

Targeting Wellness Newsletter

Good News for Good Health!

November 2020

Debby Schiffer, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIFs

November is a unique month in my opinion. The beauty of autumn is starting to slowly fade and the chill of winter is fast approaching. This can be a month of transition. As the season changes so too can we prepare our minds and bodies to “honker down” for the next few months.

But wait...isn't that what we have been doing this entire year? Granted 2020 has been a year of new experiences unlike no other. Many of us are ready for something to change, yet again. Some spark of hope perhaps? Trust that the future will be in our favor?

Look to this month as an opportunity to reflect. Reflect on what you have. On those you love. On what you are thankful for and give gratitude to have the chance to build a life of your choosing.

This is also National Diabetes Month. Diabetes is a chronic disease over 34 million people in America must deal with on a daily basis. That's 1 in 10 people. And 88 million have pre-diabetes or 1 in 3 Americans! Of those adults who are diagnosed with T2 diabetes, 15% were smokers, 89% were overweight and 38% were physically inactive. What's the common denominator? Lifestyle choices!

Diabetes Prevention has been a focus for decades yet it still remains one of the 10 leading causes of death in the United States with nearly 85,000 succumbing to the many complications it causes. However, studies now show that not only can diabetes be prevented, it can also be reversed once you have it!* It requires some lifestyle changes that are in your control! How empowering is that?



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Note *: I realize that type 1 diabetes is different. Once you have it you will always require insulin injections. However, changing one's lifestyle has proven to reduce the amount of insulin needed due to increased insulin sensitivity. And that too is empowering!

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Are You At Risk For Diabetes?

Let's review what can increase our risk of having pre-diabetes and the symptoms that could indicate you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes.

According to the American Diabetes Association, your chances of having pre-diabetes go up if you have any of the risk factors listed below and, the more of them you have, the more likely your chances of getting or already having diabetes.

Keep in mind that some people experience such mild symptoms that they can be overlooked. Others may experience some of these symptoms but it does NOT necessarily mean you have diabetes. Please check with your healthcare professional if you ever have any concerns or questions.

Symptoms of Diabetes

- * Urinating often
- * Feeling very thirsty
- * Feeling very hungry –even though you are eating
- * Extreme fatigue (unexplained)
- * Blurry vision
- * Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- * Weight loss—even though you are eating more (Type 1)
- * Tingling, pain or numbness in the hands and/or feet (Type 2)

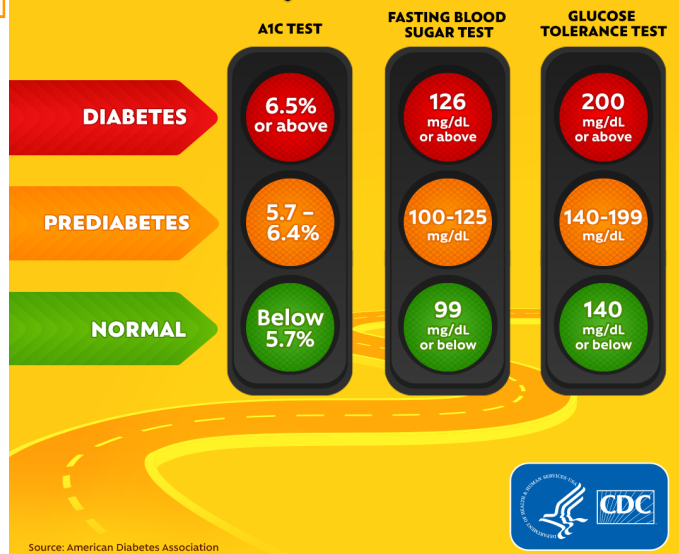
There are a number of similarities between Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, yet the cause of each are very different, as is the treatment. In people with Type 1 diabetes, their symptoms generally come on very suddenly where as with Type 2, it's more gradual and sometimes there are no signs at all. That is why more than 90% of the people with pre-diabetes don't even know they have it until they get diagnosed with Type 2.

Type 1 was typically seen in children (a.k.a. Juvenile Diabetes); however, it's not unheard of to become insulin dependent as an adult. And as with Type 2, this was mostly discovered as we aged (a.k.a. Adult Onset Diabetes); however, "new diagnosed cases of both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes have significantly increased among US youth" as stated by the CDC National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2020.

