

The Health & Wellness Handbook

“The Care and Keeping of Your World Famous TUMB”

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Sections:

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- Hydration and Nutrition
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Exercise

Building a Healthy Exercise Philosophy

A lot of people dread working out. It's definitely more appealing to sit around than to go to a hot, sweaty gym with people who smell gross, run on a treadmill for god-knows-how-long, lift some weights, and go home sore and achy. For a good portion of people, especially college students, it's more work than what it's worth. So this self-perpetuating cycle begins, where you avoid the gym, become less athletic, then when you try to work out again, it's hard and you lose all hope so you continue not going to the gym.

As a culture, we've completely lost the plot on the point of exercise. The thing about it is that we view it as a punishment or a chore, and that there's only one valid way for adults and near-adults to exercise: At a gym with intimidating equipment and possibly even more intimidating people. This is the subconscious philosophy many young adults come into college with. At the TUMB, we have a chance to try and rectify this, to help heal people's relationship with exercise. Whatever way someone enjoys moving their body, whether that be marching, dancing, running, skateboarding, lifting, martial arts, competitive sports, pick-up games, swimming, whatever, all exercise is good exercise, and the best exercise is whatever exercise you have fun doing. Why? Because fun exercise brings people back for more, encouraging long-term health.

If this is our leading philosophy, we will have a much easier time helping our members find their own unique relationship with exercise. Encouraging movement, both at rehearsal and outside of it, is how we will help build a stronger TUMB. With that, naturally, that means our leadership will have to actively work towards this goal. Here are my suggestions for how we can implement this into the TUMB's culture:

- ***Do not use exercise as a consequence.*** Let's face it: Making people run laps pretty much never solves problems. Using exercise as a punishment teaches people that exercise *is* a punishment, and will make members less likely to seek out exercise on their own.
- ***Do not shame anyone for a lack of athleticism.*** The last thing that someone who is struggling to exercise needs to hear is someone else ragging on them for being unathletic. Again, this will most often push people away from exercise.
- ***Do not put exercise on a pedestal.*** Someone who exercises a lot is not inherently a better person than someone who hasn't worked out since high school gym class. Exercise and health are not moral matters, they are simply aspects of being human.
- ***Encourage healthy movement.*** I'll say it a million times in this document: All exercise is good exercise. Never shame anyone for participating in a sport or form of exercise that you personally deem "silly" or "unnecessary". Silly things are fun, and fun exercise is the best exercise.

- **Provide alternatives.** Not everyone is going to be able to do everything. Make sure you know *why* you're doing a specific exercise during rehearsal, so that when someone asks for an alternative, you're able to suggest something that works the same skill.
- **Recognize the role the TUMB plays in the health of our members.** Marching band is a form of exercise that is often seen as less daunting than other sports. Thus, we have the chance to not only encourage healthy exercise within our ensemble, but to help our members branch out and explore other forms of exercise they enjoy outside of marching.

Exercises for a Marching Band

So now that we've established that all exercise is good exercise, it's time to break down what we do in a marching band and how we can train our bodies for it. Marching band is a cardio-forward, somewhat-endurance-based aerobic sport. That's a lot of words, so let's break it down a bit more.

In marching band rehearsals, we work for long periods of time at a fairly steady pace. We march, walk, run, and dance, which raises our heart rates. In performances, we work for a shorter period of time, again at a fairly steady pace, doing all of the same things and thus still raising our heart rates, though with the intensity of performing in front of a large crowd, the overall output of our bodies is much higher.

What this all means is that marching band is a sport that requires a lot of cardiovascular and physical stamina. When it comes to encouraging our members to work out outside of rehearsal (while still bearing in mind that, again, all exercise is good exercise), some other great sports that will encourage similar skills as marching band are steady-state cardio sports like swimming, biking, walking, running, and hiking, among a million others.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of cardio exercises we can do during rehearsal:

- Jogging (alt. Jogging in place)
- Squat jumps (alt. Squat-to-relevé)
- Jumping lunges (alt. Alternating lunges)
- Jumping jacks (alt. Low impact jacks)
- Various across-the-floor exercises such as high knees, butt kicks, squat kicks, etc.

