming, and they may have a difficult time deciding what to play with."



Physical therapy made fun




Family walks are a great way to exercise and socialize.

Building community

Another way parents can support their babies and themselves is through community. "They can participate in activities such as walks," Metla says. "We've had so many families meet through one of the monthly mom and dad walks we host, become friends, and set up their own play dates." The walks are especially popular because they give the families a chance to get outdoors and get moving. "The parents get to talk, the kids get some socialization, and everyone gets some exercise," she says. "Everyone has a great time, it's free, and it's low-stress."

One-stop shop

The strong family community wasn't a happy coincidence. When Metla started Three Little Ducks, she envisioned it as a one-stop shop for families. "If you're looking for other parent friends or kids for your child to socialize with, you can come to us," she says. "We're here to support you if your child happens to fall behind on milestones. And don't feel discouraged. Remember that all children develop at their own rate." 

For more information about Three Little Ducks, email aloha@threelittleduckshawaii.com or visit threelittleduckshawaii.com.

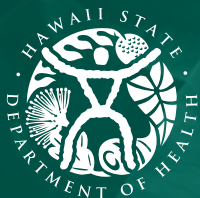
With HMSA365 Discounts, save 5% on baby class six-week programs. Visit hmsa.com/well-being/hmsa365 or use the QR code.



Staying engaged with your keiki is fun for everyone.



For info on free 'ohana yoga classes with Three Little Ducks, visit islandscene.com/more.



Could you have Prediabetes?

TAKE THIS ONE-MINUTE QUIZ TO FIND OUT.

Write your score below

1 How old are you?

- Younger than 40 years (0 pts)
- 40-49 years (1 pt)
- 50-59 years (2 pts)
- 60 years or older (3 pts)

2 Are you a man or a woman?

Man (1 pt) Woman (0 pts)

3 If you are a woman, have you ever been diagnosed with gestational diabetes?

Yes (1 pt) No (0 pts)

4 Do you have a mother, father, sister, or brother with diabetes?

Yes (1 pt) No (0 pts)

5 Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure?

Yes (1 pt) No (0 pts)

6 Are you physically active?

Yes (0 pts) No (1 pt)

7 What is your weight category?

(See chart at right)

Height	Weight		
4'10"	119-142	143-190	191+
4'11"	124-147	148-197	198+
5'0"	128-152	153-203	204+
5'1"	132-157	158-210	211+
5'2"	136-163	164-217	218+
5'3"	141-168	169-224	225+
5'4"	145-173	174-231	232+
5'5"	150-179	180-239	240+
5'6"	155-185	186-246	247+
5'7"	159-190	191-254	255+
5'8"	164-196	197-261	262+
5'9"	196-202	203-269	270+
5'10"	174-208	209-277	278+
5'11"	179-214	215-285	286+
6'0"	184-220	221-293	294+
6'1"	189-226	227-301	302+
6'2"	194-232	233-310	311+
6'3"	200-239	240-318	319+
6'4"	205-245	246-327	328+
	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points

You weigh less than the 1 point column (0 pts)

Adapted from Bang et al. Ann Intern Med 151:775-783, 2009. Original algorithm was validated without gestational diabetes as part of the model.

TOTAL SCORE

IF YOU SCORED 5 OR HIGHER,

- You could have prediabetes, a condition that puts you at higher risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. **Talk to your doctor to see if additional testing is needed.**
- You can join a **Diabetes Prevention Program**, a lifestyle change program to build healthy habits to reverse prediabetes and lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
 - » Each session is led by a trained lifestyle coach who encourages and motivates participants. People who have diabetes and people who are pregnant at the time of enrollment are not eligible for the program.
 - » Visit BeatDiabetes.hawaii.gov for more information and to find a **Diabetes Prevention Program** near you.



Scan the QR code to share the prediabetes risk quiz with your ohana and friends.



Social Media



social media and our keiki

words Kay Yasufuku Tam
photo illustration Brandon Young



Kathryn Egan, M.D.

More than ever before, children have much easier access to social media.


Parents must juggle how much screen time to allow while also considering the safety of their children who consume and create content on social media.

While social media can be a powerful tool for children to forge connections, express creativity, and receive emotional support, children, and adolescents in particular, are prone to the adverse effects of social media. According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, some effects include sleep disruption; cyberbullying; exposure to violent, dangerous, or inaccurate content; and fostering unrealistic expectations through social comparisons, which can damage self-esteem.

Tips to help keep keiki safe

Kathryn Egan, M.D., a child and adolescent psychiatrist and pediatrician, shares advice on how to protect your children online.

