

# wellness GUIDE

EASY & HEALTHY  
**summer**  
SNACKS

EMBRACING A  
**SUMMER OF**  
**mindfulness**

**BUDGET**  
**friendly**  
FUN IN THE SUN

BEACH READS  
**& road trip**  
ESSENTIALS

**SUMMER 2022 EDITION**

 **SASKATCHEWAN  
BLUE CROSS®**





Why do I have a  
Personal Health Plan?  
**Our health is worth**  
*investing in.*





# STAYING healthy & happy THIS SUMMER

Fresh air, sunshine and nature can do wonders for your health! After spending so much time at home for the last few years, it's time for some new experiences. Let the sun melt your worries away and help you focus on a happier, healthier you in 2022!

As Saskatchewanians, we know that our summer months are precious. The only weeding you should do this summer is in your garden, rather than weeding through endless social media pages, blogs, or Pinterest posts to find health and wellness information. We created the Saskatchewan Blue Cross Summer Wellness Guide to bring it all together in one convenient place, and serve as your starting point for planning this summer's most memorable experiences!

For starters, we have tips on how to grow your own delicious herbs - and recipes that will help you make the most of your harvest! There are recommendations for podcasts, audiobooks, and songs to make the most of your road trips. If you aren't sure where to head, check out Saskatchewan travel blogger Ashlyn George's suggestions.

We've partnered with local experts to give you information about staying mentally well, and healthy go-to snacks when you are out traveling. With rising costs, make sure you read the article on ways to stretch your budget. And if you need a little help unwinding at the end of the day, we have some low back stretches you can try.

We hope these resources, tips and expert testimonies will inspire you to prioritize your own health and wellness this summer. Whether you plan on having a low-key summer or spend your time connecting with family and friends, enjoy this guide to make the most of the months ahead.

*Your partner  
in wellness,*



# energizing 9 road trip SNACKS

Courtney Berg,  
Registered Dietitian,  
Vitality Nutrition  
@vitalitynutrition\_



## for your cooler

### Vegetables and dip

Pre-cut your veggies and bring along your favorite dip like hummus, tzatziki, or guacamole! Veggies are loaded with fibre to keep your digestion regular while on the road. You could even add a high-fibre cracker for a more substantial snack (eg. try Wasa crackers or Mary crackers for more fibre).

### Hard boiled eggs with fruit

Eggs are loaded with protein to keep you full for hours. Pair them with fruit for fibre and you have a well-balanced snack!

### Turkey bites with portioned cheese

Protein is one of the most filling nutrients and helps to keep your blood sugar (ie. energy) stable through the day. Turkey bites with portioned cheese or cheese strings is a high-protein option that can be paired with fruit or veggies for a more filling snack!



## to stash in your bag

### Roasted chickpeas

Roasted chickpeas are a 2 for 1 snack as they contain both protein and fibre. Roast your own chickpeas or purchase a store-bought version to share with your road trip companions!

### A high fibre protein bar

Protein bars are the perfect, portable snack for traveling! We recommend choosing a bar with >3g of fibre and >12g of protein per serving. If possible, source bars with whole food ingredients and are low in added sugars. For example, Rx bars or Simply bars.

### Homemade energy bites

Energy bites taste like a cookie but with the fibre, protein, and nutritious fats you need to keep you feeling well. [Try this recipe for energy bites](#) or do a quick Google search for a variety of tasty variations!



## to grab at a gas station

### Beef jerky

Beef jerky is a classic road trip snack to satisfy your salty cravings while also being rich in protein. A protein rich snack like jerky will ensure you avoid a blood sugar spike that can lead to a crash in energy levels!

### A protein beverage from the cooler

Ready-to-drink protein beverages are increasing in popularity. While they might not be an everyday go-to, they are a great option for an on the road protein-rich option that will keep you full for longer! Some options include Core Power or Premier Protein.

### Fruit with nuts

Many gas stations will sell fresh fruit like bananas or apples or unsweetened dried fruit. When paired with a nutritious fat source (like nuts) you'll create an energizing and satisfying snack duo!





**Packing for your next getaway? Here's our list of Road Trip Essentials you won't want to forget!**

# ROAD TRIP essentials

**Drinks & Snacks:** Hunger and driving just don't mix - so make sure to include a packed lunch or appropriate number of snacks when you embark on your next adventure.

**First Aid Supplies:** Being prepared for anything will make sure nothing wrecks your trip! Pick up a pre-made kit from a drugstore, or DIY one with key items like bandages, anti-septic wipes, sterile gloves, tweezers, antibiotic ointment, and pain relief medications.

**Reading Material:** Be sure to grab some literature to pass the time. Check out our book list on page 13 for some suggestions, or visit your local library to pick out of few favourites of your own!

