

# FOR YOUR HEALTH

A Newsletter for Police & Fire Clinic Members

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Please Note: The content in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider

MAY 2022



## Support for Public Health Workers and Health Professionals

Providing care and services to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic can lead to stress, anxiety, fear, and other strong emotions. How you cope with these emotions can affect your well-being, the care and services you give to others while doing your job, and the well-being of the people you care about outside of work. During this pandemic, it is critical that you recognize what stress looks like, take steps to build your resilience and cope with stress, and know where to go if you need help.

Experiencing or witnessing life threatening or traumatic events impacts everyone differently. In some circumstances, the distress can be managed successfully to reduce associated negative health and behavioral outcomes. In other cases, some people may experience clinically significant distress or impairment, such as acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or secondary traumatic stress (also known as vicarious traumatization). Compassion fatigue and burnout may also result from chronic workplace stress and exposure to traumatic events during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Recognize the symptoms of stress you may be experiencing.

- Feeling irritation, anger, or denial
- Feeling uncertain, nervous, or anxious
- Feeling helpless or powerless
- Lacking motivation
- Feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burned out
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating



## Tips to cope and enhance your resilience.

- Communicate with your coworkers, supervisors, and employees about job stress.
- Talk openly about how the pandemic is affecting your work.
- Identify factors that cause stress and work together to identify solutions.
- Ask about how to access mental health resources in your workplace.
- Remind yourself that everyone is in an unusual situation with limited resources.
- Identify and accept those things which you do not have control over.
- Recognize that you are performing a crucial role in fighting this pandemic and that you are doing the best you can with the resources available.
- Increase your sense of control by keeping a consistent daily routine when possible — ideally one that is similar to your schedule before the pandemic.
- Try to get adequate sleep.
- Make time to eat healthy meals.
- Take breaks during your shift to rest, stretch, or check in with supportive colleagues, coworkers, friends and family.
- When away from work, get exercise when you can. Spend time outdoors either being physically active or relaxing. Do things you enjoy during non-work hours.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting and mentally exhausting, especially since you work with people directly affected by the virus.
- If you feel you may be misusing alcohol or other drugs (including prescriptions), ask for help.
- Engage in mindfulness techniques, such as breathing exercises and meditation.
- If you are being treated for a mental health condition, continue with your treatment and talk to your provider if you experience new or worsening symptoms.



# 5 Myths vs Facts About Depression

## MYTH #1:

**Depression will not affect me.**

**FACT:** Depression is more common than you may think. In the US, more than 17 million adults live with depression yet less than half get treatment. While you may not experience depression, chances are you know someone who does.

## MYTH #2:

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**Depression and sadness are the same and people can just snap out of it.**

**FACT:** Being sad is not the same as having depression. Depression is a mental health condition that causes people to experience extreme sadness, trouble sleeping, loss of energy, difficulty thinking, and more.

## MYTH #3:

**People's genetics dictate whether they develop depression.**

**FACTS:** Depression is caused by one or more factors, including biological factors, life experiences, family history, personality, and environment.

## MYTH #4:

**Those impacted by depression do not recover.**

**FACTS:** With proper treatment, usually consisting of medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both, people with depression can and do get better! Early and effective treatment leads to the best results.

## MYTH #4:

**People with depression cannot work in demanding or stressful jobs**

**FACTS:** People with depression hold jobs in diverse fields and at all levels of organizations, from the shop floor to the c-suite. Depression impacts people's work and personal lives differently. There is no "one size fits all."

## POTENTIAL SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

**Feeling sad, hopeless, worthless, or guilty**



**Thoughts of death or suicide**



**Trouble sleeping, sleeping too much**

**No longer interested in things or activities once enjoyed**

**Difficulty concentrating, thinking, or making decisions**



**Changes in appetite, weight loss or gain, unrelated to dieting**

## Voice Support for Employees' Mental Health Needs

- 63% of employees diagnosed with a mental health condition have not told their employer.\*
- More than half of all employees say they would not disclose a mental health condition diagnosis.\*

These statistics underscore the pervasive stigma associated with mental health.