Risk Factors

- * Are you 45 years old or older
- * Are you African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American or Pacific Islander.
- * Have a parent, brother or sister with diabetes
- * Are overweight
- * Are physically inactive
- * Have high blood pressure or take medicine for high blood pressure
- * Have low HDL cholesterol and/or high triglyceride
- * Had gestational diabetes during pregnancy
- * Have been diagnosed with polycystic ovary syndrome (POS)

THE ROAD TO TYPE 2 DIABETES



Genetics is not a "life sentence" that you will get T2 diabetes. Although it could play a part, your environment plays a huge role in determining your risk. Studies have proven this fact on identical twins raised under totally different lifestyles. Your choices matter!

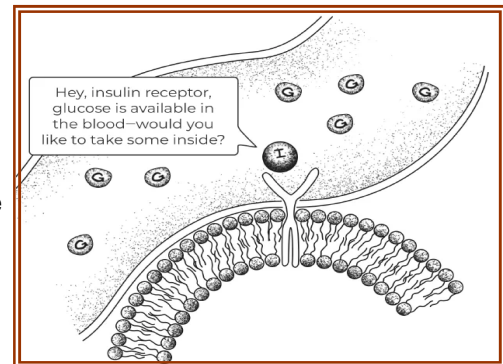
What REALLY Causes Insulin Resistance?

Before answering this question, let's first get a brief refresher on the role of insulin.

What is insulin and why is it important?

Insulin is a hormone that is produced and secreted from the pancreas when glucose levels rise in the blood. Basically, this happens every time you consume carbohydrates. As glucose enters the blood stream, the beta cells within the pancreas are signaled to produce insulin. All the cell tissues in our body are designed with receptors to "take up" glucose for energy. Insulin attaches to the receptors and acts as the "key" to open up the cell allowing glucose to enter. What if there is no insulin? The blood sugar would rise and rise with futile attempts to enter the cells. This is what happens with Type 1 diabetes.

So without insulin our liver, muscles and other tissues would have a difficult time importing glucose from the blood. On their own, they would only be able to transport 5 to 10 percent of the glucose flowing through the blood. Insulin allows the tissues to be nourished and keeps the blood sugar levels in a normal range.



What is insulin resistance?

What if there is enough insulin but the insulin ("key") doesn't work, something has jammed the cell receptor ("lock"), leaving high levels of glucose in the blood? This is insulin resistance. It is a condition where multiple organs and cell tissues become *resistant* to the attempts made by insulin for glucose uptake. Having extra glucose circulating around in the blood alerts the pancreas to pump out more insulin. Having excess insulin (a condition called hyperinsulinemia) can be dangerous, activating growth cells, particularly insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) that significantly increase the risk for cancer.

Did you know?

It took more than 7000 studies and the death of countless smokers before the Surgeon General reported that smoking was hazardous to your health, posting a warning sign on all tobacco products?

The same is going to happen with nutrition. For decades, scientific evidence has proven that a plant-strong diet can change your health & lifespan. But healthy people don't keep the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries profiting from their sickness! Therefore, it's up to YOU to educate yourself and decide you want more out of your life!

<https://nutritionfacts.org/video/evidence-based-eating/>

Even folks with Type 1 diabetes can have insulin resistance.

Carrying extra weight, especially around the waist, increases the body's resistance to insulin and can result in high blood glucose levels.

If you or someone you know has Type 1 and is starting to require larger doses of insulin to overcome blood glucose levels, it may be a sign of insulin resistance. This could also lead to further weight gain.

What causes insulin resistance?

Here's the part where there is a significant amount of confusion. For decades, physicians have been taught and the public has been told that carbohydrates cause insulin resistance. There is a large gap between what science research has discovered and what is communicated to us. And as sad as it may seem, this gap is maintained by the economic forces that may profit from a lifelong chronic disease like diabetes.

Research study after research study has consistently shown that a diet high in fat leads to insulin resistance. Not a diet high in carbohydrates. One study took young, healthy people and separated them into two groups. One group was put on a fat-rich diet while the other one on a carbohydrate-rich diet. Within two days, glucose intolerance skyrocketed in the fat group (Greger, 2020).

