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Wise & Well

Welcome to the Wise & Well Newsletter, where we promote whole-person well-being each month and highlight health-related topics to help you be your best.



Mental Health Awareness Month

Our mental health is the engine of our daily lives, it steers and influences how we navigate our thoughts, emotions and interactions with the world around us. In the hustle and bustle of work, family and individual goals, it's easy to overlook the little signs that our mental health may need some attention. And those tiny signals? They can snowball into bigger challenges if we ignore them. Catching these signals can make a world of difference, helping us bounce back quicker and healthier. Remember, it's okay to ask for help or offer a shoulder when things get tough.

To give your mental well-being a positive boost, adding in some intermittent physical activity like a quick walk, stretch or even dance in your home can improve your mood and change your state of mind. When it comes to mental health, our environment plays a big part in how we experience life. From where we live to where we work, colors, sounds and tastes all have an impact on how we think and perceive the world. That's why it's important to create spaces that make us feel good and supported. Every little bit helps in building a happier, healthier mind — it's essential to our overall health and quality of life.

Therapy

Therapy isn't solely confined to the traditional setting of an office; it's incredibly diverse, with a vast array of options. From expressing emotions through strokes of paint in art therapy to embracing the soothing rhythms of sound therapy, there's a therapeutic form suited to every preference. There's even equestrian therapy, which involves guided interactions with horses and a therapist to help you navigate through your stress — an innovative approach. Don't be afraid to choose which one suits you best, be it through art, music, or the gentle nudge of an intuitive animal.

Affirmations

Affirmations are more than just nice words; they allow us to have a personal coach nestled in our minds. Consider the placebo effect, which shows how belief, even in a simple sugar pill, can manifest real physiological improvements.

Visualization

Visualizing our goals and aspirations plays a pivotal role in our mental health. Visualization acts as a rehearsal for success. Through visualization, we enable our brain to experience the sensation of achievement, thereby better equipping it to transform those visions into reality. It's not just fantasizing about triumph; it's about mentally preparing for it, seeing it and holding that image of where you want to be.

Rest and Sleep Hygiene

Good sleep hygiene involves creating an environment that promotes high-quality sleep and rest. Reducing blue light from our phones and other devices helps us get the rest we need for a healthy mind and body. Additionally, it's okay to say "no" to new tasks if you're taking on too many activities. Take time to appreciate your daily milestones and get regular rest and relaxation.

Diet

A balanced diet and plenty of water can improve your energy and focus throughout the day. While dietary restrictions or needs can vary from person to person, we should be very mindful of our caffeine, sugar and alcohol intake — don't overindulge. Even with regular physical activity, our diet plays a key role in how we feel and our overall health.

References:

[nimh.nih.gov](https://www.nimh.nih.gov)

[thesaratoga.org](https://www.thesaratoga.org)

Additional Resources

Upcoming Wise & Well Webinar — Register Now!

What's the State of Your Mental Health? Recognize How You're Really Doing and Learn Strategies for Staying Healthy

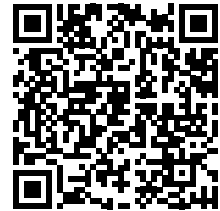
When: Tuesday, May 14 | Noon – 1:00 p.m. ET

Join us for an engaging roundtable discussion! Our panel of leading mental health experts will share practical tips to help you prioritize your well-being. We'll also integrate a live Sage training focused on emotional hygiene.

Key Takeaways:

- Learn how to define well-being for yourself.
- Recognize the signs that your mental health may be suffering.
- Discover simple interventions to use at work and home to keep you well.

To register, [click here](#) or scan the QR code below. For more information about the webinar, view the [Employee Flyer](#).



Monthly Moves

Breathing Meditation

A simple yet powerful meditation is “mindful breathing,” which involves focusing your attention on your breath. This valuable skill can help you manage stress, anxiety and negative emotions more effectively, regain composure during moments of frustration and enhance your concentration abilities. Consider meditating daily, even if it's just for a few minutes. Meditation is a skill that improves with practice. Be patient and kind to yourself as you explore this practice.

