

Momentum

Living healthy in both mind and body



Employee Assistance Program
For Professional Consultation

Call 1-800-523-5668

For TTY Users: 1-800-456-4006

Foods that fuel the brain

- ✓ For mental sharpness, eat seafood such as salmon, mackerel, herring and trout that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids.
- ✓ To boost cognition and memory, eat foods high in antioxidants including blueberries, grapes, nuts and leafy greens.
- ✓ For steadier energy, eat complex carbohydrates like whole wheat bread, green and starchy vegetables, brown rice and soy.
- ✓ To help regulate levels of serotonin (and mood), eat lean proteins like turkey, chicken, lean beef, eggs and beans.

The benefits of being physically healthy

Whether your doctor tells you to adopt better health habits, or the motivation comes from a discouraging discovery such as not being able to fit into last year's outfits, realizing that change will be needed can be a harsh wakeup call. It helps to keep in mind the basic benefits of living more actively.

Both a healthy eating plan and regular physical activity play a critical role in getting to and staying at a healthy weight. If exercising has proven daunting to you, try to be more active in simple ways throughout the day such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

Being active can help you prevent or manage a wide range of health problems including heart disease, stroke, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancer, arthritis and falls. It also helps support better digestion and bone density.

Getting regular exercise is also one of the best ways to reduce stress, anxiety and depression, elevate and stabilize your mood (via production of endorphins, the feel-good neurotransmitters), improve sleep quality, and boost your self-esteem!

If you're struggling to find or maintain a good exercise plan, consider new activities that you might find fun—from dancing to swimming to cycling to martial arts to dog walking.



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Finding emotional balance

Rather than having strong emotional reactions to everything—and swinging like an emotional pendulum—it's better to learn how to identify, regulate and release emotions.

- Putting your emotions into a few words helps you respond with control rather than with an unconscious, habitual reaction. For example, say to yourself, "I'm feeling hurt" or "I'm feeling excluded." From this non-judgmental starting point, you can begin to deal with the issue without it overwhelming you.
- Being prepared in advance to deal with routinely irritating situations—your emotional triggers—can help reduce their power over you.
- Once you've identified an emotion, take time to breathe in and out deeply. Exhaling an unwanted feeling helps deflate its power.
- If you've got a trusted friend or family member handy, share your experience of uncomfortable feelings with them.
- Work out your emotions via a brisk 30-minute walk or bike ride, pound a gym workout, or do whatever vigorous exercise you prefer. Exercise helps you regain balance.

Children and living healthy



Be a good role model

You don't have to be perfect all the time, but if children see you trying to eat right and getting physically active, they'll take notice of your efforts. You'll send a message that good health is important to your family. Encourage a positive family attitude regarding healthy eating and exercise.



Involve the whole family

Plan times for everyone to be active together. Take walks, ride bikes, go swimming, visit a park, garden, or play hide-and-seek outside. Everyone will benefit from the exercise and time together. Let your children experiment with different physical activities so that they find things they love doing. This can instill lifelong healthy habits.



Limit screen time

When kids spend too much time on passive entertainment such as TV, video games, computers and phones, it can lead to a sedentary lifestyle and excessive snacking. These habits increase risks for obesity and cardiovascular disease. Strive to limit screen time to two hours per day.

Additional sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Heart Association, Mayo Clinic, Psychology Today, WebMD, Good Relaxation.



Webinar—Join us on Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2016 for a wellness webinar entitled *Well-being for a Healthier Body and Mind*. Register [here](#).