

Pisgah Wellness Center Newsletter

December 2017


As we approach the New Year, this tends to be a time of reflection and also a time for hope, renewal and even a jumpstart to a new healthy habit in one's life.

It has been exactly one year since my husband and I moved into a new house and we are so grateful. However, moving is one of the hardest situations to conquer and it has been increasingly challenging for me in many ways. So in 2018, to improve my mental, physical and spiritual wellness I plan to get back on track with my strength training and cardio routines. With the change in location and loss of my best walking partner of 12 years, Scooter our dog, I have fallen off the physical fitness wagon. What kind of role model is that?

So I vow to you all that this year, I am getting back on the wagon and committing to strength training, cardio, good nutrition, meditation time, and actively setting life goals to better myself.

This all sounds very broad and even obvious to some for changes coming in the New Year, but these are lifestyle choices that do make me confident in who I am and how I operate in my life.

I will leave you with this poem by a young lady named Jada Carrington,



*Keep it moving
Be happy, be positive, be you
Keep it moving
Keep grinding and keep
Shining
Keep it moving
Brush all the haters off
Keep it moving
Believe, achieve, succeed
Keep it moving
Be awesome and be great
Keep it moving
No matter what life throws at
You just keep it moving*

*Best wishes for the New Year!
Abby*

New Year Special!

- During the month of January we will be waiving the registration fee for anyone signing up for a membership. Please spread the word to all your friends and family. This is one of the best times of the year to get in shape, meet some new friends, and save money all at the same time!

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3 Foods That Marketers Want You to Think Are Healthy

You probably already know that real food is healthier than processed food. But sometimes it's hard to tell what's real because of the way foods are marketed. Once-healthy items such as vegetables, beans and nuts can become processed foods. Even if they start out as something good, what matters most is how they end up. Foods are manipulated and then advertised with words such as "healthy," "real" and "contains vegetables" to make them sound more nutritious than they really are — but don't be fooled. Here's how some well-marketed processed foods compare with the real thing.

●**Carrot sticks vs. "veggie sticks"** : I've met many parents who think that "veggie sticks" (those strawlike chips made with vegetable powder) are the miracle they've been waiting for, because they can finally get their kids to eat vegetables. That's because this snack's packaging includes claims such as "made with spinach," "now with sweet potato" and "100% all natural." One brand even boasts that it contains the same vitamin content as 2½ cups of broccoli, seven cups of spinach, two carrots and more. Yikes. Please take heed: A tiny sprinkle of vegetable powder infused into a crunchy snack is not the same as eating a serving of vegetables. Veggie sticks are fine to serve as a treat, but they should not be confused with real veggie sticks — also known as carrots, celery and cucumber.



Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/how-many-of-these-6-foods-have-marketers-tricked-you-into-thinking-are-healthy/2017>



Whole-grain vs. gluten-free bread:

Gluten-free foods were created for people with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity. But "gluten-free" has morphed into a marketing buzzword that people erroneously equate with "healthy." According to a survey of more than 1,500 U.S. adults, 38 percent eat gluten-free foods because they believe they're better for their overall health. But studies show that most gluten-free foods contain more fat and salt — and less fiber, protein and vitamins — than their gluten-containing counterparts. A dense, whole-grain sprouted bread made from fiber-rich, wholesome ingredients is a much healthier choice than a gluten-free bread made from fiber-free cornstarch, tapioca and rice flour. Gluten-free does not mean healthier.

Loose trail mix vs. trail mix bars:

Good ol' raisins and peanuts are perfect for a hike, and manufacturers have attempted to make this age-old snack even more convenient by turning it into a bar. The trouble is, to get the ingredients to fuse together, they need to add something sticky and sweet. Enter sugar. Whether it's honey, maple syrup or agave, adding two or three teaspoons of sugar to your once-natural trail mix is never a good idea. The bars may come in packages emblazoned with words such as "natural," "real food" and "nothing artificial," but that tells you nothing about the sugar content. Plain nuts, seeds and dried fruit are a better choice than bars that contain added sweeteners.

