



WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Gardening for All

Let's talk about gardening. For thousands of years following the advent of crop cultivation, the average person had at least some tangible connection to the growing of their own food. Today, for most of us—especially in cities—the growing of food is an abstract concept. When we think about farming, we think of agribusiness, and produce trucked in from across county lines. We are physically and spiritually separated from the cultivation of our own nutrients. This separation could be one reason why so few people take their food choices seriously.

One solution is to grow your own food. If you don't already have a garden, there are many great ways to get started no matter where you live. With the right equipment and a little know-how, you can grow herbs and produce anywhere.

Below are some tips for growing produce in all types of environments:

- **Apartment without a balcony:** Open your windows for sunlight and fresh air, but grow lights and rotating fans work well, too. Use organic potting mixes. Grow herbs and fast-growing greens (e.g., basil, chives, cilantro, lettuce, mustard mix, arugula, spinach, and chard).
- **Apartment with a balcony:** Mind the balcony's weight limit; plants need water, which adds significant weight. Plants may grow larger and more quickly than you expect, so avoid overcrowding. Grow greens and root crops (e.g., beets, carrots, leeks, onions, radishes, and turnips). In the summer, try cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, summer squash, and tomatoes.
- **House with a yard:** Growing food outside means dealing with critters. Build pest control into your setup: Fence in your growing area; install hoops over the beds and cover them with netting; and place a hardware cloth at the bottom of raised beds before laying soil. As for weeds, deal with them early and often.
- **Community garden:** Join one near you, or start your own. In addition to all the benefits of growing your own food, you'll also meet your neighbors!

Learn more about how to grow food at home [here!](#)

Knowing what to grow can be difficult at first. Click [here](#) for Easy-to-Grow Plants to use as a starting guide. Knowing what fruits and vegetables to eat may also help you decide what you want to plant in your garden. Check out the additional flyers to learn more about fruit and vegetable recommendations!