

# Inspiring Women



## Chattanooga's Champion

Karen Mills' Journey of  
Comedy and Cancer

## Together in Motion

Creative Ways to Get Your  
Family Moving

 **Franciscan**  
HEALTH

## Whisking Up Something New

Affordable Kitchen  
Makeover Ideas

## Decoding Cancer Jargon

A Guide to Understanding  
the Lingo

## Shedding Light on Hair Loss

Embracing Beauty in  
Every Strand

# Letter *from* Franciscan Health

## Hello!

Welcome to the fall issue of *Inspiring Women!* As the leaves change color and the air turns crisp, we hope you feel the cozy warmth, love and guidance that Franciscan Health embodies, echoing our enduring values of healing and compassion. Just like a warm cup of cider on a chilly autumn day, may this issue bring you comfort and inspiration.

In this issue, we are thrilled to feature the remarkable Karen Mills in our main story, "Karen Mills: Chattanooga's Champion". Karen is a beacon of resilience and positivity. As a cancer survivor, comedian and incredible college basketball player, she brings a unique perspective on life, showing us all how to approach challenges with a bit of laughter and a lot of courage. Her story is sure to inspire and uplift you, just as it has us.

We also have a delightful and practical piece titled, "Whisking Up Something New: Affordable Kitchen Makeover Ideas." If you're looking to refresh your kitchen without breaking the bank, this article is packed with simple, DIY ideas to transform your space into a cozy, stylish haven.

Understanding medical terminology can often feel overwhelming, especially when it comes to cancer. To help demystify these complex terms, we have included "Decoding Cancer Jargon: A Guide to Understanding the Lingo." This lighthearted article breaks down the jargon, making it easier for you to stay informed and engaged in the conversation about cancer.

Make sure to check out "Thread & Butter" as the weather cools and indoor activities begin calling. And look out for the incredible "Pa's Pumpkin Praline Pie" recipe to really wow your friends with a great dessert.

As you explore these articles and more, we hope you find the confidence, knowledge and comfort you need. Thank you for being a part of the *Inspiring Women* community. Together, let's continue to embrace health, happiness and a harmonious balance of mind, body and spirit.



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## God's Faithful Promise

"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

*Genesis 28:15, NIV*

In this powerful promise to Jacob, we find an extraordinary revelation of God's unending faithfulness and loving presence. Just as God assured Jacob, He speaks the same words to each of us today. When we embark on life's journey, uncertain of what lies ahead, God reminds us that He is with us, watching over us every step of the way. There is no place we can go where His loving gaze does not rest upon us. He is our ever-present guide—providing direction, protection and comfort throughout our lives.

Moreover, God promises to bring us back to the place of His divine calling and purpose. Even when circumstances may lead us away or when we stray from His path, God's unfailing love remains steadfast. He is the God of restoration and reconciliation, patiently waiting for our return to Him. No matter how far we may wander, His grace reaches out to bring us back to the land of His promises and blessings.

Dear sister, we can rest in the assurance that God is faithful to fulfill every promise He has made to us. He does not abandon us midway or leave His plans for us unfinished. He faithfully carries out His divine purposes in our lives. The Almighty Creator of the universe is personally invested in our well-being, working tirelessly until every word He has spoken over us comes to pass.

# Together in *Motion*

## Creative Ways to Get Your Family Moving

Maintaining your fitness goals can be a challenge, especially with life's many responsibilities. Finding time for workouts can be tricky, but why not make it a family affair? Exercising together keeps everyone active and brings the whole family closer, turning fitness into fun shared moments.

Regardless of your family's stage, you can enjoy physical activities together, just like a cozy family movie night. Skip calling it a workout at first—make it sound more exciting! Tailor activities to your kids' ages and personalities. Start small since expecting everyone to hit the gym might be unrealistic.

For younger kids, make workout time playful. Turn it into a game, making exercise fun and helping them associate being active with joy. Here are some low-cost, easy activities to enjoy with your kids!

### Obstacle Course

Turn your backyard into a mini adventure park! Use household items like pillows/cushions, string, brooms and chairs to create a challenging course. Jump over, crawl under and weave through obstacles for a fun and energetic workout. Challenge each other to do it faster!

### Improvised Kickball

Grab a ball and head to a park or your backyard. Set up bases using anything you have on hand, like jackets, bags or the corner of the house, and get ready for a game of kickball that's sure to get everyone involved.

### Frisbee

Head outside with a frisbee for some high-flying fun! Practice your throws and catches, and challenge each other to see who can make the longest throw or the coolest trick shot.

### Dance Party

Crank up the music and let loose in your living room. Show off your best dance moves, try to copy each other's steps or even create a family dance routine. It's a fantastic way to get moving and have a blast.

### Hiking or Neighborhood Walks

Explore the great outdoors or your local neighborhood on foot. Choose a trail or route, pack some snacks and enjoy a scenic hike or walk together. Keep an eye out for interesting plants and animals along the way. You can challenge your kiddos to find something specific on the trail and make it into a fun scavenger hunt!

### Group Jump Rope

Get everyone together for a classic jump rope session. Take turns doing solo jumps, or try to synchronize your jumps for a group challenge. It's a fun way to build coordination as a group and stay active.

### Bike Ride

Hop on your bikes and go for a ride around your neighborhood or on a local trail. Enjoy the fresh air and the thrill of cycling together. Maybe you can ride over to the local ice cream shop? But don't forget to wear your helmets!

### Chalk Games

Unleash your creativity with some sidewalk chalk. Draw hopscotch, mazes, obstacle courses or even four square and challenge each other to play through them. It's a fun way to play and get some exercise at the same time.

Since older kids tend to be in and out of the house on their own schedule, give them the opportunity to come and work out with you. Take them to the gym and show them what your routine looks like. The important thing to remember with our older kids is to let them make it their own. When they can create a sense of identity and individuality in what they do, they'll love it even more.

When you lead your family in activities like these, encourage your kids in their victories. Whether they beat you in the backyard obstacle course or set a new pace on the treadmill, when we encourage our kids it will build their confidence and continue to show them the joy in physical activity. It also allows you to meet your physical activity needs and goals, while continuing to spend quality time with your family.



# OB/GYN

## Ask an Expert



Padmaja Venkata Sanaka, MD

Obstetrics and  
Gynecology

Wish your doctor was on speed dial? We talked with some experts at Franciscan Health to answer your most pressing questions. This is what they had to say!

Find a  
Franciscan Doc



1. **What are the risk factors for gynecological cancer?**

The risk factors for gynecological cancer, like ovarian, uterine, cervical, fallopian tube and vulvovaginal cancers, include age (most common in women over 50), family history of ovarian or breast cancer, genetic mutations (such as BRCA1 and BRCA2), personal history of cancer (breast, uterine or colorectal), never having been pregnant, endometriosis, obesity, multiple cycles of ovarian stimulation for infertility management with medication and hormone replacement therapy, especially if taken for more than five years.

2. **What are the early symptoms of gynecological cancer?**

Early symptoms may include abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge; pelvic pain or pressure; bloating or feeling full quickly; fatigue, urgent urination, changes in bowel habits, pain during intercourse; itching, burning or soreness in the vulva; and unexplained weight loss or gain. Any abnormal vaginal bleeding should be reported to your gynecologist so cervical cancer can be ruled out with a Pap smear and uterine cancer with endometrial sampling/biopsy, pelvic ultrasound or other tests.

3. **What sets the Franciscan Cancer Center apart from other treatment centers?**

Regular gynecological exams, starting at age 21 for cervical cancer screening, are highly recommended. Currently, there is no effective routine screening test for ovarian cancer for the general population. However, for women at high risk (e.g., those with a family history or genetic predisposition), doctors may recommend regular pelvic exams, transvaginal ultrasound and CA-125 blood tests.

