

Your Health



# Financial Wellness

Our financial well-being and physical health often intertwine more closely than we realize.

As we navigate the paths of budgets and health routines, understanding the link between financial stability and physical well-being becomes essential. The path to good health includes finding ways to balance financial and physical wellness.

By cultivating financial stability, you're actively nurturing your physical health. Likewise, making your health a priority supports financial resilience. Whether you're crafting a budget or crafting a nutritious meal, each choice resonates across the spectrum of well-being.

## LINKS BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL HEALTH

Financial stress can manifest as physical ailments, affecting sleep, digestion and mood. It can compromise our immune system and cause migraines. Recognizing this connection empowers us to take charge of our finances as a way to nurture our bodies. Researchers have found that people under a lot of physical stress often have poor physical and mental well-being.

MoneyGeek reports that debt-related financial problems can increase the odds of developing depression by 51%. They also warn that money problems can cause unhealthy coping techniques such as undereating, overeating or drinking unhealthy amounts of alcohol.

Not having good health insurance or

having financial difficulties also contributes to people not going to the doctor when they should which causes health problems to go undetected and untreated.

While financial stress can cause physical health issues, the reverse is also true. Having physical and mental problems leads to people making poor financial decisions. It can hamper the ability to earn or manage money or to ask for help.

## PRACTICAL STEPS

Create and stick to a budget as a foundational step in financial wellness. Just as a balanced diet supports health, a balanced budget supports financial well-being. Building an emergency fund provides a safety net, reducing unforeseen financial challenges.

Tackle debt strategically by paying off high-interest debts and consolidating loans if it aligns with your financial goals. Regularly contribute to retirement accounts and savings.

Health and financial wellness intersect in health care costs. Secure adequate health insurance coverage and consider health savings accounts for potential medical expenses.

Exercise on a regular basis and eat a balanced diet to reduce the risk of chronic illness and potentially save on healthcare costs. Pursue a healthy lifestyle that will enhance energy levels and productivity to boost your ability to pursue career goals.



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Consider seeking mental health care. Professional care can help treat the depression and anxiety that makes it difficult to care for your physical and financial well-being. You can also get

financial therapy from professionals who can help you identify problematic behaviors, reduce negative feelings toward money and aid you in finding solutions to improve your situation.

# Elevate Health with Foot Care

Our feet deserve more attention than they often receive.

Our overall health is tied to the well-being of our feet. Our health journey involves tending to the intricate needs of our feet. By recognizing the pivotal role our feet play and incorporating mindful practices into our routine, we lay the groundwork for comfort, vitality and well-being.

Our feet bear our weight throughout the day and help us move through life's demands. Neglecting foot health can lead to a range of issues from discomfort and pain to more serious problems affecting our mobility and overall well-being.

The National Library of Medicine explains that foot health can be a clue to overall health. If your joints are stiff, you might be developing arthritis. Tingling and numbness is a sign of diabetes. Swelling is a warning sign of kidney disease, heart disease and high blood pressure.

## GOOD SHOES

Our feet require proper footwear to function optimally. Ill-fitting shoes can lead to blisters, bunions and even long-term conditions affecting joints and posture. Investing in quality shoes that offer support, cushioning and a proper fit is essential for maintaining foot health and preventing discomfort.

Foot Care MD recommends wearing shoes that are com-



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fortable, practical and fit well. They need to fit the shape of your foot. If they are too narrow or tight, they can result in foot problems. Poorly fitting shoes can also cause calluses, corns and blisters. You shouldn't have to break shoes in, they say. If that is necessary then they aren't a good fit or they aren't properly designed.

## FOOT CARE TIPS

You don't need elaborate rituals to promote foot health. Start with a daily inspection to examine your feet for cuts, blisters or any irregularities and take care of these minor

issues before they escalate. Clean any wounds and cover them in bandages. If you have rashes, treat them with anti-fungal powders and lotions.

Keep our feet clean by washing them thoroughly with regular soap and water. Apply a nourishing foot cream to prevent moisture buildup. Change socks every day and allow wet shoes to dry before wearing them again. This helps keep your feet dry as sweaty feet can cause rashes or eczema.

Trim your toenails straight across to prevent ingrown nails. Use proper nail clippers

and avoid cutting them too short. Incorporate simple foot exercises like toe stretches and ankle circles to maintain flexibility and strengthen foot muscles. What you eat can also affect your foot health and stave off osteoporosis. Include lots of calcium and Vitamin D in your diet.