**Music & Podcasts:** Before heading out on the open road, download your top tunes and shows to listen offline. Not only will you save on cellular data, you'll also make sure you don't have to cruise in silence if you go through an area with sparse cell service!

**Emergency Preparedness Kit:** Whether you come across some unfamiliar terrain with 5% remaining on phone battery, or you blow a tire and end up on the side of the highway, it's smart to plan ahead. Top items for your kit include tools, a flashlight, a charger or portable power source, and maps for backup navigation.

**Boredom Busters:** Pack your crosswords, sudoku, or other puzzles to keep your brain stimulated on the drive. Or if you'd like something a bit more calming and relaxing, try an adult colouring book.

**Travel Insurance:** You wouldn't leave your house without your wallet, so why leave the province or country without travel insurance? Not to worry, we've got you covered! Blue Cross offers policies covering up to \$5,000,000 in emergency medical care services including hospitalization, tests and diagnostics, emergency dental treatment, ambulance or taxi service, and much more. Visit our website to learn more about how you can add a deductible to your travel insurance to save!



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# for the love of the outdoors

By Ashlyn  
George  
[@thelostgirlsguide](#)



## I am a serial adventurer.

Without realizing where it would lead in the beginning, I've made a life and career by chasing the high of outdoor experiences.

What stemmed from a passion for travelling after university, turned into a passion for pursuing novelty, excitement and a challenge in the outdoors – regardless of the destination.

While I've travelled across all 7 continents and through more than 60 countries, I've spent a lot of time exploring here at home in Saskatchewan. There's so much to see and do between our provincial borders.

**I consider myself a jack-of-all-trades when it comes to the outdoors.** I'm not an expert in any one activity as I love the diversity of them all. The excitement of researching gear, learning skills needed for new activities, and pushing the limits of what my body is capable of – it's addicting. But it's also good for my mental health and helps me relieve stress.

**The hardest part is deciding to try something unfamiliar.** Every year or two, I pick a new-to-me activity. It started with running when I was in university. That led me to completing several half marathons and even a 30-kilometre race. (I'm still eyeing up a full marathon – one day). Then I became interested in backcountry hiking and camping. I bought a backpack and lightweight tent and wandered the province exploring every trail and backcountry campground I could. In 2016, I hiked the 135-kilometre Boreal Trail solo. In 2020, I went back and did it in the reverse direction.

Next, I started taking courses for white water canoeing in our northern rivers. Not many realize it, but we have some of the best white water in Canada. I bought a paddleboard and started overnight tripping in the south. One of my favourite weekend adventures is paddling from Outlook to Saskatoon on the South Saskatchewan River. The sandbars are large enough you can pitch a tent and have your own private island in the middle of the river.

Last year, I purchased a gravel bike and have been touring the province on two wheels, riding into the world of bikepacking. This year, I'm dabbling in triathlons. It seems my love for outdoor adventures and activities has come full circle as I combine running and biking with a new challenge: swimming. While I'm intimidated by long-distance swims, I've started lessons and joined a club for encouragement. That seems to be the secret to all of these activities I love to do. **Every time I start something new, I encounter warm and welcoming communities.** People are always willing to offer advice, swap gear, and share their knowledge about the best ways and places to adventure.

After years of exploring, I am still inspired and awed by the geographical destinations and access to nature we have in Saskatchewan.

**Read on for a few of my favourites you might want to add to your own bucket list this summer.**



**For able-bodied individuals, hiking is the most affordable and easiest activity you can participate in. It's why I started with it years ago.**

### **EASY**

For those just beginning, the 2-kilometre Boundary Bog boardwalk loop in Prince Albert National Park goes through a black spruce forest and carnivorous fen. It is easy yet highly rewarding – especially when the larches turn golden later in the year.

### **INTERMEDIATE**

For those looking to add elevation, head to Grasslands National Park West Block. The connected 4.5-kilometre Eagle Butte and 70 Mile Butte trails have some of the best big sky views in Saskatchewan, especially at sunset.

### **EXPERT**

For the adventurous, consider tackling the 135-kilometre Boreal Trail in Meadow Lake Provincial Park. I prefer through-hiking it from east to west but it's also a great trail to hike in sections on weekend or day trips.

# hiking



# camping



**It doesn't matter whether you camp in a tent, a van, a trailer or an RV, Saskatchewan has incredible regional, provincial, and national parks with campgrounds for everyone.**

### **EASY**

While many head to the Centre Block of Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park, a favourite camping spot of mine is along Battle Creek in the West Block.

### **INTERMEDIATE**

Pine Cree Regional Park is tucked into a coulee in the hills near the Frenchman River Valley. The campsite across the wooden bridge is a top choice.