Think about the role of insulin for a moment. When we consume high levels of fat, especially saturated fats found primarily in animal products and processed foods (the Standard American Diet or SAD), it's no surprise that there will be weight gain. A consistent diet rich in fatty foods, not only increases the number on the scale but causes particles to build up **inside the cells**. Particles (fat) accumulate in our liver, in our muscles, and in our abdominal area. These particles interfere with insulin's ability to transport glucose out of the blood. With the blood glucose already elevated, you now have a meal that may contain carbohydrates (maybe a piece of bread or a fruit). More glucose enters the blood stream. The pancreas releases insulin and insulin will "knock" asking your liver to uptake glucose; however the liver is not in need of fuel because it's already handling all the fat it needs (thus the term "fatty liver").

Insulin cannot transport glucose into the tissue. If you were to check your blood sugars at that moment, they would be elevated. It's not because you ate a carbohydrate; its because the insulin cannot remove the glucose from the blood due to fat particles lining your tissues...leading to insulin resistance. But don't just take it from me. There are a lot of Lifestyle Medicine Physicians who are paving the way for change (Look up: Dr. Neal Bernard, Dr. T. Colin Campbell, Dr. Michael Greger, Dr. Cyrus Khambatta, Dr. Dean and Anne Ornish, to name a few.)

Tackling Type 2 Diabetes

Nutrition

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine have dedicated many clinical studies to showing how a plant-based diet can have a positive impact on patients with type 2 diabetes. Research findings, after studying thousands of patients, revealed that a plant-based diet controlled blood sugar **three times more** effectively than a traditional diabetes diet of limiting calories and carbohydrates.

Within weeks, patients experienced dramatic health improvements such as weight loss, improved insulin sensitivity and a dropped in their hbA1c levels.

As noted on page 3 of this newsletter, fatty foods increase insulin resistance through fat storage in the cells. A plant-based diet is low in fat, which allows insulin to function properly.

If you or someone you know has diabetes or has been told they have prediabetes, I would encourage you to visit <https://www.pcrm.org/health-topics/diabetes> and read up on the scientific evidence showing carbohydrates are not the enemy to a diabetic. Read *The China Study*, a book written by T. Colin Campbell. Listen to Dr. Michael Greger short videos on *NutritionFacts.org*. If you are currently on medication and are contemplating starting a transition towards more whole, plant-based foods, I highly encourage you to involve your doctor before starting. Many times, type 2 diabetes is reversed with this lifestyle change, which will cause you to reduce or eliminate your diabetes medication. Always seek the advice of your doctor before stopping any medication.

“

A plant-based diet is a powerful tool for preventing, managing, and even reversing type 2 diabetes. Not only is this the most delicious 'prescription' you can imagine, but it's also easy to follow. Unlike other diets, there's no calorie counting, no skimpy portions, and no carb counting. Plus, all the 'side effects' are good ones. ”

Neal Barnard, MD, FACC, President, Physicians Committee



Sources: PCRM; ADA; health.harvard.edu

Physical Activity

There is no denying all the benefits exercise has on your health, regardless of whether or not you have diabetes (or any other disease, for that matter). Exercise controls weight, lowers blood pressure, lower harmful LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, raises healthy HDL cholesterol, strengthens muscles and bones, reduces anxiety and improves sleep quality.

Exercise helps to lower blood glucose levels and boosts your body's sensitivity to insulin, countering insulin resistance! Many studies on people with diabetes, highlight some very positive results:

- * Exercise lowers hbA1c values
- * All forms—aerobic, resistance, or doing both were equally good at lowering hbA1c values
- * Both aerobic and resistance training helped lower insulin resistance in previously sedentary older adults with abdominal obesity at risk for diabetes. Combining the two types of exercise showed more benefits than doing either one alone.
- * Those with diabetes who walked two hours a week were less likely to die of heart disease than their secondary counterparts. Those exercising 3-4 hours a week cut their risk even more!
- * Women with diabetes who exercised moderately at least four hours a week (including walking) reduced their risk of heart disease by 40% compared to those who did not exercise.



