

# YOUR SPECIAL MONTH

*“The world’s favorite season is the spring.  
All things seem possible in May.”*

~ Edwin Way Teale



## Tree of the Month – Elm

Elm trees encompass a wide variety of plants in the elm family, the majority of which grow in the northern hemisphere. Some types include the American elm, red elm, cedar elm, English elm, and Chinese elm. These gorgeous, hardy, adaptable trees are favored in cities, parks, and backyards because they grow quickly with a wide canopy and provide excellent shade. Unfortunately, a 1930s outbreak of Dutch elm disease killed many elms in American and European cities. Efforts to breed disease-resistant varieties are ongoing, with some success in developing



trees that can withstand the devastating effects of Dutch elm disease. These beautiful trees typically grow between 50 and 70 feet tall, but some species can top 100 feet. Elm trees have jagged (or “toothed”) leaves, petal-less flowers, and fruit called samaras, which each contain one seed. Elm wood is a popular choice for building projects and furniture. traditions.

## Special Days

**May Day**  
May 1

**Cinco de Mayo**  
May 5

**Mother’s Day**  
May 12

**Armed Forces Day (U.S.)**  
May 18

**Victoria Day (Canada)**  
May 20

**Memorial Day**  
May 27

## Flower – Lily of the Valley



Lily of the valley, the birth flower for May, got its name from early Christian monks. The flower’s Latin name, *Convallaria majalis*, means “valley” (*Convallaria*) and “the month of May” (*majalis*), which probably refers to where it thrives and when it blooms. These delicate, white, bell-shaped perennials are very fragrant. They signify purity and innocence and also are said to bring luck in love. For these reasons, they are often the choice for bridal bouquets.

## Birthstone – Emerald



The emerald is the birthstone for May. This stone’s name was derived from the Greek word *smaragdus*, which is a term that was applied to several kinds of green stones. In the Middle Ages, the stone was thought to foretell the future. It was also believed to cure epilepsy and fever and to protect the wearer from panic. Emeralds frequently occur inside shale, a fine-grained sedimentary rock. They are found in many parts of the world, but Colombia is known to mine the largest and highest-quality emeralds.

## Take Care in May

Spring is synonymous with rejuvenation and starting anew. This month is dedicated to several key elements of living well and is the perfect time to focus on self-care.

### Get Those ZZZs

May is Better Sleep Month, so take time to revitalize your sleep habits. Experts suggest sleeping in a cool, dark room and going to bed and waking up at the same times daily.

### Maximize Those Steps

In honor of National Walking Month, schedule a daily stroll or two with friends or family. Research shows that taking

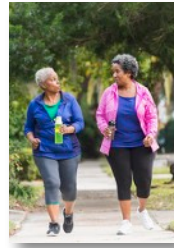
walks is one of the best things you can do for your health.

### Feel Good

May is also Mental Health Awareness Month, so now is a great time to take stock of your emotional well-being. Be kind to yourself, reach out for help if you need it, and offer support to those in your community who may need a friend.

### Joint Care

Arthritis Awareness Month is in May each year. Contact your doctor if you have any untreated aches and pains in your joints.



## ABCs and 1, 2, 3s

Legend has it that Confucius was the world's first teacher, and millions have followed in his footsteps. Teachers educate and shape young minds. Honor them on May 7 (and year-round!) for National Teachers Day.

## May Zodiacs

Taurus (The Bull)  
May 1–20

Gemini (The Twins)  
May 21–31

*May* is the fifth month of the year on the Gregorian calendar and one of seven months with 31 days. May is a special month for just about every culture. What's not to love? May signals the height of spring, and summer's just around the corner! For Roman Catholics, it is the month to honor the Virgin Mary; for Buddhists, it marks the Buddha's enlightenment; for early pagan cultures, May was the time to celebrate the month's namesake, Maia, goddess of the life cycle.

## The Good Old Days

In 1943 (over 80 years ago), the average annual income was \$2,043. Today, it's around \$60,000. The average cost of a new house was \$3,600. A loaf of bread was 9¢, and a gallon of milk was 62¢. Stamps were 3¢ each. A car cost \$1,100, and gas was just 21¢ per gallon. According to the Consumer Price Index calculator, \$1 in 1943 is equivalent to over \$14 in today's money.

## What's Lucky in May?

Lucky Color: Yellow  
Lucky Animal: Squirrel  
Lucky Letters: *B* and *S*  
Lucky Day: Friday  
Lucky Plant: Rose



## May Birthdays

Calamity Jane (frontierswoman) – May 1, 1852  
Dwayne Johnson (actor) – May 2, 1972  
Robert Browning (poet) – May 7, 1812  
Don Rickles (comedian) – May 8, 1926  
Harriet Quimby (aviator) – May 11, 1875  
Stevie Wonder (musician) – May 13, 1950  
Madeleine Albright (diplomat) – May 15, 1937  
Janet Jackson (singer) – May 16, 1966  
Cool Papa Bell (baseball player) – May 17, 1903  
Tina Fey (comedienne) – May 18, 1970  
Raymond Burr (actor) – May 21, 1917  
Sonia Rykiel (fashion designer) – May 25, 1930  
Bob Hope (comedian) – May 29, 1903  
Brooke Shields (actress) – May 31, 1965