

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

The surprising link between your heart and mind

Ever feel like your mind and body are two separate things? Think again! Your mind and body are connected in some pretty cool ways. When you're stressed, anxious, or down, your body goes into "fight or flight" mode. This can lead to high blood pressure, inflammation, and even heart disease. Chronic stress can also contribute to depression, which can further affect your heart.

The impact of anxiety and depression

Anxiety can lead to irregular heartbeats and heart disease. People with depression are more likely to develop heart problems, and those with heart disease are more likely to feel depressed. It's a tough cycle to break, but it can be done.

Breaking the cycle: Tips for better health

- **Chill out.** Try mindfulness techniques like meditation, yoga, or deep breathing to calm your mind and body.



- **Get moving.** Engage in regular physical activity to reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Connect with others.** Build a support network of friends and family to talk to when you're feeling stressed or anxious.
- **Sleep tight.** Prioritize sleep and aim for 7-9 hours per night to help your body and mind recharge.
- **Eat to beat stress.** Focus on a balanced diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- **Take fun breaks.** Make time for activities you enjoy to reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Seek help.** Don't be afraid to ask for help if you're struggling with depression, anxiety, or stress. Florida Blue contracts with Lucet to provide mental health services. If you feel you need more immediate support, call the Lucet helpline at 833-848-1762. Specially trained behavioral health therapists are available 24/7 for support and a referral to services matched to your needs.

You can learn more about the heart-mind connection and resources available to Florida Blue members at [BlueAnswers](https://www.floridablue.com/blueanswers) on FloridaBlue.com.

Resources: [NAMI.org](https://www.nami.org); [Heart.org](https://www.heart.org)

IN THIS ISSUE

The surprising link between your heart and mind

Nicotine free and loving it

Recipe of the month

Nicotine free and loving it

Are you ready to quit vaping or smoking? That's a great decision. Nicotine can cause serious health problems like lung cancer and heart disease. It's also a very expensive habit. Quitting can save your life and save you money.

Quitting might be one of the hardest habits to break, but you can do it. Here are eight tips to help you succeed:

1. **Set a quit date** and make a plan to stay on track.
2. **Get support** from family and friends.
3. **Avoid triggers** like places where you usually vape or smoke.
4. **Use nicotine replacement** like gum or patches to help with cravings.
5. **Stay active** with exercise to distract yourself and feel better.
6. **Learn to relax** without vaping or smoking.
7. **Reward yourself** for reaching milestones. You've earned it!
8. **Get help** if you're struggling at TobaccoFreeFlorida.com or 1-877-U-CAN-NOW.



Resources: CDC.gov; TobaccoFreeFlorida.com

Greek Salad with Edamame (Serves 4)

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup red-wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 8 cups chopped romaine (about 2 romaine hearts)
- 16 ounces frozen shelled edamame (about 3 cups), thawed
- 1 cup halved cherry or grape tomatoes
- ½ European cucumber, sliced
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¼ cup slivered fresh basil
- ¼ cup sliced Kalamata olives
- ¼ cup slivered red onion

Directions:

Whisk vinegar, oil, salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Add romaine, edamame, tomatoes,



cucumber, feta, basil, olives, and onion; toss to coat.

Recipe courtesy of Eatingwell.com; for nutritional information click [here](#).

We comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-352-2583 (TTY: 1-877-955-8773).

ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1- 800-352-2583 (TTY: 1-800-955-8770).

Florida Blue is a trade name of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Unless otherwise indicated, all materials, content and forms contained in this newsletter are the intellectual property of Better You. No materials, content and forms contained herein may be copied, reproduced, distributed or displayed in full or in part without expressed written permission by Better You.