



WELLNESS HUB PRESENTS

OCTOBER: BALANCE • GRATITUDE • GUILT-FREE JOY

Thanksgiving, Family, Friends & Fall Traditions

Core

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EXECUTIVE CHAMPION MESSAGE

Thanksgiving and What Matters Most

October invites us to slow down and gather together. As autumn colours deepen and the air becomes crisp, Canadian Thanksgiving offers a timely reminder that wellness is rooted in gratitude, balance, connection, and celebration.

For many Canadians, Thanksgiving is not a holiday defined by gifts or commercial pressure. It is centred on family, friends, food, tradition, reflection, and the people who matter most. It gives us permission to gather around a table, share stories, laugh, remember, and express appreciation for the blessings and relationships that support us.

This month's theme is Balance, Gratitude & Guilt-Free Joy. It is an invitation to enjoy the season without expecting perfection. Enjoy the pie. Take the walk. Host the potluck without needing everything to be flawless. Wear the costume.

Send the thank-you note. Light the candle safely. Tell someone they matter.

Wellness is not about denying ourselves joy. Wellness is about learning how to live with intention. October asks us to balance nourishment and treats, budgeting and celebration, tradition and sustainability, laughter and safety, gratitude and honesty.

Loradonna Botter



FEATURE ARTICLE

Thanksgiving: The Holiday That Brings All Eight Wellness Dimensions Together

Thanksgiving is a uniquely holistic holiday. It brings together nourishment, gratitude, relationships, stewardship, reflection, nature, appreciation, and emotional connection. In many ways, it is the holiday that naturally connects all eight dimensions of wellness.

At its best, Thanksgiving is not about perfection or presentation. It is about gathering with family, friends, neighbours, chosen family, co-workers, or community and remembering that life is richer when it is shared.

Wellness dimension

Thanksgiving connection

Nourishing meals, seasonal foods, fall walks, and movement after dinner.

Gratitude, reflection, perspective, and noticing what is working.

Gathering with family, friends, neighbours, co-workers, and community.

Meaningful celebrations without overspending; potlucks and shared hosting.

Prayer, thankfulness, purpose, quiet reflection, and appreciation.



FEATURE ARTICLE

The Flavours of Fall

Fall has a flavour all its own: cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, apple, pumpkin, maple, chai, warm coffee, and fresh-baked pastry. These flavours are more than recipes. They are reminders of comfort, family, gathering, and celebration.

Pumpkin Spice Latte

Coffee or espresso, milk, pumpkin puree, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, and a little maple syrup or brown sugar. Warm together and top with foamed milk.

Cozy Chai Tea

Black tea, milk, cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, cloves, and honey. Simmer gently for a comforting fall drink.

Spiced Apple Cider

Warm apple cider with cinnamon sticks, cloves, orange slices, and a little nutmeg. Serve warm in mugs.

Beverage bar tip

Label drinks, offer both caffeinated and non-caffeinated options, and keep toppings simple: cinnamon, whipped cream, orange slices, and nutmeg.



THE FLAVOURS OF FALL

Fall Baking Showcase

Thanksgiving desserts are often the part of the meal people remember most. This section celebrates classic apple and pumpkin flavours, plus a few Canadian favourites.

Treat

Simple recipe idea

Fill a pastry shell with sliced apples, cinnamon, nutmeg, lemon juice, sugar, and a little flour. Top with pastry and bake until golden.

Combine pumpkin puree, eggs, evaporated milk or cream, brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves. Bake in a pie shell until set.

Layer chocolate cookie crust, pumpkin-spiced cheesecake filling, and chocolate drizzle. Chill before serving.

Use tart shells with butter, brown sugar, corn syrup or maple syrup, egg, vanilla, and a pinch of salt. Raisins are optional. Pecans, walnuts, or chocolate chips may also be added.

Layer apples with cinnamon and top with oats, flour, butter, brown sugar, and a pinch of salt. Bake until bubbly and crisp.



FEATURE ARTICLE

The Perfect Potluck Planning Guide

Potlucks capture the spirit of Thanksgiving beautifully. They reduce pressure on the host, invite everyone to contribute, and create a table filled with variety, generosity, and shared effort.

