SELF-CARE AWARENESS MONTH

invest in your future vitality

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THRIVE PROACTIVE HEALTH

Michelle Hilliard • Certified Nutritionist • Integrative Nutrition Health Coach

Three Steps You When Can Start Today for Healthy Aging

When we're young we never think time will catch up to us. Then we blink and time smacks us right in the face. Here are three steps you can take to help you continue aging gracefully and feeling your best.

BALANCE YOUR BLOOD SUGAR When you have good blood sugar balance, you fuel our body properly to give it more energy, improve your sleep, improve your skin, provide fewer cravings, provide a happier/calmer mood, and balance hormones. Insulin resistance, pre-diabetes, or diabetes can lead to other inflammatory diseases such as stroke, dementia, cancer and heart disease if it's not managed.

- Try and eliminate refined sugar and starches from your diet.
- Eat more real, whole foods rather than man-made, processed foods.
 Pair protein, fat and fiber together with all meals and focus on non starchy carbohydrates such as sweet potatoes, to add to meals.

Our lifestyles today have become more sedentary due to technology and modern conveniences. This is a problem because our bodies are made to move. What can you do to move more?

- Walk, go to the gym, or participate in a fun physical activity or hobby that gets you moving.
- A quick walk after meals can help decrease blood sugar levels.
- Activities like weight training can help you build muscle, which will help with longevity, insulin sensitivity and overall mobility.
- Find an accountability partner to help you get moving. This can come in the form of a friend, partner, family member or trainer at the gym.

As we age, we lose muscle and gain fat. Protein is filled with the building blocks we need to build and maintain muscle mass.

- Make it your goal to get 4 to 6 ounces of high quality protein with every meal.
- Easy protein ideas include chicken, turkey, wild-caught fish, grass-fed beef, organic tofu, high quality protein powders, tempeh, eggs, nuts, seeds and beans.

MY FAVORITE DAY-STARTING BLOOD-SUGAR-BALANCING PROTEIN SMOOTHIE

Blend all ingredients and enjoy! 1 scoop of vanilla protein, *aim for 30 grams* 1-2 tbsp of organic peanut butter or other nut butter

> 1-2 tbsp of psyllium husk 1 handful of organic spinach 1 cup of water 1 cup of nut milk almond, coconut, macadamia, or flax milk 1/2 cup organic frozen blueberries

MOVE YOUR BODY DAILY

J DON'T SKIMP ON PROTEIN INTAKE

Vivian Takafuji • Ph.D., L.Ac., Dipl. OM • Acupuncturist

RECHARGE YOUR BATTERIES TO IMPROVE YOUR VITALITY

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a holistic healthcare system that works to restore balance to the organs, thereby optimizing the levels and free flow of our internal "Qi" or energy. This could be interpreted in Western terms as living in vitality.

TCM CONSIDERS THE KIDNEYS TO BE IMPORTANT RESERVOIRS OF OUR QI. I THINK OF THE KIDNEYS AS THE BATTERIES ON OUR BACK THAT KEEP US RUNNING THROUGH LIFE.

> When your energies are low, you can experience fatigue, low back or knee pain, lack of motivation and loss of zest for life. The Kidney "Jing" or "Essence" relates to the bones, brain and stages of reproductive development. When the Jing is weak, you can see signs of poor memory, infertility, early menopause or premature aging.

YOU NEED TO RECHARGE YOUR BATTERIES THROUGH PROPER DIET, GOOD SLEEP PATTERNS, GENTLE EXERCISE AND OTHER HEALTHY LIFESTYLE HABITS.

Stress can quickly deplete your energies if left unchecked. Chronic pain can also weaken your immune system and have detrimental effects on your mood, further lessening your sense of vitality. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal remedies can be greatly helpful to rectify these imbalances.

Many Chinese medical texts describe practices designed to "nurture life" and promote longevity, a concept referred to as "Yang Shen." Diet and nutrition are a primary focus as well as breathwork and meditative practices to harmonize Body-Mind-Spirit. Qigong exercises are recommended to boost Kidney Qi, and herbs are prescribed to nourish Kidney Jing.