4. **Is there anything I can do to help prevent gynecological cancer?**

Regular moderate exercise for 150-300 min per week can help you stay active and prevent obesity, which is a known risk factor. Additionally, balancing your red meat consumption is recommended, as research has shown that consuming too much red meat can increase the risk of autoimmune diseases.

# GET BACK TO FEELING AMAZING

## Get In, Get Out, Get Better.

When minor illnesses or injuries suddenly arise, it can feel like an inconvenience. But it's going to be okay –

The sooner you get in, get treatment and get answers, the sooner you can go from feeling yucky to feeling some relief.

## In-person and virtual visits!



FranciscanExpressCare.org

# This or *That*

Looking for a fun way to get to know your loved ones better? Our This or That game is perfect for sparking laughter and deepening connections. Whether it's a family gathering, friend hangout or date night, these playful questions will bring everyone closer together. Prepare for laughter, surprises and unforgettable moments!



- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| SLEEP IN      | WAKE UP EARLY |
| COFFEE        | TEA           |
| TAKE-OUT      | HOME-COOKED   |
| DRIVER        | PASSENGER     |
| BOOK          | MOVIE         |
| NIGHT IN      | NIGHT OUT     |
| TEXT          | CALL          |
| CHOCOLATE     | VANILLA       |
| DUNKIN'       | STARBUCKS     |
| CITY          | COUNTRY       |
| FLY           | DRIVE         |
| SALTY         | SWEET         |
| BEACH         | MOUNTAINS     |
| SPRING/SUMMER | FALL/WINTER   |
| PIE           | CAKE          |
| CAT           | DOG           |
| SHOP IN STORE | SHOP ONLINE   |
| MUSIC         | PODCAST       |
| GOLD          | SILVER        |
| JEANS         | SWEATS        |



## Apple & Maple Baked Oatmeal

Start your day with the comforting flavors of fall with this delicious Apple & Maple Baked Oatmeal. Perfectly sweetened with maple syrup and packed with tender, juicy apples, this hearty breakfast dish is both nutritious and satisfying. It's easy to prepare and makes for a wonderful make-ahead option, ensuring you have a wholesome meal ready to go even on the busiest mornings.

**PREP:** 15 minutes • **COOK:** 45 minutes • **SERVES:** 10

### Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup maple syrup (or brown sugar)
- 2 tsp. sea salt
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 Tb. vanilla extract
- ½ cup coconut oil, melted
- 6 cups quick oats
- 2 apples, diced into ½" pieces
- ½ cup pecans (can be chopped)

### Directions

- 1 | **PREHEAT THE OVEN** to 350°F with a rack in the middle of your oven. Grease a 9x13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
- 2 | **IN A MEDIUM SIZE BOWL**, beat the eggs. Add the milk, maple syrup (or brown sugar), salt, baking powder, vanilla, coconut oil, oats, apples and pecans, and stir to combine.
- 3 | **POUR THE BATTER** into the prepared baking dish. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, or until golden brown and firm in the center.
- 4 | **SERVE IMMEDIATELY**, or seal in airtight containers after cooling to be reheated for breakfast all week!



### We want to hear from you!

Inspiring Women would love to feature your favorite recipes in future issues! Visit [inspiringwomen.org/share-recipe](https://inspiringwomen.org/share-recipe) or scan the QR code to submit your favorite tried and true dishes!

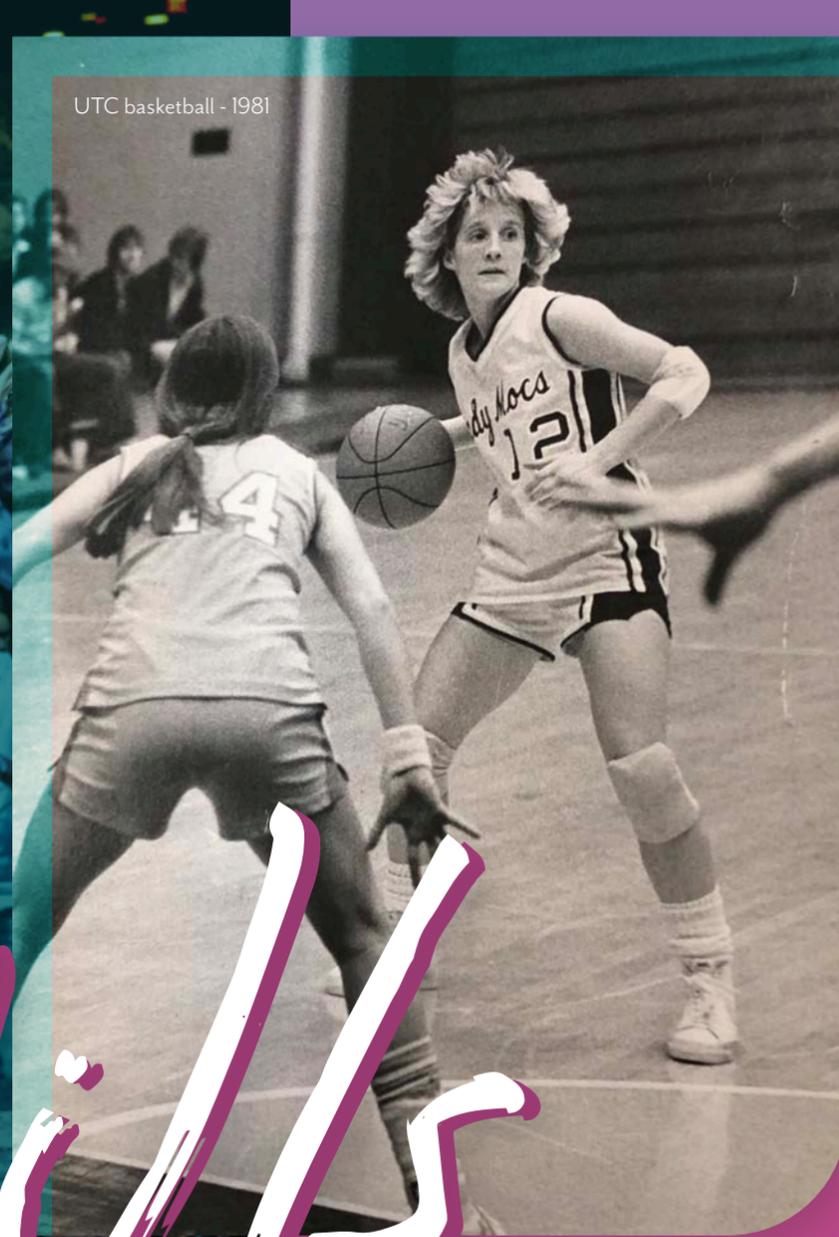


# CHATTANOOGA'S CHAMPION

*A Journey of Cancer & Comedy*

# Karen Mills

On tour with Leanne Morgan at the Moody Center in Austin, TX - 2023



UTC basketball - 1981

**K**aren Mills is a woman of remarkable resilience and boundless positivity. A well-traveled comedian, a celebrated athlete and a cancer survivor, Karen has faced life's challenges with a smile and a joke, turning even the darkest moments into opportunities for growth and inspiration. Hailing from Chattanooga, Tennessee, Karen's story is one of perseverance, humor and an unwavering spirit.

**A Childhood in Chattanooga**  
Karen Mills was born in Cleveland, Tennessee, but it was in Chattanooga that she found her roots and developed her love for sports. Known for its scenic beauty and vibrant culture, Chattanooga is home to various outdoor activities and a continuously growing art scene. Once a small town, Chattanooga has now become a popular tourist destination.

Karen's life always revolved around athletics. Her family life was steeped in sports culture, with basketball being her passion from an early age. Despite her height of only 5'2", which many considered a disadvantage, Karen's skill and determination shone through. By the fifth grade, she was already starting for her eighth-grade team, proving that her talent and hard work could overcome any perceived limitations.