Step 1: Choose the mood

Traditional Thanksgiving, Harvest Supper, Soup & Bread Night, Dessert Potluck, or Fall Festival Gathering.

Step 2: Assign categories

Appetizers, salads, mains, sides, desserts, beverages, and kid-friendly options.

Step 4: Add connection

Invite guests to bring one story, one gratitude, or one family tradition to share.

Done

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PHYSICAL WELLNESS

Move Through the Season

Cooler weather can make movement feel refreshing. October offers simple ways to support physical wellness: walks, yard work, stretching, balance practice, pumpkin patch outings, and family activities after meals.

Autumn activity ideas

- Nature walks
- Pumpkin patch outings
- Leaf-raking workouts
- Yard cleanup
- Hiking
- Family walk after Thanksgiving dinner

Balance training

Single-leg stance: stand on one foot for 30 seconds.

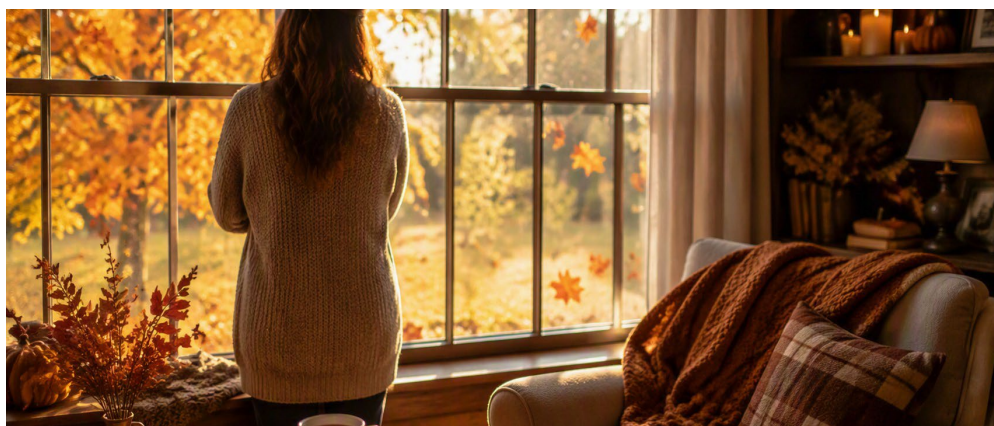
Tandem stance: place one foot directly in front of the other, heel to toe.

Use a wall or chair for support as needed.

Safety reminder

Raking leaves and carrying pumpkins count as movement.

Use good posture, take breaks, and avoid overdoing it.



PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLNESS

The All-or-Nothing Thinking Reset

All-or-nothing thinking can turn one treat, one missed walk, or one busy day into a sense of failure. October is a good month to challenge that pattern. Balance means one choice does not define the whole season.

All-or-nothing thought

“I ate dessert, so I ruined everything.”

“Because I missed one workout, I failed.”

“If I cannot do it perfectly, why bother?”

Balanced reframe

“I enjoyed a special occasion.”

“One choice is not my whole pattern.”

“I can return to my routine at the next opportunity.”

Reflection

Where do I expect perfection from myself? What would balance look like instead?



SOCIAL WELLNESS

Connection, Fall Gatherings & Costume Fun

October brings opportunities for connection: Thanksgiving meals, potlucks, costume contests, pumpkin carving, family game nights, fall craft evenings, and workplace celebrations. Social wellness is strengthened when people have safe, respectful, and light-hearted ways to belong.

Connection ideas

- Fall potluck
- Family game night
- Pumpkin carving
- Gratitude circle
- Craft night
- Costume contest

- Coffee and dessert gathering

Conversation starters

What made you smile this year?

What are you grateful for?

Who helped you recently?

What tradition do you enjoy?



SOCIAL WELLNESS FEATURE

Costume Contest: Creativity, Fun & Respect

Costume contests can build laughter, creativity, and team spirit. The best costumes are fun, safe, inclusive, and respectful of residents, families, visitors, co-workers, and the workplace environment.

Appropriate costume guidelines

Choose costumes that are family-friendly, respectful, inclusive, safe to move in, non-graphic, non-sexualized, and appropriate around residents, families, visitors, and co-workers.