SIMPLE EXERCISES YOU CAN DO:

- Gently tap and then press into your low back muscles at the level of the kidneys, stimulating the Du4 acupoint, translated as the "gate of life."
- You could also press into the soles of your feet (the start of the Kidney Meridian) or do daily foot soaks to nourish the kidney energies.

BY PAYING ATTENTION TO RECHARGING ACTIVITIES, WE CAN WORK TO LIVE AS OUR MOST VITAL SELVES.

Hitor Myth The Truth About Healthy Aging

Most of us want to do the right things to live a healthy life and keep enjoying the things we love, but often we are confused about what things are the right things.

We are constantly bombarded by social media, news headlines, articles, and commercials often presenting misleading and contradictory information, with none of it actually invested in our well-being. What do I believe? Are the things I have learned actually correct? Have I been doing what I need to do to set me up for healthy aging?

If I make changes now, is it too late? Will it make any difference? What does the science actually tell me?

These are common questions that I have asked myself, and I get asked all the time.

Let's break down some common myths, and get to what the research actually says, instead of opinions, individual experiences, and fads.

the myth: fad diets are so popular, they must work

Fad diets sound too good to be true, because they are. Fad diets and nutrition programs are created to make money, not to make you healthier and happier. They sell you the idea of losing weight fast, however, they are usually very restrictive, involving banning entire food groups. Often, most people on these fad diets fail in the long-term, because they are made to fail. You achieve a little success, just to eventually fail, so they can lure you back in and make more money.

the myth: sleeping-in on the weekend helps you catch up on sleep

Our bodies function on a cyclical, 24-hour clock, called our circadian rhythm. We often think of the circadian rhythm as just our sleep/wake cycle, however, it is much more than that. Every cell in our bodies functions on this clock. Our bodies like regularity and consistency. When we sleep-in on the weekends, our circadian rhythm gets off schedule, which can impact our sleep quality, make us tired during the day, make it difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep at night, and can even impact food cravings.

do this

Focus on eating whole, minimallyprocessed foods, with lots of fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. Minimize distractions while you eat, and drink plenty of water throughout the day, including during your meals.

do this

The best approach is to have a regular bedtime and wake time that you do your best to stick to every day of the week. Even if you have a night that you're up later, wake up at your regular wake time the next morning to get your circadian rhythm back on track. As always, aim for a goal of 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.

the myth: social media can inspire your diet and exercise routine

Unfortunately, most of what is found on social media is anecdotal evidence and personal experience that doesn't hold much weight when compared to research. Like a fad diet, it sounds too good to be true because it is. This creates irrational expectations, and then you get let down once you fail. Often, what's on social media is quick fixes, and not the more mindful practice of sustainable lifestyle behavior changes.

the myth: if you're having trouble falling asleep, you should just lie there with your eyes closed

If you're lying in bed having difficulty falling asleep you may be unconsciously training your brain to associate lying in bed with not sleeping. Your bed is for sleep, and you want to do everything in your power to train your brain and body that when you're in bed, it's sleeptime.

do this

Invest in your long-term success. Partner with a health or fitness coach who can set you up with a plan, help you overcome obstacles and stay accountable to your goals.

do this

If after 20 minutes of lying in bed you still haven't fallen asleep, you should get out of bed and do a relaxing activity. This does not mean drinking or eating a snack, watching TV, or scrolling on your phone. Instead, think of reading a book or meditating. Also, make sure to keep the lights dim and minimize noise.

the myth: taking your phone to bed is no big deal

Most of us are guilty of lying in bed scrolling through our phones, and before you know it, we've lost an hour of sleep. It's not just going to sleep later that is impacting your sleep quality, but also the exposure to your phone's blue light. Research has shown that flooding your brain with blue light close to bedtime disrupts production of melatonin—a hormone that helps regulate your sleep/wake cycle. This can lead to lighter, more restless sleep, leaving you feeling groggy and fatigued.

do this

Limit use of any screens for at least one hour prior to bedtime. Leave your phone in a different room and use a regular, oldfashioned alarm clock. If you must use your phone for an alarm clock, set your alarm and leave your phone across the room. This will also help with limiting use of the snooze button.

the myth: I'm too old; making changes now won't help

The human body is amazingly capable of making changes even in advanced age. We cannot stop aging or death, however, the lifestyle choices that we make each day have a dramatic impact on how quickly or slowly we age.