1. **Talk to your child about online safety.** Foster ongoing open conversations about online safety, digital citizenship, the possible downsides of social media, and safe social media use.
2. **Impose screen-free times.** Maintain screen-free times, for example, during homework and family time, meals, and at least one hour before bedtime. Parents can also be good role models and follow the same rules.
3. **Set expectations for devices.** Set a household expectation that devices be used in the center of the house where family can see and be more aware of use and content. Establish a charging location for all devices at a designated time in the evening, ideally in the center of the home, away from bedrooms.

If you're unsure of where to start, your pediatrician is a great resource to ask any questions during your child's regular checkups. Dr. Egan also recommends the American Academy of Pediatrics site; search Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health. This site provides evidence-based education and technical assistance to support children's mental health as they navigate social media. 





kids first

words Leslie A. Hayashi

photo illustration Garry Ono

One of the most stressful events in an adult's life is divorce, according to research based on the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). But what if children are involved? According to that same research, divorce is the third most stressful life event for them.

In the late 1980s, Maui Family Court Judge Dough McNish became concerned about the effects on children of divorcing parents. After a discussion with psychologists, a novel program was developed. Two aspects were critical: first, that the program be mandatory for the parents and second, that it also include their children. With seed money from the Baldwin Foundation, parents and children were enrolled into a program called "They're Still Our Children," one of the first in the nation.


Soon, family court judges from the other islands implemented their own programs. Today, Kids First is a statewide program serving families on Hawai'i, Kaua'i, Maui, and O'ahu. In 2023, over 5,122 parents and children age 6 through 17 attended this program, an increase from prior years.

Kids First reminds parents to put the interests of their children first over their own feelings of anger, hurt, and grief. Sessions start off by watching a video called *The Purple Family*. Everyone in the family loves the color purple until one day the father decides he wants everything to be the color red. Arguments arise and the three children are caught in the middle. Following the video, licensed psychologists explain the different stages of child development and how to recognize the varying emotions their children are feeling as the family breaks up.

By attending the sessions, children find support and encouragement from others who are going through the same experience. Children are divided into four age groups. Younger children age 6 to 8 use art to draw their feelings

of sadness, anger, and happiness; children age 9 through 11 and 11 through 13 express their feelings in discussion groups. Teens age 14 to 17 take on the roles of a divorcing couple and decide how to divide their assets and address child custody in a mock mediation.

"At least one child or more asks if they can return tomorrow for another class," says Bernadette Wong, Kids First program manager. "A parent reported that they are so happy that we provide these classes that help them with what they are going through."

If you're interested in volunteering, please call the Judiciary's Volunteer in Public Service office at (808) 539-4909 or email VIPs@courts.hawaii.gov. If you have a doctorate in psychology with experience in family and couples therapy, please contact Wong at (808) 954-8280 for information on participating. 

Leslie A. Hayashi was a trial judge in Hawai'i for 25 years. She serves on The National Judicial College Board of Trustees and taught at the college for 20 years.

Top five stressors for adults:

- 1) Death of a spouse.
- 2) Divorce.
- 3) Marital separation.
- 4) Jail term.
- 5) Death of a close family member.

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HMSA Health Education Workshops

Check out these free health education workshops we're offering this spring.

There's no cost to attend workshops. Workshop dates and times are subject to change.

Under the Sun

The outdoors provides boundless opportunities for carefree fun in the sun. But danger could be lurking if you're not careful. Get sun and water safety tips to protect you and your family during outdoor activities. You'll also learn how to prevent skin cancer, heat illnesses, and more.

HMSA Center in Hilo

May 31, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

HMSA Center in Honolulu

June 9, 10-11 a.m.

HMSA Center in Pearl City

June 12, 10-11 a.m.

808 Trail-ready

Are you interested in hitting the trails as a way to exercise, destress, and enjoy nature? In this session, we'll discuss ways to prepare before you head out, such as knowing what clothes to wear, gear you should have in your pack, and local resources. Most importantly, we'll review how to avoid common mistakes that may lead to dangerous situations.

Online at hmsa.com

June 17, Noon-1 p.m.

Preventive Care

Find out why it's important to get medical screenings even if you don't have any symptoms, as opposed to just going to the doctor when something is bothering you. Topics covered include screenings specific to men and women, and screenings for diseases that affect us all.

HMSA Center in Honolulu

May 19, 10-11 a.m.

HMSA Center in Pearl City

May 29, 10-11 a.m.