## PROFESSIONAL HELP

Seeking out such services as pedicures, foot massages and reflexology go beyond pampering and indulgence. They contribute to your overall well-being, especially if you have a lot of foot pain or are diabetic.

Pedicures involve exfoliation, nail care and moisturization. Regular pedicures — for men and women — can prevent nail and skin problems. Foot Care MD recommends spacing your pedicures eight weeks apart.

Foot massages enhance circulation, reduce tension and relieve stress throughout the body. You can give yourself a foot massage by rolling your feet back and forth over a rolling pin. Reflexology is an ancient practice that involves applying pressure to specific points on the feet, believed to correspond to different body organs.

# Choosing Healthy Snacks

In the whirlwind of modern living, maintaining a nutritious diet can be a challenge.

However, with a little planning and smart choices, healthy snacking can seamlessly fit into your on-the-go lifestyle. Seek out nourishing snacks that promote mindful eating and keep you energized throughout your day.

Healthy snacking is more than just filling the gap — it's about giving your body the sustenance it needs to thrive. By embracing nourishing options that align with your busy lifestyle, you're making a conscious choice to make your health a high priority, one snack at a time.

Every snack is an opportunity to infuse your day with energy and vitality. Whether you are tackling meetings, juggling errands or simply embracing the day, let your snacks be a source of nourishment that propels you forward with strength and wellness.

## SMART SNACKING

Fresh fruits like apples, bananas and grapes are portable and packed with vitamins, fiber and natural sugars. Pair individual nut butter packets with whole-grain crackers or apple slices for a satisfying blend of protein and healthy fats.

Opt for single-serving containers of Greek yogurt. They're rich in protein, calcium and probiotics. You can turn it into a parfait by adding layers of granola and mixed berries.

Create your own trail mix with a mix of nuts, seeds, dried fruits and a touch of dark chocolate for an energy-boosting combo.

Pre-cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and bell peppers, paired with a small container of hummus,



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offer a balanced and crunchy snack. You can also cut celery sticks and fill them with peanut butter which can promote feelings of fullness.

Prepare a batch of hard-boiled eggs for a protein-packed, portable snack that curbs hunger.

Portable and portion-controlled, string cheese offers protein and calcium on the go.

Grab some whole-grain bars that have minimal added sugars and whole-food ingredients for a convenient snack option.

Roasted chickpeas are a great source of fiber and have an impressive nutrient profile. They're filled with vitamins

and minerals and are high in folate, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, copper and manganese.

Create turkey roll-ups by laying out a slice of turkey breast. Layer on top of it your favorite cheese, a pickle, cucumber and a tomato slice. Roll it into a wrap. Snacks like this that are low in carbs and high in protein can improve blood sugar levels and regulate appetite.

Other options can include cheese slices, baked tofu, cottage cheese, roasted watermelon seeds, canned salmon or tuna, chia pudding, edamame, lentil salad, overnight oats and seasoned popcorn.

## PREPARING AHEAD OF TIME

Spend a few minutes prepping snacks for the week. Wash and cut fruits and vegetables, portion out nuts and assemble snack packs. Invest in reusable containers that keep snacks fresh and prevent squishing. Mason jars, bento boxes and small airtight containers are great options. Carry a reusable water bottle to sip on throughout the day.

Avoid mindless munching by listening to your body and practicing portion control. Tune in to your hunger cues. Snack when you're genuinely hungry, not out of boredom or stress. Even with healthy snacks, portion control is key.

# Home Workouts

Dedicating time to fitness can be a challenge.

Yet, maintaining an active lifestyle is essential for well-being. Home workouts offer a practical solution for individuals with jam-packed schedules. Home workouts empower you to weave physical activity seamlessly into your busy life. Every rep and every stretch contributes to your path toward a healthier and more active lifestyle.

Advantages to working out at home include the increased flexibility and convenience. You don't have to drive anywhere or keep to someone else's schedule. It is less expensive than paying for a gym membership.

There are many ways to work out at home. You can livestream classes, use a phone or computer app or watch a video. You can also pipe in your own music and get the whole family to work out with you.

## SAMPLE ROUTINES

The Tabata Circuit takes about 15 minutes and is a high-intensity interval training (HIIT) routine. Alternate between 20 seconds of intense exercise and 10 seconds of rest. Choose exercises like jumping jacks, squats, push-ups and burpees. Complete each exercise for four minutes and then move to the next.

