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Separate fact from canned food fiction

Shoppers can find just about any of their favorite foods in canned varieties. Convenience is a driving force behind the popularity of canned food, as such items often are affordable, chopped and/or prepared and easily stored for long durations without the need for refrigeration. When a certain ingredient is needed, all one has to do is go to the pantry and select the right item for the meal.

Despite the benefits of canned foods, shoppers may not have all the facts concerning their nutrition and benefits. To set the record straight, here's the truth about popular canned items.

CANNED FOODS ARE NUTRITIONALLY SOUND

Canning preserves most nutrients. Healthline reports that protein, carbohydrates and fats are unaffected by the canning process. Most minerals and fat-soluble vitamins like vitamins A, D, E,

and K also are retained. However, certain water-soluble vitamins may be affected, such as vitamins C and B. Mixing canned foods with other foods rich in water-soluble vitamins can ensure nutritional needs are met.

CANNED FOODS ARE TASTY

Have a Plant, the Plant-Forward Eating Guide, says canned foods offer comparable taste to fresh and frozen alternatives. Recipes will not suffer if canned ingredients are used in lieu of others.

CANNED FOODS CUT DOWN ON WASTED FOOD

The high-heat canning process locks in freshness and flavor so canned items are shelf-stable for many months. While fresh foods are beneficial, they may spoil if not used in a timely fashion, leading to waste. Often canned foods are packaged in manageable portions, meaning a home cook

can grab only what's needed for a recipe, resulting in less waste as well.

CANNED FOODS ARE AFFORDABLE

The charitable organization Construction says that canned foods help families stretch their budgets. Fresh green beans are nearly 500 percent more costly than canned green beans, according to an analysis from researchers at Michigan State University. Many other canned foods are less expensive than their fresh or frozen counterparts. Canned items also are put on sale frequently, helping people save even more money.

CANNED FOODS PROVIDE VARIETY

Canned options are limitless, meaning families can prepare many different recipes even when access to fresh ingredients is limited, such as when produce is out of season.

Community Health Needs Assessment Washington County and Surrounding Communities, Vermont

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Central Vermont Medical Center (CVMC), in partnership with Washington County THRIVE, is leading a Community Health Needs Assessment to better understand and respond to the health needs of our community residents.

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The survey will take about 5 to 10 minutes to complete and is open to all residents 18 or older. All responses are voluntary and confidential.

*See attached QR Code.



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SMELL RE-TRAINING

Treating post-COVID anosmia with essential oils

The COVID-19 pandemic has been rough on all of us. Whether you or a loved one experienced the virus or not, we were all faced with challenges we might not have expected. One of the strangest and more frustrating situations to come from COVID-19 is the possibility of lingering symptoms after you've recovered. One issue that many people are dealing with is post-COVID anosmia. At a time when life's simple pleasures seem so much more important, imagine not being able to enjoy the benefits of the smell of flowers or herbs in the garden, soup simmering on the stove, or the aromas when walking on the beach, or in the woods...

WHAT IS ANOSMIA?

Anosmia is a condition in which the ability to smell is completely lost, or aromas typically enjoyed may smell rancid or unpleasant. Losing your smell can have drastic impacts on your day-to-day life. Food tastes different, cooking becomes more difficult, and it can also be dangerous. Think about losing the ability to smell smoke if your house catches fire. Scary stuff! While we are here to discuss losing your smell due to COVID-19, there are many other ways in which anosmia onsets. The most common causes of anosmia are:

- The common cold
 - The flu
 - Sinus infections
 - Hay fever
 - Rhinitis (non-allergenic)
- and of course: COVID-19

POST-COVID ANOSMIA IS REAL!

Imagine this...you're out of the dark woods that was COVID-19, you get invited to a dinner out with friends. You get ready to go but as you're putting on your deodorant, you notice you can't smell the wonderful scent of lavender. Strange,



maybe you need a new deodorant stick? You ignore it and head to dinner. When it comes time for the appetizers to arrive, you're so excited to smell the amazing cheesy goodness of nachos only to be disappointed again – no smell! So, you ask your friends, can you smell those nachos? Yup, they all can. And that's when you realize – you've completely lost your sense of smell. It may seem light-hearted when put in the context of nachos, but losing your sense of smell can have severe impacts. Anosmia can lead to emotional distress and illness if not addressed.