Turn on Your Humor Radar

Why Humor: Many people go about their days unconsciously looking for faults and problems.

How to Laugh More: Swap your fault-finding detector with a humor-locating radar. Pay attention to chances for a chuckle instead of opportunities for trouble. Keep an eye for funny moments and you will start to see more of them in your life.

Make a Date with Humor

Why Humor: The often used excuse for the lack of humor in life is, there is simply no time for something as trivial as laughing. But since you know that laughing is a potent antidote to chronic stress, then you may as well make time for laughter, just like the way you'd allocate time for sleeping, eating and working.

How to Laugh More: Each week, make a date with yourself or someone who looks like he or she can use a good dose of laughter. The only thing to do during a humor date is to relax and laugh till you cannot get up straight.



Is Laughter Really THE BEST MEDICINE?

From the slight giggle to a belly chuckle, laughter has more benefits than just improving your mood.

- Lowers STRESS Levels
- Creates a Positive Outlook on Life
- Stimulates YOUR ORGANS
- Burns Calories
- Reduces BLOOD PRESSURE
- Naturally Decreases Pain
- Easy, Fun and UNINTENTIONAL WORKOUT
- Improves Heart Health
- Boosts the IMMUNE SYSTEM

UnityPoint Clinic
www.UnityPoint.org/Clinics/Laughter

Make Your Wellness Routine More Fun

Let's be honest: Healthy eating, regular exercise, and making time for self-care can be a big commitment. And while it's definitely worth it, every wellness routine requires planning, thoughtfulness, and quite a bit of time and energy. That's why it's important to make it as fun as possible. Here are small changes that can bring a smile to formerly mundane tasks—after all, you're more likely to stick to it if it's enjoyable.

- **Find a grocery buddy.**

Grocery shopping alone can feel like a chore. Instead, make a standing weekly date with a friend to go to the farmers market for your favorite fruits and veggies.

- **Don't let cardio get you down.**

Sometimes we forget that there's more than one way to get an awesome cardio workout. Switch things up and sign up for a cardio dance party—you won't regret it!

- **Remember that water doesn't have to be boring.**

Swap regular water for water infused with fruit or herbs. Our favorite flavor choices? Honeydew, cilantro, and raspberry.

- **Make teatime a ritual.**

Instead of having your afternoon tea in a paper cup or that chipped mug from the cabinet, invest in a full tea set and sit down mindfully to enjoy the warmth and uplifting smells drifting from your cup.

- **Ditch the app for a colorful bullet journal.**

Constantly charting your activity in a fitness or nutrition app can start to feel like a chore. Instead, try keeping a food diary and workout log in a bullet journal. This will infuse a few minutes of mindful creativity into your day, while still allowing you to track your efforts.

- **End your day with a bubble bath.**

Even if you already have an evening ritual, it's nice to change it up and do something really luxurious like an Epsom salt bath. For a little more fun, add some bubbles and a few drops of essential oil.

Source: <https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/10-swaps-fun-wellness-routine>



Cucumber Infused Water

Directions: Place 1 thinly sliced English cucumber in a pitcher. For still infused water, add 2 quarts of water. For sparkling water, add 1 quart of seltzer during prep and a second quart just before serving. Refrigerate 2 to 4 hours to allow the cucumber to infuse. Stir well and strain, discarding the cucumber. For serving, add fresh cucumber slices for garnish and plenty of ice. The infused water will keep refrigerated for up to 2 days.

Recipe courtesy of Food Network Kitchens

Winter Farmers Markets

Asheville City Market– Winter

Dates: Saturdays, January 7-March 25

Time: 10am-noon

Location: Inside the Asheville Masonic Temple, 80 Broadway St., at the corner of Broadway & Woodfin St., free parking at Home Trust Bank across Woodfin.