Remember, the goal of cardio here is to elevate the heart rate at a consistent level. This means slower exercise for longer periods of time, not sprints.

On top of stamina training comes strength training. We don't need our band to become bodybuilders, but there are certain muscles & muscle groups that our sport heavily depend on, and increasing strength means increasing stability (preventing injuries) and increasing consistency (creating more reliable performers).

The areas that are used the most in marching band are our cores, calves, ankles, shoulders, and backs. Not that everything else isn't also super important, but these are what we work the hardest, and if you need evidence, ask people where they get sore during band camp. So, here's a non-exhaustive list of beginner-friendly, no-equipment exercises for these areas!

- **Core:** Planks/Modified planks, dead bugs, leg lifts, toe taps, bicycles.
- **Calves/Ankles:** Calf raises (straight, outward, and inward), mountain climbers, raised heel squats, tiptoe walking. *See also: Farmer's carry. Requires two heavy objects, but this doesn't necessarily mean fancy schmancy weights. Large water bottles, cans, etc. suffice.*
- **Shoulders:** Arm circles, incline push-ups, mountain climbers, planks/modified planks, superman row
- **Back:** Superman, cat-cow, inchworms, bird-dog.

Stretching

If you're reading this doc, you already know stretching is important. Let's delve into *why* before we go any further.

You've probably heard that stretching prevents injuries. Sort of true. Stretching, in and of itself, doesn't magically prevent injuries, but *mobility* does. Consistent stretching increases range of motion, which improves general mobility, which encourages stability and prevents injuries. Think of it like this: A stick that can bend before it breaks is less likely to break than a stick that can't bend at all without snapping. Stretching, alongside proper warm-ups, is how we get there. Make sense? I hope so.

So now that we've addressed that, let's delve into the two types of stretching: Static and dynamic. Static stretches are stretches that involve holding a specific position for a period of time, increasing flexibility and releasing muscle tension. Dynamic stretches are controlled movements through a specific muscle's full range of motion. Both are crucial.

Warming up should generally have more emphasis on dynamic stretching, and cooling down should generally have more emphasis on static stretching. Here's two examples of a full-body stretch routine, one static, the other dynamic.

Static Body Stretches:

- Neck: Head tilts, both sides
- Shoulders: Cross-body stretch, behind-the-head stretch
- Hands: wrist extension & flexion
- Back: Ragdoll pose, child's pose
- Hips: Pigeon pose, straddle stretches (left, right, and center)
- Hamstrings: Touching toes
- Thighs: Standing quad stretch, hero pose
- Calves: Partner calf stretch
- Ankles: Alternating arches

Dynamic Body Stretches:

- Neck: Neck rolls
- Shoulders: Scissor stretches
- Hands: Rolling wrists
- Back: Trunk twists
- Hips: Walking lateral lunges, glute bridges
- Hamstrings: Hamstring scoops
- Thighs: Alternating ninja stretch, knee hug to quad stretch
- Calves: Alternating calf raises
- Ankles: Rolling out ankles

Last thing about stretching: Stretching is only half of a proper warm up. Think of a rubber band. If you put a rubber band in the freezer all day, then take it out and try to stretch it right away, it'll shatter. You have to warm it up first. We do that with light cardio *before* stretching.

Pre-stretching cardio can include but is not limited to: Jumping jacks, brisk walking/light jogging, and light across-the-floors.

Make sure you don't go crazy with the pre-stretch cardio. Remember, these people haven't stretched or warmed up yet. The bigger stuff can wait until they've warmed up, stretched, and are ready to go.

Hydration and Nutrition

Water Breaks and Hydrating

We've all heard it a million times: Hydrate or die, water is mandatory. The first priority of hydrating is making sure everyone in the band has the means to hydrate. Everyone needs a big water bottle and the ability to fill it up with water. We're pretty on top of this as a band, so it's simply a matter of keeping that up.