## Create a Mental Health Action Plan

- 76% of employees say they've struggled with an issue that impacts their mental health.\*
- No person is immune from mental health challenges that can arise in life and at work.

### EMPLOYER ACTIONS:

- Regularly voice support for mental health.
- Initiate mental health conversations across all levels of the organizations.
- Model acceptance by leadership and encourage employee engagement with mental health care benefits and support programs

### EMPLOYER ACTIONS:

- **SURVEY** - Create a Mental Health Action Plan with input from employees.
- **SHARE** - Integrate the plan with the organization's overall health, safety, and well-being plan.
- **ITERATE** - The plan should continuously assess the needs of employees and make improvements as needed.

# 5 Actions Employers Can Take to Cultivate a Mental Health-Friendly Workplace



## Provide Mental Health Education and Training for Staff

### TRAINING SHOULD HELP EMPLOYEES TO:

- ADDRESS - Develop a common language for sensitive topics.
- IDENTIFY - Teach employees how to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health distress.
- RESPOND - Connect people to available resources including comprehensive mental health benefits

## Offer Solutions Across the Continuum of Risk

### ASSESS

Look for ways to address needs across the continuum of mental health conditions from employees who are at low risk (no symptoms) to high risk (require treatment and rehabilitation).

### EXPAND

Programs that address individual-level employee needs are necessary, but insufficient: employers can also consider organization level interventions.

### ADVANCE

Create policies to build a supportive environment that normalizes mental health self-care and treatment in the workplace. Set a positive tone with regular communication cadence, visible role modeling, and consistent leadership engagement

## Measure Effectiveness as You Grow Your Programs

### RESEARCH

ASK vendors to share their theory of behavior change. REQUEST outcomes data to show that their programs "work".

### CHOOSE

**SELECT** programs that can demonstrate effective results that improve the signs and symptoms of depression, anxiety, or stress. **CHOOSE** programs that report aggregated data on ongoing results.

### INNOVATE

Digital apps for mental health, like meditation apps, can be a promising way to reach many employees at an affordable cost.

\*The American Heart Association commissioned Harris Insights & Analytics to conduct an online national survey on mental health of 1,041 U.S. adults 18 years or older who work full or part time at an organization that offers health insurance and has 25 or more employees.



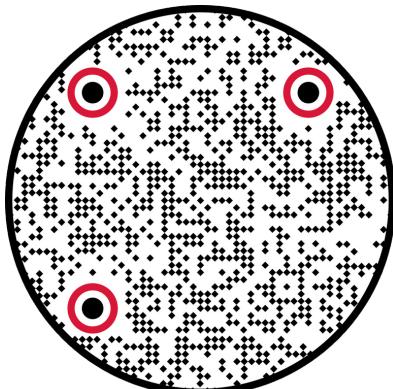
# TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM

Virtually Every Wednesday,  
May 25 -July 13, 2022

Enter to Win A  
**\$75 Gift Card After  
Completing All 8  
Courses.**

This 8-week program emphasizes the benefits of enhancing your health. It also provide individuals who use tobacco with proven strategies for changing their behavior and lifestyle.

**REGISTER HERE:**



<https://forms.gle/4qXsdYqM62L5hzj18>

# What Your Sleep Position Says About Your Health



You're not alone if you don't give a lot of thought to the way you sleep at night — or know which sleep position you prefer for that matter — but even the slightest adjustment to your positioning can have lasting effects on your health. Learn more about the risks and benefits associated with each sleep position.

When it comes to sleep, we all have our preferences. Chances are that you have some consistency in your sleep routine. Whether you're a night owl or an early bird, you likely have a favorite sleeping position. Depending on your personal habits, you may prefer to sleep on your back, side or stomach. Unfortunately, your favorite position could be of detriment to your health, causing general soreness or even affecting more serious conditions like sleep apnea. Practicing good sleep habits — often referred to as "sleep hygiene" — can help you improve your sleep quality for a better night's rest. Good sleep hygiene is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Some quick things you can adjust for a better night's sleep include staying active during the day and avoiding large meals, caffeine and alcohol before bed. But once you've eliminated some of these other negative factors, it's time to set your sights on your sleep position.