The bodyweight circuit takes 20 minutes and involves performing a series of bodyweight



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exercises such as lunges, planks, mountain climbers and triceps dips. Do each exercise for 45 seconds, followed by 15 seconds of rest. Repeat the circuit twice.

A 10-minute cardio blast involves you jumping rope, doing jumping jacks or running in place for 10 minutes. Alternate between high-intensity bursts and moderate-paced recovery periods.

Yoga and stretching routines can be done for 15 minutes at a time. Dedicate the time to

stretching and flexibility. Practice yoga poses or engage in static stretches to improve mobility and reduce muscle tension.

## BENEFITS

Regular exercise increases energy levels and combats feelings of fatigue, helping you tackle daily tasks with vigor. Physical activity triggers the release of endorphins, reducing stress and promoting a positive outlook. Short bursts of exercise can enhance focus

and productivity, making you more efficient in your tasks. Engaging in regular workouts supports heart health, reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases. It also contributes to weight management by burning calories and boosting metabolism.

## FORMING A HABIT

Home workouts will be more successful when they become a habit, something your body learns to expect on a regular basis. Schedule wisely by iden-

tifying pockets of time in your day when you can fit in a workout on a consistent basis. Designate an area in your house for workouts. Clear the space and have any necessary equipment nearby. Keep water bottles handy to stay hydrated during your workouts.

Start with manageable routines and gradually increase intensity as you build strength and stamina. Switch up your routines to prevent boredom and engage different muscle groups.

# Nurture Your Health with Water

It's easy to forget one of the simplest yet most vital aspects of self-care: Staying hydrated.

Our bodies demand attention and care and hydration is a significant part of that. Each sip of water nurtures your body's vitality. By integrating simple practices, we embark on a journey toward enhanced well-being — one refreshing gulp at a time.

Water is the elixir of life and its importance cannot be overstated. It maintains bodily functions, facilitating digestion, circulation, temperature regulation and even cognitive performance. Water provides cells with the fluids it needs to keep the body operating smoothly.

## PRACTICAL TIPS

The Mayo Clinic recommends that men drink 15 ½ cups of water per day and that women drink 11 ½ cups per day. Penn Medicine recommends that you drink between a half ounce and an ounce of water for every pound that you weigh.

Set reminders on your phone or calendar to prompt you to drink throughout the day. Carry a reusable bottle that you keep within arm's reach no matter where you are. If plain water feels bland, infuse it with slices of fruit, vegetables or other flavors. This adds a burst of flavor



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without any added sugars or artificial ingredients.

Create rituals that incorporate hydration into your routines. Drink a glass of water when you first wake up, before a meal and before bed. This mindful approach ensures consistent intake. If you're worried about whether you are drinking enough, monitor your urine color. Light yellow means you are properly hydrated while dark yellow may signal the need

for more fluids.

## BENEFITS

Staying hydrated goes beyond quenching thirst. It offers several health benefits.

Dehydration can lead to fatigue and decreased energy levels while adequate hydration can keep you feeling vibrant and ready to tackle your day. Drinking water supports cognitive function, enhancing your focus, memory and overall mental acuity.

Water aids in digestion, promoting the movement of nutrients and waste through the digestive tract. This can help prevent issues like constipation. Staying hydrated optimizes physical performance by regulating body temperature and supporting muscle function.

Drinking water even affects how you look and feel. Hydration contributes to healthy, glowing skin. Well-hydrated skin appears more

plump and vibrant, minimizing the appearance of fine lines. Lack of water can affect mood and lead to irritability. Keep drinking lots of water to support emotional well-being and help maintain a positive outlook.

The benefits of hydration are within reach. With every sip you are helping to ensure your body focuses at its best. Stay hydrated, stay healthy and relish in the wellness that flows from within.

# Care for Your Immune System

Our immune system acts as a vigilant defender, shielding us from illnesses.

Enhancing our immunity through mindful choices can make a significant difference to our health. You have the power to harmonize your immune system through mindful choices.

By embracing a balanced lifestyle that includes nourishing foods, adequate sleep, stress management, physical activity and hygiene, you're actively nurturing your body's natural defenses. Every choice you make, from the food you eat to the moments of relaxation you embrace, contributes to the robust symphony of your immune health.