The other fact of the matter is that water is simply not enough. When we sweat, we lose electrolytes, which balance out the amount of water in our bodies. For our ninety-minute rehearsals, especially when it gets colder, worrying about electrolytes isn't as big of a deal, but during band camp as well as the hotter points of the season, electrolytes are pretty important. We get most of our electrolytes through food, but during longer, hotter rehearsals, supplementing with sport drinks may be necessary. There's debate around an exact, ideal water-to-sport drink ratio, but I can say that I have personally had success with a 2:1 ratio (2 units of water to 1 unit of a sport drink). We don't want to blow sugar through our wind instruments, though, so I personally recommend zero-sugar sport drinks for hydration during rehearsal.

We can set all of this up for perfect hydration, and it will still go to waste if we are not on top of providing frequent, adequate water breaks to our members. Water breaks should ideally occur every 15-20 minutes, but no more than every 30 minutes. These should become more frequent in weather above 90 degrees F. I, personally, advise against "gush-and-goes", where members have to run to their water and run back, as this often defeats the purpose of hydrating and also can make members nauseous.

Perhaps most crucially: *If it is so hot and/or humid that we are struggling to keep up with consistent, adequate water breaks, it may be time to re-evaluate if it is truly constructive for us to continue working outside.* A hot, miserable band in sweltering heat will be overall less productive, and it's likely that the members won't remember the details of what we're working on. Technique will likely get sloppier as dehydration and overheating tires them out, which increases injury risk, not to mention the increase of heat exhaustion or heat stroke risks. Sometimes, toughing it out is no longer a viable option, and as leaders, it is our responsibility to advocate in our athlete's best interest, with their health being our number one priority.

Fostering Healthy Relationships with Food and Nutrition

I want to preface this section by saying that *the Health and Wellness team are not nutritionists, nor is anyone else in the TUMB's leadership. This advice does not supersede that provided by a qualified medical professional.* That being said, the basics of nutrition are pretty straightforward,

and we have to know the basics ourselves if we want to help our members properly fuel themselves.

The three main macronutrients found in our food are carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. In our intestines, carbs are broken down into sugars, fats are broken down into fatty acids and glycerol, and proteins are broken down into amino acids. We won't get into the super complicated stuff here, but what we need to know and understand is how our bodies use these three macronutrients.

- **Carbohydrates** are our bodies preferred primary energy source, especially for short-term energy.
- **Fats** are our bodies long-term, slower-burning energy source, and also aid in cell function and nutrient absorption.
- **Proteins** are how our bodies build and repair muscle, and they aid in the production of hormones and enzymes. Proteins are *not* an energy source, but they can make our bodies feel “full” and satiated.

All three of these macronutrients are essential for our bodies, especially since many college students are still growing.

Vitamins and minerals are slightly more complex in function, but easier to ensure are being consumed: Generally speaking, if someone is eating enough fruits, veggies, grains, and meats to get enough carbs, fats, and proteins, they're very likely getting enough vitamins and minerals as well. [This](#) source from the NHS has a breakdown of each vitamin and some of the most crucial minerals, since that topic is a bit too lengthy to fully explain here.

Now that we've gotten through what our body uses our food for, let's break down strategies to ensure our marchers are nourishing their bodies.

First and foremost, any discussion about a performance-based sport would be lacking without acknowledging the reality of the prevalence of disordered eating habits in our national culture. Again, we are not nutritionists and cannot cure or treat disordered eating habits, but the way we talk about food can be crucial in helping the young adults in our ensemble develop healthy and confident relationships with food, preventing the development of those habits in the future.

For long-term fitness and the cultivation of a healthy relationship with food, an “**add, don't subtract**” philosophy can ensure that our marchers are getting the nutrients they need without teaching harmful misconceptions about our bodies' fuel. This mentality teaches us to eat what we crave, but to pay attention to what that food offers and what it doesn't. Instead of replacing the foods we really want with a “traditionally healthier” alternative (subtracting), we can simply add more to our plate to make up for what is lacking in the foods we want (adding). An example of “add, don't subtract” at work could look like this:

A student chooses a slice of cheese pizza for their band camp lunch, since it helps

sate a craving they've been having and it feels appetizing to them. This is an excellent source of fats and carbohydrates. However, it lacks protein, as well as many vitamins and minerals. Instead of replacing the pizza they really want with something else, they can keep that pizza slice, and also add a side salad with leafy green veggies, a dressing they like, and a protein-rich topping such as chickpeas, egg slices, or chicken.