The best time to exercise is one to three hours after eating, when your blood sugar level is likely to be higher. If you are on insulin, it's important to check your blood sugar beforehand. If it's below 100 mg/dL, eat a piece of fruit or have a small snack to help avoid hypoglycemia. Checking before and after exercise is a good habit to get into especially if you take insulin. Your risk of developing hypoglycemia may be highest six to 12 hours after exercising. (Resource: health.harvard.edu)



Diabetes and Coronavirus

I have no doubt that if you or someone you care about has diabetes, by now you are well aware of the higher risk it puts you in not only for contracting COVID-19 but for experiencing a more severe reaction if you should contract it. One reason is due to a compromised immune system. Also it seems this novel coronavirus “thrives in an environment of elevated blood glucose”. (Medical News Today)

Diabetes also causes the body to be in a constant state of low-level inflammation, slowing down the healing response, making it more difficult to fight off any infection. But as I have been saying all along, focusing on those elements you CAN control will indeed improve your defenses against not only COVID-19 but any infectious disease yet to come. That includes eating more whole foods, incorporating exercises into your daily routine, getting enough quality sleep and learning techniques to manage your stress (meditation, yoga, prayer, walks in nature, laughter, music, journaling, etc.).

This is serious times we are living in. How serious are YOU in changing the outcome of your life? I want to help you stay on track and work through those barriers that are leading you towards a future of medication and poor health. Most people after the age of 50 are struggling to live the life they had dreamed about but health limitations can start to arise, making that very challenging. If you are ready to make a change; If you are tired of feeling tired and defeated; If you want support from someone who will hold you accountable to yourself...Then reach out to me to discover whether health & wellness coaching could help you. All you need to do is contact me.

Are you up to trying a 5-day experiment to strengthen your defenses against COVID?

For only 5-days, try to reduce and even abstain from animal-based products (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy, cheese) plus highly processed foods (fast food, packaged, refined & sugary foods) and incorporate whole food choices instead (vegetables, fruits, legumes, beans, whole grains, few nuts/seeds).

CHART 11.2: NUTRIENT COMPOSITION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL-BASED FOODS (PER 500 CALORIES OF ENERGY)

Nutrient	Plant-Based Foods*	Animal-Based Foods**
Cholesterol (mg)	—	137
Fat (g)	4	36
Protein (g)	33	34
Beta-carotene (mcg)	29,919	17
Dietary Fiber (g)	31	—
Vitamin C (mg)	293	4
Folate (mcg)	1,168	19
Vitamin E (mg_ATE)	11	0.5
Iron (mg)	20	2
Magnesium (mg)	548	51
Calcium (mg)	545	252

* Equal part of tomatoes, spinach, lima beans, peas, potatoes

**Equal parts of beef, pork, chicken, whole milk

Table from: *The China Study* by T. Colin Campbell, Thomas M. Campbell II (May 11, 2006)

Look at all the valuable nutrients contained in the plant-based food column on this chart.

This is a great way to start building up healthy gut bacteria that will increase your defense against the illnesses that may be lurking out there during the winter months.

Even in 5-days you can start to see the healing benefits of such a shift. Again, be mindful of your body's response to such a change. You may be surprised at how good it feels. Always consult with your healthcare professional if you are currently on medication.

Expressions of Gratitude Boost Health

Thanksgiving season is full of opportunities to think about all you have to be grateful for and it seems to spark the desire to give back.

While it seems pretty obvious that gratitude is a positive emotion, psychologists are now learning that it can make you happier and change your attitude about life – like an emotional reset button. Studies also show that when you stop and “count your blessings,” you not only shift from feeling bad to feeling very good, something we may all need a little re-minding of during this time of unrest. There’s more! Focusing on what you are grateful for versus what we “wish would happen” also has some amazing health benefits as well.

Practicing gratitude regularly can create a more positive outlook, improved mood, reduced stress, and increased fulfillment. Here are some key words to think about for cultivating gratitude (pay attention and see the good things in your life).

15 Steps To Achieve Gratitude

1. Appreciate
2. Stop Labeling
3. Optimism
4. Release Your Past
5. Avoid Comparison
6. Kindness
7. Stop Using Excuses
8. Nurture Relationships
9. Forgiveness
10. Avoid Impressing Others
11. Commit To Your Goals
12. Care For Your Body
13. Believe
14. Dream
15. Give

PreventDisease.com

Grateful people tend to be more optimistic, a characteristic that researchers say boosts the immune system.