Her dedication paid off when she earned a full scholarship to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC), where she led the nation in assists in 1981. She helped the team earn Division 1 first-team All-American making them the first in UTC history to earn the distinction. Her basketball prowess and relentless effort for her team at Chattanooga earned her a place in the Chattanooga Basketball Hall of Fame, and her #12 uniform was respectfully retired as a testament to her exceptional talent and tenacity.

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Karen as a child, age 4



UTC basketball - 1980



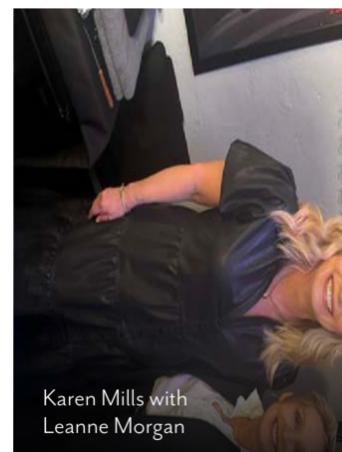
The Bijon Theatre in Knoxville, TN - 2023



*"If you want something, start working toward it."*



The Comedy Catch in Chattanooga, TN - 2003



Karen Mills with Leanne Morgan

The Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, TN - 2023

### From Hoops to Humor

After college, Karen found herself searching for her next calling. Though she pursued a degree, it wasn't a perfect fit for her. She moved between jobs, looking for something that resonated with her spirit. It was during this period that Karen began to explore her talent for humor.

Stand-up comedy is something that many strive for, but it takes hard work and a willingness to fail—a lot—to truly make it work as a career. Plus, a little natural talent always helps, too. For Karen, her start in comedy came from a performance at The Punchline in Atlanta, GA which brought her the recommendation that she take a class on writing original material. This was new for her. Starting out, Karen had great confidence and presence on stage, but she didn't have the skills yet to create her own routine. After a few writing classes and many practice sessions, in 1993, Karen began performing her own comedy act, quickly becoming known for her witty observations and infectious energy.

Karen has performed beside fellow comedian and friend, Leanne Morgan, since they met in 2004, during a "Southern Fried Chicks" comedy tour. Their friendship has lasted them both for over twenty years. Even now, they're on a 100-city tour together!

Throughout her comedy career, Karen has created quite a resume of accomplishments and performances. She's opened for Leanne Morgan at Atlanta's Fox Theatre, been part of Nate Bargatze's "Nateland Presents" show and performed multiple times at the legendary Grand Ole Opry. Many of her online clips from her shows rake in over 30 million views. It's safe to say she's pretty funny.

What makes Karen's comedy routine and sense of humor so appealing is her natural approach to life's often dark realities. She's well known for her straightforward approach to life, living by the mantra, "if you want something, start working toward it," all while making smart, funny and keen observations about life's day-to-day events. This simple, "keep moving forward" mentality helps Karen persevere, especially when life loses its sense of humor.

### Facing Cancer

In 2013, Karen's life took an unexpected turn. What she initially thought were menopause symptoms turned out to be something far more serious—a cancerous mass in her abdomen discovered during a routine checkup. The news was a shock, but Karen faced it head-on, determined not to let her ovarian cancer diagnosis define her. She had two shows scheduled before her surgery and planned to go through with them, but anxiety led her to prioritize her health. She had a friend stand in for one of her gigs, allowing her to undergo surgery sooner than expected.

Karen's approach to her diagnosis was practical and forward-looking. "What's next? How do we get back to normal life?" she asked, embodying her refusal to be sidelined by the disease.

CONTINUE READING ▶▶▶



Karen taking chemo with friend, Christi Homar - 2013



A month after Karen finished her last chemo treatment - 2013

### Laughing With Joy

Throughout her battle with cancer, Karen's support system proved invaluable. Initially, she struggled with vulnerability, but this journey taught her the strength found in openness. She saw her experience as a way to help others, asking, "Why me?" in terms of how she could use her situation to move forward positively. She found humor in both the good and the bad, incorporating her experiences into her comedy, resonating with many who had also been touched by cancer.

Karen emphasizes the importance of surrounding oneself with positive influences and having faith in miracles. This mindset, she believes, is crucial for healing and moving forward. Even during her battle with cancer, she kept her act going! She kept moving forward, continuing to perform, making people—and often herself—laugh with joy to make the challenges of life feel a little less harsh.

### Sharing Struggles, Finding Strength

One poignant moment in Karen's journey came when she performed at a women's health event, not knowing it was focused on survivors. Despite her natural inclination to keep her struggles private, she shared her medical condition with the audience. The overwhelming

support and love she received, during and after the show, highlighted the incredible impact of vulnerability. This experience underscored the power of sharing one's struggles and the difference it can make. By opening up, Karen discovered the importance of emotional support and positive connections, which can uplift and strengthen us during life's toughest challenges, making the journey toward healing a shared, empowering experience.

### An Everlasting Spirit

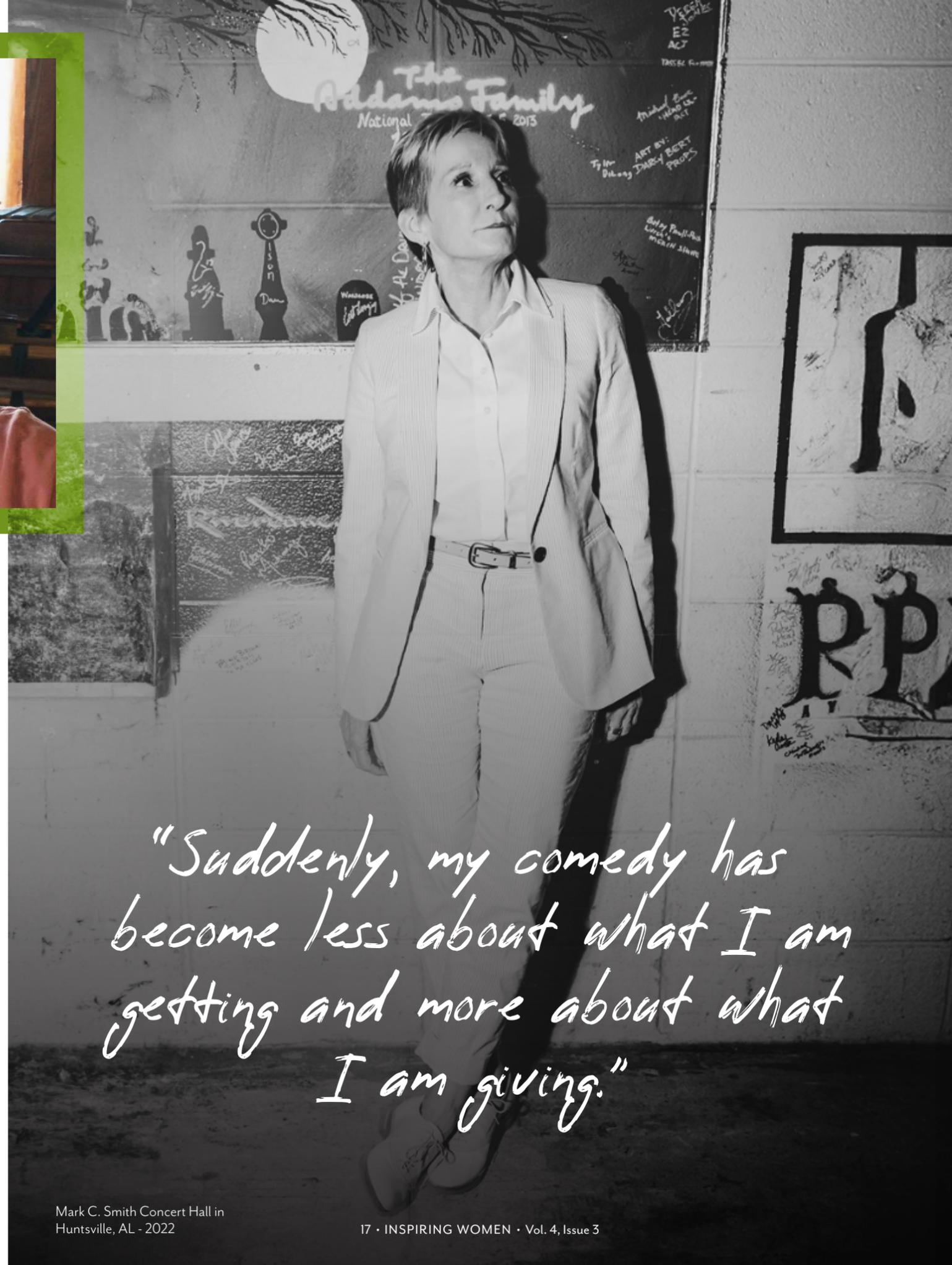
Even after a recurrence in 2019, Karen has continued to bring joy and laughter to her audiences for over 30 years now. She doesn't believe in succumbing to doom and gloom. Instead, she keeps moving forward, inspiring others with her story of resilience, humor and positivity. Karen's journey from basketball to comedy showcases her versatility and dedication, demonstrating how she has continually reinvented herself while staying true to her passions. Her ability to transition from an accomplished athlete to a celebrated comedian is a testament to her determination and adaptability.