This way, our marchers are getting all of their nutrients while still eating the foods they love.

Here are some of my other recommendations regarding our attitudes towards food and nutrition.

- **Give our athletes judgment-free space to listen to their bodies.** Generally speaking, our bodies crave specific foods for a reason. Sometimes we crave pretzels because we need sodium, or we crave bread because our body needs energy. Sometimes, we need sweet food that nourishes our soul. Always trust that someone else knows their body better than you know their body.
- **Avoid the false “healthy food” vs “junk food” dichotomy.** All food has a place in a healthy diet. All foods have nutritional value to us. Different foods nourish us in different ways. Placing moral values on foods is a sign of unhealthy eating habits. Our marchers will be less likely to fully nourish themselves if they believe that certain foods are inherently “bad”. *Any food is better than no food, no matter what.*
- **Avoid commenting on what or how much someone chooses to eat.** Genuine, well-meaning compliments like “wow, that sandwich looks really tasty” is one thing. However, negative or derogatory comments towards someone’s food choices (like “Are you really eating all that?” “That food isn’t healthy for you.”) can, again, lead to that athlete developing unhealthy, potentially disordered eating habits. Likewise, do not comment on any athlete’s weight or body type, including in regards to how you *assume* it relates to their food choices.
- **Be a role model.** Use the “add, don’t subtract” philosophy for your own meals! This will help encourage our marchers to use it in regards to themselves. Also, like above, it helps break the dogma of “good” vs “bad” foods, and instead seeks emotional and physical satisfaction with our food choices.
- **Do not pressure anyone to make a specific food choice.** If you think someone is eating too much or not enough, consider: They very likely know their body better than you do. If you have an actual, genuine concern about someone’s dietary needs, the dining hall is *not* the place to make that known. Making someone feel embarrassed about their food choices is the last thing we want. Instead, if there is a genuine concern, consider talking to a campus counselor.
- **Encourage emotional and physical nourishment.** If someone is excited about a certain food, encourage them to nourish themselves with it alongside other foods! Whether it be the salad bars in the dining halls (which I personally love, by the way) or the soft-serve machine, any food can play an integral role in feeding and fueling our members for success.

This might seem radically different to the type of nutritional advice you're used to hearing. Frankly, the nutritional advice we grew up hearing was often rooted in restriction, focusing on how to limit our intakes of certain foods. Perhaps not-so-coincidentally, eating disorders and disordered eating habits are rising. By focusing on allowing ourselves to listen to our bodies and honor our cravings, hopefully we can help our marchers develop healthy relationships with their bodies and the food they use to nourish it, healing those who are already hurting and preventing that hurt from festering in the future.

Band Camp Prep

Has your section been growing mushrooms in their rooms for the whole semester? Well, no fear. We already know that *there is no moral value to exercise or the lack thereof*, since you've presumably already read the exercise section. However, that doesn't mean that it isn't still incredibly important to prepare oneself for band camp. No moral value simply means there's no shame or guilt that needs to be involved with the process.

Remember everything I said about stamina? We can prepare for that. As previously mentioned, we can work on training our stamina in preparation for band camp by doing any one of the listed sports or activities, including running, walking, dancing, swimming, biking, and hiking, among others.

Strength training wouldn't go amiss, either. Again, I would recommend working extra on the specific focus areas I mentioned during the exercise section: Core, calves, ankles, shoulders, and back.

Another major part of band camp prep is a funny little thing called *heat acclimation*. Let's face it: Global warming is real, but marching band season waits for no one, not even Mother Nature. Slowly acclimating our bodies to the hot, summer temperatures and humidity levels *before* band camp starts will make it easier to deal with them during outdoor rehearsals. This can mean going for walks during the day, working out outside, or even just sitting on a porch for a few hours or choosing an outdoor table at a restaurant or cafe. Any level of acclimation is better than none.