Avoid costumes that are

- Based on stereotypes

- Mock cultures, identities, religions, disabilities, or personal characteristics
- Politically divisive
- Violent or graphic
- Unsafe to work in
- Too revealing or suggestive

Team ideas

The Flavours of Fall: chai tea, apple cider, pumpkin pie, apple pie, butter tart.

Thanksgiving Dinner: turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, pie.

Eight Dimensions of Wellness: one person per dimension.

Safety first

Comfortable footwear, good visibility, no tripping hazards, clear walkways, safe props, and no masks that block vision.



FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Holiday Spending Prep Starts Now

October is a helpful time to prepare for the months ahead. Holiday spending can become stressful when it is left until the last minute. A simple October check-in can reduce pressure later.

Quick financial wins

- ☐ Review subscriptions
- ☐ Cancel unused apps or services
- ☐ Start a holiday savings bucket (Quber)
- ☐ Plan low-cost gatherings
- ☐ Decide on gift limits early

Frugal gathering ideas

- Cozy potluck

- Soup and bread night
- Dessert swap
- Board game evening
- Homemade decoration night

Reflection

What can I prepare now so December feels less stressful?



SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

A Season of Gratitude

Thanksgiving offers a natural moment for gratitude. Whether expressed through prayer, quiet reflection, journaling, conversation, or time outdoors, gratitude helps people pause and remember what matters most.

Gratitude practice

Each day write or say: one thing I appreciate, one person who helped me, one joyful moment, one lesson learned.

Around the table

Invite each person to name one person, one memory, or one simple blessing they are thankful for.

Sacred calling

Offer gratitude for the capacity to care, serve, encourage, and show compassion in ordinary moments.



ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

Fall Festival at Home

Decorating for fall does not need to be expensive or wasteful. Autumn offers beautiful natural materials: pumpkins, gourds, leaves, pinecones, branches, dried flowers, apples, and warm textiles.

Natural decor

- Pumpkins
- Gourds
- Corn stalks
- Pinecones
- Leaves
- Seasonal flowers
- Wicker baskets

Sustainable ideas

- Thrifted decor
- Homemade wreaths
- Reusable fabric bunting
- Natural centrepieces
- Repurposed jars and candles

Safety at home

Keep walkways clear, use battery candles when possible, avoid overloaded cords, and keep decorations away from heat sources.



CAREER WELLNESS

Mid-Year Career Reset

October is often the halfway point of the fiscal year, making it a meaningful time to pause and review professional goals. Career wellness includes celebrating progress, learning from challenges, adjusting priorities, and planning for the second half of the year.

Just as Thanksgiving invites gratitude, a mid-year career reset invites us to appreciate what has already been accomplished before focusing on what remains. Progress deserves to be noticed.

Celebrate accomplishments

What am I most proud of this year?

What challenge did I overcome?

What new skill have I developed?

What contribution have I made to my team?

Refocus for the next six months

What goals still matter?

What priorities need adjustment?

What support would help?

What would success look like by year-end?

October career challenge

By the end of this fiscal year, I would like to be able to say that I _____.

Notes



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Guilt-Free Enjoyment

October can bring treats, gatherings, family memories, costumes, traditions, and cozy comforts. Guilt-free enjoyment is the practice of receiving joy without turning every celebration into a test of self-control.

Permission slip

You have permission to enjoy Thanksgiving dinner, eat dessert, attend gatherings, laugh, rest, take photos, create memories, and return gently to your routines.

Balanced self-talk

Instead of “I ruined my healthy eating,” try “I enjoyed a special occasion and can return to my routine at the next meal.”

Body gratitude

Thank your body for what it helped you do: stand, lift, walk, cook, hug, rest, heal, or serve.



HALLOWEEN FEATURE

Halloween Safety: Keep the Glow, Lose the Risk

Candles, pumpkins, costumes, decorations, and trick-or-treating are part of October fun. A little planning helps keep the season festive and safe. Battery-operated candles or small flashlights are safer choices for jack-o'-lanterns, especially around children, pets, costumes, curtains, or dried decorations.