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted! - Acsop

Anytime is the perfect time to be grateful, not just in November. What about “paying it forward”? “Paying it forward” is when random acts of kindness are extended to a stranger in the hope that they, in turn, will do something nice for someone else. It’s not done with the expectation of something in return. It’s merely doing something out of the kindness of your heart. ♥ Every day in some small way, you can brighten someone’s life with an act of kindness. And just like with gratitude, acts of paying it forward can improve both your physical and mental health.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Volunteer
- Participate in a cleanup day
- Donate clothes or food to local pantry/good will
- Run/walk in a charity race for a cause you believe in
- Ask that folks donate instead of buying you holiday gifts
- Leave a good book behind
- Let someone go ahead of you in line (even with more stuff in their basket!)
- Give up your seat for someone else

It’s no secret that stress can make us sick, particularly when we can’t cope with it. It’s linked to several leading causes of death, including heart disease and cancer, and claims responsibility for up to 90% of all doctor visits. **Gratitude**, it turns out, **can help us better manage stress**. “Gratitude research is beginning to suggest that feelings of *thankfulness* have tremendous positive value in helping people cope with daily problems, especially stress,” says Robert Emmons, University of California Davis

Resource: PACE University; [WebMD](#)

- Smile at someone
- Spend some time with the elderly
- Visit the animal shelter
- Pray for someone else
- Put coupons on community boards
- Pay for someone’s lunch, toll, groceries
- Write a positive review for a restaurant
- Take the time to really listen to someone
- Send someone a funny card (in the mail!)



“
Gratitude
makes sense of
your past,
brings peace
for today, and
creates a vision
for tomorrow.

-Melody Beattie

DEVELOPGOODHABITS.COM

DID YOU KNOW

Gratitude...

- * SHIELDS YOU FROM NEGATIVITY
- * MAKES YOU AT LEAST 25% HAPPIER
- * REWIRES YOUR BRAIN
- * ELIMINATES STRESS
- * HEALS
- * IMPROVES SLEEP
- * BOOSTS SELF-ESTEEM & PERFORMANCE
- * ENHANCES THE LAW OF ATTRACTION
- * IMPROVES RELATIONSHIPS

mindmoves

*When everything feels like an uphill struggle, just think of
the view from the top!*

YBL

“Gratitude should not be just a reaction to getting what you want, but an all-the-time gratitude, the kind where you notice the little things and where you constantly look for the good, even in unpleasant situations. Start bringing gratitude to your experiences, instead of waiting for a positive experience in order to feel grateful.”

-Marcelina Fabrega

**Your best stories will
come from your struggles.**

**The seeds of your
successes are in your
failures. Your praises
will be birthed from your
pains. Keep standing. I
have never seen a storm
last forever.**

Seasons change.

Be encouraged!

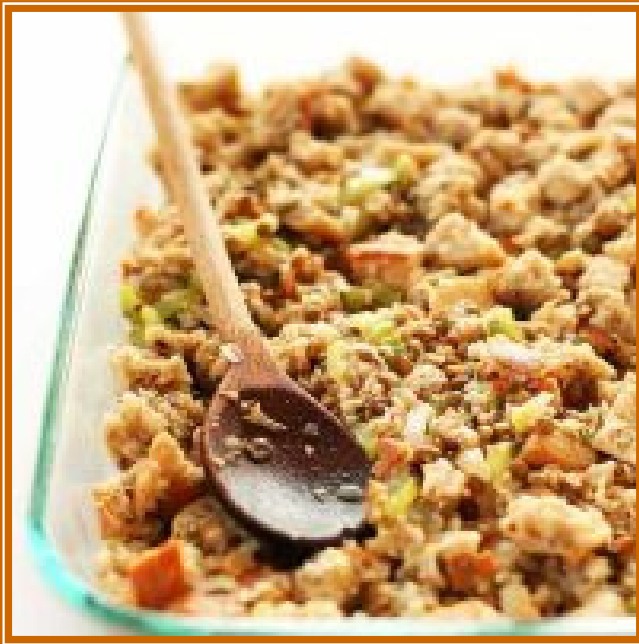
Healthy and Hearty Stuffing For The Holidays



With the holiday meal preparation fast approaching and knowing that stuffing has traditionally been a favorite side dish, I thought this version sounded exceptionally delicious and loaded with nutrients...not just bread! Check it out and maybe this will be a new dish to add to your dinner table.



Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 1 hour 30 minutes
Servings: 8



Ingredients:

- * 1 large loaf whole-grain bread* (cubed & set out to dry overnight // 1 large loaf yields ~9 cups loosely packed cubes)
- * 3/4 cup uncooked green lentils
- * 3 Tbsp olive oil or vegan butter (I used a mix of both)
- * 1/2 cup white onions (diced)
- * 3/4 cup celery (diced)
- * Salt & pepper
- * 3 - 3 1/2 cups vegetable broth (plus more for cooking lentils // homemade or store-bought)
- * 1 batch [flax egg](#) (1 Tbsp (7 g) flaxseed meal + 2 1/2 Tbsp (37 ml) water as original recipe is written)
- * 3/4 tsp dried sage*

Recipe taken from: Minimalist Baker

Directions:

1. The night before, cube your bread and set it in a large bowl to dry out - you want it to be the texture of day old bread - noticeably dry but not rock hard.
2. The day of, if you haven't already cooked your lentils, do so now by thoroughly rinsing 3/4 cup lentils in cold water, then adding to a small saucepan with 1 1/2 cups veggie broth or water (amount as original recipe is written // adjust if altering batch size).
3. Cook over medium-high heat until a low boil is achieved, and then lower to a simmer and continue cooking uncovered for 20-30 minutes. Set aside.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (176 C) and line a 9x13 pan (or comparable sized dish // as original recipe is written // adjust if altering batch size) with parchment paper or spray lightly with nonstick spray. Also prepare flax egg and set aside.
5. Sauté onion and celery in the olive oil or water/veggie broth and season with a bit of salt and pepper. Cook until fragrant and translucent - about 5 minutes. Set aside.
6. To the bowl of bread, pour most of the broth then add the remaining ingredients (sage, cooked veggies, flax egg, and lentils) and mix with a wooden spoon. The key is to make sure it is about the consistency of a meatloaf. If it's too dry, add more broth and mix again. If it's gotten too wet, add more bread.
7. Transfer to the prepared pan and cover with foil. Bake for 45 minutes. Then remove the top layer of foil so the top can brown. Increase heat to 400 degrees F (204 C) and bake for another 10-15 minutes or until the top is well browned and crisp.
8. Remove from oven and let cool slightly before serving. Leftovers reheat well in the microwave or oven, though best when fresh.
9. This dish would be awesome with [vegan mashed potatoes](#) and her [vegan mushroom gravy](#)! (found on the same website)

Super Simple Pumpkin Pie Bites



Just in time for the holiday! And we know how tempting they can be. Here is twist on the traditional holiday pumpkin pie...plus all the flavors of homemade in a perfect bite-size dessert the family will love! Even better, all of the ingredients are healthy and plant-based. No dairy, eggs, processed sugar, processed flour, or added oils.

Ingredients:

- * ¾ cup cooked pumpkin
- * 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- * ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- * 10 pitted Medjool dates
- * ½ cup water
- * 1 cup rolled oats
- * 1 tsp cinnamon
- * ¼ tsp pumpkin pie spice
- * 2 tsp baking powder
- * 1 tsp pure vanilla extract



Cooking Tips

These bites can be made the day before serving.

Yields: 36 to 38 (1 1/2-inch) bars



T. COLIN CAMPBELL
Center for Nutrition Studies

Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Into the bowl of a large food processor, add all the ingredients. Pulse or process until the mixture is well combined.
3. Remove the bowl and blade from the base. Divide the batter evenly, filling 36 to 38 sections of either a silicone brownie-bites pan or a nonstick miniature muffin pan (I use two pans).
4. Bake for approximately 15 minutes, or until tops are golden and almost firm to the touch. Watch carefully so that you don't under or over bake. Remove your bites from the oven and place on a cooling rack.

Gratitude turns what you have into enough!

Debby Schiffer, MA, NBC-HWC, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIF

E-mail: debby_schiffer@targetingwellness.com

Home Office: 856-322-1220

Cell: 856-520-9908