HOW LOSS OF SMELL CAN LEAD TO DEPRESSION

Losing any of your senses will have a detrimental impact. Losing your sense of

smell specifically will completely change how you interact with the world. Your sense of smell can have an impact on your job, your relationships, and your overall wellbeing. Sure, the practicality of losing your hearing or sight might seem more intense and difficult to deal with, but studies have shown that people who lose their sense of smell struggle with depression and social isolation. Furthermore, those who already struggle with depression are put at much greater risk for worsening symptoms when they experience disturbances to their sense of smell.

SMELL RE-TRAINING AFTER COVID-19

Luckily, for those experiencing post-COVID anosmia, there is a potential

solution: smell re-training. Fifth Sense is a UK-based charity that was created to assist people who have been affected by smell and taste disorders. They've created a smell re-training program that could get your nose back into full-functioning performance.

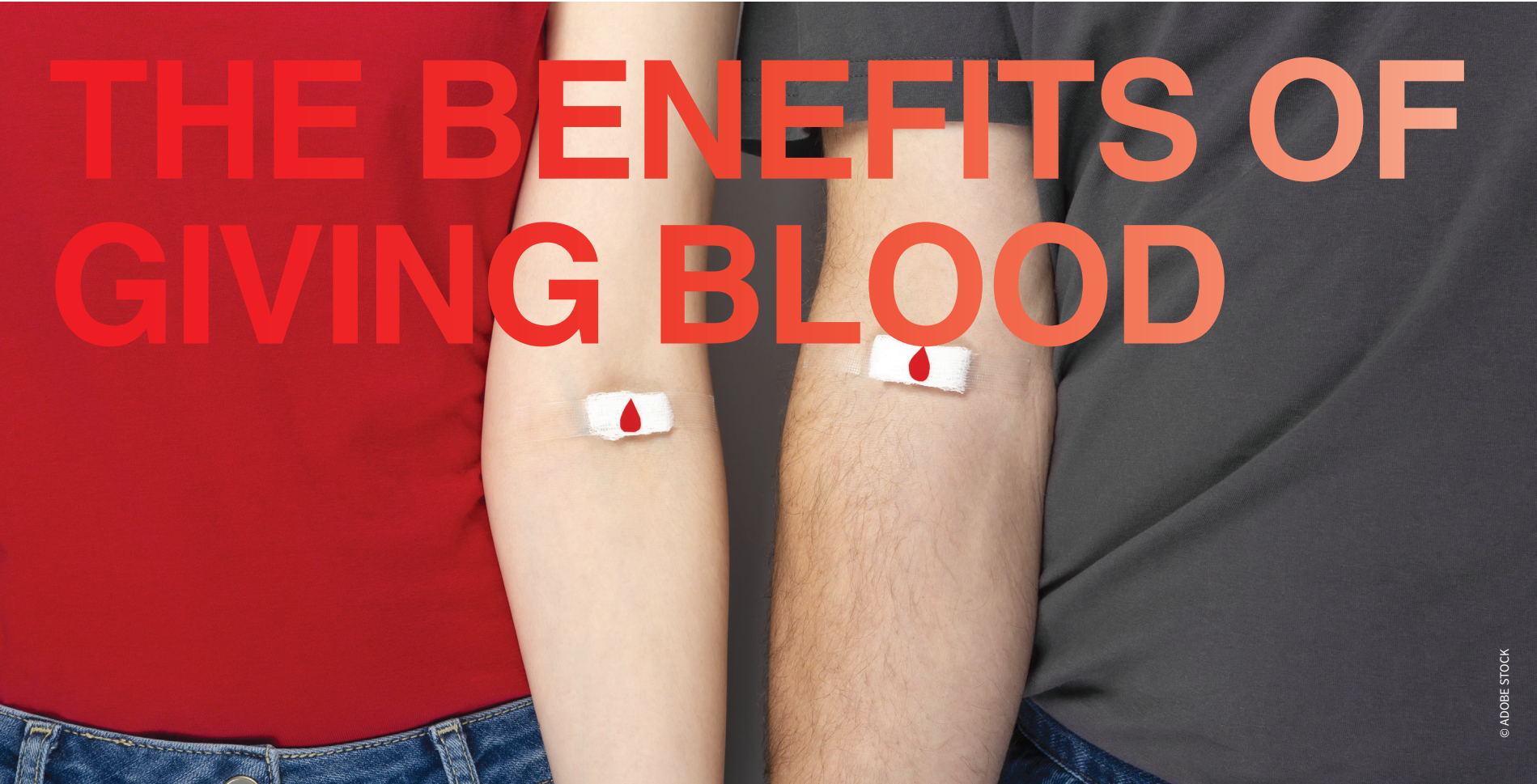
WHAT IS SMELL RE-TRAINING?