HMSA Center in Hilo

May 31, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Online at hmsa.com

June 19, Noon-1 p.m.

Visit hmsa.com/HealthEducation or call 1 (855) 329-5461 to register.



growing gains

words Summer Nakaishi



C. SAITO

While it does take a village to raise a child, parenting books can guide and encourage us along the way. However, reading parenting advice can be complicated.

So, we present these books with a reminder that every parenting book and parent (and child) is imperfect. Hold on to the advice that serves you and leave behind the tips that don't.

The Anxious Generation

By Jonathan Haidt

Life has evolved into a digital world, leading to what Jonathan Haidt calls the great rewiring of childhood. He details how the dual effect of overprotective parenting in the real world and the rise of smartphone use has replaced a play-based childhood with an online childhood, creating a tidal wave of adolescent mental illness. Haidt also issues a call to action, proposing ways communities can work together to help children return to a more humane childhood.

The Family Firm

By Emily Oster

In her third parenting book, economist Emily Oster focuses on raising kids in the early school years, when our decisions can have lasting consequences. Parenting, Oster says, is a full-time job and applying small business principles to family decisions can improve day-to-day operations. By taking the right approach, we can better prioritize even life's "small choices" and reduce stress.

The Little Prince

By Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Written in 1943, this novella has been translated into over 500 languages and is not a parenting book but a classic fable of friendship, loss, and growing up. The narrator meets a little prince in the desert while attempting to fix his plane, listening to the prince recount his life story of traveling to different planets, reminding us of the power of childhood curiosity and the value of human connections.

Hunt, Gather, Parent

By Michaela Doucleff

While grappling with daily power struggles with her toddler, NPR Science Desk correspondent Michaela Doucleff, Ph.D., read modern parenting study after study but found most of them to be Western and European-centric. On a work trip in a Maya household, something caught Doucleff's eye – children were happy to help with chores. With her 3-year-old in tow, Doucleff set out to live with and learn parenting strategies from Maya, Inuit, and Hadzabe cultures and shares what they can teach us about removing control issues and raising happy and helpful kids.

keiki corner


Spot the differences

See if you can find 10 differences!




Spring emoji quiz


Use the emoji clues to figure out the words or phrases.




1. _____




2. _____




3. _____




4. _____



5. _____



6. _____



7. _____

Fresh, fruity breakfast tacos

Get the kids in the kitchen to help make these easy, customizable tacos that swap tortillas for pancakes. Make your pancakes from scratch or use ready-made. We used seasonal sweet strawberries, but feel free to use other toppings.

You'll need:

- Pancakes.
- Greek yogurt.
- Bananas, sliced.
- Strawberries, sliced.
- Granola.
- Blueberries.
- Hazelnut spread or peanut butter (optional).
- Honey (optional).

Instructions

Spread yogurt on pancakes. Add toppings. Drizzle with hazelnut spread, peanut butter, or honey. Fold and enjoy!



Spot the differences: Dog collar, bone, flower, scooter wheel, kite, "flame," slipper, drumstick, green hat band, shell, eggs in basket
Emoji quiz: 1. Spring cleaning, 2. Raining cats and dogs, 3. Green thumb, 4. Rainbow, 5. Lady bug, 6. Ice cream truck, 7. April showers bring May flowers.

salads with a hint of sweetness

words Michelle Liu

photos Rae Huo

food styling Cedric Fujita



Pineapple and Arugula Salad

Spruce up your leafy greens! From crunchy apples to juicy pineapple, the possibilities are endless when it comes to elevating your salads with a combination of sweet fruit.

Pineapple and Arugula Salad

- ½ cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 2 Tbsp. white vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 lime, juiced
- 4 cups baby arugula
- 3 cups fresh pineapple chunks, drained and patted dry
- 1 serrano chile, stemmed, seeded, and thinly sliced
- 2 avocados, halved, pitted, and cut into bite-size chunks

In a small bowl, steep red onion and garlic in white vinegar for a few minutes to reduce their bite.

In another small bowl, mix olive oil, paprika, and lime juice.

Place arugula in a large serving bowl. Top with pineapple, chile, avocados, and red onion mixture. Drizzle olive oil dressing on top. Toss and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving: 220 calories, 14 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 15 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 7 g fiber, 14 g sugar, 3 g protein

Green Salad with Apples, Cranberries, and Pepitas

- ½ cup pepitas
- 1 8-oz. Granny Smith apple
- 5 oz. spring greens salad blend
- ⅓ cup dried cranberries
- 2 oz. crumbled goat cheese

Dressing

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1½ tsp. honey
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp. fine sea salt
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

In a medium pan, toast the pepitas over medium heat, stirring frequently until they turn golden on the edges.