Karen continues to inspire others not just with her humor, but with her strength and ability to overcome adversity. Her story is a shining example of how one can face life's challenges head-on and emerge stronger and more determined. She is a testament to the power of laughter, the strength found in vulnerability and the importance of maintaining a positive outlook, no matter what life throws your way. By sharing her journey and finding humor in the darkest moments, Karen has touched countless lives, proving that with the right mindset, one can turn any obstacle into an opportunity for growth and inspiration.



**CANCER IS A LAUGHING MATTER!**

Karen was invited to share her story with TEDx through a presentation at TEDxChattanooga in 2016 titled, "Cancer is a Laughing Matter." Check it out here for a taste of her hope and humor!



*"Suddenly, my comedy has become less about what I am getting and more about what I am giving."*

# Fasting for the Body and Soul

## A Journey Through the Stages of Fasting

Fasting is a time-honored practice that goes beyond simply abstaining from food; it's a holistic journey that nourishes both the body and the soul. For centuries, Christians have used fasting as a way to deepen their spiritual connection with God, seeking clarity, healing and a closer walk with the Lord. Today, fasting has also gained popularity for its physical health benefits. Whether you're new to fasting or a seasoned practitioner, understanding the stages your body and mind go through can enhance your experience and help you find balance in both the physical and spiritual.

### The Spiritual Side of Fasting

Fasting is more than just skipping meals; it can be a spiritual discipline rooted in Scripture. From Moses fasting on Mount Sinai to Jesus fasting in the wilderness, the Bible is full of examples where fasting is used to seek God's guidance, express repentance or prepare for a significant spiritual task. When we fast, we are essentially saying, "Lord, I need You more than I need food." Each pang of hunger becomes a reminder of our deeper hunger for His presence.

During a fast, the time that would normally be spent preparing and eating meals can be devoted to prayer, Bible study or simply sitting in God's presence. Fasting helps us reset our priorities, drawing us closer to God as we disconnect from worldly distractions.

### The Health Benefits of Fasting

Fasting isn't just good for the soul; it has numerous physical health benefits as well. Modern science has shown that fasting can improve metabolism, reduce inflammation, boost brain function and promote longevity. The process of autophagy, which is triggered during fasting, allows the body to cleanse itself by removing damaged cells and regenerating new ones.

However, fasting isn't for everyone. Those with certain medical conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, should consult with a healthcare provider before starting any fasting regimen. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, individuals with a history of eating disorders or those with chronic health conditions should approach fasting with caution or avoid it altogether.

*Fasting affects everyone differently and everyone's experience will differ. It is important to set realistic goals and visions of why you are choosing to fast. Define what fasting looks like for you on an individual level. Extended fasting can be particularly dangerous. Please consult with your physician before considering fasting of any type.*



*Make an appointment with your primary care physician today.*



### The Physical & Emotional Stages of Fasting

Understanding what happens to your body during fasting can make the experience more manageable and spiritually enriching. Here's a look at the stages of fasting, along with what you can expect physically and emotionally.

#### STAGE 1: THE FED STATE

- **Physical Changes:** The first stage of fasting begins right after you finish a meal, known as the "fed state." During this time, your body is digesting and absorbing nutrients, with insulin levels rising to manage the influx of glucose. Excess sugar is stored as glycogen in your liver and muscles, ready to be used for energy later.
- **Emotional Impact:** After eating, you might feel a sense of satisfaction and comfort, with hunger temporarily at bay. However, if your meal was high in refined sugars or carbohydrates, you might experience a quick spike in energy followed by a crash, leading to irritability or mood swings. Choosing balanced, wholesome meals before your fast can help stabilize these emotional fluctuations.
- **Spiritual Reflection:** As you enter this initial phase, consider offering a prayer of gratitude for the nourishment you've received. Use this time to set your intentions for the fast, asking God to guide you and give you strength.

#### STAGE 2: THE EARLY FASTING STATE (3-4 Hours Post-Meal)

- **Physical Changes:** A few hours after your last meal, your blood sugar and insulin levels start to decline. Your body begins to tap into its glycogen stores for energy, marking the onset of the early fasting state. This phase can last up to 18 hours as your body transitions from the fed state to a more significant fasting state.
- **Emotional Impact:** As glycogen stores are used up, you may feel an increase in hunger, irritability or fatigue—you might know this as the "hangry" stage. Your emotions might swing as your body adjusts to the absence of readily available glucose. However, these feelings typically lessen as you become more accustomed to fasting.
- **Spiritual Reflection:** During this stage, turn your hunger into a reminder to pray. Every pang of hunger can be a cue to focus on God, asking Him to fill you with spiritual sustenance as your body begins to rely on its stored energy.

CONTINUE READING ▶▶▶



### Making Fasting Fun and Spiritually Fulfilling

Fasting doesn't have to be a daunting task. Approach it with a sense of anticipation and joy, viewing it as a spiritual adventure. Here are some tips to make your fasting experience more enjoyable:

- **Create a Fasting Playlist:** Music can be a powerful tool for spiritual reflection. Curate a playlist of worship songs to listen to when your fast gets challenging, allowing the music to uplift your spirit and keep you focused on God.
- **Journal Your Journey:** Keep a fasting journal to document your thoughts, prayers and any insights you gain during the fast. It's a wonderful way to track your spiritual growth and reflect on the experience afterward.
- **Fasting With Friends:** Consider fasting with a friend or a group from your church. You can support each other, share your experiences and even break the fast together with a special meal.
- **Celebrate the Small Victories:** Every hour you fast is a victory. Recognize and celebrate the small wins along the way, whether it's overcoming a moment of intense hunger or experiencing a powerful moment in prayer.

### Embrace the Journey

Fasting is a personal and profound experience that offers both physical and spiritual rewards. By understanding the stages of fasting and embracing the journey with a spirit of prayer and reflection, you can deepen your relationship with God, improve your health and discover new strengths within yourself. ●

#### STAGE 3: THE FASTING STATE (12 Hours to 48 Hours)

- **Physical Changes:** Once your glycogen stores are depleted, your body enters the fasting state. During this phase, your body begins to break down fats into fatty acids and ketones, shifting to fat as its primary energy source. This process, known as ketosis, can start between the 12 and 24-hour mark.
- **Emotional Impact:** As you enter ketosis, your hunger may decrease, and your mood may stabilize. Many people report feelings of mental clarity, increased focus and even a sense of euphoria during this phase. However, if you're new to fasting, this stage can be challenging both physically and emotionally as your body and mind adjust to the changes.
- **Spiritual Reflection:** This stage offers a unique opportunity for spiritual growth. As your physical hunger diminishes, you may find it easier to focus on prayer, meditation and scripture. Let this be a time of deepening your relationship with God, relying on Him for strength and clarity.

