

WALK THE TALK

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

April 2018



It's Stress Awareness Month!

Are you feeling chronically fatigued?

Feeling tired or overworked sometimes is normal, and often unavoidable. Exhaustion can be caused by long, stressful workdays and/or hectic personal schedules combined with little rest. A good night's sleep can usually resolve temporary fatigue. However, if you're feeling constant fatigue that doesn't get better with sleep, this can be problematic! A constant state of tiredness and low energy can drain your mood, motivation and concentration, and chronic fatigue can ultimately affect your overall health and well-being.



In most cases, fatigue arises from your lifestyle habits and routines. A great first step in addressing your fatigue is taking an inventory of your daily activities. Use this list to get started taking stock of your day to day:

Excessive drinking or drug use. Experts recommend that women have no more than one drink per day and men no more than two. Alcohol can have a depressive effect, so anything more than this could easily zap your energy.

Too little exercise. A sedentary lifestyle can leave you feeling sluggish and morose. Physical activity kick starts circulation and feel-good hormones in your body, helping you to feel alert and energized. Aim to get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity a day like brisk walking.

Lack of sleep or lack of quality sleep. Experts recommend that adults get around 7-8 hours of sleep per night. Make sleep a priority – your health truly depends on it.

Poor nutrition. Your body needs essential nutrients to function properly. If you're not fueling your body with the nutrition it needs, you will feel sluggish. Aim to eat fruits and veggies every day—they're loaded with the vitamins, minerals and fiber your body needs to stay healthy and energized.

Unmanaged stress. Chronic stress can leave you chronically fatigued. Make sure you're following the tips above, as they will help you manage the burden of stress on your body. Also, make sure you're making time for things you enjoy, a key strategy for managing stress.

Adapted from: WELCOA Well-Inspired.



April is Also Humor Month!

Did you know that laughter really IS the best medicine? Laughter can decrease stress levels!



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Layered Mason Jar Salad

Source: www.ilovepecans.org



April is Pecan Month and April 23rd is Picnic Day. Spending time with friends and family

is a great way to relieve stress. In addition, what better way to enjoy their company than a potluck picnic? Try this mason jar salad at your next gathering!

Prep: 30 | Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients:

For Vinaigrette

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ⅛ tsp. black pepper
- 2 navel oranges, zested

For Salad

- 1½ pounds Brussels sprouts
- ½ cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 navel oranges, segmented
- 1 pound shrimp (40-60 count) cooked, peeled and deveined
- 2 yellow bell peppers, diced
- 1 cup pecan halves, toasted
- 4 (12-ounce) mason jars with lids

Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 500 degree F.
2. Place the Brussel sprouts in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast until lightly charred, about 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the oven. When cool enough to handle, shave into thin strands and set aside.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the pecan oil, cider vinegar, honey, salt, black pepper and orange zest until well combined.
4. To assemble the salad, pour 2 tablespoons of vinaigrette into each Mason jar. Evenly distribute layers of sliced red onion, orange segments, shrimp, diced yellow peppers, and shaved Brussel sprouts.
5. Top with toasted pecans halves. Seal with a lid and refrigerated until ready to eat.

Meal Prep Your Way to a Better Work Week!



Making time to cook one or two larger meals on the weekend can feel daunting, especially if your weekend schedule is already packed.

However, meal prep is a great way to buy yourself more time during the week! Which strategy works for you?

Strategy 1: Make extra servings of what you like to eat. You can pre-pack healthy lunches for the week, freeze dinner for future weeks, or have dinner ready to go for the next few nights. This works well with homemade pizza, stir-fry, mason jar salads (check out this month's recipe!) and bigger projects like lasagna, enchiladas or soup. If you need snacks, pre-cut veggies and fruit salads.

Strategy 2: When chopping or cooking meat or vegetables, make extras of certain ingredients and fold them into future meals. This works best with mixed vegetables or meats like ground beef – pre-cooking them can mean just heating them up later and having tacos on Tuesday! If you've pre-diced tomatoes and shredded cheese on Sunday, it's even easier to put your taco bar together quickly.

Other tips and tricks:

- **Make room in your freezer** to prevent food waste and prepare food for future weeks.
- **Plan for food storage.** Glass containers won't take on the smell of your food, but they weigh more. Plastic tubs or bags are reusable but can't be heated in the microwave.
- **Label tubs with the cooking date** before you pop them in the freezer.
- **Portion food out before storing** in the freezer. For babies, use ice cube trays; for older children and adults, use muffin tins. Thaw only what you need.
- **You don't have to make the whole meal.** Precooking certain items, such as rice and vegetables, allows you simply to cook chicken or tofu to make a stir-fry or add a protein or beans to make burrito bowls.

Adapted from: <http://oeachoice.com/meal-prepping-your-way-to-a-better-work-week/>



Move More & Stress Less!

Exercise increases your overall health and your sense of well-being, which puts more pep in your step every day. But exercise also has some direct stress-busting benefits.

It pumps up your endorphins. Physical activity helps bump up the production of your brain's feel-good neurotransmitters, called endorphins. Although this function is often referred to as a runner's high, a rousing game of tennis or a nature hike also can contribute to this same feeling.

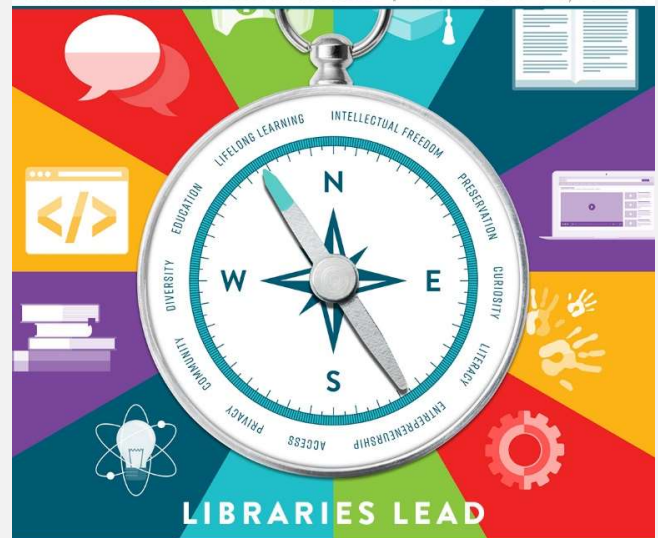
It's meditation in motion. After a fast-paced game of racquetball or several laps in the pool, you'll often find that you've forgotten the day's irritations and concentrated only on your body's movements. As you regularly begin to shed your daily tensions through movement and physical activity, you may find that this focus on a single task, and the resulting energy and optimism, can help you remain calm and clear in everything you do.

It improves your mood. Regular exercise can increase self-confidence, it can relax you, and it can lower the symptoms associated with mild depression and anxiety. Exercise can also improve your sleep, which is often disrupted by stress, depression and anxiety. All of these exercise benefits can ease your stress levels and give you a sense of command over your body and your life.

From: www.mayoclinic.org

Celebrate National Library Week!

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK | APRIL 8-14, 2018



ALA American Library Association

Library Champions

LIBRARIES TRANSFORM

Did You Know?

- Reading to kids supports brain development.
- Reading exercises our brain.
- Reading teaches kids about the world around them.
- Reading improves concentration.
- Reading helps a child's imagination to develop.
- Reading improves vocabulary and language skills (for kids AND adults!)
- Reading improves memory, focus and concentration.
- Reading improves analytical thinking skills.
- Reading encourages spending time together.
- Reading reduces stress!
- Spending time together reduces stress!

So celebrate Stress Awareness Month and National Library Week together for double the stress reduction this month!

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