Lastly, as leaders, ensuring that our marchers have all the proper equipment they need for band camp is crucial to the maintenance of their health during band camp. Water jugs, proper athletic shoes and clothing, hats, sunglasses, earplugs, snacks if necessary, sunscreen. Equipping our athletes for success is crucial.

Band camp is hard. As leaders, perhaps the most important form of prep we can do is being ready to extend kindness, patience, and help to our marchers during the toughest part of the season. Do all of the other prep, too, but don't forget to be human first.

Mental Health

Creating a Village

This is another section that will be opened with this reminder: *The Health and Wellness team, as well as the rest of the TUMB's leadership, are not mental health professionals. Nothing in this document supersedes the advice/instruction of a qualified medical professional. We can, however, do our best to support our members in regards to their health, both in body and brain.*

The best thing we can do for all of our members is be kind, sympathetic, and understanding, first and foremost. You never fully grasp another person's situation, so giving grace to someone who may be struggling (which could be anyone) is a crucial part of creating a healthy environment here in the TUMB.

Being available to your section members, friends, and fellow leadership, should they need to talk, is important. *We are the village.* Having someone to lean on can make a world of difference to a struggling member.

In that regard, it is also crucial to not burn a candle at both ends. *You*, reading this document, also need support. Even if you think you don't, you do. Humans are an intrinsically social species. We depend on each other. Be available to those you care about, yes, but don't be afraid to set boundaries based on your own needs for your health.

Here's an example of a boundary I set last season (2023). I made it clear to many members of the band that if they needed help, I was only a text away. During the season, one member reached out late at night and said their friend was freaking out due to chest pain. I needed to sleep, and I am not a medical professional. I replied by providing a brief list of things to keep an eye out for in case it got worse, but also established that while I care about them and their friends, I am not a medical resource and to seek a valid, professional opinion in the future.

Another example could be something like, "I am available until 11pm. You're welcome to message me for help after that time, but I will not reply until morning." Also, "I am willing to listen to you talk so you can get this topic off your chest, but I do not feel comfortable providing advice in regards to this situation." Remember, if you push yourself too thin, you may end up hurting or neglecting not only yourself, but the very people you aim to help.

Creating open dialogues and depending on each other like a village can hopefully prevent and relieve a lot of stress long before it reaches a crisis point. However, it is crucial to recognize our limits. If you are worried about a friend or sectionmate, please encourage them to reach out to our Counseling Center on campus or a mental health professional of their choice. *If you believe someone may be in a crisis, including yourself, please refer to [this page](#) of the Counseling Center's website for more resources.*

Cultivating Kindness

This section is mostly self-explanatory, but let's go over it together regardless.

Band camp is hard. College is hard. Life is hard. The last thing anybody needs is you being unnecessarily harsh to them during rehearsals. Here's a short list of tips to help maintain the positive culture of the TUMB.

- **Impact > Intention.** Just because your intentions were pure doesn't mean they came across that way. If someone is upset about how you treated them, truly listen, sit in their shoes, and try to understand where they're coming from. "I didn't mean it that way" will pretty much never resolve a conflict.
- **Be kind with your criticisms.** We all know the compliment sandwich. Other strategies I recommend include framing a criticism as a compliment ("Your calves look great, I know your relevé can go a little higher!" or "You sound great, can you play a bit louder so I can hear you better?") as well as going out of your way to thank someone for making a correction, especially if you include how that correction improved what they were doing ("There, that higher relevé has made you so much more stable! Thanks for the fix!" or "Thanks for the extra air. Your tone sounds even better when it's fully supported like that.")
- **Avoid making comparisons.** Using someone with good technique as an example is one thing, but saying things like "Hey [section], why can't you all sound like [excellent member]?" is just going to crush people's confidence and maybe even inspire jealousy.
- **Don't poke fun unless you know it's okay.** Sure, maybe you can be a little playful with someone you've known since freshman year. It's definitely helpful to not be super serious all the time, it can help relax the atmosphere, but be careful with who you're poking fun at. That anxious freshman doesn't need to be the center of attention right now. It's probably a bad idea to generalize a whole section if you don't know that section well. Humor is good, but make sure you're saving it for those who you *know* can take it. Also, while we're on the topic... don't dish it out if *you* can't take it.
- **Patience, please!** Just because someone didn't implement your correction right away doesn't mean they weren't listening. They might be struggling to implement it, or they might need some more time. Give them time, and if they're still not figuring it out, go out of your way to explain your critique in a different manner, or maybe provide a visual example.

