

July is **National Park and Recreation Month** and **National Picnic Month**

You can find the best resources by clicking the names above.

July 4 - Independence Day

“One flag, one land, one heart, one hand, one nation forevermore!”

~ Oliver Wendell Holmes

July 11 - All American Pet Photo Day

Have your employees, volunteers and staff upload their pet photos with your YMCAs hashtag and #AllAmericanPetPhotoDay

July 17 - National Ice Cream Day

Two ice cream days in one week? Yep! **National Ice Cream Day is July 17, and National Vanilla Ice Cream Day is July 23.** For a delicious summer treat, grill peaches and blackberries as a topping on vanilla ice cream!

July 24 - Parents' Day

Be sure to call or visit Mom and Dad! What things do you find yourself saying or doing that your parents did when you were younger? #ParentsDay

July 28 - National Refreshment Day

Destress and take a break with a [refreshing Summer drink](#) like beer, spritzer, or lemonade.

July 29 - National Lasagna Day

You don't have to be a big, fat, orange cat or Italian to enjoy this one! [But you can go a little lighter.](#)

July 31 - National Avocado Day

Think outside the Guac! Blend one avocado with garlic, olive oil, salt, and lemon juice, for a healthy salad dressing.

FOOD & DRINK

What's in season? Apricots, beets, bell peppers, blackberries, blueberries, broccoli, cherries, cucumbers, herbs, lettuce, onions, peaches, plums, raspberries, spinach, strawberries, summer squash, tomatoes, and zucchini.

What's for dinner tonight? How about this one-of-a-kind, **healthy, zesty salmon pasta salad** that gives off a good summer vibe.

It's easy to go overboard at the Farmer's Market with all the colorful and exciting fruits and vegetables. Empty those totes and check out these recipes from [Taste of Home](#).

Celebrate the king of comfort food on July 14, National Mac & Cheese Day, with [one of these healthier](#) takes on the classic.

Did we read this right? "[Summer's best brownies are baked on the grill.](#)" #mindblown

Deviled eggs are all the craze, but for vegans, not so much. Until now! You can enjoy the same great flavors, minus the egg, [in this recipe](#) made with potatoes.

Break out the blanket and basket and try one of these [Summer Picnic Foods](#) to **celebrate #NationalPicnicMonth**.

This [Kabob and Orzo Salad](#) has **proteins, veggies, and grains** that'll make for an easy and delectable summer dinner with family and friends out on the patio.

National Hot Dog Day is July 20. Hot dogs are known for not being very healthy. But, here are some [alternatives](#) to soothe your cravings. If you must have the real deal, we'll never tell!
#NationalHotDogDay



LIFESTYLE

Friendly reminder. Make a habit of turning off the lights and unplugging non-essentials during extreme heat to avoid adding stress to the power grid.

Have an action plan for your pets in case of a fire. **Keep a collar on your dog and leashes and cat carriers in an easy-to-access spot** near an exit so you can grab them on your way out.

Post for July 22 / National Hammock Day – Does anything say relaxation more than a hammock? #NationalHammockDay #unwind #relax

Two birds, one stone! Squatting to pick weeds from your garden is a great way to get those quads burning.

Tick check! After being outside or walking through the woods, give yourself a once-over, paying particular attention to areas like **behind the knees, ankles, and scalp.**

Do your skin a favor and indulge in eating water-rich foods. They'll hydrate your body's cells keeping your skin plump and youthful looking! #cucumber #tomato #watermelon #peach

If you love a Caprese Salad, you must get this recipe into your rotation! **Steam fresh broccoli and add to halved cherry tomatoes, cubed Mozzarella, and thinly sliced basil.** Then drizzle with Balsamic and oil.

Promote facts about [firework safety](#) throughout July. Many states allow fireworks to be set off privately on days other than the 4th.

Make your own eco-friendly, 100% biodegradable confetti! Use a craft punch to punch holes in dried-up leaves or flowers. #weddings #birthdays #anniversaries



COMMUNITY

National Kitten Day is July 10. Consider adopting or fostering a kitten, or get some laughs by watching kitten videos on YouTube. #kittens #adopt #love #nationalkittenday

Don't forget to **check in on your elderly or impaired neighbors** during heat advisories.

July 11 is World Population Day. Help keep our waters clean and safe as our population increases by taking shorter showers and turning off the water while brushing your teeth. What other ways can we conserve water? #WorldPopulationDay

It's time to standardize recycling bin labels and help reduce the waste entering our oceans. To learn more about how and recycle right, **visit www.recycleacrossamerica.org**.

Create a healthy working environment by using non-toxic cleaning products and adding plants that absorb indoor air pollution whether you work from home or in an office.

National Mutt Day is July 31. Fill your heart with love by **adopting our fostering a shelter animal**, or consider donating to your local shelter in honor of a lost pet.



HEALTH

Challenge yourself this summer: **Stop into the YMCA at least 3x a week** and use a variety of workout machines and weights to keep yourself active and healthy.

