

## August is National Wellness Month

With all of life's challenging moments, it's more important than ever to focus on your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. It's easy to keep your general wellness on track, with just a few key strategies to help.

**Make Sleep a Priority.** Not getting enough sleep makes you feel tired and irritable the next day. You may have difficulty concentrating or getting your work done. Try getting an extra half hour or so of sleep each night to prepare you for the next day.

**Stay hydrated.** Water makes up a majority of your body weight and is involved in many important functions. This includes flushing out waste from your body, regulating your body temperature, and helping your brain function. So, drink up!

**Develop an Attitude of Gratitude.** Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, appreciate good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. Research has shown that consciously practicing gratitude can reduce feelings of stress and anxiety.

**Get Wellness Exams.** Regular check-ups with a doctor or other certified professional can identify underlying conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes, even if you aren't experiencing symptoms. Early intervention is always the best medicine!

**Incorporate Fruits/Veggies into Your Diet.** A diet rich in fruits and vegetables helps you maintain a healthy weight and lowers the risk of diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Fruits and veggies can also help promote healthy skin, eyes and bones. They strengthen your immune system and lower the risk of digestive problems and some types of cancer.

**Take a Walk Outside.** Walking has been proven to help reduce anxiety and depression, but walking in nature takes those results to a higher level. That's because different parts of our brain activate in nature. Our mind calms, leading to physical changes including a reduction in heart rate and blood pressure.

**Plan for Obstacles.** Nothing goes our way 100% of the time, so a good way to prevent feeling overwhelmed when life throws you a curve ball is to prepare for the possibility that tough times may come. Having skills, resources and supports in place will lessen their disruption.

**Take a Deep Breath.** "Take a deep breath" might be some of the best advice around. It's one of the easiest and most effective ways to relieve stress. When we take a slow inhale through the nose and a big, long exhale through the mouth, we're signaling to the brain and body that we're safe, that it's okay to calm down. Within a matter of seconds, we start to feel more relaxed.

**Limit Screen Time.** We often talk about screen time limits for kids but what about adults? The evidence shows that devices can be habit-forming for adults, too. Too much screen time in adults has negative impacts on physical and mental health. Schedule your screen time to limit your exposure, and engage ways to keep your wellness on track!