#### STAGE 4: THE LONG-TERM FASTING STATE (48 Hours and Beyond)

- **Physical Changes:** After 48 hours, your body enters the long-term fasting state, where it begins to rely heavily on gluconeogenesis—producing glucose from non-carbohydrate sources like amino acids. While ketones continue to provide energy, prolonged fasting may lead to muscle breakdown, making this stage risky without medical supervision.
- **Emotional Impact:** The long-term fasting stage can be emotionally taxing, with feelings of fatigue and vulnerability becoming more pronounced. However, for experienced fasters, this phase can also bring profound spiritual clarity and a deeper sense of peace.
- **Spiritual Reflection:** In this final stage, focus on the spiritual rewards of your fast. Reflect on the journey you've taken, the challenges you've overcome and the ways in which you've grown closer to God. Let this be a time of gratitude and spiritual renewal.

# SHEDDING LIGHT ON Hair Loss

## Embracing Beauty in Every Strand

Have you ever noticed a few extra strands in your brush and paused? It's a common experience, shared by many, from everyday individuals to celebrities alike. But when does shedding a few strands cross into a territory that warrants concern?

### The Basics of Hair Shedding

Losing 50 to 100 hairs daily is a normal part of our hair's life cycle. This shedding is a sign that our hair is following its natural rhythm of renewal and growth.

For those who love protective styles like braids or weaves, it might seem like you're shedding more hair when you finally let your hair down. This is simply the accumulation of hair that has naturally shed over time, waiting for the moment to be released.

### When to Pay Attention

If you find yourself losing more hair than what feels normal for you, or if your scalp feels different, it may be time to consult with a dermatologist. Keeping an eye on our scalp and hair health is crucial for catching issues as soon as they arise.

### Understanding Our Hair's Journey

Our hair cycles through three phases: growth, transition and rest. A majority of our hair is growing at any given moment, with a small portion taking a rest before the cycle begins anew. Disruptions in this cycle due to hormones, poor nutrition, stress, etc. can lead to noticeable changes in hair density, so keep an eye out!

SOURCE : WOMEN'S HEALTH

### Causes of Hair Changes

Various factors can influence our hair's health and appearance:

- **Genetics:** Our family history can play a role in our hair's future.
- **Life Changes:** Events like pregnancy or menopause can have an impact on hair health.
- **Stress:** It's not just emotional; stress can affect our physical health, including our hair.
- **Nutrition:** A balanced diet is key to maintaining healthy hair.
- **Styling Habits:** Overstyling or tight hairstyles can stress our hair, leading to damage.

It's important to remember that our value and beauty are not measured by the volume of our hair. Each woman carries a unique strength and beauty, with or without a full head of hair. Celebrating ourselves, embracing our natural beauty and caring for our well-being are great steps toward living confidently and healthily.



*Whisking Up Something New*

# AFFORDABLE KITCHEN MAKEOVER IDEAS

Is your kitchen feeling a bit drab and in need of some TLC? Fear not! You don't need to break the bank to give your cooking space a fresh new look. With a sprinkle of creativity and a dash of elbow grease, you can transform your kitchen into a chic and cheerful haven. Let's dive into some fun and budget-friendly ideas to revamp your kitchen!



## 1 Color Pop With Paint

One of the easiest and most effective ways to breathe new life into your kitchen is with a splash of paint. Whether it's a bold accent wall or refreshing your cabinets, paint can make a world of difference. Choose a vibrant color that makes you smile every time you walk in. For a super budget-friendly option, check out your local hardware store's discounted pre-mixed paint section!

## 2 Swap Out Cabinet Handles and Knobs

Out with the old, in with the new! Changing your cabinet handles and knobs can instantly modernize your kitchen. There are plenty of affordable options online or at your local hardware store. You can also check out resale hardware stores for an even better deal!

## 3 Creative Backsplashes

A new backsplash can add character to your kitchen without costing a fortune. Consider peel-and-stick tiles or even a fun, washable wallpaper. These options are easy to install and come in a variety of patterns and colors. You'll be amazed at how this small change can make a big impact.

## 4 Upcycled and DIY Decor

Get crafty and upcycle items you already have. Turn old mason jars into classic storage containers, or create a unique spice rack from reclaimed wood. The internet is brimming with DIY tutorials that can help you turn everyday items into stunning kitchen decor.

## 5 Open Shelving

Show off your prettiest dishes and glasses with open shelving. You can install affordable shelves and paint them to match your kitchen's new color scheme. This not only looks stylish but also makes it easier to grab what you need when cooking up a storm.

## 6 Bring in Some Greenery

Plants can do wonders for any space, and the kitchen is no exception. Add a few potted herbs to your windowsill or hang some trailing plants from the ceiling. They'll purify the air, add a touch of nature and might even inspire some new recipes!

## 7 Fun and Functional Rugs

A vibrant rug can add a cozy feel to your kitchen. Look for rugs that are easy to clean and have a non-slip backing. Whether you prefer a bohemian vibe or a sleek modern look, there's a rug out there that will make your kitchen floor pop.

*Pro Tip:* Make sure your rug is washable for easy clean up in case of spills!

## 8 Personalize With Artwork

Hang some fun artwork or family photos to personalize your space. You don't need to spend a lot—check out thrift stores or create your own art. A gallery wall can make your kitchen feel uniquely yours. Maybe there's a hand-written family recipe you could frame?

## 9 Lighting Magic

Good lighting can completely transform a space. Swap out old fixtures for stylish, affordable options or spray paint your current fixtures. String lights or under-cabinet lighting can add a warm, inviting glow to your kitchen, making it the perfect spot for late-night snacks and chats.

## 10 Declutter and Organize

Get rid of items you don't use and organize the rest. As you are cleaning out, clean under everything—even your large appliances. Invest in some pretty baskets or bins to keep things tidy. The dollar store has very affordable options. An organized kitchen not only looks better but also makes cooking more enjoyable.

## Ready, Set, Revamp!

There you have it—ten fun and budget-friendly ways to revamp your kitchen. Remember, the heart of your home deserves some love, and a little creativity can go a long way. So, roll up your sleeves, put on some music and let the kitchen makeover begin! Happy revamping!

### Quick Tip

**Take Your Time, Transform Gradually**  
A kitchen makeover doesn't have to happen all at once. Sometimes the best transformations come from making changes bit by bit. Don't feel pressured to buy everything immediately; instead, focus on finding the right pieces that truly speak to your style and needs. A well-curated space takes time, so be patient and let your kitchen evolve naturally.



# Pa's Pumpkin Praline Pie

There's nothing like Pa's pumpkin pie at the fall festival to get you into the spirit of the season. This pumpkin praline pie recipe is a classic. It's perfect for fall, but now with a nutty twist! (And maybe just a dash of love to make it just like Pa used to.)

**PREP:** 15 minutes • **COOK:** 1 hour • **SERVES:** 8 slices

## Directions

### PRALINE BOTTOM LAYER

- 1 | PAR-BAKE** the pie crust. Lay the crust in a pie pan (if not already in one). Prick the bottom of the pie dough with a fork a few times (3 to 4 piercings). Bake at 425°F until the crust starts to turn golden, approximately 15 to 20 minutes. It should still look pale but not raw. Allow the crust to cool.
- 2 | IN A BOWL,** stir together pecans and brown sugar, then sprinkle mixture evenly over the pie crust.

### PUMPKIN PIE FILLING

- 1 | IN A BOWL,** beat together the pumpkin purée, sweetened condensed milk, eggs, brown sugar, cinnamon, salt, ginger, nutmeg and cloves until smooth.
- 2 | POUR FILLING MIXTURE** into the pie crust, over top of the praline layer.
- 3 | BAKE PIE** at 425°F for 15 minutes. Then lower heat to 350°F and bake for 40 to 50 minutes more. When done, a knife should be able to cut in and come out clean.
- 4 | REMOVE FROM OVEN,** and let cool completely.