Costume safety

Bright or reflective details

Comfortable footwear

Good visibility

Avoid long dragging pieces

Use face paint instead of masks when possible

Treat safety

Check treats before eating

Discard torn or loose packaging

Be allergy aware

Avoid choking hazards for young children

Pet safety

Keep chocolate away

Create a quiet space

Secure doors and gates

Reduce stress from repeated doorbells



HALLOWEEN FEATURE

Fun Fall Facts, Pumpkins & Superstitions

Fall traditions are full of curious history, harvest symbols, and old superstitions. Whether people believe the stories or simply enjoy them, they add fun to the season and remind us how traditions are passed from one generation to another.

Halloween today is largely about creativity, costumes, neighbourhood connection, safe fun, and seasonal imagination. It gives people permission to be playful.

Pumpkin facts

Pumpkins are fruits because they contain seeds. Many parts of a pumpkin are edible, including flesh and seeds.

Thanksgiving facts

Canadian Thanksgiving is celebrated in October and is strongly associated with harvest, gratitude, family, and community.

Why black cats?

Black cats became linked with folklore, mystery, and Halloween storytelling over time.

Why Friday the 13th?

The date became surrounded by folklore and popular culture. It remains more fun than fact.



CLOSING REFLECTION

What Matters Most?

October reminds us that wellness is not found in perfection. It is found in gratitude, balance, connection, laughter, tradition, and time spent with the people who matter most.

Reflection prompt

My response



SOURCE NOTES

Source Notes and Editorial Acknowledgements

This October issue was created from the user-provided October content files and aligned with the August and November Wellness Hub magazine style. Staff-facing copy should not imply medical, legal, counselling, or financial advice. Employees should consult qualified professionals as appropriate.

Source area

Source note

OCTOBER_Tricks Treats and Balance_Wellness Content.docx and OCTOBER_Tricks Treats and Balance_Wellness Content v1.docx.

The visual and editorial approach follows the August and November Wellness Hub magazine style.

The Canadian Encyclopedia informed the Canadian Thanksgiving history framing.

Health Canada / Canada.ca Halloween safety and Halloween food safety guidance informed costume, decorating, fire safety and treat-safety reminders.

Mayo Clinic Health System gratitude resources informed the general gratitude and wellbeing material.



APPENDIX A

Flavours of Fall Recipe Collection

Autumn drinks, Thanksgiving desserts, butter tart variations, and potluck recipe cards

This appendix is designed as a practical insert for the October Wellness Hub magazine. The main magazine keeps the Thanksgiving story moving, while this appendix gives readers the full recipes they can save, print, share, or bring to a fall potluck.

Inside This Appendix

01 / Autumn Beverage Bar

Pumpkin spice latte, chai tea, cinnamon maple coffee, apple cider, and pumpkin hot chocolate.

02 / Fall Baking Showcase

Apple pie, pumpkin pie, pumpkin chocolate cheesecake, apple crisp, and butter tarts.

04 / Potluck Recipe Cards

Printable recipe card pages for Thanksgiving and fall gatherings.

01 / Autumn Beverage Bar

These drinks are simple, cozy, and easy to adapt for a Thanksgiving brunch, dessert table, fall potluck, or quiet evening at home.

Pumpkin Spice Latte

Makes 2 mugs

Ingredients
Method
1. Warm milk, pumpkin puree, maple syrup, vanilla, and spices in a small saucepan. 2. Whisk until hot and slightly frothy. Do not boil. 3. Divide coffee between two mugs. 4. Pour pumpkin milk mixture over coffee. 5. Top with whipped cream and cinnamon if desired.

Tip: For a lighter version, reduce sweetener and use steamed milk without whipped cream.

Cozy Chai Tea

Makes 2 mugs

Ingredients
Method
1. Simmer water, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, and cloves for 5 minutes.

2. Add tea bags and steep for 3 to 4 minutes.
3. Remove tea bags and spices.
4. Add milk and warm gently.
5. Sweeten to taste and serve warm.

Tip: For a caffeine-free option, use rooibos tea instead of black tea.

Cinnamon Maple Coffee

Makes 2 mugs

Ingredients
Method
1. Brew coffee with cinnamon, or stir cinnamon into freshly brewed coffee. 2. Add maple syrup and stir well. 3. Add warm milk or cream. 4. Finish with a pinch of nutmeg if desired.

Tip: A small amount of cinnamon in the coffee grounds gives a smooth fall flavour.

