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BROWARD
County Public Schools

Wellness Newsletter

April 2020

Live. Life. Well.

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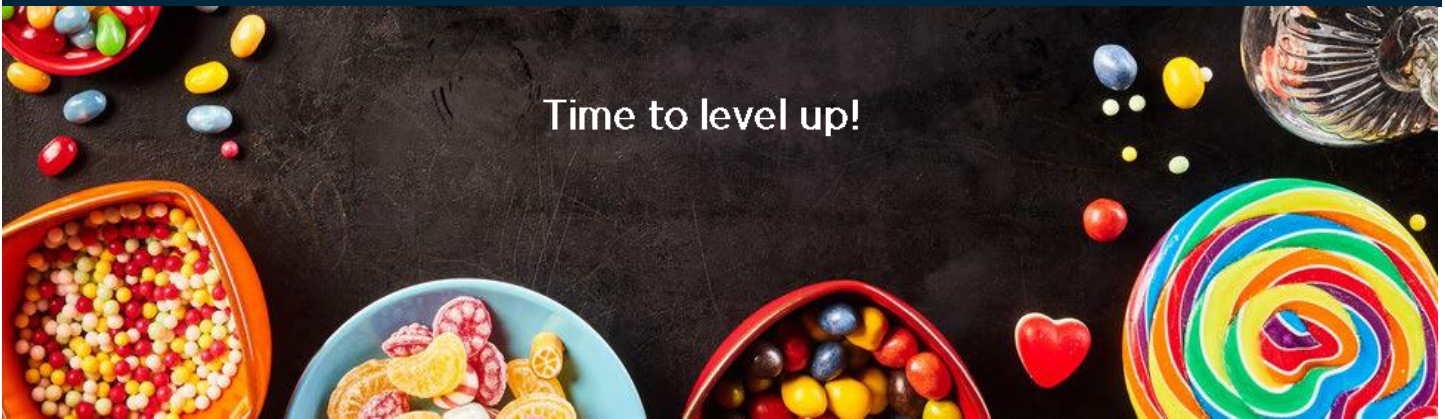
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Time to level up!

Defeat Your Diet-Killers

Have your weight loss efforts come to a standstill? Is what worked in the past no longer working? Consider these potential diet-killers and adjust your strategies to continue pushing toward your weight loss goals:

Alcohol

Happy hours are a great way to connect with friends and coworkers on a social level, but they can wreak havoc on your health over time. While [moderate drinking](#)¹ up to one drink for women and two drinks for men each day—has been correlated with [good health](#)², it does not do much in terms of furthering your weight loss efforts. At roughly 7 calories per gram, alcohol contains nearly double the number of calories as carbohydrates and proteins. If weight loss is your goal, alcohol can pose a pretty significant obstacle.



Sugary Drinks

Sugar lurks in many foods and beverages, but sweetened drinks are a double-edged sword. Not only do empty-calorie sugary drinks offer very little in terms of nutritional value, they are also digested quickly. The result? You are more likely to over-indulge and rack up more calories than you intended. Research has shown that drinking just one sugary drink daily can add 5 [pounds](#)³ to your waistline each year.



Your Social Network

Look beyond your plate and consider who you are spending the most time with. [Researchers](#)⁴ have discovered that our eating behaviors are highly influenced by our circle of friends.

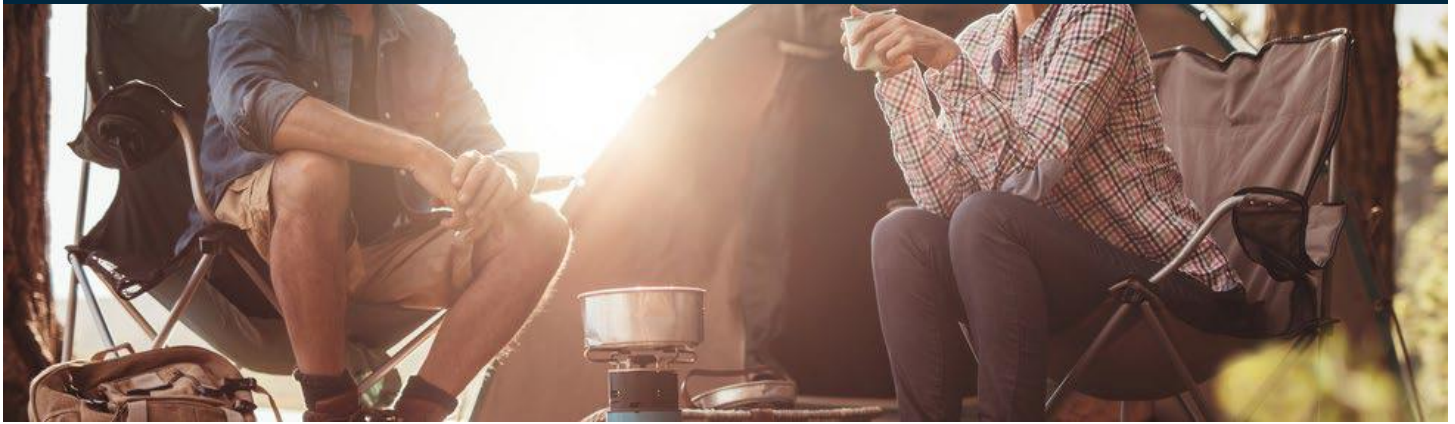


Snacking

While you may have heard that eating several small meals each day is good for you, it can also increase your overall daily caloric intake. Frequent snacking can interfere with your body's ability to regulate hunger and fullness, and defeat your weight loss attempts.