The Harvard Medical School points out that boosting immune health has been elusive because the immune system is a complicated system and to function well, it requires balance and harmony. It says researchers still don't know a lot about immune responses and there is no scientifically proven direct links between lifestyle and enhanced immune system. But, they are still researching and exploring potential links between diet, exercise, age, stress and other factors on immune response.

## NUTRITION

The fuel we provide our bodies directly influences their ability to ward off infections.



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Incorporating immune-boosting foods can be a simple and effective strategy. Vibrant fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants. Choose fruits like citrus and berries and vegetables like spinach and broccoli to support your immune health.

Garlic and ginger are potent ingredients that contain compounds that can enhance

responses. Probiotics like yogurt, kefir and fermented foods contain beneficial bacteria that contribute to gut health, a key factor in overall immunity. Almonds, sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds provide essential nutrients like vitamin E and zinc.

The simple act of staying hydrated supports immune responses. Water aids in the

production of lymphatic fluid, which transports immune cells throughout the body.

## SLEEP AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

Too many people wear their lack of sleep as a badge of honor, but sleep and stress management play a pivotal role in immune functions. Quality sleep allows the body

to repair and regenerate, strengthening immune responses. Aim for seven to nine hours of restful sleep each night. Chronic stress weakens immunity. Engage in stress-relief techniques like meditation, deep breathing or engaging hobbies.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular activity contributes to more than just physical fitness. It bolsters the immune system. Engaging in regular, moderate-intensity activity can increase circulation and promote healthy lung function. Spending time outdoors exposes you to sunlight, which boosts vitamin D levels, which are crucial for immune health.

## LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Limit sugar intake. Excessive sugar can suppress immune function. Opt for whole, unprocessed foods instead. Don't smoke. Stay current with all vaccines as vaccines prime the immune system to fight off infections. Practice good hygiene. Regular handwashing and proper hygiene prevent the spread of germs. Limit your alcohol consumption.

Excessive alcohol weakens the immune system. Enjoy alcohol in moderation. Positive social interactions and maintaining relationships contribute to overall well-being, indirectly supporting immune function. So stay connected to people you care about. Engage in mindfulness practices like yoga or tai chi. Both of these practices can help reduce inflammation.

# Ease Digital Eye Strain

Screens have become our windows to the world.

From work tasks to entertainment, we spend hours gazing at digital displays. Yet, this digital immersion comes with a downside — digital eye strain. But relief is within reach. You can nurture your eyes through simple adjustments and mindful practices. You can actively promote your vision and lasting eye health by implementing screen settings that suit your eyes, taking regular breaks, practicing eye exercises and creating an ergonomically friendly workspace.

Your eyes deserve attention and care to keep capturing the vibrant canvas of life with clarity and comfort.

## SCREEN SETTINGS

Soothe your eyesight by ensuring your screen settings are in harmony with your eyes before you delve into the digital abyss. Adjust the screen's brightness and contrast to match your surroundings. A bright screen in a dim room or vice versa strains your eyes.

Opt for larger text and clear fonts to minimize squinting. Adjust the settings until the text is comfortably legible. Activate blue light filters on your devices to reduce the glare that contributes to eye strain. Many devices offer built-in blue light filters or apps that serve the same purpose.

## TAKING BREAKS

Your eyes deserve mini-vaca-



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tions during digital marathons. Prevent eye fatigue by taking regular breaks.

Every 20 minutes, shift your focus to something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. This exercise rests your eyes and reduces strain. Blinking hydrates your eyes and prevents dryness. Combine blinking with deep breaths to refresh both your eyes and mind.

## EYE RELIEF EXERCISES

Just as a stretch rejuvenates your body, eye exercises can do wonders for your visual well-being.

Rub your palms together to generate warmth, then gently cup them over your closed eyes. Feel the soothing darkness and allow your eyes to relax. Shift your focus. Hold your thumb about ten inches from your face. Focus on it for

a few seconds, then shift your focus to an object in the distance. Alternate between near and far a few times. Gently roll your eyes in a circular motion, first clockwise and then counterclockwise. This exercise loosens eye muscles and improves circulation.

## HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Create an environment that supports hydration and ergo-

nomics. Proper hydration supports eye moisture, so keep a water bottle nearby. Adjust your workspace to reduce strain. Position your monitor at eye level, about 20 inches from your face. This prevents neck strain and encourages a natural gaze. Ensure ambient lighting is comfortable and doesn't create glare on the screen. A well-lit room reduces eye strain.