These tips are only the tip of the iceberg, but they're a great place to start when it comes to maintaining the helpful, kind culture we're striving for in this ensemble.

Special Considerations and Circumstances

Everything above has been a general guide for the average member. However, our members are not a monolith. We are an ensemble of individuals coming together to create one beautiful final project, but we don't stop being individuals when we join the TUMB. Some of us have special needs.

This has been a bit of a common theme, but I'll reiterate it again anyways: Always assume that someone knows themselves and their needs better than you do. In conjunction with that, always assume that their doctor knows their needs better than you do. If someone has a particular need, be patient, listen, and work with them to find a solution. Ideally, you want a solution that satisfies their needs as well as their obligation to the band, but in regards to health, the individual always comes first.

Specific Sections of the Ensemble

This is a much more mild example of special circumstances, but it's worth recognizing that specific sections in the TUMB have certain needs that the rest of the band don't experience, at least not on the same magnitude.

The drumline is known to experience more back pain than many other sections due to the strain that harnesses and drums place on their spines and back muscles. Overuse and strain of back muscles can lead to injuries later down the line. They also face an increased risk of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. In order to address this, drumline should be allowed plenty of opportunities to stretch their back and wrist muscles to prevent injury.

Sousaphones are also a section with special considerations. The nature of their instrument often leads to shoulder, back, hip, knee, and foot pain due to the added weight and stress of the instrument. To counteract this, like drumline, sousaphones should be given ample time to stretch these muscles, especially throughout longer rehearsals. On top of that, in order to prevent long-term overuse injuries and burnout, letting sousaphones take their instruments off in the stands when they do not need to be "at the ready" is essential.

Both of these sections, as well as pit, have to return their instruments to the box truck between rehearsal and performance at football games, as well as between meal breaks during band camp. Courtesy and grace should be extended to these sections during these times in order to ensure that they have plenty of time to properly nourish their bodies before returning to rehearsal or getting into uniform. If this causes undue burden, then it may be best to let these sections be dismissed earlier than other sections in order to ensure that their needs are met.

Religious Obligations

It's school policy to respect and have patience for any student's religious obligations and/or holidays. However, it's important to recognize some common traditions that may come in conflict with marching band days in the future.

This is not a complete list, but are simply just some holidays and obligations that we should keep in mind as leaders.

- **Dietary restrictions:** Just as forcing a vegan to eat meat is cruel, forcing someone to break a religious dietary obligation is cruel. If a member lists that they keep kosher or follow halal food restrictions, or any other cultural/religious diet, be sure to honor those obligations and provide the necessary foods for proper nutrition.
- **Ramadan:** The exact timing of Ramadan is different every year. There's a chance that, in the future, it could end up being during the fall. Be patient with any observant Muslim students during the month of Ramadan, and work with them to find a way to meet their needs as they will likely be fasting, including water intake.
- **Jewish holidays:** It's hard to keep Shabbat work-free when Saturdays are often football game days, so extend grace to any Jewish students during these days if they choose to follow specific traditions on Saturday football days. On top of that, please be aware that Jewish holidays begin at sundown, which means that they may need to leave rehearsal early if a holiday falls on a rehearsal day. This is especially crucial considering that the High Holy Days tend to be during marching season.
- **Fast Days:** Ramadan has its own bullet point since it's a full month long, but in general, many religions have dedicated fast days. If a member tells you that they are fasting for a holiday, trust that they know what their specific restrictions are and show patience if they need extra break time.

Just because you may not follow or understand a specific tradition doesn't mean it might not mean the world to some of our members. These traditions can impact how we prioritize their health, so it's crucial that we keep them in mind.