the myth: your genes determine your health more than your lifestyle

Many of us believe our health is fated, either positively or negatively, due to genes we've inherited from our parents. However, the field of epigenetics, which is the study of how lifestyle choices can turn on or turn off genes, has shown us that our habits and behaviors are much more impactful on our health than our genes.

do this

If you're eating a healthy diet, moving your body regularly, getting adequate sleep, avoiding the use of substances, managing stress constructively, have a positive mindset, and have good social connections, you're much more likely to lead a long, healthy, productive life.

do this

If you have a known risk for any disease because it runs in your family, it's even more important to make healthy lifestyle choices to avoid the same fate as other family members.

SELF-CARE AWARENESS MONTH

TAKING **INVENTORY** ON YOUR OFLIFE

stressors are all around us. Our resilience and how we deal with the stressors are key indicators that affect our health and happiness.

IO KEY AREAS OF SELF-CARE

As September is Self-Care Awareness Month, this is a great time to use the Wheel of Life tool to help you reflect and get perspective on how you are currently showing up and acting in various areas of your life. The Wheel of Life is divided into the 10 dimensions that influence our unique ability to thrive...

FINANCES

REST & RECOVERY

6

STEP I ASSESS

WORK & CAREER In the circles next to each category description on the next page, SATISFACTION rate your level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10:

SOCIAL LIFE FRIENDS & FAMILY

STEP 2 DIAGRAM

There are 10 lines on the wheel graph. Mark your rating from each category in the appropriate section of the wheel and shade the area towards the center of the wheel. See the example at the bottom of this page.

STEP 3 IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

Think of a bike wheel rolling down a hill. The smoother the wheel, the smoother the ride. A balanced circumference means that your life has balance and you are optimally managing key areas of your life.

On the contrary, flat tires, dented rims, bent spokes will all affect how we roll in life.

HOME COOKING Those areas will exhibit the imbalances in your life that are pulling you back and affecting how you thrive.

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING These become your areas of opportunity. These are the areas where you need to incorporate more self-care and become more aware of your daily contributions and routines in those areas. What habits do you have in those areas? Think about small modifications you can start implementing in that area, become mindful and set priorities based on your life vision.

MENTAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

This example shows how to fill in the spokes. It also demonstrates imbalance and opportunity for building more mindful habits in order to create a better balance.



FAITH, SPIRITUALITY

^{HOME}ENVIRONMENT ^{& RELATIONSHIPS}

9 8

In the circles next to each category description, rate your level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10.

6

7

1 — **2** — **3** — LOW SATISFACTION (OPPORTUNITY)

WORK ENVIRONMENT & CAREER SATISFACTION

Do you sense that your work is aligned with your personal strengths and talents? Are you planted, engaged, properly challenged and growing in your career field, and working towards feeling success and achievement? Do you enjoy your work environment and colleagues or would you rather be working at a different job or in a different field?

FINANCES

Money is merely a tool that helps us achieve our dreams and live the life we desire. This category encourages you to think about if your income supports your basic needs and the lifestyle you desire. Reflect on your relationship and habits with money and how your finances impact your relationships, security and retirement.

SLEEP QUALITY: REST & RECOVERY

Reflect on the routines around your sleep habits. Do you have a regular consistent bedtime and wakeup time? Do you properly wind down before bed, get seven-to-nine quality hours of sleep without disruption? Do you get up easily in the morning and feel like you have enough energy throughout the day?

FAITH & SPIRITUALITY

Positive psychology research shows us those that have a sense of being connected to something bigger than themselves are happier. You don't have to be religious to experience spirituality, this is about expanding on your sense of purpose and meaning in life. Your faith and spiritual beliefs can directly influence your relationships, emotional and mental resilience.

HOME ENVIRONMENT & HOME RELATIONSHIPS

Reflect on your living environment, family time, and family relationships. Do you enjoy your home environment and are you able to relax, enjoy hobbies at home such as watching sports, reading, writing, gardening, playing a musical instrument, etc? Are your home-life demands and relationships stressed with too many agendas and to-do lists? Is your home messy, cluttered, or unorganized? SIGNIFICANT OTHER & INTIMACY

8

9

HIGH SATISFACTION (ABUNDANCE)

10

This category has you reflecting on your role in a potentially important and special relationship in your life. Reflect on your connection, engagement with each other, romantic activities, sex, and the support systems you have for each other. If you are not in a special relationship, rate how satisfied you are in that fact. Happy and satisfied or lonely and frustrated?

MENTAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Are you coping effectively and adapting to life stressors, uncertainty, and adversity in a constructive way? Can you manage your emotions and stay cool, calm and steady so you're able to communicate effectively, empathize with others, and defuse conflict? Or do you catch yourself worrying, becoming fearful of all the things that can go wrong, and swimming in negative emotions such as anger, judgment, sadness, jealousy, frustration, anxiety, loneliness and resentment?

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING & FITNESS

Are you walking or getting at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week? Or at least 75 minutes of high intensity? Are you including resistance training and preserving muscle mass as you age? Reflect on your physical health and weekly exercise routine.

HOME COOKING & MEAL PREPPING

Reflect on how you plan and prepare your meals each week. Do you grab pre-packed processed foods and frequent drive-thrus? Or do you consciously go to the grocery store, choose your ingredients and prepare your meals at home? Our relationship with these habits reflect our nutritional beliefs and relationship with food that will impact our energy levels and health. Plus, home cooking and sharing a meal around a table with others can enhance connection, communication and build relationships.

SOCIAL LIFE, FRIENDS & FUN

Are you having enough fun in your life? This category is about the laughter, fun and enjoyment you have in your life. Reflect on your hobbies and recreational patterns and how you live life sharing that fun with others.

Aging is inevitable, but there is a lot of research these days on chronological age vs. biological age.

> Chronological age is the actual amount of time you have existed in this body and biological age refers to our epigenetic alteration, how well the body functions and whether you have the "diseases" of old age.

Science has shown there are many factors that contribute to lowering our biological age.

Diet, exercise, sleep and stress levels all play an important role in keeping your body young. And learning to manage your energy is vital in keeping you healthy and slowing the aging process.

I often joke, I think I'll write a letter to Cher and let her know you actually can TURN BACK TIME.

You see, your body is made of energy, and each of us is actually a toric field of constantly moving energy. When the energy is flowing in a pristine manner, your body is actually in a "healing mode." This healing mode is your natural state. But stress, poor diet, unresolved emotion and other lifestyle choices can create gunk in the system, slowing down the energy moving through us. (I should note here, this energy is not separate from us, we are this energy. We are energetic beings; all of life is energy.)

HOW OLD ARE YOU... BIOLOGICALLY?

When you learn to masterfully manage the energy that is YOU, amazing things happen. You activate the energy for replenishing and rejuvenating your body and when you do, the result is healing and a younger you.

When you come in and have an energy session with me, I will teach you how to begin practicing to master this energy of YOU for a life with better health, more vitality and joy!

WITH EVERSA EVERSA LITTLE DECISION DECISION DECISION AI CRA AI CR

My son recently graduated from college and is working at his first full-time job. He decided to live with me and his dad, after realizing he could save far more money staying at home. His goal is to purchase a home in Virginia Beach. Will that happen tomorrow? Nope. Next year? Maybe. The point being that he is actively investing in his future self every single week when he puts the majority of his paycheck into the stock market.

And while financial investment is important, there is another investment that is even more critical for every human — investment in your body!

The health of your body is an asset worthy of daily investment.

Read that sentence again (maybe twice) and internalize that message!

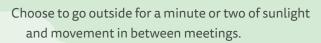
Unfortunately we often forget, or de-prioritize self-care. What does self-care look like? Of course, we know of traditional things like massage, meditation and music. But self-care is woven into literally hundreds of little decisions you make every single day.

Every time you choose to momentarily stand up and move your body during the business day is self-care. Choosing water over a sugary soda is self- care. Making a meal at home instead of eating fast food is self care.

Two of the greatest influences on your health are the foods you eat and the beverages you drink.

Every single food and drink choice you make contributes to your overall health. When choosing your food and drink, frame your choices with the criteria of, "What will best serve my body to maintain optimal function?" as opposed to opting for simply what tastes good at the moment.

Self-care can also be easily incorporated into your lifestyle with other small decisions.



Squeeze a little lemon into your water bottle to give that water some zip.