1. <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/faqs.htm>
2. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-life-depth/alcohol/art-20044551>
3. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/sugary-drinks/>
4. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa066082>



Explore the Great Outdoors

Nature offers many health [benefits](#)⁵, including improved mood and higher vitamin D levels. It has also been linked to lower blood pressure, improved sleep, and enhanced immune function. Forest bathing is a fancier way of saying spending time in nature, and it is gaining popularity. That is not surprising, considering so many of us find ourselves stuck inside during the workday. Fortunately, spending time in nature can look like a lot of things.

Here are some ideas to help you explore the great outdoors:

Dine outside

Dining out is the norm for many, but when is the last time you dined outside? Organize a weekend picnic or simply find some green space to have lunch outside.

Take a hike

Walking is an easy way to experience nature, and it does not require a high level of physical fitness either. Check to see if any local community groups organize walking, hiking, or running groups so you can connect with nature as well as others in your community.

Campout

Camping allows you to experience nature on a whole new level. Whether you pitch a tent in your backyard or travel to a campground, experiencing nature for an extended period of time can do wonders.

Volunteer

Many local, state, and national parks have volunteer positions that offer an opportunity to both reap the health benefits of being outdoors while also giving back to your community. It is a win-win.

Adventure Travel

Adventure travel is one of the fastest [growing](#)⁶ segments in the travel industry. Cruising, sailing, rafting, over-landing, mountain climbing, hiking, safaris, and other unique types of travel can involve various levels of physical activity while you explore the world's expansive natural landscapes. If you are thinking about doing something different for your next vacation, consider adventure travel.



5. <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/90720.html>

6. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-release-46-cagr-to-2020-597059331.html>



Stay Motivated and Beat Your Boredom

Staying motivated can be tough, especially when falling back on familiar routines feels a whole lot easier. Consider these tips to help you stay motivated when it comes to your health goals:

Stay connected to your why

Vision boards can be powerful motivators, offering graphic images that help reconnect you with why you are investing energy and time into your goals in the first place.



Focus on one thing

When you have too many goals or too many items on your to-do list, it can feel overwhelming. That can deter your motivation to do anything at all. Concentrating on one thing each day helps keep you focused and motivated.

Buddy up

Invite a friend to join you at the gym, attend a yoga class, or take a walk in your neighborhood. Research has shown that when you have an accountability partner, you are more likely to follow through with your intentions. When someone else is counting on you, you are more likely to show up.



Change your routine

Routines can get boring. When things get boring, motivation wanes. That is why it is hard to stick to the same meal plan week after week. Changing up your routine every month or so can help you maintain excitement about your goals. For example, changing the time of day you exercise or where you eat lunch are easy ways to shift your momentum.

Monitor your progress

Whether you use an app or a sheet of paper, tracking your progress can serve as visual motivation. Monitoring helps us transform actions into habits.



Ways to Keep Your Body Healthy

A healthy body not only contributes to a more active, productive and fulfilling life, but can also add years to your life. When your body has a strong immune system to combat health problems, your risk of developing eye problems, arthritis and chronic diseases like cancer, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease is reduced. By following a few guidelines, you can develop habits that contribute to the ongoing health of your body.

Eat Healthy Foods

When you eat right, you not only feel better and have more energy, but you also provide your body with vital nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins, minerals and fiber that maintain your body's health. A nutrient-rich diet includes whole grains, fish, nuts, eggs, poultry, lean meats, fat-free or low-fat dairy foods such as yogurt and fortified milk, and unsaturated fats like olive oil and avocados. Avoid processed and refined foods, which are typically loaded with saturated fats and sugar. These foods have little nutritional value and can cause your blood glucose levels to rise and then quickly drop, leaving you feeling tired.

Regular Exercise

Eating a healthy diet and participating in regular exercise is crucial to keeping your body healthy. Regular physical activity helps control your weight, strengthens your bones and muscles, improves your mood and may add extra years to your life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, is safe for most people. Participate in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise a week. If you are experiencing health issues, check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

Get Enough Sleep

Although the amount of sleep needed varies with each individual, getting adequate, quality sleep plays a vital role not only in your daily performance, but also in keeping your body healthy throughout your life. Sleep is necessary for the healing and repair of your heart and blood vessels. It aids in the balance of your body's hormones and supports your body's growth and development. Your immune system, which defends your body against infections and other harmful substances, relies on adequate sleep to remain strong and function properly. Noticing when your body needs sleep and honoring that need is important to maintaining good health. Aim for seven to eight hours of sleep per night.

