

# You FIRST

*Your Month of Well-being*

**August 2024**

## National Wellness Month!

In August we celebrate National Wellness Month. This health observance is all about prioritizing your self-care, managing stress, and implementing daily healthy habits that will make you feel like your best self! It can become all too easy to put your health and wellness on the back burner due to work deadlines, family obligations and other stressors. Research has shown that self-care helps to not only manage stress, but also promotes happiness. This month, we encourage you to take the time to fill your cup! Not sure where to start? Check out a few ideas and resources below!

### Ways to Celebrate

- **Exercise!** Just 30 minutes per day can be a huge mood booster. Not only does it help your mental health, but it also keeps you at a healthy weight, gives you more energy, and assists with pain management.
- **Spend time outdoors.** A little fresh air can do your mind and body good! Spending time in nature can help relieve stress and anxiety, improve your mood and boost feelings of happiness and well-being.
- **Get your rest.** Sleep affects growth and stress hormones, our immune system, appetite, blood pressure, and cardiovascular health. Adults should aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night.
- **Try a new wellness activity.** Have you had your eye on a new fitness class at your local gym? Sign up and try it out. Book that massage you've been wanting or even visit a new spa!
- **Commit to eating healthy.** Healthy eating emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and protein.

### Tips to Manage Stress

- **Connect with others.** Use your network of family and friends to lean on for support. Social contact is a good stress reliever because it can offer a distraction and help you put up with life's ups and downs.
- **Try yoga.** Yoga is a popular stress reliever as it incorporates many different breathing exercises and postures. Hatha yoga, especially, is a good stress reliever because of its slower pace and easier movements.
- **Keep a journal.** Putting pen to paper can be a good way to release pent up feelings. Try not to think too much and just write anything that comes to mind. No one else needs to read it, this is just a time for you!
- **Practice meditation.** Meditation can give you a sense of calm, peace, and balance that can help improve your emotional well-being and your overall health.
- **Get musical!** Listening or playing music is a good stress reliever. It provides distraction and can lessen muscle tension.

## Creating a Healthy Routine: Tips for Success

- **Start Small.** Changing up your daily routine all at once probably won't end up with lasting results. Instead, try to pick one thing each week to work on. It could be adding something new and positive, or cutting out a bad habit. Small changes make a difference.
- **Add to your existing habits.** You probably already have set habits worked into your daily schedule like drinking a cup of coffee in the morning. Try to add new habits to your existing ones. For example, if your goal is to read more, set aside ten minutes to read while you have your coffee versus drinking it on your drive in to work.
- **Make swaps.** Think about some of the not-so-healthy habits you have in your daily routine and make some swaps. For example, if you feel sluggish in the afternoons and typically reach for a sugary snack, try taking a quick walk break instead to get energized. If you find yourself having a few alcoholic drinks at the end of a long day, replace them with tea.
- **Plan Ahead.** Life can get hectic, which is why it's so important to plan so your routine and habits are not affected. By meal prepping or having a home workout option ready to go for busy days, you set yourself up for success and won't compromise your goals.

### Wellness Wednesday Webinars!

Join the CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst) Wellness and Disease Management team once a month on Wednesdays to learn more about that month's health observance and how you can prioritize your health and wellbeing!

### August 7, 2024: Just for the Health of It

What is well-being and why should we care about it? Join us to learn more about how a holistic health approach can help you live healthier life. We'll discuss nutrition, physical activity and the many other factors that impact your health and well-being.

Click [here](#) or scan the QR code to register!



### CareFirst WellBeing<sup>SM</sup> Resources

- **Inspirations and Unwinding:** Find help to reduce daily worry and stress. Both programs include videos and audio for relaxation, mindfulness, and better sleep behaviors.
- **One-on-One Health Coaching:** As part of your CareFirst WellBeing program, you can participate in personal health coaching. Your health coach will work with you and provide the support, guidance, and encouragement you need to see real results!
- **Noom:** Designed to help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight. It can also help lower the risk for chronic conditions like diabetes. There is no cost, and your privacy is assured!

Log in or sign up for [CareFirst WellBeing](#). Once logged in, select **Your Wellness Resources**. Next click **Health & Fitness** (for Noom and Coaching) or **Relax & Reset** (for Inspirations and Unwinding), then the program that interests you.

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