Disability and Medical/Dietary Needs

Everybody's body is different. These differences are to be celebrated, and in order to do that, we must offer accommodation as much as reasonably possible when someone has a medical or dietary need that is different from what is considered standard.

If a member provides you with a doctor's recommendation, don't just take it as a recommendation, but follow it as much as possible. Again, as stated in the start of this section, their doctor knows their needs better than any of us do.

If someone asks for a reasonable accommodation that does not impact their ability to learn, march, and participate in band, show grace and allow it. If there is a necessity for an accommodation that does hinder any of these abilities, then coming to a compromise may be reasonable so long as that compromise doesn't put their health at risk.

Here are some fairly common situations I know this ensemble has had to interact with before, as they will likely be relevant in the future.

- ***Special dietary needs, both by choice and by medical requirement.*** Elective dietary restrictions can include vegetarianism, veganism, and pescetarianism. Medical dietary restrictions may include a member with Crohn's Disease needing gluten-free food, a member with food allergies needing alternative foods, or a lactose-intolerant member needing dairy-free options.
- ***Different/extra breaks.*** Some people's disabilities mean they need the bathroom more often. Some medications make it easier for certain people to overheat and/or become dehydrated. Some people may be susceptible to pain and/or injury without frequent breaks. A general rule of thumb I recommend is this: I'd rather have someone sit down who doesn't need it than have someone who needs to sit down be pushed beyond their limits.
- ***Carrying food and/or medication on their person.*** Inhalers, insulin, high-sugar snacks, medicine, all of these can make or break someone's rehearsal. If they choose to carry these things on their person, then we must trust that they know what is best for them.
- ***Sitting out of optional activities.*** Someone whose foot is injured might sit out of the end-of-the-day game during band camp. If someone is already at or near their limit, or otherwise decides that a certain optional activity isn't worth the risk, that is their decision to make.

Responding to Emergencies

Yet again, I will state a reminder that *the Health and Wellness team are not medical professionals. We are not replacements or stand-ins for medical professionals.* We are simply normal college students who happen to know a lot about the human body and have experience training and/or coaching athletes. Due to this knowledge, however, we tend to be the first people that others reach for. This is a two-sided coin: For someone who is recovering from a mild, self-manageable medical episode but shouldn't be left alone, grabbing one of us is a good idea so as to not use up the resources and time of on-site EMTs. However, in true emergencies, going to a Health and Wellness Coordinator instead of a true professional could cause delay in getting the injured person the help they need. Please use reasonable discretion when deciding who to reach for.

Some common situations I have helped with in the past and felt were reasonable to be managed by a *well-informed* Health and Wellness Coordinator included the following:

- **Mild Diabetic Symptoms and Issues.** Sitting with someone while they rest and eat a snack isn't a big ask. Many diabetics nowadays wear insulin pumps in order to manage their insulin levels, but fluctuations may require breaks and/or snacks. If situations get any more severe than this, though, reach out to a professional.
- **Mild dehydration, overheating and/or heat exhaustion.** Taking care of someone with heat exhaustion usually means letting them recuperate in a cool, shaded area, getting them water and/or a sports drink, and potentially elevating the legs to help with proper blood flow. Be aware of signs of heat stroke, however, most notably a lack of sweat, confusion, and fainting. If you suspect heat stroke, seek professional help.
- **POTS, Orthostatic Hypotension, and Orthostatic Intolerance.** I will preemptively recognize my own bias here by stating that I, myself have POTS/Orthostatic intolerance and general hypotension. These three conditions are all different, but they manifest the same way, and mild cases can be treated similarly. *Rates of POTS diagnosis and diagnosis of other dysautonomic disorders have gone up due to the COVID-19 Crisis.* Move the person to a cooler, shaded place if possible, let them lie down with their legs elevated, and provide options for sodium/electrolyte intake such as sports drinks or electrolyte tablets. If they are fully unconscious for more than one minute, or if they seem to have potentially injured themselves on the way down, seek professional help.
- **General aches, pains, and mild injuries.** Anyone can get a bandage. Anyone can help ice and elevate a potential sprain. Most portable first-aid kits will have shakable cold packs, antiseptic/alcohol wipes, and bandages of various sizes. *General rule of thumb: If you can't take care of it on your own with an average first-aid kit, it's probably out of your realm of expertise.*

Always be calm and collected during an emergency. If someone is injured or in crisis, panicking will nearly always make the situation worse. If you aren't capable of staying calm, there is no shame in seeking someone else's help.