### PRALINE TOPPING

- 1 | IN A BOWL,** mix together pecans, melted butter and brown sugar. Sprinkle over the pie.
- 2 | BROIL THE WHOLE PIE** on high for 2 to 3 minutes or until bubbly. Remove from the oven and serve! Enjoy it warm or chilled with a scoop of your favorite vanilla ice cream!

## Ingredients

### PRALINE BOTTOM LAYER

- 9" pie crust
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed

### PUMPKIN PIE FILLING

- 1 ¾ cups pumpkin purée
- 14 oz. sweetened condensed milk
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves

### PRALINE TOPPING

- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. butter, melted
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed



### We want to hear from you!

Inspiring Women would love to feature your favorite recipes in future issues! Visit [inspiringwomen.org/share-recipe](http://inspiringwomen.org/share-recipe) or scan the QR code to submit your favorite tried and true dishes!

# The *Busy Bee* Tendency

## *How to Stop and Smell the Flowers*

It's so easy to get caught up in the daily grind, buzzing from one task to another. Chasing the sweet nectar of completed tasks or just being stuck in a hive of constant activity, our busyness can quickly become harmful to our overall well-being.

Avoiding busy bee burnout and cultivating a balanced life for yourself is no easy task. But don't worry—it's not all work and no play! We can always find ways to improve and make our daily buzz more enjoyable. Here are a few ideas for you to consider to help you slow down and enjoy the flowers along the way:

### Prioritize Tasks

Focus on tasks that align with your goals and values. For example, if personal health is a priority, make time for exercise and meal preparation. By doing so, you ensure that your daily buzz is about what truly matters to you.

### Set Boundaries

Establish clear boundaries between work, personal life and leisure time. Learn to clearly and politely communicate your limits to colleagues, friends and family. For instance, you might designate certain hours as "no work" periods where you focus solely on personal activities and relationships. It's important to have your own space!

### Delegate and Ask for Help

Don't be afraid to delegate tasks or ask for help when needed, both in your professional and personal life. Delegating can lighten your load and create opportunities for others to contribute. For instance, if you're swarmed with a project, see if a colleague can handle part of the workload or if family members can assist with household chores. Remember, it's okay to share the hive.

### Schedule Regular Breaks

Incorporate short breaks throughout your day to rest and recharge. Even a few minutes of deep breathing, stretching or a brief walk can help reduce stress and improve focus. Set a timer to remind yourself to step away from your desk every hour and take a moment to be still.

### Don't Forget Sleep

Make sleep a priority by setting a consistent sleep schedule and creating a relaxing bedtime routine. Avoid screens before bed and create a calming environment to help ensure you get the rest you need to function effectively. Remember, even busy bees need their beauty sleep.

### Practice Mindfulness

Engage in mindfulness practices such as prayer, deep breathing or yoga to help manage stress and increase self-awareness. Starting your day with a few minutes of prayer can set a positive tone and help you approach your tasks with a clearer mind. It's all about finding your inner buzz.

### Learn to Say No

Politely decline tasks or commitments that don't align with your priorities or that could overwhelm your schedule. For example, if you're asked to come to an event with some friends but your plate is already full, it's okay to explain that you need some time to relax with yourself. Saying no can help you avoid turning your hive into chaos.

### Say Yes to Things You Want

Dedicate time to activities you enjoy outside of work. Hobbies can provide a creative outlet and a sense of accomplishment. Whether it's painting, hiking or playing a musical instrument—engaging in activities you love can rejuvenate your spirit and offer a refreshing break from routine tasks.

# EFFICIENT EATS

## Strategies for Effective Meal Planning

Meal planning and prepping is like setting the sails for a voyage towards healthier eating habits, time-saving strategies and ultimately, a more streamlined life. As meal prepping has grown in popularity, this approach to managing your meals not only helps in maintaining a balanced diet but also reduces stress, saves money and minimizes food waste. No wonder everybody wants to try it! Here's a brief guide to getting started with meal planning and prep, ensuring you can enjoy nutritious, delicious meals without the daily hassle.



### Start With a Plan

#### 1. Assess Your Schedule

Before diving into meal planning, take a moment to consider your weekly schedule. Identify the days you'll have time to cook and those when you'll need something quick or on-the-go. This will guide the complexity and quantity of meals you plan to prepare.

#### 2. Choose Your Recipes

Based on your schedule, select recipes that fit your time constraints and dietary preferences. Consider themes like "Meatless Mondays" or "Taco Tuesdays" to simplify decision-making. Aim for variety to keep your meals exciting and nutritionally balanced.

#### 3. Make a Shopping List

Once you've chosen your recipes, compile a shopping list. Organize your list by grocery store sections (e.g., produce, dairy, grains) to streamline your shopping trip. Stick to your list to avoid impulse buys that can derail your meal plan. Ordering for pick-up is a time saver, too!

### Efficient Meal Prep

#### 1. Batch Cooking

Choose one or two days a week for batch cooking. Cook large portions of staples like grains, proteins and vegetables. These can be mixed and matched to create different meals throughout the week, saving you time and effort on busy days.

#### 2. Utilize Kitchen Tools

Slow cookers, pressure cookers and sheet pans are invaluable tools for meal prep. They allow for hands-off cooking and the preparation of multiple meal components at once. For example, a sheet pan can roast a variety of vegetables together while you prepare protein on the stove.

#### 3. Embrace Freezing

Not all meals need to be eaten within the week. Soups, stews and casseroles freeze well and can be a lifesaver when you're short on time. Label your frozen meals with the date and contents for easy identification.

### Staying Flexible

While meal planning brings structure, it's important to remain flexible. Life is unpredictable, and there may be days when your planned meal doesn't fit your mood or schedule. It's okay to swap days around or opt for a simple backup meal like scrambled eggs or a salad. The goal is to reduce stress, not add to it.

### The Power of Leftovers

Plan for leftovers by doubling recipes or setting aside portions before serving. Leftovers can serve as lunch the next day or be repurposed into a new meal, such as using roasted chicken in a salad or stir-fry. This approach maximizes your cooking efforts and ensures no food goes to waste.

### Quick Tips for Success

#### 1. Keep It Simple

Start with recipes that have fewer ingredients and require less prep time. As you become more comfortable, you can experiment with more complex meals.

#### 2. Stay Inspired

Regularly explore new recipes to keep your meal plan exciting and prevent boredom. Food blogs, cookbooks and social media are great sources of inspiration.

#### 3. Involve the Family

If you're meal planning for a household, involve others in the recipe selection and prep process. This can make mealtime more enjoyable for everyone and lighten your workload.

Meal planning and prep is a skill that improves with practice. By starting with a plan, making efficient use of your kitchen and embracing flexibility, you'll discover the joy of having healthy, homemade meals at your fingertips. This guide is your first step towards transforming your eating habits, saving time and enjoying the myriad benefits of a well-organized kitchen.

# COPD

## Ask an Expert



Ibraheem Fares Mohammad Yousef, MD

Pulmonary Medicine, Critical Care Medicine, Internal Medicine

Wish your doctor was on speed dial? We talked with some experts at Franciscan Health to answer your most pressing questions. This is what they had to say!

Find a Franciscan Doc



1. What is COPD, and how does it affect women differently than men?

COPD, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, is a disease that makes it difficult to breathe. It includes conditions like emphysema, recurrent bronchitis and sputum production. While COPD affects both men and women, studies have shown that women may experience more severe symptoms at a younger age and with less exposure to smoking or environmental toxins than men. This could be due to differences in lung anatomy, hormonal factors or genetic predispositions. Women are also more likely to develop COPD from smoking fewer cigarettes over a shorter period compared to men.

