

Targeting Wellness Newsletter

May 2021

Good News for Good Health!

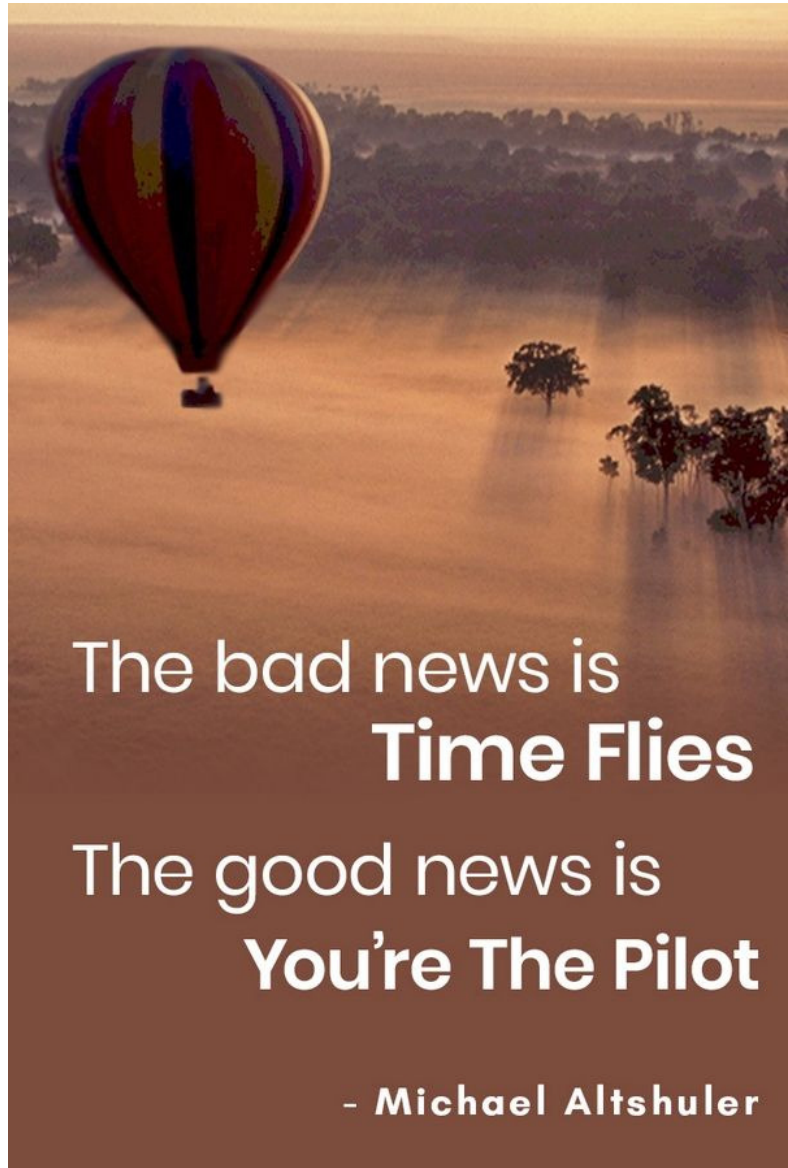
Debby Schiffer, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIFs

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH



The bad news is
Time Flies
The good news is
You're The Pilot

- Michael Altshuler

Don't let fear, anger, shame, doubt, uncertainty or the perceived reaction of others hold you back from your dreams and aspirations. We only have one chance at this thing called life. Don't wait until everything is "perfect". You'll only look back with regret thinking "what if....". In every failure, there is an opportunity to learn and grow, preparing you for the next attempt! There is no failure in trying; there is only failing to try.

Improve Sleep Hygiene and Improve Your Quality of Life

With the many demands we place on ourselves to *get it all done in a day*, we are experiencing “prolonged wakefulness” according to studies done by NCBI (National Center for Biotechnology Information). Sleep deprivation (SD) can have a huge impact on our attention span and working memory, but it also impedes our long-term memory and decision-making skills.

