

# OCTOBER NEWSLETTER



*"Nothing is permanent in this wicked world, not even our troubles."*

*—Charlie Chaplin*

## In Honor of National Book Month Here are Some Health Benefits of Reading

[healthline.com](http://healthline.com)

From smartphone apps to streaming TV services, there are endless options for entertainment in today's digital age. However, the timeless hobby of reading books offers several benefits for physical and mental health that may be lacking with more technologically oriented activities. Designated as National Book Month, October is the perfect time to curl up with a good book and celebrate the simple pleasure of reading.

While doing so, here are a few of the key health benefits of reading to keep in mind:

- Stronger connectivity in the brain. Several studies using MRI scans have confirmed that reading involves a complex network of circuits and signals in the brain that become stronger and more sophisticated the more you read.
- Reduced stress. A 2009 study measured the effects of yoga, humor, and reading on students undergoing high-stress educational programs in the U.S. The results indicated that reading for just 30 minutes at a time was as effective as practicing yoga or experiencing humor at lowering blood pressure, heart rate, and feelings of psychological distress.
- Bigger vocabulary. Not surprisingly, reading increases your exposure to unfamiliar words in contexts that will help you learn their meaning, thereby expanding your vocabulary.
- Increased ability to empathize. Love reading fiction? Here's some good news—studies indicate that by delving into the inner worlds of characters, people who read literary fiction display a heightened ability to empathize with the feelings and beliefs of others in real life. This is particularly true for long-term lovers of fiction; they develop what researchers call the "theory of mind," or a set of skills critical to building and maintaining social relationships.
- Reduced risk of age-related cognitive declines. Although it hasn't been conclusively shown that reading can prevent disease such as Alzheimer's, studies suggest that older adults who read and solve math problems every day not only maintain, but can even improve their cognitive functioning. The practice keeps your mind engaged, which can help prevent the development of the plaques and lesions found in the brains of people with dementia.



## Butternut Squash and Chorizo Hash

bonappetit.com

### Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. (or more) extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 oz. fresh chorizo, casings removed
- 1 lb. butternut squash (about ½ of a medium squash), peeled, cut into ½" pieces (about 4 cups)
- 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
- Kosher salt
- Lime wedges and cilantro leaves with tender stems (for serving)

### Directions:

- Heat oil in a large heavy skillet (preferably cast iron) over medium-high. Cook chorizo, breaking up into small pieces with a wooden spoon, until browned and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl with a slotted spoon; reserve skillet with fat.
- Add butternut squash and onion to reserved skillet and cook over medium-high, adding more oil if needed and stirring occasionally, until golden brown and tender, 10–15 minutes. Stir in chorizo and season with salt. Squeeze a lime wedge over and top with cilantro. Serve with additional lime wedges for



## 4 Red Flags Buyers Shouldn't Ignore During a Home Inspection

magazine.realtor

Consisting of a visual assessment of a home's structure and systems, a home inspection is a crucial step in the real estate process—particularly for buyers, who will be made aware of any notable problems that may increase their bargaining power against the seller, or even cause them to reconsider the purchase altogether. While not everything revealed during a home inspection is serious, there are certain defects about which buyers should always consult their realtors for guidance. Here are four red flags that buyers shouldn't ignore:

- A crumbling foundation. A home's foundation ensures that it is structurally sound, protecting all the fixtures and systems within. If the inspection reveals cracks or other forms of deterioration in the foundation, buyers should be aware that these could be very expensive to fix in the future.
- Mold. Typically stemming from water leaks and/or poor air circulation, mold carries significant health risks and can be difficult to eliminate. While an inspection should reveal the presence of mold if it exists, buyers can also be on alert by looking for musty smells or discoloration around the walls or ceilings.
- Termites. While termites are common—particularly in older homes—they can cause major damage to a home's structure over time. If the inspection shows signs of termites, a specialist will likely need to be called in to quell the infestation and prevent further damage.
- Electrical problems. If a home's wiring or circuits are outdated or were improperly installed, they may create fire hazards and other problems.



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