2. What are the early symptoms of COPD in women?

COPD does not usually become noticeable until after the age of 40. Most people diagnosed with the condition are over 60 years old. Early symptoms of COPD in women can include a persistent cough (often referred to as "smoker's cough"), increased mucus production, shortness of breath during everyday activities, frequent respiratory infections and fatigue. Many women might mistake these symptoms for normal aging or conditions like asthma, which can delay diagnosis and treatment. It's important for women experiencing these symptoms, especially if they have a history of smoking or exposure to lung irritants, to consult a healthcare provider.

3. How can women reduce their risk of developing COPD?

The most effective way for women to reduce their risk of developing COPD is to avoid smoking or to quit if they currently smoke. Avoiding secondhand smoke and reducing exposure to environmental pollutants, such as dust, chemical fumes and indoor air pollution, is also crucial. For women who are at risk, regular check-ups with a healthcare provider can help monitor lung health and catch early signs of COPD.

# FREE HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENTS

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\* Your information will not be shared with third parties. Assessments are not diagnostic and not meant to replace regular doctor visits.



## WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

In just minutes, Franciscan Health can help you assess risk factors for common, sometimes preventable conditions. Your confidential analysis includes a **FREE REPORT** you can print and discuss with your primary care physician.\*

# Silent Dependencies

The Sneaky Addictions You Didn't Know You Had

Addiction is usually associated with criminals and the mentally ill. But what if I told you that we are all suffering from some kind of addiction? We live in an instant gratification society—we can stream or download digital media instantly, receive packages in two days or less and have food or groceries delivered to our homes in less than an hour. With the world at our fingertips, dopamine levels have been severely affected.

Dopamine is a chemical in the brain that makes us feel good when we enjoy something, like online shopping, sipping coffee or scrolling through social media. It acts like a reward, encouraging us to repeat these activities. However, when we overindulge in seemingly harmless habits, our brains release more dopamine than usual, leading to a cycle where we crave more of these

activities to feel that same pleasure. Then, other normal activities don't bring as much joy because they don't produce the same dopamine high. This cycle makes breaking free from these habits tough, as our brain keeps seeking the intense pleasure it's gotten used to. Over time, this can turn into a sneaky form of addiction.

Understanding dopamine's role helps us see why even small habits can become addictive. It's not just about lacking self-control; it's about how our brains respond to repeated doses of pleasure. Recognizing this can help us find ways to manage these habits before they turn into harder-to-break addictions.

Sneaky addictions can subtly impact one's lifestyle and well-being without the stark consequences often associated with more recognized addictions. Here's a list of some common, yet often overlooked, sneaky addictions:

## 1 Social Media Scrolling

The endless cycle of refreshing feeds can become a compulsive behavior, seeking the dopamine rush from likes, comments or new content.

## 2 Online Shopping

The thrill of finding deals and the anticipation of package arrivals can turn occasional shopping sprees into a frequent, uncontrollable urge.

## 3 Video Gaming

While gaming can be a fun and engaging activity, it can also become an addiction when it interferes with daily responsibilities and social interactions.

## 4 Binge Watching

Watching episode after episode of a TV series for hours on end can disrupt normal sleep patterns and daily routines.

## 5 Eating Junk Food

Cravings for sugary, fatty or salty foods can become a compulsive habit, often used as a way to seek comfort or relieve stress.

## 6 Caffeine

Dependence on coffee, tea or energy drinks not only for wakefulness but also for a sense of comfort or routine can be a subtle addiction.

## 7 Exercise

While being active is part of a healthy lifestyle, an obsession with working out can become harmful, especially when driven by anxiety over appearance or compulsion rather than enjoyment.

## 8 Smartphone Use

The need to constantly check notifications, texts or apps can become an automatic behavior that interferes with face-to-face interactions and personal downtime.

## 9 Work

A compulsion to work incessantly, often fueled by a need for achievement or fear of falling behind, can lead to burnout and neglect of personal relationships.

## 10 Gambling

Beyond casinos, gambling can occur in more subtle forms like online betting or fantasy sports, where the thrill of risking something of value can become addictive.

## 11 Reading or Information Gathering

An obsessive need to consume news, books or educational materials, feeling uneasy when not learning something new, can also be a form of addiction.

These seemingly innocent addictions often start as simple pleasures or productivity tools but can evolve into compulsive needs that impact mental health, relationships and overall well-being. Recognizing and addressing these behaviors early on can help prevent them from becoming more serious.

## Is a Sneaky Addiction Affecting Your Life?

Here are some small signs that you can look for that may be a direct result of an addiction you aren't aware of. Read through these carefully and then recheck the list of silent addictions. You may be able to connect the dots and discover a sneaky dependency you weren't aware of.

### Poor Time Management

Are you finding yourself always short on time? Rushing out the door every morning but you scroll social media for 30 minutes before you get out of bed?

### Dwindling Bank Account

Are your coffee runs or online shopping catching up to you? At nearly \$7 a coffee, daily runs sure do add up quick.

### Excessive Weight Loss/Gain

Have you noticed some big changes on the scale recently? It could be the coffee, snacks, eating out, food deliveries, excessive exercise or stress from overworking!

### Strain in Relationships

Have you noticed some of your relationships have gone silent or there is more strife than usual? Maybe your time is being taken by a silent dependency—check yourself and follow up with your loved ones!



# Thread & Butter

## Unraveling the Joy of Needlework Crafts



In the tapestry of creative hobbies, needlework crafts stand out as a richly embroidered field where enthusiasts can weave their own stories, one stitch at a time. From the cozy corners of knitting circles to the dynamic threads of social media, these crafts offer a palette of opportunities to knot only express creativity but also mend the soul. So, grab your needles, and let's loop through some fantastic thread crafts that will have you in stitches!

### 1. Knitting: Not Just for Nanas

Knitting has been making a purl of a comeback, and it's not just for grandmothers anymore! This cozy craft is perfect for anyone looking to give their Netflix binges a bit more productivity. Imagine crafting a snuggly sweater, a chic scarf or even a quirky hat that's as unique as your fingerprint. Knitting is the perfect blend of relaxation and creativity, making it the ideal gateway craft for those looking to get tied up in the needle arts.



### 2. Crochet: Hook, Line and Sinker

Crochet is knitting's crafty cousin, where you hook your way to fabulous creations. From adorable amigurumi (that's Japanese for cute, crocheted creatures) to breezy summer tops, crochet offers versatility that's hard to beat. Whether you're making a granny square blanket that rivals your grandmother's or a modern tote bag, crochet hooks you with its charm and simplicity.



### 3. Embroidery: A Thread of Elegance

Embroidery is the art of adding personality and flair to fabric with a needle and thread. It's like painting, but with threads! This craft allows you to stitch your mark on everything from denim jackets to decorative pillows, making the ordinary extraordinary. With a variety of stitches in your repertoire, you can create intricate landscapes, whimsical quotes or personalized gifts that scream, "I care sew much!" Dive into embroidery, and you'll find it's a great way to thread some creativity into your life.



### 4. Cross-Stitch: X Marks the Craft

Cross-stitch is the pixel art of the thread world, where tiny Xs come together to form intricate designs and patterns. It's a form of embroidery that's both meditative and satisfying, offering a clear path to follow but plenty of room for creativity. Whether you're stitching up a storm with modern designs or paying homage to traditional patterns, cross-stitch is a great way to get your creative juices flowing. Plus, it's a fantastic way to make one-of-a-kind pieces that promise a booty of handmade delights for those brave enough to navigate the sea of threads.

### 5. Quilting: Patching Together Memories

Quilting is the final touch to your crafting couch. It involves sewing together pieces of fabric to make blankets, throws and even artwork. Each quilt tells a story, pieced together with fabrics that can carry memories, colors that speak to your soul and patterns that add warmth to any home. Quilting is a craft that binds generations, a way to create heirlooms that wrap loved ones in warmth and history. It's a patchwork of creativity, where every piece is a fragment of imagination sewn together with love.