### **EXPERT**

One of the best backcountry camping experiences is pitching a tent at the end of the Valley of 1000 Devils 6-kilometre one-way trail in Grasslands National Park East Block.



# biking

**Biking is an excellent form of low-impact exercise! It stimulates your heart and lungs, which can improve circulation and reduce your risk of cardiovascular diseases.**



## **EASY**

If you're headed to Grasslands National Park East Block on the hunt for dinosaur bones, make sure to pack a bike and your camera. The 22-kilometre roundtrip single-lane paved parkway is an easy but stunning ride as it follows the escarpment overlooking the badlands.

## **INTERMEDIATE**

While I haven't ridden it yet, the 60-kilometre loop from Lumsden along the 7 Bridges Road is on my bucket list. It's a popular day ride, especially for those who live close to Regina.

## **EXPERT**

For an epic 250 kilometre, 3-day ride, bike from Outlook to Douglas Provincial Park for the night. Cross the Riverhurst Ferry the next day and camp in Birsay. Finish the ride with a tour along the canals near Gardiner Dam before returning to Outlook.

**Paddling can help to improve core strength and stability - which can prevent or reduce back pain and enhance your mobility.**

## **EASY**

The Gem Lakes Trail in Narrow Hills Provincial Park is popular for hikers and campers but the view from on the water on these 7 crystalline kettle lakes is just as lovely. While you'll have to portage the short trails between the lakes, the peace and tranquility of the surrounding Boreal Forest is worth it.

## **INTERMEDIATE**

The South Saskatchewan River from Poplar Bluffs (12 kilometres), Chief Whitecap Dakota First Nation (50 kilometres) or the Gardiner Dam (100 kilometres) offers options for a paddle trip for all levels and abilities.

## **EXPERT**

For serious paddlers, the most affordable float plane flight from Missinipe in the north is out on the Paull River. White water skills are necessary as this is a true backcountry experience. This route has numerous rapids to run, a waterfall, and is full of island filled lakes in the Precambrian Shield.

# paddling





Whether you're just starting out or years into your own adventures and looking for new ideas, these destinations provide a great overview of some of the best spots to explore here in Saskatchewan this summer.

As for me, what will I get up to next? Well, winter's a pretty great season to adventure in too.



## ABOUT ASHLYN GEORGE

Ashlyn George (B.A., B.Ed) is an award-winning travel writer, photographer and the content creator behind **The Lost Girl's Guide to Finding the World.** She is the go-to adventure travel expert in Saskatchewan but is no stranger to trips abroad. Having travelled solo through more than 60 countries on all 7 continents, she's a passionate storyteller in pursuit of adventure, learning and discovery. Find her online @thelostgirlsguide.

**@thelostgirlsguide**



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the province?*



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Saskatchewan Blue Cross.**





By Corey Young,  
Physical Therapist  
at ProSport Rehab  
[@prosportrehab](#)

# PREVENTING back pain *through exercise*

**Do you suffer from back pain? Learn what might be causing you pain, and how to prevent it through exercise!**

**Unfortunately, back pain is very common in today's society.** It is one of the major causes of lost time at work, and the reason for many visits to Doctors, Chiropractors, Massage Therapists, Acupuncturists and Physical Therapists. One of the best tools to recover and prevent future back pain episodes is to increase your core muscular endurance in conjunction with treatments from a trusted practitioner.

Although back pain can come from a single traumatic episode, it is more often a result of repetitive wear and tear that is aggravated by poor posture, poor lifting techniques, and poor muscular endurance of the core musculature. It is therefore important to pay attention to your posture, follow proper lifting guidelines, and work on your core muscles.

The core musculature is the groups of muscles that form a cylinder around the abdomen. This includes the **abdominal** muscles in the front, the **oblique** muscles along the sides and the **lumbar paraspinal** muscles along the spine, and the **pelvic floor** muscles. The purpose of these core muscles is to maintain the spine, and its joints in the optimal lumbar neutral posture while performing any activity. The more endurance these muscles have, the longer the spine can maintain this posture and reduce the risk of injuries.

To train endurance is different than training strength. Think of the training needed to run a marathon, versus the training for a 100 metre race – it is vastly different! For muscular endurance, one must perform prolonged sets and repetitions and do the exercises daily.

The illustrations to the right show different positions of the spine, and the **optimal spinal position, called a neutral spine**. This is the natural curve of the lumbar spine when standing. Training your core muscles through exercise can help you to maintain a neutral spine - and reduce and prevent back pain.

