

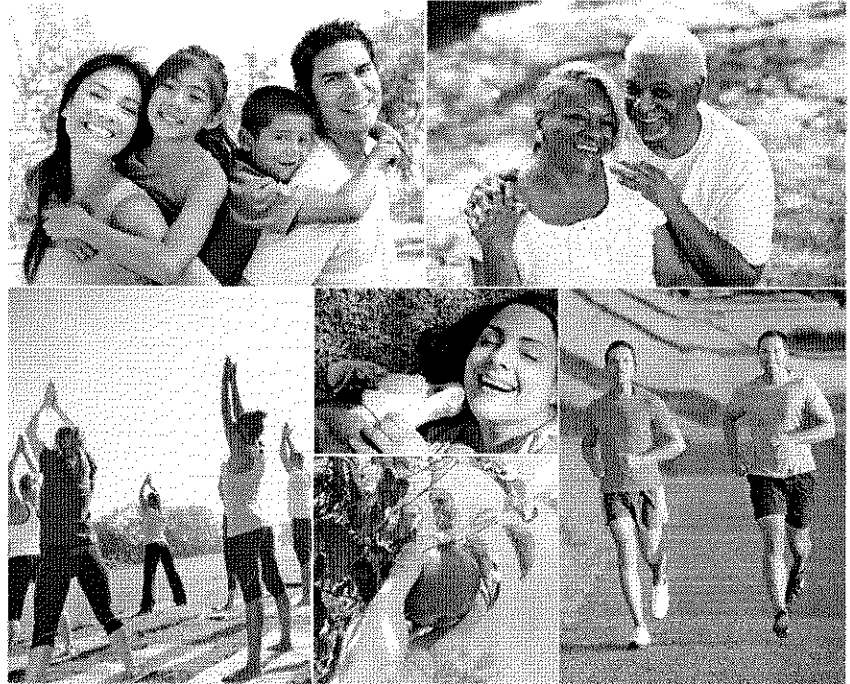
WHAT IS WELLNESS?

Wellness is defined as “an active process of becoming aware of and making choices towards a more successful existence.”¹

Because living a “successful existence” means something different to each individual, wellness can be many things, but it generally includes the pursuit of health, defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”² and working towards achieving one’s full potential.

Your pathway to wellness can be:

- Good health
- Saving more money
- Healthy relationships
- Being good to yourself
- Showing gratitude
- Keeping good friends close
- Taking care of your community
- Eating one less cookie
- Looking for a new job
- Learning how to let go
- Walking instead of driving
- Playing with your pet
- A day at the spa
- Eating fresh fruit from your own garden
- Mastering a difficult yoga pose

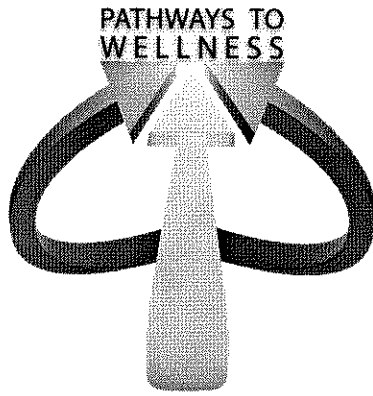


Did you know?

- Connecting with others can help you to enjoy the times when you are alone.
- Staying positive can improve your mood and your health.
- If you quit smoking now, in 20 minutes your heart rate drops, and in 12 hours the carbon monoxide (a gas that can be toxic) in your blood drops to normal.
- Exercising in “spurts” can be just as effective as continuous exercise.
- Helping others may help you experience less depression.
- Drinking beverages with caffeine should be stopped 6-8 hours before bed to ensure a more restful sleep.
- Creating joy and satisfaction can be easy with little things such as making a gourmet meal while listening to your favorite music, treating yourself to a massage, or even taking a few moments to admire nature.
- What you drink is just as important as what you eat.
- Spirituality can give you a sense of purpose and meaning.
- Writing down your problems can help shift your thinking about the issue and ultimately improve your mood.
- It is essential to choose a provider who understands the importance of the both of you working collaboratively regarding your health care.
- Stress management techniques are important because chronic (long-lasting) stress can change your brain and the way you function.

¹The Six Dimensions of Wellness, National Wellness Institute, http://www.nationalwellness.org/?page=Six_Dimensions, 1976

²Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948.



FOUR SIMPLE STEPS

Taking good care of your body and mind can make a difference in how well you do in your day-to-day life and how well you manage change. Exercising, eating right, getting enough rest and relaxing will not only set you on the right path to wellness, but also help you achieve and enjoy daily activities more and improve how you deal with life's challenges. Caring for yourself may take a little extra time, but you will feel better and more successful. Here's what you need and why it helps:



A healthy diet:

- Improves your ability to learn.
- Means eating a nutritious breakfast everyday. Skipping meals leads to a lack of energy.
- Includes eating something nutritious every time you have a meal. Try substituting processed foods with a salad or swapping something fried for a piece of fruit.
- Requires limiting your alcohol intake.
- Avoids excessive amounts of caffeine. Caffeine dehydrates you. Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day to prevent dehydration.

Regular exercise:

- Elevates mood, reduces stress, increases energy level, improves appearance, and stimulates the release of endorphins and serotonin, which makes you happier.
- Increases alertness and creativity.
- Improves your overall mental and physical well-being. Even taking a 15-minute walk, 3 times a week, can help.
- Keeps you active and also creates more opportunities to meet new friends!
- Decreases stress. On days when you are feeling overwhelmed, hit the gym or do another type of exercise.



Relaxation:

- Means taking time each day to unwind, especially before sleeping. Listen to music, read or do whatever you enjoy. Alcohol or drugs are not the way to go.
- Offers a distraction from problems, a sense of competence and many other benefits.
- Means getting a good laugh. Laughing decreases pain, may help your heart and lungs, promotes muscle relaxation and can reduce anxiety.

Plenty of rest:

- Means getting at least 7-9 hours of sleep. This is essential and will make you more attentive and active. Inadequate sleep can lead to mood changes and lowered resistance to illness.
- Provides the physical and psychological resources to cope with everyday life. Without it, you have to work harder to get daily tasks done and you have less energy.
- Includes cutting back on alcohol consumption because it can disturb your sleep. Though you might fall asleep faster, your body will not be as rested.