Smell re-training is the idea that you can improve the ability of your nose to detect and distinguish different smells. Think about your nose just like you would your muscles. Just like going to the gym and working out can have an impact on the functionality of your muscles, training your nose with different smells can have an impact on how well the nose works!

It is recommended that you inhale 4 essential oils, specifically rose, lemon, eucalyptus and clove bud, at least twice daily for 12 weeks. You may do it longer, if needed. Smell re-training is believed to work as a combination of neural pathways related to scent regrowing, while encouraging improved brain connectivity. If one chooses to try this strategy to regain this sense, try not to get discouraged. It is common for this process to take some time before you start to smell anything, and that is normal. AroMed Essentials offers easy to use, affordable aromatic nasal inhalers for just this purpose. These four aromas have proven to be the most effective when it comes to those used in smell training research studies. If one is willing to commit to the twice daily ritual, there is hope for those with anosmia.

*Lauren Andrews RN, Clinical Aromatherapist
Owner AroMed Essentials * 8 State Street, Montpelier, VT*

THE BENEFITS OF GIVING BLOOD



Superheroes walk among us, but you won't find them in capes or masks. Instead, they donate life-saving blood to help others.

According to the American Red Cross, a single blood contribution can save as many as three lives. Donations are allowed five times a year, meaning you could potentially end up impacting hundreds and hundreds of people over the course of your lifetime. Here's more information on how to become a superhero, too.

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

You might not know, but blood donations are seasonal. The numbers plummet during the busy travel season each summer; inclement weather plays a role, too. But even on sunny spring days, fewer than 10 percent of those who are eligible actually donate blood, according to the American Red Cross. The non-profit conducts more than 200,000 annual blood drives in an effort to combat this critical shortfall. Some 80 percent of their donations come from mobile sites set up in local communities. The Red Cross provides blood to some 2,700 hospitals across America.

WHY YOU SHOULD

Depending on your blood type, you might be providing a critical resource for patients who don't have ready access to a badly needed transfusion.

(For instance, only seven percent of Americans are O-negative, the so-called universal blood type that can be used by anyone.) In times of crisis, these donations are particularly important.

Medical institutions can be overwhelmed by patient emergencies or surgery-related infusions, requiring a large amount of donor blood. But blood is actually always needed. If you don't know your type, helpful technicians at your hometown blood bank can provide a test.

BUILDING TRUST

Hospitals, blood banks and organizations like the Red Cross take precautions when collecting, processing, testing and distributing blood. This ensures your good health through the procedure, but also the safety and effectiveness of the donation once it arrives. Blood is comprehensively analyzed in labs to establish a definitive type, since they can't be mixed, but also to check for infectious diseases. Provided information is kept strictly confidential; none of it can be released without your permission, unless directed by a judge. So whether you're giving blood at the offices of an area health-care provider or at a Red Cross mobile drive, you can be confident in the process.

DIET & YOUR TEETH



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When you think of food and oral health, brushing and flossing always come to mind. But what's in the food itself can play a significant role, too.

Obviously, food and drinks with high sugar content increase our chances of suffering from gum disease and tooth decay. But there are other dietary tips that can help us all to better oral health. Check out this list of food impacts before making the next grocery list.

PLAN A HEALTHY DIET

Consider eating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein like chicken or fish. Try to avoid snacking, and not just because of the empty calories. Well-balanced meals help with saliva production, deemed the mouth's first line of defense by the American Dental Association.

SALIVA'S ROLE

Saliva helps wash leftover food from our teeth and mouth, and dilutes acids found in food and drinks that can impact our dental health. More saliva is released while eating a full meal than with a quick snack. Also, make sure you drink plenty of water through the course of the day. This helps balance our any bouts with dry mouth when the supply of saliva runs low.

HOW YOU'RE IMPACTED

Having poor dental hygiene can lead to gingivitis; hardened tartar creates gum inflammation. Periodontal disease is particularly dangerous for those who are or want to become pregnant, since they are far more likely to deliver babies either very early or at a low birth weight. Both issues can have long-term health issues for the child. Regular brushing, flossing and professional cleanings can help stave off the effects of periodontal disease, which infects the pockets around the roots of our

teeth. The gums then pull away from the tooth, causing them to loosen and fall out. But what you eat can have a notable impact, as well.

WHAT TO EAT

Diet plays a key role in avoiding periodontal disease, a serious issue with the gums that can lead to the loss of your teeth. Foods with vitamin A,

like leafy vegetables, eggs and broccoli, help bolster oral wellness. Eating things with lots of vitamin C, including many fruits and vegetables, can also have a positive impact. Studies show that the antioxidant melatonin — found in cereals, but also available as a supplement — is also beneficial for those hoping to improve their periodontal health.