**Read on to the next page for three daily exercises to help you take care of your spinal health!**

## CHECK IN: SPINAL POSITION



**Too arched**



**Too flattened**



**Well  
positioned  
spine!**



# 3 EXERCISES prevent back pain

This guide covers the “Big 3” exercises, developed by Dr. Stuart McGill for back pain care. The recommended pattern is to hold each repetition for 10 seconds, repeat 10-15 repetitions of each exercise once daily. **Stop the exercise** if it is painful, or if you are unable to maintain proper technique.

## CURL UP



**Instructions:** Lay down on your back, and place your hands in the small of your back (under lumbar spine not the pelvis). Bend one knee to prevent using the hip flexors, and contract your abdominal muscles to lift your chest and shoulderblades off the ground. Hold for 10 seconds and return to the start position. Rest for 2-3 seconds and repeat 10-15 times.

**Tips:** Do not hold your breath, use your elbows to push you up, or lead with your head. **To turn up the heat,** place a small towel under your back, or try crossing your arms on your chest, or placing your hands by your ears.

## SIDE PLANK



**Instructions:** Start on your side, resting on your elbow with your knees bent. Contract your oblique (side) muscles to lift your hips off the ground and straighten your spine into the neutral position. Hold for 10 seconds and return to the start position. Rest for 2-3 seconds and repeat 10-15 times.

**Tips:** Maintain even breathing, and engage your abdominal muscles. **To turn up the heat,** try extending your legs and doing the plank motion with straight legs instead of bent at the knees!

## 4 PT. LEG LIFT



**Instructions:** Lift up one of your legs, and the opposite arm. Engage your abdominal muscles to keep your spine in the neutral position. Hold for 10 seconds and return to the start position. Rest for 2-3 seconds and repeat 10-15 times.

**Tips:** Try placing a ball on the small of your back, and keeping it there while you do the exercise – if it stays in place, you are maintaining a neutral spine. To progress the exercise instead of holding the arm and leg still continuously move the arm up and down for 10 seconds again without moving out of the neutral lumbar spine.

**Did you know?**  
Every Personal Health  
Plan covers treatment  
by a licensed  
physiotherapist!





# all about 211 SASKATCHEWAN

Looking for a service or program in Saskatchewan and aren't sure where to start? 211 Saskatchewan is here to help you navigate this sometimes-complex task, free and confidentially, ensuring you find **exactly what you need.**

## What is 211?

211 Saskatchewan is a free, confidential service that connects individuals to human services in the province by telephone, text, online chat, or through a searchable website. When you call or text 2-1-1, or start a web chat session at [sk.211.ca](https://sk.211.ca), you are connected with a trained and caring Service Navigator that will help determine which services are available and most appropriate to meet your unique individual needs. Alternatively, you can search for services through our website at [sk.211.ca](https://sk.211.ca) – information is all organized by need making it easier to find what you're looking for. This access to community, non-emergency health and government services is available 24/7/365. Over the phone, 211 is available in over 175 languages, including 17 Indigenous languages.

## What role does 211 play in the community?

211 acts as the front door to support, helping people navigate an often complex network of services and programs to find what they need for their unique situation. 211 Saskatchewan's service is available to everyone, free of charge. A key role for 211 is helping alleviate the challenge of determining which services are available and appropriate to meet various needs. This can be a valuable service for individuals looking for supports for themselves or a friend or family member, or for service providers finding supportive options for those they work with. In addition to connecting people to services and information, 211 collects valuable data on resources, needs and unmet needs that can assist in determining the most common needs in our province, as well as where needs are unmet because gaps in services may exist.

**Kristin Nelson – Director of  
211 Saskatchewan, United  
Way Regina, and United Way  
of Saskatoon and Area**



## How is Saskatchewan Blue Cross involved in 211?

In 2021, 211 Saskatchewan received a generous three year sponsorship from Saskatchewan Blue Cross. This investment supports 211's ongoing sustainability in our province. It ensures that we are here moving forward to support the people in Saskatchewan and be the front door that assists them in navigating services and finding the supports they need. Support from Saskatchewan Blue Cross will contribute to many people being supported and connected to local services in Saskatchewan.

## How does 211 improve health literacy and wellness in Saskatchewan?

By ensuring people have a connection to services and information, 211 is supporting the well-being of people in our province. We are here to connect people to a variety of services in many different areas, including, but not limited to, mental health supports, addiction services, learning/education and employment programs, non-clinical health supports, early years information, supports for those experiencing interpersonal violence, food security, housing programs, basic needs supports, and many more.