Or simply look in the mirror and smile at yourself in the morning.

Self-care is in the way you live your life.

You have lots of little opportunities every day to help your body function better. Try an extra one or two today and see how you feel!

TEACHERS & STUDENTS Back-to-School Special 20% OFF ALL MASSAGES

REQUIRES VALID ID OFFER EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 30

SESSIONS FILL UP FAST BOOK YOUR MASSAGE TODAY! Your health is not something you can look at as a short-term objective. Starting routines and turning them into healthy habits is a great way to achieve your long-term health goals. **If you are looking for something small you can add to your routine that can help your body be more resilient for the future, dry body-brushing may be just the thing.**

Dry body-brushing or dry brushing involves rubbing a coarse-bristled brush on your skin to exfoliate it. The skin is the largest, most eliminative organ in our body, and exfoliating the skin removes dead skin cells from the surface of the epidermis and reveals soft, healthy skin. It also leads to better skin cell renewal and can help prevent the appearance of premature aging. Plus, it allows the body to pass toxins and absorb nutrients more easily by keeping pores unclogged.

Additionally, dry brushing is thought to stimulate the body's lymphatic system, which is responsible for protecting your body from illness by removing cellular waste and keeping the body's fluids balanced. It can become backed up or slowed down by blockages or diseases that weaken your immune system.

You can keep your lymph system flowing with dry brushing a few times a week. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- When purchasing your brush, look for an all-natural bristle brush and make sure you aren't over exfoliating your skin. Watch out for brushes that are made out of plastic as they will scrape and damage your skin.
- The best time to dry brush is in the morning before a shower. I love adding dry brushing into my morning routine three times a week. It gives me a boost of energy and leaves my skin soft and glowing!
- When using your dry brush to stimulate your lymphatic system, use long strokes with mild pressure always moving toward your heart.
- It is always great to follow up your dry brushing with a natural and hydrating oil, cream or lotion. Try adding a few drops of the essential oils (Helichrysum, Lavender or Frankincense) to jojoba oil for extra agedefying properties.
- Never brush over open wounds or sunburned skin.

LP PROTECT YOUR BODY WITH DRY BRUSHING

A trained massage therapist can also use dry brushing to lessen the effects of lymphedema, a condition where the tissue swells due to an accumulation of fluid; this usually occurs in the limbs. Ask your health care provider if dry brushing is right for you.

If you are interested in trying dry brushing, ask your massage therapist and we will be happy to add the health-boosting enhancement to your service. If you have any concerns, ask your health care provider before moving forward. Julie Blandin • PT, ATC, CSCS, PRC, DipACLM • Posture and Movement Health Expert









WHAT IS THE BEST RECOVERY POSTURE DURING HIGH-INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING?

I can remember doing two-a-day workouts with my basketball team that included relay suicide runs and sprints up a long hill. When we were waiting for our teammate to hand off or as we got to walk down the hill, coach would say, "Put your hands on your head" to help us recover faster and get our breathing to slow down. Personally, I never found that effective and now, 20-some years later, I know why.

Putting your hands on your head or behind your head is not an effective recovery position because of the posture it puts your ribcage and spine in. When your chest is elevated and your spine is hyperextended, your diaphragm's ability to move through its full range of motion is challenged and the respiratory mechanics are inefficient to recover quickly. Allow me to explain a little bit more...

A key part of recovery is relaxation. To get an overactive or tonic muscle to relax, it must lengthen. Your diaphragm muscle relaxes and lengthens

when the ribs slide down, internally rotate, and retract back for the thoracic spine to flex. This ribcage posture better positions your respiratory mechanics to slow down, relax and recover faster than when your ribs are flared, elevated, and externally rotated with the spine extended.

Your diaphragm is your main breathing muscle and it, too, must move through a range of motion to lengthen and contract. Think about your biceps — if your bicep is contracted, your elbow will flex so that muscle can shorten. To get your bicep to relax and lengthen, you have to straighten your elbow. Just like your elbow moves through a range of motion to influence the bicep, your thoracic spine and ribcage will move through a range of motion to influence how your diaphragm contracts and lengthens. Your diaphragm lengthens and contracts up and down like a piston inside of your ribcage. When your ribs are down and the thoracic spine is rounded, the diaphragm is optimized to move with maximal efficiency.

