



EMPLOYEE WELLNESS NEWSLETTER MAY 2023



Mental Health Awareness Month

Boosting Your Office Morale

This month, we are dedicating the newsletter to acknowledge Mental Health Awareness Month. After spending hours at a workstation, then inside on days off, how about going outdoors for while? Taking a few minutes in the natural world can help you recharge and energize. In one study, workers who had access to a window and natural daylight were physically and mentally healthier, with better attitudes and fewer sleep problems than those who didn't. If you don't work next to a window — and many people don't — seek time in a room offering natural light, where you can take a break, have lunch, or hold meetings. A study in the Harvard Business Review found that subjects who took a break from a task to stare at a screensaver of a concrete roof experienced an 8% dip in concentration when they returned to their task. But those who gazed at a green, flower-filled meadow screensaver performed better and improved their focus by 6%. Use your breaks and time off to walk outside. Take your work outdoors occasionally if you can.



Make a Change

Feeling worn out? Your diet can contribute to that low energy, sluggish feeling. Luckily, it's never too late to make some changes in your life. Here are some healthy nutrition swaps you can try this month:

- Swap sweet beverages for water.
- Replace refined grains with whole grains.
- Have beans instead of meat once a week.
- Add an extra serving of vegetables to your day.
- Try a fruit you've never had before.
- Swap out potato chips for celery & chips
- Almond milk instead of cow's milk.
- Swap candy with nuts and dried cranberries.



Important Dates:

- Saturday, May 06 – National Fitness Day
- Thursday, May 18 – National Bike to Workday
- Sunday, May 21 – World Meditation Day
- Saturday, May 27 – National Sunscreen Day

Egg White Breakfast Bites

These low-calorie, low-fat egg white bites make a quick weekday breakfast and they're equally as convenient for midday snacks. In order not to waste egg yolks and to save time, I like to use a carton of liquid egg whites. Egg whites tend to be rubbery, so adding in the cottage cheese helps make them creamier. You can store extras in the freezer and reheat as needed.

Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes
Serving: 12

Ingredients:

- cooking spray
- 1 (16 ounce) carton liquid egg whites
- ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup packed fresh spinach, finely chopped
- ½ cup roasted red peppers, drained and chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil, minced
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Spray a 12-cup muffin pan generously with cooking spray.
2. Combine egg whites, cottage cheese, garlic powder, salt, and pepper in a blender; blend until smooth, about 15 seconds.
3. Combine spinach, roasted red peppers, and basil in a bowl. Pour in egg mixture and stir to combine.
4. Ladle the mixture evenly into the muffin cups, filling each about 3/4 full.
5. Top each muffin with 1 teaspoon feta cheese.
6. Bake in the preheated oven until egg white bites are set, 18 to 20 minutes.

**This recipe was taken from www.allrecipes.com*



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How to Spot BURNOUT

Most of us have a bad day once in a while. But when you're constantly emotionally, mentally and physically exhausted because of prolonged, extreme stress, you have burnout.

Burnout is a serious condition, but it is treatable. First, look closely at yourself. Probably you nearly always recognize when you're stressed, but burnout may sneak up on you without your realizing it.

Do You Know the Signs?

Below are some of the symptoms of burnout. Do any of them sound familiar?

- You are negative and cynical about your life and work most of the time.
- You dread going to work.
- You find it difficult to be productive at work and at home.
- Your energy is low most days.
- You feel underappreciated or as though things never work out for you professionally.
- You are overeating or using cigarettes or other substances to cope.
- You have trouble sleeping or sleep too much.
- Your appetite has changed.
- You have physical aches and pains with no known cause, especially headaches, digestive upset, chest pain, and back pain.
- You often feel angry and frustrated at work.
- You can't focus.
- Your coworkers frequently ask what's going on or if you're doing okay.

Symptoms of burnout can mirror major depression, and one condition can certainly influence the other. Major depression is marked by a depressed mood most of the day and no interest in normal activities and relationships at home and at work. These symptoms occur every day for at least two weeks.

Beating burnout can be as simple as taking a few days off to rest, relax and recharge (no takehome projects or phone check-ins allowed). How you take care of yourself outside work also affects how you feel on the job. Get plenty of sleep, eat well, exercise daily, and spend time on pleasurable activities so you feel more energized and fulfilled both personally and professionally.



Here are a few suggestions to maintain your mental health while using social media according to National Alliance on Mental Illness -

- Limit your time on social media platforms. Some platforms, such as Apple and Google, have settings to help you do this automatically on your phone.
- Consider what sites and profiles you visit; if they make you feel bad, unfollow them
- Before you post something about yourself or someone else, consider if you would make this comment in an in-person setting
- Remember that what you post will be very hard to take back or remove
- Remember that what people post, or what you see, may not be honest or real presentations of their experiences or lives
- Leave or unfollow a profile/page/site if it is making you feel worse
- Report posts that are hurtful or making you worried



KEY TAKEAWAYS -

- 21% of adults are experiencing at least one mental illness. That's roughly 50 million people.
- 55% of adults with a mental illness have not received any treatment.
- 5.44% of adults experience severe mental illness.
- Over 12.1 million adults (4.8%) have reported serious thoughts of suicide. This figure more than doubles when surveying adults who identify as two or more races.
- The states faring the poorest included Kansas, Arizona, and Oregon, which all report high percentages of adults with mental illness and thoughts of suicide.

- From a 2023 State of Mental Health in America Survey

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS ARTICLE COURTESY OF KAISER PERMENENTE

The word "affirm" means to validate or confirm. In the mental health world, affirmations are short, encouraging statements that you can use to create a more positive frame of mind. You can repeat an affirmation to yourself as often as you'd like. With so many of us facing new challenges these days, now could be the perfect time to turn positivity into a regular habit. Try using one of these affirmations each week to help you stay positive so you can continue to tackle your goals.

1. I am ready.
2. My efforts help me succeed.
3. I can make a real difference.
4. My hard work will pay off.
5. I am strong.
6. I have the power to make the right choices for me.
7. I have faith in my abilities.
8. I got this.
9. I am grateful for what I can do.
10. I am happy to be me.
11. My goals are achievable.
12. I am confident.
13. I will practice self-kindness.
14. I am on the right path for me.
15. I am thankful for the love in my life.
16. I will take action and accomplish my goals.
17. Success is mine.
18. I will find the good in all things.



According to Harvard Medical School, as complex human beings from a wide variety of cultures, with a variety of life experiences and mental and physical health needs, our connection with music is very personal. Our relationship with music can be a very beautiful, vulnerable, and often complicated dance that shifts from moment to moment based on our mood, preferences, social situation, and previous experiences. There are times where music can have a clear and immediate impact on our well-being:

- easing a transition to sleep with a soothing playlist.
- finding motivation for exercise by listening to upbeat dance music.
- aiding self-expression of emotions by singing.
- connecting to others by attending a live musical performance.

Music and Mental Health