Spiced Apple Cider

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients
Method
1. Combine all ingredients in a pot. 2. Warm over low heat for 20 to 30 minutes. 3. Do not boil. 4. Strain if desired and serve warm. 5. Garnish mugs with an apple slice or cinnamon stick.

Tip: This works well in a slow cooker for potlucks or open house gatherings.

Pumpkin Hot Chocolate

Makes 2 mugs

Ingredients
Method
1. Whisk milk, cocoa, pumpkin puree, sweetener, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt in a saucepan. 2. Warm gently until smooth and hot. 3. Pour into mugs. 4. Top with whipped cream if desired.

Tip: A tiny pinch of salt helps deepen the chocolate flavour.

02 / Fall Baking Showcase

These recipes are written for a family table or potluck. For food safety, keep chilled desserts refrigerated until serving and label common allergens such as nuts, dairy, eggs, wheat, and chocolate.

Classic Apple Pie

Makes one 9-inch pie

Ingredients
Method
1. Preheat oven to 400 F. 2. Combine apples, sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, and lemon juice. 3. Place filling into bottom crust and dot with butter. 4. Top with second crust and cut vents. 5. Brush with egg wash if desired.

- 6. Bake 45 to 55 minutes, until crust is golden and filling is bubbling.
- 7. Cool before slicing.

Tip: Use a mix of tart and sweet apples for the best flavour.

Traditional Pumpkin Pie

Makes one 9-inch pie

Ingredients
Method
1. Preheat oven to 375 F. 2. Whisk pumpkin, eggs, brown sugar, milk, spices, and salt until smooth. 3. Pour into pie shell. 4. Bake 45 to 55 minutes, until centre is just set. 5. Cool completely before serving. 6. Refrigerate leftovers.

Tip: Serve with whipped cream and a little cinnamon.

Pumpkin Chocolate Cheesecake

Makes one 9-inch cheesecake

Ingredients
Method
1. Preheat oven to 325 F. 2. Mix cookie crumbs and melted butter. Press into a springform pan. 3. Beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. 4. Add eggs, pumpkin, vanilla, and spices. 5. Pour filling over crust. 6. Swirl melted chocolate through the filling or sprinkle chocolate chips over top.

7. Bake 45 to 55 minutes, until set around the edges.

8. Chill at least 4 hours before serving.

Tip: This is a rich dessert. Cut into small slices for potlucks.

Apple Crisp

Serves 8

Ingredients
Method
1. Preheat oven to 350 F. 2. Toss apples with lemon juice, sugar, and cinnamon. 3. Place apples in a baking dish. 4. Mix oats, flour, brown sugar, butter, and salt until crumbly. 5. Sprinkle topping over apples.

6. Bake 35 to 45 minutes, until bubbling and golden.

Tip: Serve warm with yogurt, whipped cream, or vanilla ice cream.

03 / Canadian Butter Tarts

Butter tarts are a Canadian classic, and every family seems to have a strong opinion about them. This version keeps raisins optional because that is the only peaceful path forward.

Classic Canadian Butter Tarts

Makes 12 tarts

Ingredients
Method

- 1. Preheat oven to 375 F.
- 2. Place tart shells on a baking sheet.
- 3. Whisk melted butter, brown sugar, syrup, eggs, vanilla, and salt until smooth.
- 4. Add optional raisins or nuts to tart shells if using.
- 5. Fill tart shells about two-thirds full.
- 6. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, until filling is bubbling and pastry is golden.
- 7. Cool before serving. Filling will be very hot.

Tip: For a runnier filling, bake slightly less. For a firmer filling, bake a few minutes longer.

The Great Butter Tart Debate

Choose your favourite version and let the friendly debate begin.

Version
What to Add
Best For
Purists

Traditionalists
Crunch lovers
Classic fall flavour
The adventurous

04 / Potluck Recipe Cards

These cards can be copied into the October magazine, printed, or shared with staff and family members. They are useful for potlucks because they make ingredients and allergy notes visible.

Potluck Recipe Card Template

Dish name

Appendix Closing Note

Recipes are one way traditions are passed from one person to another. A pie, a tart, a warm drink, or a handwritten recipe card can carry memory, comfort, and connection. Add your

own family favourites to this appendix and let the collection grow over time.

Flavours of Fall Recipe Collection | October Wellness Hub
Appendix