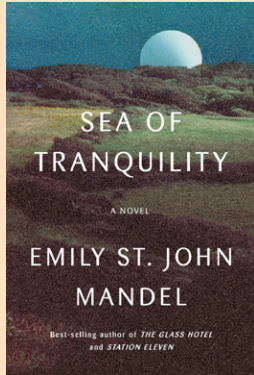


**Visit [sk.211.ca](https://sk.211.ca)  
to learn more!**



# beach READS

One of the best ways to relax and unwind on those long summer days is to dive into a new book! Whether you're heading to the beach, or just to your backyard these books by Canadian authors are sure to keep you entertained!



## Sea of Tranquility by Emily St. John Mandel

*"A journey from Vancouver Island in 1912 to a dark colony on the moon hundreds of years later, unfurling a story of humanity across centuries and space."*  
GoodReads.com

This novel is a story of time travel involving Edwin St. Andrew who crosses the Atlantic by steamship; Olive Llewellyn who is a writer living on the moon; and Gasperry-Jacques Roberts, a detective from Night City.



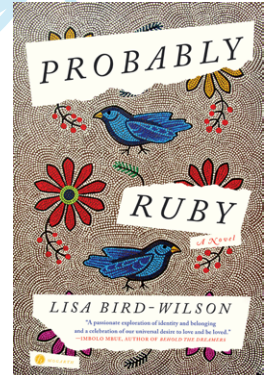
## Every Summer After by Carley Fortune

*"A romantic look at life, love, and the people and the choices that mark us forever."*  
GoodReads.com

Persephone Fraser met the love of her life during a childhood spent at her family lake house in Ontario. Eventually, they grew apart and live separate lives. Persephone returns to her childhood lake house where she comes to terms with herself, her lost love and all that the future has to hold.

## Probably Ruby by Lisa Bird-Wilson

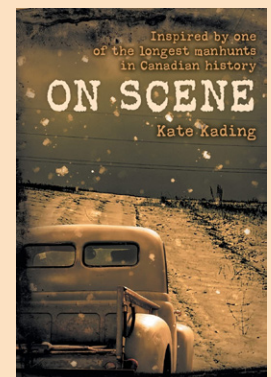
*"An Indigenous woman adopted by white parents goes in search of her identity in this unforgettable debut novel about family, race, and history."* Goodreads.com



This story follows the life of a Métis woman in her thirties, coming to terms with a life of displacement and loss. After being adopted at a young age, Ruby loses her sense of Indigenous heritage which leaves her feeling lost as she navigates adulthood.

## On Scene by Kate Kading

*"The fictionalized story of a little known piece of Canadian history depicts a tragedy that didn't have to happen and the search for justice."*  
Goodreads.com



This fictional novel follows RCMP Sgt. Walter Regitnig and his canine partner, Bruce, in their pursuit of a man who shot two officers and fled into the woods. The story is inspired by true events that led to one of the longest manhunts in Canadian history.

# EASY listening

Soundtrack your summer days and banish boredom on long drives with these Canadian podcasts and albums!

## PODCASTS

### Lemon Water

Host Michelle Siman talks to experts from Canada's health and wellness community, like osteopaths, dermatologists, and owners of Canadian wellness brands.



### Millennial Minimalists

Learn tips and tricks to help you in your journey to living simply and sustainably. With episodes about going zero-waste, overcoming distractions, and decluttering, this show has something for everyone!



### The MapleMoney Show

This podcast explores (and de-mystifies) all things personal finance, like how to get the most from a travel rewards program, and what renovations to do prior to selling your house.



### The Secret Life of Canada

With episodes about why puffed-wheat squares are so popular in western Canada, to why there are so many Canadians in pro wrestling, this podcast is sure to add to your trivia night knowledge.



## MUSIC

### Dara Schindelka - Saturn Returns

Released this past May, Dara Schindelka's Saturn Returns album is the definition of easy listening. In describing this album, Schindelka said it's the perfect book-reading, tea drinking musical accompaniment. Saturn Returns is a collection of songs that reflect on Saturn's celestial and astronomical affects on us each as individuals and provides insight into some of Dara's own experiences.

### Rueben and the Dark - Coming Like a Storm

Coming Like a Storm is alternative folk music that will take you on a journey of emotions, through the ups and downs of a failing relationship.

### iskwē And Tom Wilson - Mother Love

Mother Love is the collaboration we didn't know we needed! Iskwē is known as a musical storyteller, accompanied by Tom Wilson, to create blues, rock and folk music.

### Megan Nash - Soft Focus Futures

Nash describes their sophomore release as a "big album about a lot of change," that tells the story of her divorce through the album's lyrics. Folk, pop, and roots influences come together to create a perfect soundtrack for dreamy Saskatchewan summer days.

### BYFRN - Kissing Mirrors

Kissing Mirrors is a mixture of pop, hip-hop, rock and dance music which give this album a little something for everyone.



