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# Health Yourself!!

Spring Has Sprung!! Let's Celebrate by Spring Cleaning!!

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The air is becoming fragrant with the blossoms of many flowers. It's getting mild enough to open windows and let in spring air and light. Unfortunately, it's also that time of year when we realize that, over winter, we may have let a few things go ignored in our houses and apartments. My husband and I figured it out for ourselves over the Easter weekend when we turned the ceiling fans from winter circulation to spring circulation. After choking on all the dust plumes and bunnies that flew off of the fan blades and all over the house, we realized that we had forgotten to dust the blades before we made the change.

So spring cleaning began. There's a tremendous feeling of accomplishment when a house is completely cleaned from top to bottom—at least, I'm assuming there is, since we didn't actually get finished in a weekend. But we're working on it, and have found that not only can we make our house fresh for the season, we can enjoy each other's company while we're doing it.

- We decided to use the activity of cleaning as part of our fitness routine. Instead of wearing ourselves out cleaning windows and *then* going for our walk/run, we figured that we could reasonably count all that moving, bending, stretching, and stooping as exercise and kill two birds with one stone.
- We set a schedule to finish one room or section at a time. We don't run all over the house like chickens without heads. We started in one room and we finished it before we moved on to the next one. It's kind of fun to make it a competition to see who can get their part done, *and meet all expectations*, first. (I have to include that caveat because I *really* don't like getting under things—it's getting harder and harder to get back up again).
- We made some deals for rewards with each other. For every four hours of spring cleaning, we'll watch an episode of the BBC version of *Sherlock Holmes* on DVD. When we're *completely* done, we'll have a nice barbeque on our newly cleaned-out screen room.
- We have a pile to donate to charity. Clothes we haven't worn in 2 or more years go into this pile. Books we read once and know we won't read again (yes, this is a very tiny pile) go into a box for FOL. Dishes and other kitchen items that we haven't figured out how to use will go to Goodwill. I'm excited to think about what the junk drawers and cabinets will look like soon!
- We play music. I'm a little bit country, he's a little bit rock-n-roll. It keeps us moving—him more than me, since the first one done with the task gets to choose the next song.
- We started in the room that gave us the most feeling of accomplishment, which just happens to be the one that everyone sees first, the great room. It energized us to get to the rest of the house.
- We knew we couldn't finish in day without killing ourselves, so we plan to work on a different room each day until we're satisfied. Along with this decision, we figured we could do little things in-between the big tasks.

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**This month's challenge:**

**Pick one room in your house to start your spring cleaning.**

**Building Healthy Habits Tip of the Month:** Not only does spring cleaning make your house or apartment look and feel cleaner. You'll have a healthier house if you get rid of dust mites, mold, and other allergens.

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### Chicken and Strawberry Salad

Serves 4

Dressing:

1 TBsp sugar

2 TBsp red wine vinegar

1 TBsp water

1/8 tsp salt

1/8 tsp ground pepper

2 TBsp olive oil

To make dressing, combine first five ingredients in small bowl. Drizzle in the oil, whisking constantly.



Salad:

4 cups torn romaine lettuce

4 cups arugula

2 cups quartered strawberries

1/3 cup sliced red onion

12 oz skinless, boneless roasted chicken, sliced

2 TBsp unsalted cashews

1/2 cup (2 oz) crumbled blue cheese

To make salad, combine lettuces, strawberries, onion, and chicken. Toss gently. Place onto four plates. Top each serving with 1 1/2 tsp of cashews and 2 TBsp of cheese.

Drizzle dressing over each serving.

Per serving

Calories 333 Fat 16.4 g Protein 32 g Carbohydrates 14.8 g Fiber 3.5 g  
Cholesterol 83 mg Iron 2.5 mg Sodium 347 mg Calcium 156 mg

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- For example, we'll each take a drawer to organize while we're watching that DVD of *Sherlock Holmes*, we will organize the linen closet while we're air-drying after a shower, or will wipe down the front of the fridge while dinner is cooking. For those of you who are curious, yes, the air-drying thing is kind of fun...
- One final tip. We didn't get started until we had all cleaning supplies and materials put together. None of this "Oh honey, I need to run to Home Depot for grill cleaner." It about killed me, but I stayed out of that toy store the whole time we were working.

We've still got a couple of rooms to go, but things are looking good. And we're still married.