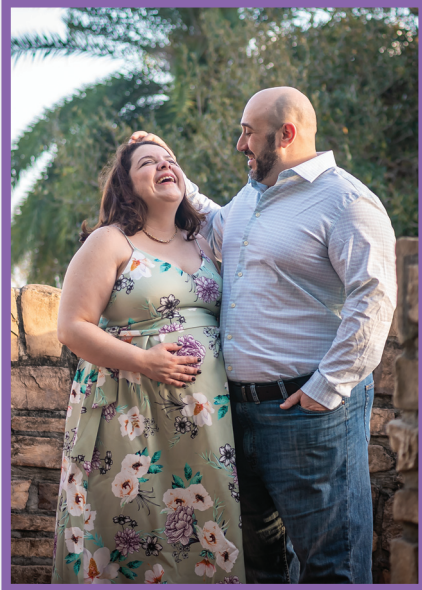
Reduce Stress

Stress management in your busy, active life plays an important role in keeping your body healthy. Although stress cannot be avoided, it can be controlled. When stress is repeated, excessive and left untreated, your body can develop physical health problems, such as high blood pressure, weakened immune system, and mental issues like depression and lack of concentration. Strategies like exercise, yoga, meditation or participating in stress-reduction programs are effective ways to manage your stress and help keep your body healthy.

Drink Water

Keeping well-hydrated is essential not only to your body's health, but to its survival. Water is an essential nutrient that makes up between 60 and 70 percent of the body. Every cell needs water to function properly. Water maintains body temperature, moves nutrients and waste materials through your system, helps normalize blood pressure and lubricates and cushions joints and organs. You must replace the water lost through body functions like perspiration and breathing every day to avoid dehydration. Keep a bottle of water handy during the day to drink from. A good rule of thumb for estimating adequate daily water intake is to drink in ounces, half of total body weight. For example, if you weigh 140 pounds, drink 70 ounces daily.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS SPOTLIGHT



Sharon Rushfield
Office Manager, Service Quality

In the summer of 2019, the Office of School Performance & Accountability division requested to have an employee wellness event at their work site on the topic of stress management and relaxation techniques. One of the vendors that was most interesting to Sharon was the on-site acupuncturist. The acupuncturist invited Sharon and a few of Sharon's co-workers for a semi-private demonstration. Small needles were inserted into specific pressure points on the surface of Sharon's skin to match where her physical ailments were.

Sharon had just recently began reading about the benefits of this alternative treatment and was very excited to try it. In fact, she enjoyed it so much that she decided to follow-up with this provider for a private session. During her appointment, Sharon told the doctor that she was in a car accident years ago and wanted to have therapy on her neck, lower back and try acupuncture for infertility issues. After three sessions, she noticed that her circulation improved, her body felt better, and her sleep was more restful. These changes were recognized almost immediately.

In the Fall of 2019, Sharon started feeling sick and thought that she may have the flu. Even though she was experiencing infertility issues, she decided to take an over-the-counter pregnancy test. To her shock and surprise, the test indicated that she was expecting. She went out and purchased 4 more tests that weekend to rule out a false-positive. Her family doctor confirmed she was pregnant that following week. She and her spouse are looking forward to their first child, a baby boy, which will arrive mid-April.

Her advice for Broward County School employees is to, "give acupuncture a try. The benefits outweigh the fear of needles." Sharon feels strongly that acupuncture is a great alternative to prescription drugs. She can't wait to be a mother and feels in some way that being in a relaxed state, due to the acupuncture sessions, helped her to eventually conceive.



Recipe: Hearty Oatmeal with Pears

INGREDIENTS

- 1 bosc or anjou USA Pear, cored and chopped
- 1 cup old-fashioned oatmeal
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 4 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 2 cups water
- 1/4 cup toasted pecans

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large glass bowl, combine pear, oatmeal, cinnamon, brown sugar, raisins, and water.
2. Microwave on high for seven minutes or until pears are tender.
3. Divide between two bowls, top with pecans, and enjoy.

Total Time (Cook & Prep):

10 minutes

Servings: 4

NUTRITION INFO

(per serving)

Calories: 420

Total Fat: 14 g

Carbohydrate: 64 g

Dietary fiber: 7 g

Sugars 35g

Source:

Navigate Wellbeing Solutions Recipe Library

Courtesy of [USA Pears](#)





The Wellness Newsletter is prepared for you by Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., Navigate Wellbeing Solutions, and Broward County Public Schools' Benefits Department. The contributions included in this newsletter do not specifically reflect your employer's opinions. Please consult your healthcare provider before making any changes in diet, exercise or recommendations made by this publication.