In a small bowl, mix all the dressing ingredients.

Just before serving, chop the apple into bite-sized pieces. Place greens in a large serving bowl. Top with apples, dried cranberries, and toasted pepitas. Crumble goat cheese over salad.

Drizzle vinaigrette dressing with just enough to lightly coat leaves (you won't need all of it). Gently toss to mix all the ingredients and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving: 300 calories, 21 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 300 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 18 g sugar, 6 g protein



Green Salad with Apples, Cranberries, and Pepitas

Strawberry Spinach Salad

¾ cup raw pecans
½ cup thinly sliced red onion
10 oz. fresh baby spinach
1 lb. quartered strawberries
¾ cup crumbled feta cheese

Dressing

¼ cup balsamic vinegar
3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1½ Tbsp. poppy seeds
1½ Tbsp. honey
½ tsp. Dijon mustard
½ tsp. kosher salt
⅛ tsp. black pepper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spread pecans in a single layer on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake 8 to 10 minutes until pecans smell fragrant. Transfer to cutting board and roughly chop.

Place onions in a bowl and cover with cold water to reduce their bite. In a small bowl, whisk together all dressing ingredients until well combined.

Place spinach in large serving bowl. Add strawberries. Drain red onion and add to bowl. Drizzle half the dressing over the salad and toss to coat the leaves. Add feta and pecans. Toss lightly to combine. Serve with leftover dressing on the side. Makes 6 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving: 290 calories, 23 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 400 mg sodium, 18 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber, 11 g sugar, 6 g protein



For a Mediterranean salad recipe, go to [islandscene.com/more](https://www.islandscene.com/more).

sweet golden sunshine

words Michelle Liu

Whether it's fresh off the grill, marinated in a salsa, or cut right off the core, pineapple is synonymous with Hawai'i. Here are some fun facts about the sweet tropical fruit.

The Goldilocks rule

One serving of pineapple a day is "not too much, not too little, but just right."

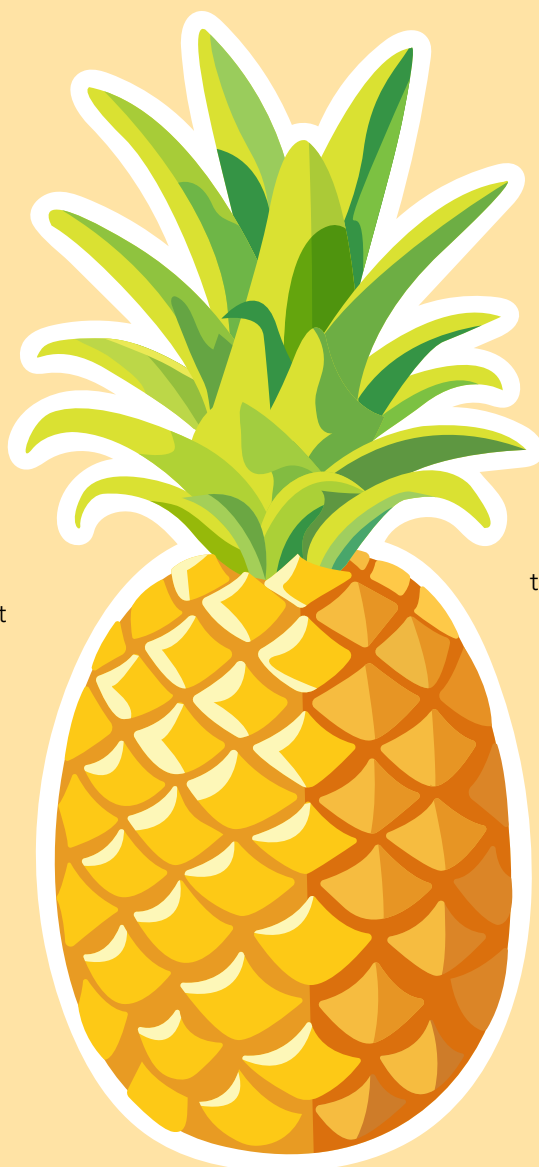
That's because the fruit is rich in manganese, an essential mineral. One serving is ½ cup fresh pineapple, peeled and diced.

Packed with vitamin C

Vitamin C plays an important role in your immune system, wound healing, and collagen production.