Snack on this - It's easy, healthy, crunchy, and a bit spicy! Cut watermelon into your favorite shape, squeeze with lime juice, and top with a sprinkle of salt and chili powder. Enjoy.

It's hot! Your body will lose fluid quickly from sweating, decreasing your physical performance - snack on sliced strawberries, cucumber, or tomatoes for an extra water intake.

Are you working from home? **Walk while you talk.** A 15-minute exercise session during the workday is better than nothing.

Did you know the mango is the most eaten fruit on Earth? They're great for helping you get rid of stress as they are a good energy source and highly beneficial to gut health.

Having a pet is known to decrease blood pressure, lower cholesterol levels, aid in coping with depression, and alleviate loneliness. #adoptapet

A healthy Cheesecake, [less than 100 calories?](#) Yes, please! Celebrate **National Cheesecake Day on July 30** with this guilt-free recipe.

Pro Tip: Keeping a healthy lifestyle can be difficult. A workout friend can help motivate you and keep you on track to a healthier you.

Watching your weight? Try unsweetened applesauce as an alternative to butter in your recipes as it is super low in calories and completely fat-free. 1 cup butter = ½ cup applesauce.



PARENTING

Fun summer activities for kids don't have to be complicated. **Switch up the classic game of touch tag** with flashlights for a fun evening activity.

Post for 7/7 - **Hey, Dads! Enjoy a healthy activity with your girls** by walking on National Father Daughter Take a Walk Day. Be sure to snap a pic or two and hashtag them with #FatherDaughterTakeAWalkDay.

Hot summer days are ideal for a bit of crafting. Check out these [cute and creative ideas](#) to keep the kiddos entertained.

Bright idea! Have your kids paint pictures for your friends and family who have home offices. They'll love showcasing their favorite artist on their walls!

Post for 7/20 - Plan a family fun night and visit your local planetarium to **get up close and personal with the moon!** #MoonDay

What's a good reason to switch your plastic grocery bags to paper? [These cool craft ideas!](#)

Take a ride on a carousel horse on **July 25 for National Merry-Go-Round Day.**

Are you heading to the beach? Have your kids search for sea glass, then [check out Pinterest](#) for all the fantastic things you can make with the pieces you find!

Practice a family fire drill. This tradition is vital for everyone. Discuss your evacuation plan, designate someone to carry out the pets, and decide where your meeting location will be.

Hugging is good for your health. Hugging your kids will make them happy and keep your blood pressure and heart in good shape.

MEMBERSHIP

Ask the nutritionist: I've heard that nitrates in some foods are good for you, but I thought they were terrible for you. What's the deal?

Beat the heat by bringing your workout indoors to the YMCA! **Run on the treadmill**, lift some weights or try a new machine to switch up your routine!

Have your lifeguards create an instructional video on water safety for **National Drowning Prevention Day on July 25**. Use the hashtag #DrowningPrevention

Highlight a Summer Camp Activity each week in July so members can see what fun their kids are missing out on or getting into!

Healthy Living Tip: If you are an outdoors runner, check out these [tips for exercising in the Summer heat!](#) Stay cool and drink lots of fluids.

Members. What is your favorite summer fitness class?

Are your kids bored already? The Y is open all summer long if you need fun and exciting activities to keep them occupied while home from school. Enroll them in classes or bring them by the pool for some splashin' good fun!

How is everyone enjoying Summer camp? **Any fun stories or pictures to share?**

Hot summer days are perfect for using the YMCA pool! Stop by, check it out, and learn more about what your **membership with the YMCA** can do for you.



TRIVIA

What year did the Bikini make its debut? A. 1923 B. 1948 C. 1961

Answer: 1948

When did Neil Armstrong walk on the moon?

Answer: July 20, 1969

True or false - all kittens are born with blue eyes?

Answer: True. As kittens grow, their eye color changes.

Post for 7/15 - How many items are in the average American home? #GiveSomethingAwayDay

Answer: 300,000! Today is a good day to give some unwanted or unneeded things away.

Who invented lemonade?

Answer: The Egyptians created lemonade in 500 AD.

What were the first animals to be domesticated?

Answer: Goats

How many people signed the Declaration of Independence? A. 12 B. 29 C. 56 D. 64

Answer: 56

What is the imaginary sporting game played in the Harry Potter movies and books?

Answer: Quidditch

Who is known as the Golden Bear?

Answer: Jack Nicklaus



INSPIRATION

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." ~ Neil Armstrong

Thought for the day - Listen to your body, sleep well, make your environment a reflection of who you are or want to be, and eat healthily and in moderation.

"Summer afternoon - summer afternoon; to me, those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language."

~ Henry James

"If you're not barefoot, then you're overdressed." ~ Unknown

"If something stands between you and your success, move it. Never be denied."

~ Dwayne Johnson

"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time."

~ John Lubbock

"The groundwork for all happiness is good health." ~ Leigh Hunt

"Setting goals is the first step into turning the invisible into the visible." ~ Tony Robbins

"Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall."

~ Confucius