# EMBRACING mindfulness THIS SUMMER

**O**ur summers are short in Saskatchewan, we need to make the most of them. Embracing Saskatchewan summers mindfully is a wonderful way to boost mental health. Nature can play a role in keeping us emotionally, psychologically and physically healthy. Fresh air and exercise have long been recommended to help us feel better physically and mentally.

The quality of our relationship with nature can also influence the positive impact between nature and mental health. **Mindful activities involving the use of our senses can improve our connection with the natural world while helping us recognize beauty and find meaning.** Mindfulness is a state of non-judgmental awareness of what is happening in the present moment, including the awareness of one's own thoughts, feelings, and senses. How we think about and appreciate our natural surroundings is an important factor in supporting mental health and preventing stress.

**How can we embrace nature mindfully?** It's easy, start by heading outside. Use your five senses to experience nature in ways you may not have observed before. Take advantage of a summer storm to increase your mindfulness skills. Pay close attention to the fresh smell of rain in the air. Listen to the thunder, the pitter patter of the rain, the sounds of wildlife scurrying around. Feel the electricity in the air, notice how it feels on your skin. Observe the sky come alive with lightning. "Taste" the air and rain to

By Karen Zemlack,  
owner/clinician at Bloom  
Counselling & Wellness  
Center in Regina  
[bloomcounsellingyqr.ca](http://bloomcounsellingyqr.ca)



sense how it feels on your tongue. You might see, hear, feel, taste, or smell something you haven't noticed before. Mindfulness takes practice, if you notice your mind wander, gently bring your attention back to mindful awareness.

The great news is the mental health benefits of nature can be available to all of us, no matter where we live. Being outside can be cathartic, creating emotions such as calmness and joy. Nature can reduce anxiety and stress, as well as increase our creativity and our ability to connect with others. Try combining physical activity and social contact with others while being outside. Interactive distractions such as going for walks with friends can keep our minds from ruminating and increasing anxious and/or depressive thoughts. **Even small changes to your routine can improve your self-care practises and overall mood.** Consider going out and exploring local events happening in your community.

The way you think affects the way you feel. Changing unhelpful thoughts is key to feeling well. The more positive feelings you give to an event the more positive you will feel. Retraining your attention onto nature can help you interrupt yourself from engaging with a stream of negative thoughts, while also tuning into your environment. Also, try to keep a good routine in the summer. Maintaining a consistent routine and a good sleep schedule are always beneficial in supporting mental health.

Get help when you are feeling anxious or depressed, no matter what time of year.

**Make this summer a season of self-care.** Don't wait for something outside of your control to help you feel better. Only you can take action and work on yourself.

The warm summer weather gives us the chance to get out there and embrace what nature has to offer, while at the same time adding joy, serenity, curiosity, and inspiration to our lives. Why not nurture that appreciation for nature – it may even lead to better mental health!

## BENEFITS OF mindfulness

- 1** Regular mindfulness practice can improve memory, concentration, focus, and overall mental performance.
- 2** Learning to be in the moment can help to reduce overthinking and rumination, leading to decreased levels of stress.
- 3** Practicing mindfulness can help with sleep habits, and assist in increasing your energy throughout the day.

### ABOUT KAREN ZEMLACK

Karen is an experienced Registered Social Worker, who has worked with clients in various health settings and roles for 20+ years. Karen's passion is to see people establish and restore healthy relationships, and to help people live their lives to the fullest. She does that through a variety of approaches that are research driven and scientifically based. She is eclectic, drawing from years of clinical training, graduate work, and experience. She loves to continue to learn, research, attend training, and absorb resources to enhance her therapeutic skills. Karen is trained in a variety of evidence-based approaches.

Karen began her studies at the University of Saskatchewan completing her BA in Psychology, then going to the University of Regina to complete her Bachelors of SW and Masters of SW.



**Your Personal Health Plan  
will keep you covered  
wherever life takes you.**





# HARVESTING at home

Whether you have a green thumb or not, it's possible to have a full, fresh herb garden on your window sill! Here are 6 herbs that will thrive in an indoor garden box.



## **BASIL**

Basil is an easy-going plant that requires only well-drained soil and a bright, warm place to sit. Fabric pots are recommended to increase airflow, and only occasional watering is needed.



## **ROSEMARY**

Rosemary requires similar growing conditions to basil, so they can even be planted together. Well-drained soil, lots of sunlight and a pot with drainage holes are must-haves for this herb. Once you get it planted, rosemary is easy to harvest and dry for cooking use!



## **MINT**

Mint is a hardy plant that grows towards the closest light source. The plant also requires frequent watering and rich soil, but if pruned or harvested regularly, it will thrive indoors.