The fruit that keeps on giving

Don't throw away the crown of leaves at the top of the fruit. You can plant it and have another pineapple in about two years.



When canned is better than fresh

Making a gelled salad or dessert? Always use canned pineapple because the enzyme bromelain in fresh pineapple will prevent the gel from forming.

Funny feeling

Pineapple can cause a tingling sensation in your mouth because it's a high-acid fruit. Maui Gold pineapples are lower in acid and higher in sugar than other types, making it a refreshing treat.

The great debate

Despite its name, Hawaiian pizza (with pineapple and ham) wasn't invented in Hawai'i. It originated in Canada and was named after the brand of canned pineapple used on the pie.



one skillet to the rescue

words Michelle Liu

photos Rae Huo

food styling Marjie Beaton

While eating is my favorite part of cooking, the worst is cleanup. Seeing a pile of dishes in the sink after dinner fills me with dread. But that's not an issue with these recipes. They require just one skillet for cooking and a bowl or plate for prep. It's a win-win with bold flavors and easy cleanup!

Mediterranean Salmon with Couscous

- 4 6-oz. salmon fillets
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- ½ tsp. black pepper, divided
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, sliced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp. mild harissa paste
- 1 cup dry Israeli couscous
- 1½ cups water

Salsa

- 3 Tbsp. pitted and finely chopped Castelvetrano olives
- 3 Tbsp. finely chopped pistachios
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ tsp. red pepper chili flakes
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ¼ tsp. salt

Pat salmon dry with a paper towel, and season with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once hot, place salmon skin side down in pan and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until skin easily releases from pan. Gently flip fillets, lower heat to medium, and cook until salmon is cooked through, about 3 to 4 more minutes. Transfer salmon to plate.

Add onion to skillet, and sauté until slightly translucent. Add tomatoes and continue cooking until tomatoes are blistered.

Stir in harissa and couscous. Add water and remaining salt and black pepper. Bring mixture to a boil. Once boiling, reduce heat to medium-low and cook until most of the water is absorbed and couscous is tender, about 12 to 14 minutes.

While couscous is cooking, combine all salsa ingredients and mix well.

Once couscous is done, place salmon fillets back in pan. Cook for 2 more minutes to warm salmon. Spoon salsa over salmon and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving: 660 calories, 33 g fat, 7 g saturated fat, 95 mg cholesterol, 850 mg sodium, 44 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 43 g protein



Turkey and Penne Skillet

- 1 tsp. dried Italian seasoning
- ¼ tsp. smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ⅛ tsp. crushed red pepper
- 8 oz. lean ground turkey breast
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cups water
- ⅔ cup uncooked multigrain penne pasta
- 1 8-oz. can tomato sauce
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 4 cups raw baby spinach
- 3 Tbsp. finely shredded Parmesan cheese

In a medium bowl, combine Italian seasoning, paprika, black pepper, and crushed red pepper. Add ground turkey and garlic and mix well.

Spray large skillet with cooking spray. Heat skillet over medium-high heat. Add ground turkey mixture and onion. Cook 6 to 8 minutes or until browned. Transfer to plate.

Add water to the same skillet. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Add pasta and cook according to package instructions. Drain pasta, reserving ½ cup of the pasta water. Place pasta and reserved pasta water in the skillet. Stir in tomato sauce, salt, and cooked turkey. Heat through, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in spinach. Top with Parmesan cheese. Makes 2 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving: 360 calories, 7 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 60 mg cholesterol, 1150 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrate, 8 g fiber, 8 g sugar, 37 g protein

Vegetarian Taco Skillet

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeds removed, and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 15-oz. can of fire-roasted tomatoes
- 1 4-oz. can of mild green chiles
- 3 tsp. chili powder
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- ¾ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 15-oz. can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1½ cups shredded Mexican cheese blend

Suggested toppings

- Avocado
- Tomatoes
- Green onions
- Tortilla chips, for serving

In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and bell pepper; cook for 5 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Add quinoa, broth, tomatoes, green chiles, and all the spices. Stir until combined and let come to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for 15-18 minutes or until quinoa is cooked.

Stir in black beans and corn. Top with shredded cheese and your choice of toppings. Spoon onto plates and serve with tortilla chips. Makes 6 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving without toppings: 340 calories, 13 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 1100 mg sodium, 40 g carbohydrate, 8 g fiber, 7 g sugar, 16 g protein



Mōhala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua.

Unfolded by the waters are the faces of the flowers.

*Flowers thrive where there is water, as thriving people
are found where living conditions are good.*

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