Let's get one thing out of the way: sleep positions are not one-size-fits-all. There are several sleep styles, and each of them is associated with different benefits and problems depending on your unique conditions and health requirements. The following factors give you a few things to consider before settling on a sleep 

- **Back and neck pain:** When it comes to reducing pain, different sleeping positions can have mixed results. If you have soreness in your back and neck, experiment with various different positions and pillows to see what works best for you. In some cases, changing the firmness of your bed may be of benefit.
- **Snoring and sleep apnea:** Obstructive sleep apnea occurs when the muscles that support the soft tissues in your throat temporarily relax, which often goes hand-in-hand with snoring. Side sleeping is the preferred position for helping calm your sleep apnea.
- **Reflux and heartburn:** If you experience heartburn, consider sleeping on your back with your head elevated. Otherwise, sleeping on your left side makes it more difficult for acids to escape the stomach.

Whether you're a side, stomach or back sleeper, we've prepared a few simple adjustments to help you improve your sleep health according to the **Mayo Clinic**:

- **Sleeping on your side:** Side sleeping, while beneficial in many ways, can lead to joint and shoulder pain.
  - **How to improve it:** With a few simple adjustments, you can take the strain off of your joints and shoulders. Start by placing a pillow between your knees. A full-length body pillow will work wonders. As for your shoulder, a firm wedge pillow can help reduce strain.
- **Sleeping on your stomach:** Stomach sleeping can be hard on your neck and back. Problems with the lower back are particularly related to sleeping on your stomach.
  - **How to improve it:** If you can't seem to sleep any other way, you can reduce strain on your back by placing a pillow under your pelvis and lower abdomen. For some, this solves the problem of the lower back but introduces new issues with head placement. If this adds noticeable discomfort, try sleeping without a pillow under your head.
- **Sleeping on your back:** On top of having harmful effects on sleep apnea, back sleeping can cause lower back pain and make existing back pain worse.
  - **How to improve it:** Start by placing a pillow under your knees to mimic the normal curvature of your body. A small, rolled towel under the small of your back can provide additional support. An elevated pillow for the head can reduce the effects of heartburn and acid reflux.

If you experience back and neck pain, heartburn, acid reflux or you have sleep apnea, you may benefit from reexamining your sleep position. It's no secret that poor sleep is directly linked to chronic health issues. While each sleep position has its own benefits and problems, developing new sleep strategies based on scientific research can help you optimize your sleep hygiene.

# Featured Recipe

## Seared Scallops with White Bean Ragu & Charred Lemon



**Total Time:** 25 mins

**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients

- 3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 pound mature spinach or white chard, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon capers, rinsed and chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 1 (15 ounce) can no-salt-added cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup dry white wine
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 pound dry sea scallops, tough side muscle removed
- 1 lemon, halved
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

### Directions

1. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add greens and cook, stirring often, until wilted, about 4 minutes.
2. Stir in garlic, capers and  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper; cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
3. Add beans, broth and wine and bring to a simmer.
4. Reduce heat to maintain a low simmer, cover and cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in butter. Cover to keep warm.
5. Meanwhile, sprinkle scallops with the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper. Heat the remaining 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat.
6. Add the scallops and cook until browned on both sides, about 4 minutes total. Transfer to a clean plate.
7. Add lemon halves to the pan, cut-side down, and cook until charred, about 2 minutes. Cut into wedges.
8. Sprinkle the scallops and the bean ragu with parsley and serve with the lemon wedges.

**Exchanges:** 2 1/2 lean protein, 1 fat, 1 starch, 1/2 vegetable

### Nutrition Facts (3 oz. scallops & 1 cup ragu each)

255 calories, 8.3g fat, 21.4g carbs, 21.4g protein, and 1.4g sugars