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My Health My Voice

Our blueprint for health

North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) is working with our community to develop a blueprint for Integrated Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs and Suicide Prevention in our region.

This plan will examine what works and what doesn't in mental health, alcohol and other drugs and suicide prevention in our region, and identify opportunities to improve mental health services and access.

We have been running workshops, interviews, surveys and focus groups with people living in our region to find out what they think about the mental health system.

Some of the key issues that we have heard include:

- *It's hard to know when to ask for help or where to get help*
- *GPs are a critical first step in getting care*
- *After seeing the GP people need help to understand what happens next*
- *There are few options unless you are in crisis or require specialist support*
- *When accessing services people often don't feel heard, safe or understood*

Local resident Gabrielle has contributed to the development of the plan. She said that she wants people to know that it's okay to talk about mental illness and to feel down sometimes.

"I also think money should be spent on green spaces, places where people and society can meet," Gabrielle said. "There are not enough trees. There are not enough places for people to connect with nature and feel better. I think that it's through that connection with nature that we are at peace."

NWMPHN is continuing to develop the blueprint during the current COVID-19 pandemic, using online and remote engagement to keep the community involved. The lessons learned about mental health during this time are also shaping what the final plan will include.

To find out more please go to: blueprintforhealth.org.au



shared ownership
and development



"I'd continue to demystify mental illness, and to let people know that it's okay to feel down, and that everybody does."

— Gabrielle

Support during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing a lot of stress, anxiety and hardship across our community. If you need help with your mental health during this time, support is available.

- [CAREinMIND Wellbeing Support](#)
Service offers free 24/7 telephone or online counselling to people living, working or studying in the NWMPHN region.
- [Beyond Blue](#) has been funded to create a dedicated coronavirus wellbeing support line.
- [Head to Health](#) includes a dedicated COVID-19 support section with resources.

You can keep updated with reliable information on COVID-19 and support services available at:

- The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website: dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus
- health.gov.au
- The North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network COVID-19 hub has a [patient resources](https://nwmphn.org.au/covid-resources) section: nwmphn.org.au/covid-resources

Also don't forget you can [still see your GP](#) during COVID-19.



For COVID-19 information in other languages go to dhhs.vic.gov.au

Protect yourself from COVID-19 and the flu

One of the best ways to protect ourselves and others from illness is good personal hygiene.

When you practise good hygiene you:

- cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue
- put used tissues straight into the bin
- wash your hands often with soap and water
- use alcohol-based hand sanitisers

- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- clean and disinfect surfaces such as benchtops, desks and doorknobs
- clean and disinfect objects such as mobile phones, keys, wallets and work passes

increase the amount of fresh air available by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning

What else can you do to protect yourself?

There isn't a vaccine for COVID-19 yet but there is a vaccine for the flu. Having the flu vaccine is even more important this year as getting the flu at the same time as COVID-19 could be very dangerous.

Contact your doctor or pharmacist to ask about how you and your family can get the flu vaccine.

Head to Health

Head to Health is a website that can help you find digital mental health services from some of Australia's most trusted mental health organisations.

It is provided by the Australian Department of Health and brings together apps, online programs, online forums, phone services and a range of information resources.

If you are trying to improve your own sense of wellbeing, looking for help with something that is bothering you, or helping someone you care about—Head to Health is a good place to start.

Go to headtohealth.gov.au

For information in other languages go to: [Embrace Multicultural Mental Health](#) or [Transcultural Mental Health Centre](#)

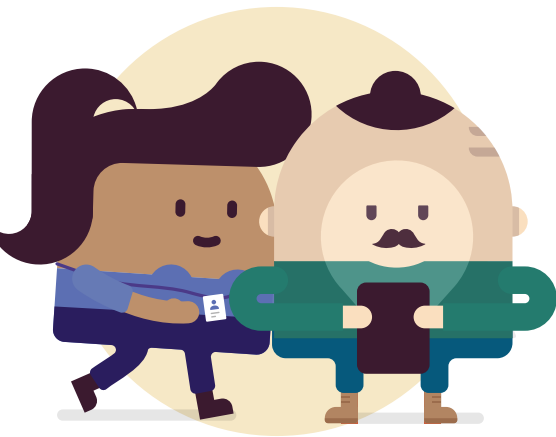


Image courtesy of Head to Health

Toasted Tortilla Wrap Recipe

Ingredients

- 4 small tortillas
- 300 g can no-added-salt four bean mix, drained and rinsed
- 1 tsp chilli sauce
- 1 small avocado, peeled and sliced

Recipe sourced from livelighter.com.au

Method

1. Mix beans and chilli sauce together
2. Make sandwiches of tortillas, beans and avocado slices.
3. Place on a non-stick fry pan to brown.
4. To flatten, place a plate on top and weight it down with a large can.
5. When browned and crisp, turn over.
6. Repeat for next sandwich.



Image courtesy of Livelighter