Hi, members,

Congratulations to everyone who participated in The Tanger Be Well Center’s 30 Days of Fitness program! We are very pleased to see the great number of personal goals reached, and all of the barriers to being active that were broken. We greatly appreciate your participation and look forward to taking on new fitness challenges together in the future. Below is a list of our winners.

Thank you so much!

The Be Well Staff

1st Place: Vrushank Bhatt
Brooke Sylvester

2nd Place: April Lamrock
Judi Bartek

3rd Place: Siri Nipita
Roxane Larouche
Andrea Vatulas
Benefits of growing your own food
There are many good reasons to grow some, or all, of your own food. First of all, it simply tastes better! A sun-ripened tomato, just picked off the vine, will be much sweeter and more flavorful than a mushy store tomato which was picked while green and ripened in a warehouse. This is why local produce is fresher and of better quality than its mass-market counterpart. By growing your own food, you will be eating healthier while also saving money! Finally, gardening is a great way to stay active, de-stress, and have fun!

What kind of soil should I use?
Good container soil is the key to success. Use a good quality soil-less potting mix in the container. Don’t use regular garden soil because it will compact and may contain parasites, diseases, or fungi. A good soil-less mix is composed mostly of peat moss and perlite (perhaps with a very small amount of fertilizer and/or wetting agent).

How should I feed my plants?
Use a liquid fish or seaweed fertilizer for container plants. As a rule, feed every one or two weeks, and be sure to follow the instructions which come with the fertilizer. Alternatively, dilute the product to a weak solution (approximately one-to-five concentration, or less) and feed every time you water. Be careful not to overfeed as this will harm your plant.

How often should I water my plants?
There are no clear-cut rules, but here are some tips: Use a good soil mix that will retain water well; then, how often you water will depend on how moist the soil is. You should only water when needed. If the soil feels dry about an inch below the surface, or the leaves are becoming brown and dried, then it is definitely time to water. Conversely, if your plant is always sitting in a pool of water after watering, you may be watering too often. Avoid this because soil that is too wet will lead to root rot.

What are some easy plants to start with?
Herbs are great to start with because they are easy to care for – and they smell great in your kitchen! Drought-tolerant herbs like rosemary or thyme are particularly good choices. These will do well even with infrequent watering. Vegetables that are easy to start with include lettuce, radishes, and bush-type beans. These can be grown in small-to-medium size containers and mature quickly (30-50 days). Start with these and you will soon be reaping the rewards!

Is it true that I can start plants from my kitchen scraps?
Yes! One easy way to start growing plants is from root cuttings from your kitchen scraps. This will work for scallions, celery, bok choy, and root vegetables, to name just a few. Cut off the entire root with about one inch of stalk attached, and place it in a bowl or glass with just enough clean water to cover the roots. After one to two weeks in a sunny spot, shoots will start to grow. Some plants, like scallions, can continue to be grown in a glass of water. Most other vegetables will need to be transferred to a container as they mature.