

Wellness Tips

Feel free to use these 24 wellness tips in weekly team emails, newsletters, or meetings. Tips are also great to incorporate on the first slide of a PowerPoint for individuals to read while awaiting presentation start.

Physical Activity-

Exercise Myths:

Myth #1: Exercise has to be vigorous to be beneficial for my health. Doing anything that's brisk enough to get your heart pumping and make you break a sweat is beneficial to your health!

Myth #2: To be beneficial, I have to work out for a long time. You can break exercise up into bouts as short as 10 minutes and accumulate activity throughout the day this way.

Myth #3: I have to go to a gym or fitness center to exercise. Gyms and fitness centers are great but not a necessity, there are many things you can do at home with little or no equipment.

- Additional resource [here](#).

Stand Up to Sitting Down!

Did you know we sit an average of **12 hours** each day? Research suggests prolonged sitting is wreaking havoc on our health. Excessive sitting is cited as a key risk factor in 4 of the top 7 killers: heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers. It is also linked to obesity.

Lower your risk, sit less, stand up more, and keep your body moving. Standing, for even short periods of time, also can increase focus, alertness and productivity.

Stand up to sitting during your workday with these tips:

- Take a walking break, alone or with a coworker
- Stand, stretch, jump, walk, or get moving at least once every hour
- Take the stairs, even if it's just one flight
- Walk to speak in person instead of emailing
- Stand up or walk in place while on the phone

Additional resource [here](#).

What's the Big Deal with Resistance Training?

Resistance training helps maintain and combat the loss of muscle mass that occurs as we age. In addition to increasing our muscular fitness, resistance training can help prevent osteoporosis, decrease our risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure, improving cholesterol levels, and lowering body fat. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends that resistance training be done at least two (non-consecutive) days each week. Each workout should consist of 8-10 exercises and 8-12 repetitions for each exercise. Additional resource [here](#).

Nutrition:

Mindful Eating:

Mindful eating can help you enjoy your food more and reach your health goals. Try:

- Taking note of the color, texture, and smell of your food before taking a bite. What do you notice that you haven't noticed before?
- Chewing each bite entirely before having another bite. Notice how the food's taste and texture change with each chew.
- Enjoy an entire meal free of distractions. Just you, your thoughts, and your food.

Additional resource [here](#).

Reducing Sugar Intake:

Did you know the average American consumes a total of 350 calories a day from added sugars? In one year, most Americans will consume anywhere between 80-150 pounds of sugar! Consuming this much sugar can put us at higher risk for developing things like heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and other health problems. Try out these tips for reducing your added sugar intake:

- Choose plain water or carbonated water with lemon instead of a soda or juice.
- Buy plain varieties of products like yogurt or cereal and add fruit as a sweetener.
- Avoid making treats an everyday food and reward yourself with non-food rewards.
- Enjoy desserts occasionally, a smaller portion will help keep calories down while still satisfying your sweet tooth.

Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Eating Well on a Budget:

Eating well doesn't have to break the bank. Check out these tips for eating well while sticking to a budget.

- Meal plan:
 - Plan your meals before you shop based on what is on sale/in season, meals you actually enjoy cooking and eating, and ingredients that can be used in more than one meal.
- Grocery Shopping:
 - Make a list and stick to it.
 - Shop at home first. Use ingredients you already have in your pantry instead of buying new.
 - Shop in season.
 - Buy bulk when appropriate.
- Skip eating out. Preparing your meals at home can cut food costs dramatically.

Additional resource [here](#).

Workplace Snacking:

Snacking at work can have a huge impact on our health goals. Stay on track with your personal health goals with these office snacking tips:

- Not an option to remove office candy, sweets, or salty snacks? Store in opaque containers and/or place them in low traffic spots.
- Keep a few of your favorite snacks on-hand for convenience.
- High fiber snacks (like nuts, fruit, whole grains, & veggies) will curb your hunger for longer!

Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Mindfulness:

Basic Mindfulness:

Practicing mindfulness can help us to decrease stress and anxiety and put everything into perspective. In mindfulness practice, we connect with our innate awareness, giving ourselves the space to respond rather than react to daily stimulus. Mindfulness practices don't need to be complicated or take up a lot of your time. Try out one of the practices below daily to see what impact it has on your life.

- Additional resources [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Cultivate Gratitude:

Feeling like you're in a slump? Research has shown that expressing gratitude on a daily basis can improve your energy levels and mood as well as help you get more sleep, boost your immune system, and lower your risk of disease. Try this "Three Good Things" practice to help cultivate gratitude in your own life.

3 Good Things Practice:

- Take out a piece of paper
- Write down 3 good things that you are grateful for today
- Keep up the practice for at least 2 weeks before reflecting on your experience

Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

How Breathing Affects our Feelings:

When we are feeling anxious or scared, we tend to breathe quicker, shallow breaths. This leads to a lower concentration of carbon dioxide in our blood causing us to feel lightheaded, clammy, sweaty, and have tingling fingers or toes. Learning how to control our breathing can help us better manage the emotions we are feeling. Next time you are feeling anxious, scared, or upset try this:

- Sit comfortably. Close your eyes if you want to.
- Breathe slowly and steadily in through your nose for a count of 4.
- Hold your breath for a count of 2.
- Breathe out slowly and steadily for a count of 4.
- Repeat for a few minutes.

Additional resource [here](#).

Emotional Wellness:

Stress Management:

Positive thinking can help manage your stress and improve your overall health. Try to approach problems with a positive outlook, looking for the bright side and making the most out of a potentially bad situation. Try to find the best in others and yourself. To cultivate positive thinking, try writing three good things that happen each day, embracing humor, or starting each day with your favorite song!

- Additional resource [here](#).

Identifying Emotions:

Identifying and expressing our emotions in a healthy way can help us to better manage the way we are feeling and the impact those emotions have on us and our surroundings. Identifying what we are feeling in the moment allows us to take a step back and make a rational choice instead of letting emotion be our guide. Being able to identify our own emotions also helps us to develop better emotional intelligence which can help improve your relationship with yourself and others.

Use the following practice to help you identify your emotions:

- Write down three positive and three negative emotions you felt today.
- Now think of different words to describe those same emotions.

Additional resource [here](#).

Self-Appreciation:

Self-appreciation is a reflection of our inner sense of well-being. Having low self-appreciation can have many negative impacts on our overall health and wellbeing. Low self-appreciation can negatively impact our relationships with others and ourselves, our ability to do our jobs, and both our mental and physical health. While developing a greater self-appreciation can be difficult, there are some simple things you can do each day to help.

- Challenge negative thinking
- Identify situations or conditions that tend to deflate you
- Take a step back. Observe your thoughts, actions, and situation from an outsider's point of view
- Practice self-care

Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Self-Care:

Self-care is an essential part of our health and wellness. Unfortunately, it is one of the first things to fall by the wayside in times of stress or uncertainty. Ignoring self-care can lead to chronic stress, burnout, and depression. Simple things, done each day can help improve our self-care habits and improve our health and wellness. Look at the ideas below for ways you can practice self-care each day.

- Go for a walk
- Journal
- Meditate
- Go out in nature
- Listen to your favorite music/song
- Do something creative
- Reach out to your support network

Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Environmental Wellness:

Bringing the Outdoors In!

Many studies have shown the benefit that nature has on our overall health and wellbeing. But what if you can't get outside on a regular basis to reap the rewards nature has for us? More recent studies have shown that bringing nature inside to us has similar positive effects on health. Try bringing the outdoors in by:

- Adding plants to your home or office
- Listening to nature sounds
- Facing a window or nature scene

These simple tasks can help to boost productivity and focus, lower stress levels, and promote feelings of relaxation and calm.

- Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Sustainability:

Focusing on sustainability in many areas of life is a key part of maintaining our overall health and wellbeing. While sustainability often sounds like an overwhelming task, there are many small things you can do each day to live a more sustainable life. Check out the following tips for helping reduce your impact on the environment:

- Choose reusable! Instead of single use plastics, opt for reusable items instead
- Recycle! Make sure you are disposing of recyclable materials properly.
- Bring lunch from home instead of going out
- Get creative to limit food waste.

Visit the Office of Sustainability [here](#) for more ways to get involved.

Clutter:

Clutter is simply the accumulation of more possessions than can fit in the available space. Clutter can induce a physiological response increasing cortisol levels (stress hormone) in our body. Clutter can also make it difficult to move, think, and process both mentally and visually. Removing the clutter from a space can help us to be more productive and feel less stressed.

Tips to help declutter:

- Tidy by category, not location (i.e. all clothing, not just the bedroom closet)
- Start by discarding/donating- get rid of things first before you start to organize
 - If you find this difficult, invite an objective person to help

- Find a place for everything, and put everything in its place (prevents clutter from building back up)
- Store like items together
- Purchase with intention- don't buy or keep things "just because"

Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Intellectual Wellness:

Fostering Creativity:

Fostering our innate creativity is one way we can improve our intellectual wellness. Fostering creativity helps us to become better problem solvers, help us better cope with stress, and keeps our brain healthy as we age. There are many ways to foster creativity including writing, drawing, painting, dancing, playing or listening to music, and more! Think of a way you can foster your creativity and practice it for 5 minutes daily.

- Additional resources [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Growth Mindset:

Growth mindset is the idea that we can grow our brain's capacity to learn and solve problems. Having a growth mindset is important in many areas of life but it can have a particularly strong impact in achieving our health or wellness goals. You can nurture a growth mindset by asking for feedback, criticism, or ways to improve, and by looking for opportunities to grow instead of obstacles.

- Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Intellectual Wellness:

Intellectual wellness focuses on engaging in creative and mentally stimulating activities, expanding your knowledge and imparting knowledge to others. Our intellectual wellness is a key piece of our total health and wellness. We can set goals to improve our intellectual wellness in many different ways. Here are a few suggestions:

- Stay open-minded. Listen to other people's opinions and accept them without judgement.
- Learn a new skill. Take a class, watch a video, or read a book about how to do something you've never done before.
- Be creative. Creative outlets are one great way to help foster our intellectual wellness.

Take the intellectual wellness assessment [here](#) to see where you stand.

Additional resource [here](#).

Social Wellness:

Assertive Communication:

Communicating assertively means clearly and calmly expressing what you want without being too aggressive or passive. Communicating assertively doesn't guarantee that your needs will be met but it makes it more likely, and it can improve your relationships with others. Assertive communication includes compromise, talking and listening, and recognizing that your needs matter as much as anyone else's.

- Additional resource [here](#).

Support System:

Having a support system is an essential part of your health and wellness. This support system can be made up of friends, family, and coworkers. Having a social support system can help you better deal with stress, improve your mental health and self-esteem, and help encourage healthy lifestyle behaviors. Grow your social support system by taking classes, volunteering, or joining a gym or fitness group.

- Additional resource [here](#).

Social Wellness:

Social wellness refers to the relationships we have and how we interact with others. Social wellness involves building healthy, nurturing and supportive relationships as well as fostering a genuine connection with those around you. Having good social wellness is an important part of developing emotional resilience. Boost your social wellness by reaching out to someone you haven't spoken to in a while, learning more about your communication style, or expressing gratitude for your support system.

- Additional resource [here](#).

Physical Wellness:

Sleep:

Sleep is important for both our physical and mental wellbeing. Getting enough sleep can help with mood regulation, learning and memory, healthy eating, weight management, and increase our energy levels. Most adults need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each night. Develop a bedtime routine and turn off electronics at least 1 hour before going to sleep to help you get more restful sleep.

- Additional resources [here](#) and [here](#).