To perform the exercise:

- 01 Location and position.** Choose a quiet, comfortable place where you won't be disturbed. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. You can sit on a chair, cross-legged on the floor or lie down.
- 02 Set a time limit.** If you're a beginner, start with 5-10 minutes. You can use a timer to help keep track of time.
- 03 Close your eyes and take deep breaths.** Inhale slowly through your nose, feeling your chest and belly rise. Then, exhale slowly through your mouth or nose, feeling your body relax.
- 04 Focus on breathing.** Notice the sensations of your breath as you inhale and exhale. Feel the air moving through your nostrils, the rise and fall of your chest or abdomen. If your mind wanders, gently acknowledge it, and bring your focus back to your breath. Don't judge yourself for getting distracted; it's part of the process.
- 05 Expand your awareness.** After focusing on your breath for a few minutes, start to expand your awareness. Notice any sounds around you, the temperature of the air on your skin and any scents you can detect. Pay attention to how your body feels.
- 06 Conclude with gratitude.** Before ending your meditation, take a moment to feel grateful for the time you've spent focusing on your well-being.

Source: [mindful.org](https://www.mindful.org)



Chickpea Tuna Salad:

A Tasty Meal that Supports Brain and Heart Health

For a nutritious, heart and mind healthy salad, consider this omega-3-rich chickpea tuna salad. Feel free to customize the ingredients to your liking and use your favorite dressing. Just be mindful of how much dressing you use — moderation is key.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon nonpareil capers, rinsed and chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 (15 ounce) can no-salt-added chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 (6.7 ounce) jar oil-packed tuna, drained
- 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup thinly sliced English cucumber
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

- 3 cups baby spinach

Directions

1. Stir lemon juice, capers, shallot, salt and pepper together in a large bowl. Let stand for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, toss chickpeas, tuna, tomatoes, cucumber, feta and dill together in a large bowl.
3. Whisk oil into the lemon juice mixture until fully incorporated. Spoon about 5 tablespoons of the dressing into the chickpea mixture; toss to coat.
4. Add spinach to the remaining dressing in the large bowl; toss to coat. Divide the spinach evenly among four plates; top each plate with 1 1/4 cups of the chickpea mixture. Serve immediately.

Tip: To make ahead, follow Steps 1 to 3 and refrigerate in an airtight container for up to one day.

Source: [eatingwell.com](https://www.eatingwell.com)



Tips

Try sending our Wise & Well Tips of the Week to your employees for quick, easily digestible health and well-being tidbits they can incorporate into their daily lives.

– Your Wise & Well Team

5 Common Mental Health Triggers and Ways to Cope

Mental health triggers can impact our mental well-being. By identifying and understanding these triggers, we can begin to develop effective coping strategies to maintain our mental well-being.

May 3

Acknowledge work stressors.

Deadlines, job insecurity and interpersonal conflicts can significantly impact mental health. Consulting a therapist or counselor can help you manage stressors effectively and remain resilient.

May 17

Navigate relationship issues.

Conflicts with partners, family and friends can create emotional distress and affect our mental health. Leaning on support groups for emotional support can help you navigate through tough times.

May 31

Maintain health with self-care.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is important to help you manage stress. Try to exercise for 30 minutes a day — move your body in whatever way feels good for you. Take time to unwind, meditate, enjoy a fun activity and connect with others.

May 10

Address financial concerns.

Financial instability is a common stressor that can lead to anxiety and depression. To reduce this stressor, seek advice from financial advisors to help avoid debt cycles. Also, budgeting tools can alleviate financial stress by providing tools for a path forward.

May 24

Consider environmental factors.

Living in a chaotic or unsafe environment, including exposure to pollution, noise and overcrowding, can contribute to long-term mental health challenges. Engaging in mindfulness, meditation or yoga can reduce stress levels and improve mental health.

Sources: [workplacementalhealth.org](https://www.workplacementalhealth.org)
[verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com) (financial stress)
[verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com) (healthy family relationships)

May Is Mental Health Awareness Month

Strategies for a Healthy Mind

You can't avoid stress, but you can stop it from becoming overwhelming by practicing some daily strategies:



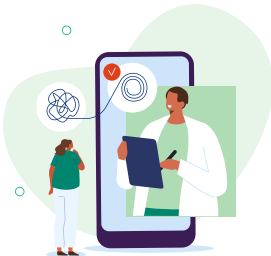
Mental Resilience:

Build resilience against work, financial and relationship stress through therapy, financial planning and support networks to safeguard your mental health.



Healthy Environments:

Combat mental health challenges by creating peaceful, organized living spaces and practicing mindfulness to reduce environmental stress.



Therapeutic Diversity:

Explore various therapy forms, like art or equestrian therapy, to find unique pathways to emotional healing and stress relief.



Mindful Practices:

Utilize positive affirmations and visualization to strengthen mental resilience and foster a positive mindset, enhancing your overall well-being.

Sources:

workplacementalhealth.org

psychologytoday.com

nimh.nih.gov

verywellmind.com