### Sew, What's Next?

Embarking on a journey through the world of needlework crafts is like opening a treasure chest of creativity. Each craft offers its own unique blend of technique, artistry and satisfaction. Whether you're knitting your worries away, crocheting through a storm, embroidering your dreams, cross-stitching your fantasies or quilting your heritage, there's a thread craft waiting to pull at your heartstrings.

# Spaghetti Squash & Sauces

Spaghetti squash is a great alternative to pasta if you're looking to avoid the carbs and calories that come packed into normal spaghetti. These squoodles can also be used in pad thai, casseroles and even stir-fry!

PREP: 10 minutes

COOK: 1 hour

SERVES: 8

## Main Dish

### SPAGHETTI SQUASH

#### Ingredients

- 1 spaghetti squash
- Extra virgin olive oil, for rubbing
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

#### Directions

- 1 | **PREHEAT YOUR OVEN** to 350°F.
- 2 | **USE A KNIFE** to cut the squash in half lengthwise. Remove seeds and pulp from the center and pitch. Place both pieces of squash on a baking sheet, with cut side up. Rub olive oil over the cut surface and bake for 1 hour. When done, squash should be tender, and a fork should insert into the middle easily.
- 3 | **USE A FORK** to scrape stringy squash out of the shell and add to a bowl. Drizzle squash spaghetti with olive oil and season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 4 | **INSERT SPAGHETTI SQUASH** into any spaghetti or pasta dish for a veggie-based replacement!



## Sauces

Time to dress up your squoodles! There are ton of delicious ready-to-use jarred sauces you can buy at your favorite grocery store. But if you're trying to cut fat, sugar or sodium, or just simply eat cleaner, then homemade is the way to go. Here are a few tried and true, quick and easy sauce recipes to make your squoodles extra tasty.

### Light Lemon Butter Sauce

#### Ingredients

- ¼ cup butter
- 2-3 garlic cloves
- 1 large lemon, juiced
- Salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- Red pepper flakes, to taste
- Grated Parmesan cheese for topping
- Parsley for garnish

#### Directions

- 1 | **ADD THE BUTTER** to a pan over medium-low heat. When melted, add the garlic. Cook for about 30 seconds.
- 2 | **ADD THE LEMON JUICE**, and allow the mixture to warm. Remove from the heat.
- 3 | **SERVE TOPPED** with grated Parmesan cheese and parsley as garnish.

### Savory Spaghetti Sauce

#### Ingredients

- 1 Tb. olive or avocado oil
- 1 lb. lean ground turkey or beef
- 28 oz. can of fire-roasted crushed tomatoes
- ¼ cup water
- 3 Tb. tomato paste
- 1 tsp. garlic, minced
- 1½ tsp. dried oregano
- 1½ tsp. dried basil
- 1 tsp. dried parsley
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. pepper
- Grated Parmesan cheese for topping

#### Directions

- 1 | **ON MEDIUM-HIGH HEAT**, add oil to skillet. Once pan is hot, add the ground meat. Sauté the meat, stirring occasionally, until browned. Drain grease if needed.
- 2 | **REDUCE HEAT** to medium-low. Add canned crushed tomatoes, water, tomato paste, garlic, oregano, basil, parsley, salt, onion powder, garlic powder and pepper to skillet with the meat. Stir to combine. Cover and gently simmer for 10 to 15 minutes or until everything is heated through and flavors have married.
- 3 | **SERVE** over your squoodles, top with Parmesan cheese.



# Decoding Cancer Jargon

## A Guide to Understanding the Lingo

If you've ever found yourself in a medical office nodding along while a doctor rattles off a string of confusing cancer terms, you're not alone. It's like they're speaking another language! Don't worry—here is a guide to help you navigate the complex world of cancer lingo.

### Diagnosis

#### The Starting Line

##### Oncologist

Think of an oncologist as the quarterback of your cancer team. They're the doctors specializing in cancer, calling the plays and guiding you through the process.

##### Biopsy

When a suspicious lump or area needs closer inspection, a biopsy is done. It's just taking a tiny sample of tissue to check for cancer cells.

##### Malignant vs. Benign

These terms describe the findings of a biopsy. Malignant is the bad guy—cancer that can spread and cause trouble. Benign is just the bystander—non-cancerous and usually not harmful.

##### Metastasis

This is when cancer decides it's time for a road trip, spreading from its original site to other parts of the body. Picture a mischievous traveler with a backpack full of trouble, leaving a trail of destruction.

##### Staging

Staging is like setting the scene for a play. It describes how much cancer is present and if it has spread. The stage can range from I (local and small) to IV (spread out and large).

### Treatment

#### The Battle Begins

##### Chemotherapy (Chemo)

This is the use of drugs to fight cancer cells. Think of it as a team of tiny soldiers attacking cancer cells. They're powerful, but sometimes they cause collateral damage, like hair loss and fatigue.

##### Radiation Therapy

This treatment uses high-energy rays to zap cancer cells. Imagine a superhero with a laser beam, targeting the bad guys with precision.

##### Immunotherapy

Your doctor can leverage your immune system through therapy or drugs to help fight the cancer. It is like giving your immune system a pep talk, boosting it to fight cancer more effectively. Think of it as rallying the troops for a major battle.

##### Hormone Therapy

Some cancers thrive on hormones. Hormone therapy uses drugs to block the body's ability to produce hormones. It's like cutting off the cancer's favorite snack, making it harder for the cancer to grow.

##### Targeted Therapy

This is the sharpshooter of cancer treatments, aiming at specific molecules involved in cancer growth. It's like having a heat-seeking missile that zeroes in on the enemy.

##### Side Effects

These are the uninvited guests that crash your treatment party. Common ones include nausea, fatigue and hair loss. They're annoying—sometimes more challenging than the therapy itself—but usually temporary.

### Remission

#### The Victory Lap

##### Remission

When cancer's no longer detectable, you're in remission. It's like winning the battle, but the war isn't necessarily over. Remission can be partial or complete.

##### NED (No Evidence of Disease)

This is the best news you can get! It means there are no signs of cancer in your body. You are in complete remission.

##### Survivor

Once you've battled cancer, you're a survivor. It's a badge of honor, representing strength and resilience.

##### Follow-Up Care

Even after treatment, you'll have regular check-ups to ensure cancer doesn't make a comeback. Think of it as routine maintenance for a well-loved car.

##### Recurrence

This is when cancer decides to make an unwelcome return. It's like that annoying guest who just doesn't know when to leave.

##### Survivorship Plan

After treatment, this plan outlines your follow-up care and steps to stay healthy. It's like a roadmap for your post-cancer life.

##### Quality of Life

This term focuses on your overall well-being during and after treatment. It's about feeling good, not just being medically okay.

Understanding cancer terminology can be overwhelming, but breaking it down into simple, relatable terms makes it easier to digest. Remember, you don't have to tackle this alone. Lean on your medical team, caregivers and support groups—they're all here to help you through this journey. ALWAYS ask questions if something doesn't make sense.

So, the next time your doctor starts speaking in what sounds like a foreign language, you'll be ready. And remember, a little laughter goes a long way in lightening the load. Stay strong, stay informed and keep smiling!



Scan the QR code for information about our Franciscan Health Cancer Center Lafayette.



## Breast Cancer Care That's Specialized For You



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No two breast cancers are the same, and no two treatment plans should be either. Advancements in diagnosis and treatment make it possible for our specialists to pinpoint your exact cancer and build a personalized plan with you. When you choose Franciscan Health, you can always expect unwavering compassion, dedication from your entire multidisciplinary team, the latest technology and innovation and years of experience resulting in improved outcomes.

**Breast cancer treatment looks different for everyone, because it should be specialized – just for you.**

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