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**TREATING
HIGH BLOOD
PRESSURE**

High blood pressure impacts millions of people every day, creating the need for a network of health care professionals, treatments, prescriptive remedies and therapies.

Ultimately, however, you play the biggest role. Here's a look at the risk factors that lead to this increasingly common health issue, and what you can do to combat it.

YOUR HEALTH

Maintain your weight. Pay attention to the doctor's recommendations when it comes to your body mass index, or BMI. This determines if a person is in a healthy weight range. If not, they join millions of other overweight and obese patients who are at risk for heart disease. Avoid smoking. If you already do, talk to your physician about quitting, since cigarette smoking is also risk factor in heart disease. Encourage others to stop smoking, too.

YOUR DIET

Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit, since your diet can play such a huge role in high blood pressure. Don't add salt; there's already lots of it in the foods we eat. Look for foods that are low in saturated and trans fats, and watch your cholesterol. Exercise, if only just for a few minutes each day. The recommendation from the surgeon general is at least 30 minutes on most days, but any regular activity can help you lower your blood pressure; it can help you maintain weight, too.

YOUR NUMBERS

Keep a close eye on your blood-pressure levels. Buy an at-home monitor, and take your reading at local pharmacies and grocery stores between doctor's visits. Also, watch your cholesterol and glucose numbers. Cholesterol should be checked by a simple blood test at least once every five years. Discuss monitoring glucose with your physician, especially if you have diabetes.

YOUR NEXT MOVE

Talk to your doctor, and be honest about where you are with heart wellness — including habits that put you at risk. They'll discuss diet and exercise tips that are shaped by your specific medical and family history. Consider widening your care-giving team beyond your general practitioner. A multi-faceted approach that also includes a pharmacist, nurse, dietitian and/or a community health worker can help you manage risk factors from a variety of critical angles. Keep a journal, so you can better monitor blood-pressure numbers, medication schedules and future appointments.

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SELF-CONTROL

While Dining Out

It's far easier to eat healthy foods and practice portion control in your own kitchen, but less so in an office setting when everyone is heading out to the hot new lunch spot.

You are bound to be starting a new diet just as someone brings in a dozen donuts to brighten up a Monday or a huge cake to celebrate a co-worker's birthday. The good news is there are steps you can take to get a better handle on what you should — and shouldn't — eat when you're away from home.

BEFORE YOU EAT

We're all tempted by sugary or fatty foods with little nutritional value, but it's far worse if you arrive with an empty stomach. Drink a cup of water or eat something healthy like a small apple before dining out. Portion control is easier when you're not starving. Stick to the first part of any restaurant menu — the appetizers, small plates and salads. The deeper you go, the larger the portions. (Worse: You'll eventually land on the desserts!) Pay attention to the calorie counts included on most menus nowadays. Consider making a pact with someone else to split a meal at the restaurant, or to order something smaller and more nutritional. It's always easier when you have someone on your team.

WHILE YOU'RE EATING

Make conversation. You can't eat when you're talking. Take smaller bites while you are eating, and thoroughly chew your food. It takes time for a message of fullness to travel from your stomach to your brain, and this gives the body a chance to catch up. If the portions are unavoidably large, offer to share your order with a nearby colleague. If no one will take you up on the offer, commit to taking some of it home to eat another time.

AFTER YOU EAT

If it's possible, tell everyone that you are walking back to the office, rather than riding. Post-meal exercise helps work off some of your just-ingested lunch, while also increasing general wellness. When you get back, skip the elevator for the stairs. This kind of cardio can help burn even more calories, instead of converting them to fat. Avoid desserts or snacking, two every-day hazards in any workplace. Revert to drinking water. It helps with food digestion and can suppress your appetite.



Maintaining HEALTHY VISION

Changes to our eyes can happen so gradually that they are difficult to notice.

These changes can have a huge impact on our lives, impacting our ability to enjoy reading or watching television. If these issues continue to worsen, mobility can be limited. In worst-case scenarios, vision is completely lost. There are options to help, however, as you work at maintaining healthy vision.

KNOW YOUR HISTORY

The best way to predict what might happen with your well being is to understand the challenges family members have faced. Talk about their eye health, in particular if anyone you are related to has been diagnosed with a serious condition or disease. Many of these issues are hereditary, and that will provide a roadmap for health-care decisions down the road. Those at higher risk, for instance, might be scheduled more regular exams.