YMCA Indoor Winter Market

Dates: Saturdays, January 7-March 25

Time: 10am-12:30pm

Location: Fellowship hall of Crosspoint Community Church. There is parking in the church parking lot and on the surrounding streets.

Black Mountain– Winter Market

Dates: November 5-April 29

Time: 11am-2pm

Location: Inside the heated pavilion of Roots & Fruits Market, 151 S. Ridgeway Avenue, Black Mountain, NC.

Source: <http://asapconnections.org/farmers-markets>

WNC Farmers Market

November-March-retail retail buildings open daily from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Location: 570 Brevard Rd, Asheville, NC 28806



Flexible Benefits

Most people take part in aerobic activity to improve their cardiovascular endurance and burn fat. People weight-train to maintain lean muscle tissue and build strength. Those are the two most important elements of a fitness program, right?

Actually, there are three important elements. Regrettably, flexibility training is often neglected. Flexibility training:

- Allows greater freedom of movement and improved posture
- Increases physical and mental relaxation
- Releases muscle tension and soreness
- Reduces the risk of injury

Some people are naturally more flexible. Flexibility is primarily due to one's genetics, gender, age, body shape and level of physical activity. As people grow older, they tend to lose flexibility, usually as a result of inactivity, but partially because of the aging process itself. The less active you are, the less flexible you are likely to be. As with cardiovascular endurance and muscle strength, flexibility will improve with regular training.

Stretch for Success

Before stretching, take a few minutes to warm up, as stretching cold muscles may increase your chances for injury. Begin with a simple, low-intensity warm-up, such as easy walking while swinging the arms in a wide circle. Spend at least five to 10 minutes warming up prior to stretching. The general recommendation for people starting an exercise program is to perform gentle dynamic-type stretches before a workout and static stretches after exercise.

When performing a static stretch:

Take a deep breath and slowly exhale as you gently stretch the muscle to a point of tension.

Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds, relax and then repeat the

Source: <https://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/pdfs/fitfacts/>

stretch two to four more times.

Dynamic stretches are more advanced and should be instructed by a qualified professional.

Avoid these stretching mistakes:

- Don't bounce a stretch. Holding a stretch is more effective and there is less risk of injury.
- Don't stretch a muscle that is not warmed up.
- Don't strain or push a muscle too far. If a stretch hurts, ease up.
- Don't hold your breath during the stretch. Continue to breathe normally.

Ideally, at least 30 minutes, three times per week, should be spent on flexibility training. But even a mere five minutes of stretching at the end of an exercise session is better than nothing to reduce potential muscle soreness. All aerobic activity should be followed by at least a few minutes of stretching.

Here are some tips for fitting stretching into an overbooked schedule:

If you don't have time to sufficiently warm up before stretching, try doing a few stretches immediately after a shower or while soaking in a hot tub. The hot water elevates body and muscle temperature enough to make them more receptive to stretching.

Try a few simple stretches before getting out of bed in the morning. Wake yourself up with a few full-body stretches by gently pointing the toes and reaching your arms above your head. This can clear your mind and help jump-start your morning.

Take a stretching class such as yoga or tai chi. Scheduling a class will help you to stick with a regular stretching program.

Seated Hip Flexors and Quadriceps Stretch



Precaution: If you have had recent joint surgery, then check with your doctor before doing this exercise.

This exercise will stretch your hip flexors (muscles on the front of your hips and upper thighs) and your quadriceps (muscles on the front of your thighs).

- Sit on the side of a stable chair, bench or other low firm surface.
- Gently move your right leg back and behind you.
- Tuck your buttocks tightly under your hips.
- You will feel a stretch on the front of your right hip and upper thigh.
- Slide to opposite side of the chair.
- Repeat with your left leg.

Source: <http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/exercise/workouts/walking/videos/hip-flexors-and-quadriceps-seated.php>