APRIL

Stress Awareness Month

Monthly well-being tip

Try integrating micro-stress relievers throughout the day to interrupt the stress-cycle without disrupting your schedule. Short breathing breaks activate the "rest and restore" response, lowering heart rate and calming the nervous system. Two-minute movement "snacks" — stretching or a brief walk — help reduce cortisol, increase blood flow and refocus attention after meetings.* One minute of gratitude reflection shifts the brain's attention away from threat cues to proactive, strength-based thinking, supporting steadier mood.*

Well-being fact

Stress Awareness Month has been recognized every April since 1992 to help people understand how stress affects mental, emotional and physical health. The observance creates a national moment to pause, reflect and take action, encouraging early intervention and prevention rather than crisis response. Meaningful improvements often begin with small, consistent shifts in behavior that compound over time. This approach is grounded in neuroplasticity — the brain's capacity to adapt — meaning positive habits practiced regularly can literally rewire stress and build resilience.*

What should you know about stress*

Short bursts of stress can sharpen focus and boost motivation, but chronic stress — prolonged activation without recovery — strains nearly every system of the body. The interconnected brain system that manages stress (hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal system) remains on high alert, elevating cortisol and adrenaline, which can disrupt sleep, digestion, immune function and cardiovascular health. When the brain stays in fight-or-flight, it becomes harder to think clearly, regulate emotions or make objective decisions under pressure. Recognizing early signs like irritability, fatigue, muscle tension, changes in appetite or difficulty concentrating enables proactive coping before stress escalates. Often we're unaware of the effects of stress because we're accustomed to operating in stressful environments.

WELLNESS OBSERVANCE(S)/DAYS*

- National Public Health Week, observed April 6th - 12th
- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Testicular Cancer Awareness Month
- National Minority Health Month

SEASONAL PRODUCE*

- Artichokes - support fiber
- Asparagus - support bone health
- Strawberries - support immunity
- Radishes - support digestion
- Peas - support energy

*FOR WELLNESS OBSERVANCES SOURCE: National Today. April Holidays. Accessed January 4, 2026.
*FOR SEASONAL PRODUCE SOURCE: Center for Science in the Public Interest. What's in season: April produce guide. April 2, 2024. Accessed January 8, 2026.
*FOR CORTISOL SOURCE: Stanford Lifestyle Medicine. How Exercises Balances Cortisol Levels. April 23, 2025. Accessed. January 6, 2026
*FOR GRATITUTE BENEFITS SOURCE: American Brain Foundation. Does Gratitude Re-Wire Your Brain? November 26, 2025. Accessed January 6, 2026.
*FOR STRESS SOURCE: The American Institute of Stress. What is Stress. Accessed January 6, 2026.
*FOR STRESS INFORMATION SOURCE: Harvard Health Publishing Harvard Medical School. Understanding the Stress Response. Accessed January 6, 2026.

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Calming berry smoothie recipe*

Ingredients

- 1 cup mixed berries (fresh or frozen)
- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 banana
- 1 teapsoon honey (optional)
- Optional: ice, water,or milk



Instructions

1. In a blender, blend together berries, banana and yogurt on high until smooth
2. Add water, ice or milk to desired consistency

   Serve immediately with a straw and more berries for garnish or your favorite toppings. Enjoy!

Nutrition

- Serving: 1 smoothie
- Calories: 467 Kcal
- Carbohydrates: 97g
- Fat: 7g
- Saturated fat: 3g
- Fiber: 9g
- Protein: 12g

Additional toppings:

Healthy additions: Chia seeds, granola or collagen powder add extra nutrition

Frozen fruit: Fruits like mango add sweetness if you want a sweeter flavor

Nut butter: A scoop of almond or peanut butter adds healthy fats

Hemp seeds: Boost healthy fats, omegas and minerals in your drink

Greens: Adding a handful of spinach or kale will give a nutritioal boost of vitamins A and C to this recipe

*FOR BERRYSMOOTHIE SOURCE: A Beautiful Mess. Berry Smoothie. August 23, 2024. Accessed January 8, 2026.

This message is for informational purposes only, is not medical advice and is not intended to be a substitute or proper medical care provided by a physician. Information is believed to be accurate as of the production date; however, it is subject to change.

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