

VIBRANT HEALTH BALANCED LIVING

natural SOLUTIONS

Conquer
food
cravings
for good
... See page 79

FRESH START for SUMMER

Get fit in your garden, Say good-bye
to sugar & Look (and feel) younger

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY MENOPAUSE

A mind-body approach that works

PROBLEM SOLVED!

Your most embarrassing
health issues ... See page 49

The Clear Skin Diet



RAINBEAU MARS

shares her yoga message
with the world



NATURAL SOLUTIONS

Natural Cures to Ease Menopause • The Health Benefits of Gardening • An Age-by-Age Guide to Spa Treatments

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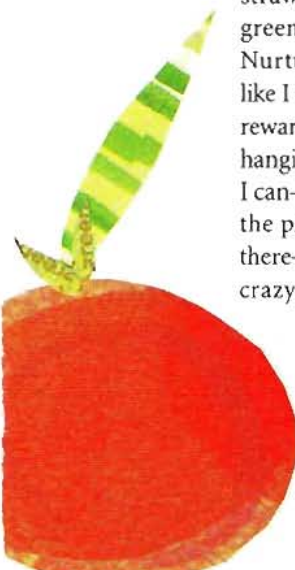


Get Growing!

Big or small, a garden can help you cultivate a healthy body and calm mind.

Written by JODI HELMER

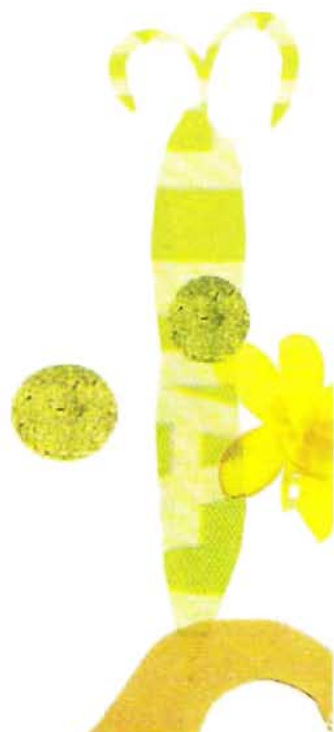
Illustrated by DONNA GRETHEN



My fascination with growing food started in the third grade, when the entire class grew tiny tomato plants on the windowsill of our classroom. The plants died before sprouting any fruit, but my interest in gardening took root. Since then, I've had many more successes in the garden: strawberries, melons, fresh salad greens, and yes, even tomatoes. Nurturing those tiny plants, just like I did when I was 8, is more than rewarding; these days I find myself hanging out in my garden as often as I can—pulling a few weeds, watering the plants, sometimes just sitting there—when I need a break from my crazy work schedule.

Getting a little dirt under your fingernails feeds your soul, says KK Haspel, founder of The Farm, a 2.5-acre biodynamic farm in Southold, New York. "There is nothing more joyful than being in nature and tending a garden," she says. "Even if you only grow one tomato, it will be the best tomato you've ever tasted."

Haspel is part of a growing trend: backyard gardening. Burpee, the national seed manufacturer, reports sales of vegetable and herb seeds increased 40 percent in 2007; the number of community gardens in the US and Canada has increased more than 332 percent since 1996; and the online group Kitchen Gardeners International, a non-profit organization that promotes





Hip flexor stretch

Stand with feet hip-width apart and arms at your sides. Step forward with your right leg and bend your left knee toward the ground, picking up a watering can (or shovel or even a large weed) with your right hand. If your hip flexors are especially tight, pause in the lunge and tilt your pelvis up, feeling a stretch in your upper left thigh and hip flexor. Step back to your starting position, repeat on the left, and do five repetitions on each side.



Inner thigh release

Stand with feet spread wide (about 3½ feet apart), toes pointed forward, knees bent, and back straight. Holding a long-handled hoe for balance, slowly move forward over the right leg, straightening the left leg, and stretching the left inner thigh. Hold for 10 seconds. Slowly return to center. Do 10 times on each side.

Ready, set, grow: Make your garden grow—no matter your space



If you have a patio ...

WHAT TO GROW Choose foods that can be grown in containers. Your best bets? Tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, and beans. Herbs like basil and thyme can be grown in pots on a sunny windowsill.

SUPPLIES Terra-cotta pots in several sizes, organic potting soil, seeds or seedlings, a watering can, and a small trowel.

GETTING STARTED Fill each pot ¾ full with organic potting soil. Follow planting

instructions on the package. Add more soil to cover the seeds or roots. Water thoroughly and place pots in full sun. For pests, try a soap and water mixture or a nontoxic pesticide.

For a small backyard ...

WHAT TO GROW Try tomatoes, salad greens, cucumbers, beans, carrots, peas, eggplant, peppers, broccoli, asparagus, strawberries, and blueberries.

SUPPLIES Seeds and/or seedlings, organic garden soil, compost, shovel, rake, hoe, kneeling pads, garden gloves, and a hose for irrigation

GETTING STARTED Turn the existing soil in the garden, adding organic soil and compost for a nutrient-rich mix. Follow planting instructions on the package,

paying careful attention to spacing and sunlight requirements. Water thoroughly after planting and throughout the growing season.

When you have acreage ...

WHAT TO GROW Take advantage of the extra space to plant oversized crops like corn and fruit trees.

SUPPLIES You'll need the same tools as a backyard gardener.

GETTING STARTED Planting an acreage is the same as starting a backyard garden, just on a larger scale. All of the same rules apply. ■

JODI HELMER is the author of *The Green Year: 365 Small Things You Can Do to Make a Big Difference* (Alpha, 2008).

Post-gardening moves

Gardening means lots of bending, kneeling, stretching—and sore muscles. Avoid injury and soothe aches and pains with these simple stretches from Jeffrey P. Restuccio, author of *Get Fit Through Gardening* (Hatherleigh Press, 2008).



Upper-back stretch

Stand upright, feet together, about 3 feet from a tree. Keeping your arms and legs straight, bend forward, flatten your back and grasp the tree with both hands. Extend your shoulders and press down on the tree until there is a slight arch in your back. Exhale and hold the stretch for 10 seconds.

Torso twists

Stand with feet hip-width apart and a broomstick or rake handle across your shoulders, arms extended and wrists looped over the handle's ends. Twist slowly to the left, exhaling and holding the stretch for five to 10 seconds. Repeat to the right. Do 10 repetitions.



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