When you place your hands on or behind your head, your thoracic cage gets elevated and pushed forward as your spine goes into extension and hyperinflation. This alters your natural spinal curve on the backside and will limit the movement for your diaphragm to move up and down. Moreover, in most people, this position will activate the back muscles and overlengthen or inhibit the abdominal muscles, which counteracts diaphragmatic support. Lastly, this position limits three-dimensional chest wall expansion because as the front ribs lift up, the back half of the ribs close and compress down, not allowing the back half of your chest wall to expand. All of which leads to less-effective respiratory mechanics.

Hands on knees and rounded posture helps to keep the ribcage flexible, and allows for more three-dimensional chest wall expansion.

It also lengthens the back muscles and better positions the abdominal wall to support the diaphragmatic movement allowing for more effective respiratory mechanics. Your diaphragmatic movement is optimized with abdominal opposition when the back ribs are open and expanded.

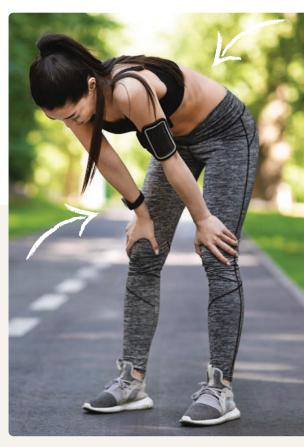
A 2019 sports science study published in the *Translational Journal of the American College of Sports Medicine* supports the understanding of how posture influences respiratory mechanics and recovery. The flexed posture of resting your hands on your knees is the better position when it comes to recovery.

This research study looked at college soccer players recovering from highintensity interval training workouts. The soccer players had three minutes to recover and were randomly designated a recovery posture — either a handson-head or hands-on-knees position.

This study confirmed that the hands-on-knees position resulted in a significantly faster recovery, faster decrease in heart rate, greater elimination of carbon dioxide, and improved movement of air in and out of the lungs between intervals than the old-school hands-on-head notion.

Effective and efficient respiratory mechanics requires a flexible ribcage to support posture and diaphragmatic movement. When you are having difficulty breathing, do not hyperextend, lock up and lift your ribcage more. This may seem counterintuitive if you don't understand how the diaphragm needs to moves up to relax inside of a deflated ribcage. Instead — slow your breathing by rounding your back and resting your hands on your knees.

The ability to recover faster from high-intensity training is an important factor for optimizing athletic performance. Faster recovery and improved breathing can help to conserve energy and reduce potential injuries due to taxed muscles and altered mechanics from fatigue.



Effects of Two Different Recovery Postures during High-Intensity Interval Training

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Thrivers' Love Notes

WE'RE HONORED BY YOUR WORDS

Kim had amazing energy and was able to answer questions and help me with my form — even in a bigger group class. I had so much fun doing this Charity Workout with some friends!. + TARA T.

Matt listened to our concerns and helped us eliminate our pains. + MARK G. Great personal care from front desk to Kim with InBody 770. Took the time to explain the process and results. + JAMES H.

The facility was very clean and welcoming. Equipment modern and top quality. Most impressive was the staff — all friendly and engaging. Great experience overall! + RUDY B.

Danielle, my massage therapist, was the best I've had. + ERIN D. The Charity Workout was fun and challenging and the '80s playlist was the bomb! + JEN F.

Vivian is amazing. + ELYSE R.

Chantal is a miracle worker. I always leave content and relaxed, which is extremely difficult for me. + WYNTER B. Best people you'll ever work with. They genuinely care, go above and beyond and know their stuff! I've worked with many physical therapists over the years, and this team is by far the best I've ever worked with. + "CHI" CHIARA B.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your healing, health and wellness journey!

If you enjoyed the content in this magazine or loved your service from Thrive Proactive Health, we'd love to hear from you:

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9:00am - 7:00pm MONDAY 8:00am - 7:00pm TUESDAY 9:00am - 7:00pm WEDNESDAY 9:30am - 7:00pm 9:00am - 7:00pm THURSDAY 8:00am - 7:00pm FRIDAY every other 9:00am - 2:00pm SATURDAY **CLOSED** SUNDAY

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