

February 2025

Wellness NEWSLETTER

HEALTH OBSERVANCE

National Cancer Prevention Month

February is National Cancer Prevention Month, a time to reflect on how our everyday choices can significantly impact our long-term health. While not all cancers are preventable, adopting certain habits can lower your risk and support overall wellbeing.

A healthy diet is a cornerstone of cancer prevention. Fueling your body with a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins provides essential nutrients that can reduce the risk of certain cancers. Limiting processed foods, sugary drinks, and red or processed meats can further support your efforts.

Physical activity is another key factor. Regular exercise not only helps maintain a healthy weight but also reduces inflammation, improves hormone balance, and strengthens your immune system. Aim to incorporate movement into your daily routine, whether it's a brisk walk, a yoga class, or even dancing in your living room.

Avoiding tobacco is an effective way to lower cancer risk. Smoking is a leading cause of cancer, contributing to approximately 30% of all cancer deaths. If you're a smoker, seeking support to quit can make a significant difference in your health.

Protecting your skin from UV damage is also crucial. Skin cancer is one of the most common types of cancer, but it is highly preventable. Use sunscreen with at least SPF 30, wear protective clothing, and avoid peak sun hours.

Finally, regular cancer screenings can save lives. Early detection allows for timely and effective treatment. Talk to your healthcare provider about the screenings recommended for your age, gender, and family history.

Making these changes may seem small but they create a powerful defense against cancer. Take the opportunity to assess your habits and make choices that prioritize your health. Small steps today can lead to a healthier tomorrow.

Source: <https://www.cancer.org/>



2 THE HEART OF SOCIAL WELLNESS

Building Healthy Connections

As Valentine's Day approaches, learn about social wellness and how to create all different kinds of healthy connections.



3 HEALTHY HABITS, HEALTHY YOU

How to Survive the Remainder of Cold & Flu Season

These five (5) tips will help you maintain your health this winter.



4 Featured Recipe

CONNECTEDNESS

HEALTH TIP CORNER



The Heart of Social Wellness: Building Healthy Connections for a Happier, Healthier You

Caitlyn Keenen – Wellworks For You

As Valentine’s Day approaches, we take time to celebrate romance and love. Although establishing loving and healthy romantic relationships is paramount, these connections are not the only ones that affect us. Other relationships in our lives include friends, family, coworkers, pets, and others. Ensuring that all relationships and connections in our lives are positive and healthy is crucial to our health and wellbeing.

Unhealthy connections can be emotionally and physically damaging. People can deeply care for one another, but something may be weighing them down. It could be ineffective communication, lack of support, jealousy, or possessiveness, to name a few.

These types of relationships detrimentally impact our health and wellbeing causing:

- **Decreased energy levels**
- **Anxiety**
- **Depression**
- **Low self-esteem**
- **Damage to one’s social wellness that can lead to more unhealthy relationships**

What is social wellness?

It’s the ability to form and hold onto healthy relationships, and to feel a sense of connection and belonging. As humans, we desire to feel loved and accepted. We want to grow without the fear of isolation. Healthy relationships meet these needs and allow us to enhance our social wellness. They help us develop close friendships, teach us to feel comfortable in diverse groups, encourage us to create relationship boundaries, and allow us to have fun. Though they may not always be perfect, healthy relationships improve our social wellness and boost our overall health and wellbeing.

How do we create healthy connections?

- Set time aside for relationships by making plans with friends and family.
- Practice self-care so you can support others without depleting your own health.
- Get involved! Volunteer or attend local events to meet people in your community.

We encourage you to assess your current relationships, evaluate how they’re currently impacting you, and try to build and foster new connections to enhance your social wellness.

Source: <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/social-wellness-toolkit>

Healthy Habits, Healthy You

Top 5 Strategies for Staying Healthy During Cold and Flu Season

Katherine Kline – Wellworks For You



Cold and flu season is a challenging time of year, but with the right precautions, you can protect your health and the well-being of those around you. Taking proactive steps can reduce the risk of illness and help you recover more quickly if you do fall sick. Let's explore five key strategies to maintain your health this winter:

1. Practice Proper Hand Hygiene

Hands are a primary way germs spread, making handwashing one of the most effective defenses against illness. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, particularly after being in public spaces, before eating, or before touching your face. If soap and water aren't available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to eliminate harmful bacteria and viruses.

2. Stay Up to Date with Vaccinations

The flu vaccine is a proven way to reduce the severity and duration of illness, as well as the risk of complications. Even late in the season, it's not too late to get vaccinated. Speak with your healthcare provider about scheduling your flu shot and staying current with other recommended immunizations.

3. Support and Strengthen Your Immune System

A healthy immune system is your body's best defense against seasonal illnesses. Prioritize eating a balanced diet rich in vitamins and nutrients, such as fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains. Staying hydrated and ensuring you get 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night are also critical components of a strong immune response.

4. Effectively Manage Stress Levels

Stress takes a toll on both your mental and physical health, weakening your body's ability to fend off illness. Incorporate daily habits to help manage stress, such as practicing mindfulness or meditation, engaging in physical activity, or spending time on hobbies and activities that bring you joy. Even small moments of relaxation can make a big difference.

5. Minimize Exposure to Germs

Germs thrive in crowded spaces, so limiting time in high-traffic areas can reduce your chances of getting sick. If you feel unwell, stay home and rest to allow your body to recover and to prevent spreading illness to others. Simple actions, like covering your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, can also help protect the community.

By incorporating these five strategies into your daily routine, you can build resilience and stay healthier this cold and flu season. And remember, after counting these tips on your fingers, give them a thorough wash to ensure they're germ-free!

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent>

FEATURED RECIPE

Lemon-Parsley Baked Cod

🍴 4 SERVINGS | ⌚ 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning
- 4 cod fillets (6 ounces each)
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°. In a shallow bowl, mix lemon juice and butter. In a separate shallow bowl, mix flour and seasonings. Dip fillets in lemon juice mixture, then in flour mixture to coat both sides; shake off excess.
2. Place in a 13x9-in. Baking dish coated with cooking spray. Drizzle with remaining lemon juice mixture. Bake 12-15 minutes or until fish just begins to flake easily with a fork. Mix parsley and lemon zest; sprinkle over fish.

NUTRITION

Per Serving:	1 Fillet		
Calories:	232	Protein:	28g
Carbohydrates:	7g	Dietary Fiber:	0g
Saturated Fat:	6g	Cholesterol:	87mg
Total Sugars:	0g	Sodium:	477mg

Source: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/lemon-parsley-baked-cod/#RecipeCard>