Cool temperatures and breathtaking colors make fall the perfect time to update your plans for a healthier you.

**Get ready for fresh fall produce**

Fall is harvest time so stake out your favorite farmers or produce market for the freshest of the season. Look for fall fruits and veggies like pomegranates, pears, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels sprouts and include them in your everyday meals and snacks.

**Get a game plan**

With baseball, football, hockey and basketball all overlapping in the fall, watching weekend games is a fall staple. Be creative and include healthier game-time snacks. Get ready for game days with hummus and yogurt dips, pita slices and raw veggies on the snack menu.

**Get ready for fall celebrations**

Thanksgiving and Halloween can be a challenge when you are surrounded by sweet treats. Think of ways to reduce the temptation to overeat. Chewing sugarless gum can help and when you do indulge, stick to bite-sized or individually packaged treats.

**Get a fall fitness plan**

If you’re a beginner, walking is the easiest way to get started on a fitness plan. If you already walk, think about a more challenging route or joining a walking club. If you currently work out at a local gym, consider joining classes, like aqua or dance workouts, for more fun and exercise.

**Get a check-up**

Fall is the perfect time to see your doctor for an annual physical and any needed age or gender related screening tests. During your health check-up, talk to your doctor about getting a flu vaccine. They are usually available by early fall in preparation for the upcoming flu season.

**Eat Green**

In the fall, seasonal red and orange produce like apples and pumpkins are everywhere, but if you look closely there is also a wealth of freshly harvested produce that’s green and good for you.

**Pears are nature’s fast food.**
Pears are the perfect fall snack. The paper thin green skin and white juicy fruit are chock full of flavor, fiber and Vitamin C. Anjou and Bartlett varieties are delicious.

**Add leeks for unique flavor**

Finely chopped leeks add flavor, color, vitamin C and folate to salads, sautéed vegetables, stir fries and even omelets. Leeks can spice up any broth or stew and are great with fish. Make potato leek soup a fall favorite.

**Broccoli is everywhere**

Although it’s available throughout the year, broccoli is in season and freshest in the fall. Broccoli is one of the most nutritious and versatile vegetables: a good source of vitamins A, C and fiber, broccoli fits many ethnic cuisines and is great as a side dish.

**If you like Brussels sprouts**

This much maligned vegetable is actually tasty and easy to prepare. Cut into halves or quarters. Steam or roast. Serve as a hot side dish or cool down and add to salads.

**The Fall Harvest**

Some fall vegetables are cruciferous which means from the cabbage family. Adding cruciferous vegetables to your diet throughout the year is important since they contain various nutrients called phytochemicals which are linked to lowering the risk of cancer. Here are some fall cruciferous vegetables that are fresh and widely available:

- Broccoli
- Radish
- Brussels sprouts
- Kohlrabi
- Turnip
The great outdoors
Opportunities for a healthier you are readily available during the fall. If you cherish time outdoors, here are a few activities that can boost your health before cool changes to cold.

Work on your fall garden
Whether you plan on shutting down your summer vegetable garden or planting crocus or tulips bulbs, you need to get things in order so that your crop of choice is a success the following year. Spending time outdoors raking leaves, weeding, mixing in top soil and compost, all help you prepare your garden for the fall while you burn calories and relax.

Shop farmers markets and roadside produce stands
The harvest can set the stage for your fall meals. Shop for local staples like acorn and butternut squash to use in soups, stews or purees. Replace traditional potatoes with seasonal turnips or sweet potatoes, they are easy to bake, boil, steam or mash. Stake out you favorite farmers market or roadside stand for healthier fall meals.

Get in on fall outdoor sports
Don’t just watch the game, get into the game. Spend time at your local park and hit the track for a brisk walk, or a slow jog. Find a fall sport or activity that you might enjoy and sign up.

Enjoy the fall festivals
Fall is a great time for relaxing outdoor trips. Root for your favorite knight in shining armor at a renaissance fair or get in on the Jack-o-Lantern carving contest at the harvest festival. Or simply enjoy some local entertainment and dancing at a nearby Oktoberfest. Whatever your choice, update your plans for a healthier you this fall.

Since everyone’s health history and nutritional needs are so different, please make sure that you talk with your doctor and a registered dietitian to get advice about the diet and exercise plan that’s right for you.

Barley, Portobello & Butternut Squash Pilaf

Serves 8

Ingredients:
- 1 cup Pearl Barley, rinsed and drained
- 1 tbsp Vegetable Oil
- ½ cup diced Yellow Onion, ½ inch
- 1 tsp minced Fresh Garlic
- 4 ½ cups Low Sodium Vegetable Broth
- ¾ cup Apple Juice
- ½ tsp Salt
- ¼ tsp ground Black Pepper
- 3 ½ cups diced Roasted Butternut Squash, ½ inch
- 1 ¼ cups diced Grilled Portobello Mushrooms, ½”
- ½ cup Dried Cranberries
- ½ tsp Fresh Thyme Leaves
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan Cheese

Preparation:

Nutritional Information per serving
- Calories: 220
- Protein: 8g
- Cholesterol: 10mg
- Sodium: 470mg
- Carbohydrates: 30g
- Total Fat: 8g
- Saturated Fat: 3g