## **THYME**

Thyme requires a lot of sunlight and regular pruning, but only occasional watering. It is also naturally high in nutrients and should not be fertilized.



## **CHIVES**

Chives are best suited in a pot with pebbles and water below in the sunniest spot in your house. If you keep the soil slightly saturated, chives are easy to grow in small spaces and in any potting material.



## **PARSLEY**

Parsley should be grown in an unglazed terra cotta pot. This plant benefits from fertilizer once a month, but only requires watering when the soil is dry.

# HOMEGROWN & fresh

Looking to use up your herbs? Try out these simple and delicious recipes for a fresh twist on your next weeknight dinner!

## GREEN GODDESS DRESSING

### What You Need:

- 1 cup firmly packed fresh parsley (some stem is fine)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1 cup peeled, seeded, and chopped cucumber
- 1 scallion, coarsely chopped
- Pinch of salt
- Freshly ground pepper (to taste)

### What To Do:

1. Throw all the ingredients in a blender and process until the mixture is well-pureed.
2. Transfer to a bottle with a tight lid, keep refrigerated and shake before each use.
3. Drizzle over salads and fresh/cooked vegetables.
4. Serve & Enjoy!

### THE VEGAN ATLAS



### THE HOME CHANNEL



## SAN MARZANO CHICKEN

### What You Need:

- 2 Large Boneless Chicken Breasts
- 1 28-ounce can San Marzano Tomatoes
- 1 tsp Vegetable Oil
- 1 tbsp Dried Oregano
- 1 Onion (chopped)
- 2 Bay Leaves
- 1 Head of Garlic Cloves (thinly sliced)
- 1 large bunch of Fresh Basil (finely chopped)
- 1 pinch Salt
- 1 box of Farfalle Pasta (or your favourite pasta, cooked & drained)

### What To Do:

1. Boil a large pot of water for the pasta.
2. Splash in enough vegetable oil to lightly film the bottom of a frying pan with a lid. Add the chicken breasts, searing the first side on medium-high heat until its golden brown, or for about 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Reduce the heat to medium and remove the chicken breasts, putting them aside.

4. Add the onion and garlic to the pan. Saute for a few moments, then add the tomatoes, dried oregano, and bay leaves. Adjust your heat to bring the works to a slow, steady simmer, not a rapid boil.
5. Put the chicken back in the pan with the rest of the ingredients, cover tightly and simmer until the meat is cooked through, or for about 10-15 minutes. Be sure to flip them once, allowing the tomato flavours to fully permeate from all sides.
6. Meanwhile cook the pasta for about 10 minutes.
7. Cut the chicken into large chunks, toss with the sauce then serve over pasta with a fresh basil garnish
8. Serve & Enjoy!







# INSPIRING achievement

Indspire is a national Indigenous charity that invests in the educations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. Partnering with private and public section stakeholders, Indspire aims to inspire achievement, while educating, connecting and investing in students so they will achieve their highest potential.

Saskatchewan Blue Cross is proud to partner with Indspire to **provide a scholarship for students pursuing a career in Social Work**. We recently chatted with one of our recent scholarship recipients to learn more about her journey.



**Interview with  
Danika Deitz,  
2022 Indspire  
Scholarship  
recipient  
& Indigenous  
Social Work  
Student**

## **Tell us a little bit about you.**

I was born in Regina. Raised by my grandparents. We moved to Crooked Lake when I was 5. I went to school in Grayson then Melville for grade 10 - 12. I moved back to Regina a year ago to go to study Indigenous Social Work at the First Nations University.

## **What inspired you to pursue a career in this field?**

I chose to invest my future in social work because I'm committed to helping others. A passion I discovered in grade 12 during a self-searching unit in my English Language class. During my time at Melville Comprehensive School, I was involved in MCS Cares, which is an organization that focused on inclusiveness. We did this by spreading awareness of mental health, LGBTQ + community and fighting against racism and sexism. Our organization partnered with Jack.org, a Canadian Mental Health establishment focused on youth mental health and suicide prevention. Through Jack.org I became a mental health advocate. This experience solidified my resolve to work in the social services sector.

My goals and ambitions while in University are not only about social work. Part of the reason I chose

Indigenous Social Work and the First Nations University of Canada is to further develop and maintain a connection to my culture. Growing up in a mostly Caucasian family, I did not have as much exposure to my Indigenous heritage as I would have liked.

## **How will pursuing a career in social work help your community?**

Once I graduate, it is my dream to provide support back to the communities that need it most. I know that for Indigenous communities, implementing their own social service programs is critical to preservation of cultural practices and protecting the well-being of their most vulnerable members. It's also an important part of their resurgence and reclamation initiatives and I want you to know that I'm dedicated and committed to being part of that.