It's crucial that we help members when we can, but sometimes the best aid we can provide is recognizing when something is out of our skillset. Emergencies are not the time to be a hero. Unless you have professional medical training, if you aren't 100% certain of what you're doing, it's time to call in a professional. The last thing an injured or struggling person needs is a non-professional doing things they aren't qualified to do, potentially making their situation worse.

In the same vein of "assume that someone knows their body better than you do", if someone directly asks for professional help, do not deny them. In the grand scheme of things, it is always safer to "waste a professional's time" than it is to deny someone medical care when they might need it. If someone thinks they need professional help, let them trust their gut. Similarly, trust *your* gut. If they're waving something off, but it has you really, really worried, it won't hurt to call a professional in. Best case scenario, it's nothing. Worst case scenario, someone who needs medical care doesn't get it

If there is one thing to take away from this section, let it be this: Due to the nature of the role that the Health & Wellness team fills, members of the ensemble may view us as a sort of in-between, someone slightly more helpful than the average Joe, but not quite as daunting as asking for an EMT or other medical professional. We will help when we can, but it is crucial for us to recognize our limits as non-medical professionals. Never be afraid to admit you don't know something, or that something is out of your skillset. In emergencies, there is no time or space for pride. Help how you can, and if you can't, seek professionals.

The above statement applies to non-Health & Wellness SMAC as well. Feel free to ask us for help, but for real, true emergencies, cut out the middleman and get a professional.

Numbers to Remember:

- **General Emergency: 911**
- **General Non-Emergency: 311**
- **Towson Campus Police Emergency Line: 410-704-4444**
- **Towson Campus Police Non-Emergency Line: 410-704-2134**

If someone is a resident of Baltimore City or County and needs scheduled transportation to a medical appointment with a professional, transportation can be scheduled with the following services.

- **Baltimore City Medical Transport: 410-396-7007**
- **Baltimore County Medical Transport: 410-887-2828**

Wrapping it All Up

The Health & Wellness team is here to help make sure all of our members are as ready as they can be for a successful marching season. This document is not an exhaustive resource, and will continue to be edited and updated as more information and studies are found. We are committed to making sure that every bit of information we give is accurate, so as scientific research about the human body and mind expands, so should this document.

This handbook is only a compilation of the basics. For more information about the various topics covered, please feel free to check out any of the following sources.

- [The American Heart Association](#)
- [The Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Overview of Carbohydrates, Proteins, and Fats by Shilpa N Bhupathiraju, PhD and Frank Hu, MD, MPH, PhD](#)
- [The Nutrition Source, Vitamins and Minerals, from the Harvard School of Public Health](#)
- [Dance Nutrition, managed by Rachel Fine, Registered Dietician Nutritionist, CEDS-C, CSSD.](#)
- [Nutrition and athletic performance, from MedlinePlus/the National Library of Medicine](#)
- [The National Eating Disorders Association](#)
- [A Breakdown of Vitamins and Minerals from the UK's National Health Service](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Medicine article on Student Athlete Mental Health, by Valerie Valle, Psy.D](#)
- [Advancing Jewish Athletics](#)
- [Prioritizing Mental Health in College Athletes, from Trine University](#)
- [Hillel International's Safety and Inclusion Resources](#)
- [Achieving optimum sports performance during Ramadan, from the National Library of Medicine](#)
- [Ways to Support Muslim Students, from the Council of American-Islamic Relations, Washington](#)
- [Dysautonomia International](#)
- [How to be a friend to someone with diabetes, from Diabetes UK](#)
- [Emergency Response Guide, from Pratt Institute](#)
- [First Aid Steps, from the American Red Cross](#)

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