OUTSIDE FACTORS

Eye health is also impacted by what we eat, and what we weigh. Eating vegetables and fruit — in particular dark leafy greens like spinach, greens and kale — is good for your eyes.

So is eating fish high in fatty acids, like tuna, salmon and halibut. Don't smoke, or quit as soon as you can. That can make you susceptible to a range of conditions which might lead to blindness. Being overweight increases your risk of diabetes, and that can also threaten your vision.

REGULAR EXAMS

Even if you think your sight is fine, schedule a regular comprehensive exam where your eyes are dilated and then evaluated. Most people assume that these exams are simply the pathway to seeing better through prescription eye glasses or contact lenses. But doctors are also on the look out for common diseases of the eye such as glaucoma, diabetic

retinopathy and cataracts, as well as age-related issues like macular degeneration. In some cases, these issues don't present clear warning signs to the average person. An eye-care professional can catch them in their early stages, when options are less limited.

WHAT HAPPENS?

In a comprehensive eye exam, the doctor or his professionally trained assistant places special drops in your eyes that widen — or dilate — the pupil. This allows more light to enter the eye, while also giving a broader field of view for the doctor. They'll examine the eyes for early signs of disease or damage, and help you develop a care plan.

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Owner
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RN, Clinical Aromatherapist,
Graduate of University of Vermont's
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AVOID COMMON INJURIES AT HOME

A uncomfortably large range of injuries can happen outside of our direct control, including car accidents and medical malpractice.

At the same time, however, we all are subject to entirely avoidable, much smaller accidents at home. Who hasn't carelessly stumbled over something in their own living room? That's why slips and falls consistently rank among the most common injuries. Here are some ideas on how to stay safer while staying home.

WHAT HAPPENS THE MOST

According to experts, the most common injuries include dog bites, car crashes, health-care mistakes, slips and falls, and assaults and batteries. Negligent doctors, petty criminals and bad drivers are held accountable in a court of law. In some cases, landlords or property owners may be responsible for a loose board on an exterior stairway, or an unleashed dog. But we're typically to blame for the rest

of these common injuries, as we're so often injured while thoughtlessly going about our every-day lives. The average tumbles tend to be more embarrassing than necessarily hurtful, but they can also be quite serious.

SAFETY AT HOME

Your home is your castle; it's also ground zero for slips and falls. Because most of them occur there, try to remove as many tripping hazards as possible. Most houses are designed to fit the needs of a young, healthy adult. So, this is especially critical if you are older, prone to mishaps, or part of a larger family — and, in particular, if there are small children. Kids can be an X factor, leaving behind toys, shoes or other things that can trip a passerby. Those items are particularly hazardous if you, your friends or your

family members are seniors, or suffer from a disability or chronic illness.

TOP TIPS

The average home can be made safer at a very reasonable price. Place non-slip rugs in areas where falls may happen near doorways or halls. ("Non-slip" is the key word: Area and throw rugs can buckle, catching your feet.) Pay attention to increasing balance issues relating to aging, medical conditions or an emerging illness. Almost all hip fractures are caused by a fall; they're also the most common cause of a traumatic brain injury. Consider storage options for children's things. Install rubber mats and handrails in the bathtub or shower. Add more lighting, since we rely so much on our vision for balance.

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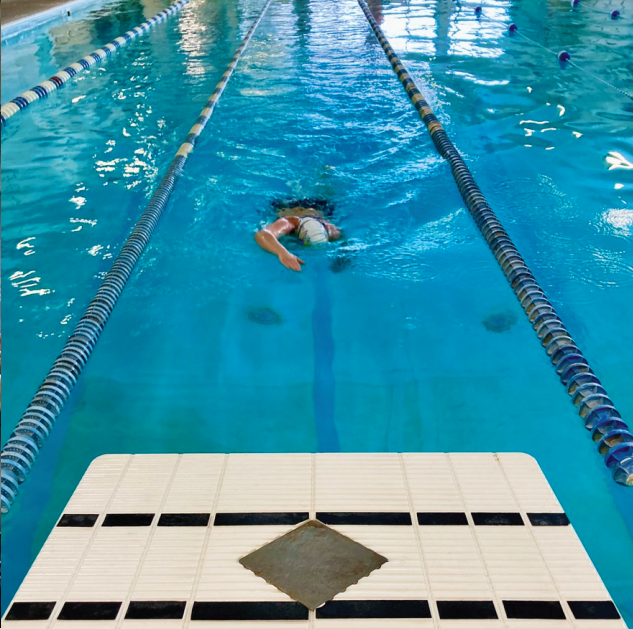
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