**Visit [indspire.ca](https://indspire.ca)  
to learn more!**

# 5 *budget-friendly* summer ACTIVITIES

With gas prices and inflation on the increase this year, here are a few ideas for affordable family activities!



# 1

## PICNIC IN THE PARK

What better way to spend a day than in the park with your family, friends, and some of your favourite foods? Pack yourself a picnic basket and head for your favourite local park. Lounge on a sprawled-out blanket while your kids run and play. Who knows, your inner child might be inspired to come out!

## NATURE-THEMED SCAVENGER HUNT

We all know that kids love collecting. A nature-themed scavenger hunt is a great way to teach your kids about local flora, fauna, insects, and other wildlife. Challenge them (and yourself) to find something new on your next family outing.



# 2



# 3

## VISIT YOUR LOCAL FARMER'S MARKET

Even if you're not there to buy, farmer's markets are a great weekend activity! Take in the local talent and learn about all the small businesses in your community.

## GO STARGAZING

Did you know that Grassland National Park is home to the darkest dark sky preserve in Canada? Whether you head out of town or head to your backyard, stargazing on a clear night is a great free activity! Grab a blanket and a beverage, get cozy and take a moment to appreciate all that the universe has to offer.



# 4



# 5

## AN ADVENTUROUS HIKE

Saskatchewan is full of beautiful hiking trails. Head out for a day of exploration on the trail network to see what you might find! Check out Ashlyn George's article on page 6 for some inspiration! If you are travelling out of province, be sure to keep your reliable & affordable SBC Travel Insurance up to date - just in case!





# INVESTING IN YOUR wellness

A Saskatchewan Blue Cross Personal Health Plan makes it easy to prioritize your wellness without putting a strain on your finances. Check out our breakdown below and see how a spending out of pocket compares to having your wellness covered by your PHP\*!

Wellness Benefit	Out of Pocket	Personal Health Plan
60 minute deep tissue massage	\$75.00	Covered
Assessment by a Physiotherapist	\$150.00	Covered
Consultation with Naturopath	\$200.00	Covered
Chiropractic adjustment	\$45.00	Covered
	Total: \$470.00	Monthly cost: \$17.44

*Out of Pocket expenses are estimates only. Personal Health Plan cost based on Blue Choice• plan, under 35 single policyholder, with core health benefits only. Coverage is subject to plan maximums.*



## ABOUT OUR Personal Health Plans

### Coverage for every stage of life, so you can be ready for whatever comes next.

Life is constantly changing - and as life changes, your health insurance needs change too. Whatever your stage in life or occupation, we're here to support Saskatchewan singles, couples or families in making your health insurance choices.

Our Personal Health Plans supplement your provincially covered health insurance. Our basic plans provide the health benefits you need, to help make sure you get the care you need, when you need it.

### How our Personal Health Plans work

**Every Personal Health Plan includes 20 core benefits**, including massage, physio, chiro, vision care, ambulance, and much more. Then, **choose whether to add custom benefits** like prescription drugs, dental, or VIP travel.

### Member Exclusive Benefits:



#### MOBILE APP & MEMBER PORTAL

Manage your plan from wherever you are with the mobile app and member portal. Check your coverage, update your information, and make claims - all in one place.



#### BLUE ADVANTAGE

Through the Blue Advantage program, members have access to savings and discounts on wellness-related products and services. You can save on purchases at participating providers across Canada.

### Ready to learn more?

Get a free, no-obligation quote for coverage customized to your needs at [sk.bluecross.ca](https://sk.bluecross.ca) or get in touch with us at 1.800.667.6853.

## QUESTIONS?

We have answers.

#### When does my coverage take effect?

**For Blue Choice®** Your coverage begins on the first day of the month following the approval of your application and the receipt of your payment.

**For Conversion** Apply within 60 days of leaving an Employer Benefits Plan and experience no interruption in coverage.

#### What payment options are available?

You may choose pre-authorized monthly debit from a bank account or pay annually using your credit card.

#### I'm leaving my employer; how do I convert my benefits?

Simply apply within 60 days of leaving an Employer Benefits Plan and we'll transition your Health, Prescription Drugs, Dental and Travel benefits into a new Conversion Plan with no interruption in coverage. If you wait until after 60 days you will be required to complete a medical questionnaire.

#### Will coverage under my Conversion Plan be identical to my Employer Benefits Plan?

Coverage may differ. Certain exclusions and limitations may apply, or benefits offered as part of your Employer Plan may not be available in a Conversion Plan.

#### How do I know which plan or options are right for me?

Our dedicated team can help you understand and choose the coverage you need, no matter what stage of life you're in.