For those professions (Police, Fire, EMS) requiring working at night, SD is crucial. The need for sleep varies significantly based on the individual. The average sleep length recommended is between 7 and 8.5 hours. Sleep is necessary for body restoration. With sleep loss, the sympathetic nervous system is activated, causing the same stress response often referred to as the “Fight or Flight” response. With this response, comes an increased level of the stress hormone, cortisol, increasing ones risk of high blood pressure, impaired immune responses and decreased metabolism. These changes can lead to insulin resistance (an extreme condition in which cells fail to respond normally to insulin in our bodies and can lead to high levels of blood sugar and Type 2 diabetes).

According to the MayoClinic, there are a few things you can do to improve your chances of a good night sleep. Chances are they will NOT be new to you. Yet so many of us struggle with getting adequate sleep, it's always good to get a little reminder now and again.

- **Stick to a sleep schedule**—Go to bed and get up the same time every day, even on the weekends. I know it's tempting to “sleep in” on your day off but staying consistent will reinforce the sleep-wake cycle (see side bar for more details) and help promote better sleep at night.
- **Pay attention to what you eat and drink**—Don't go to bed hungry or stuffed. Limit how much you drink to minimize the middle of the night trips to the bathroom. Avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol (at first you may feel sleepy from the alcohol, but it can cause disruption of sleep later in the night.)
- **Create a bedtime pattern**—which will alert your body it's time for bed. Maybe a warm bath or shower, reading a book, or listening to soothing music. Beware of watching TV or using electronic devices too close to sleep time because they stimulate your brain to be alert. Plus you probably have been on your computer all day...give yourself (and your eyes) a break.
- **Create a comfortable room for sleep**—Keep it cool, dark and quiet. Consider room-darkening shades, earplugs, a fan, eye mask, especially if you are on shift work.
- **Include some physical activity in your day**—30 minutes most days of the week is recommended by the AHA.
- **Try to manage stress**—Get organized, try meditation, write down your “to-do” list so you can get tomorrow off your mind.

Block your clock so you don't keep glancing at it and cause your mind to race with thoughts.

Sleep with a pillow between your legs to minimize back pain

Seal your mattress from allergy causing triggers. Air-tight, plastic, dust-proof covers work best.

Get out in bright light for 5 to 30 minutes as soon as you get out of bed to help get your body ready to go!

A warm cup of chamomile tea really does help you sleep.

Sources:

Alhala, P. and Polo-Kantola, P. (2007) Sleep Deprivation: Impact on cognitive performance. *NCBI*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2656292/>

MayoClinic. (2014). Sleep tips: 7 steps to better sleep. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/sleep/art-20048379>



Unplug From The Dangers of Technology

Too much screen time can hurt your health! More than 87 percent of Americans report using digital devices for more than two hours per day, and 52.2 percent report using two digital devices simultaneously. Here are a few tips to avoid letting your gadgets get the best of you.

Desktop and Laptop Computers:

Hunching over a computer monitor for extended periods can result in eye and vision problems, like eyestrain, blurred vision and dry eyes. It can also cause headaches, and neck and shoulder pain.

What to do?

1. **Set up your workstation properly.** Adjust your chair, monitor and keyboard for your height and optimal viewing distance. When you sit at your computer, your eyes should either gaze at the top of the screen or directly in the center.
2. **Reduce glare.** Adjust your monitor to avoid glare from windows or overhead lighting.
3. **Practice good posture.** Don't hunch your shoulders or cradle a phone in your neck while typing. Practice sitting up straight, stretching your shoulders and back at least every hour, and use a phone support or headset to avoid neck strain.

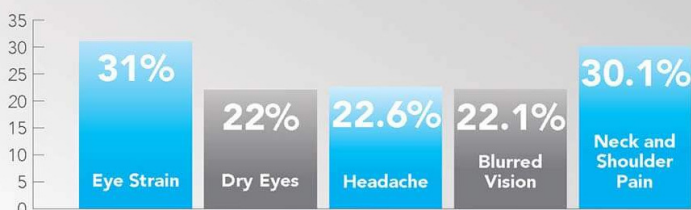
THE 20-20-20 RULE

Reducing the effects of Computer Vision Syndrome

EVERY 20 MINUTES... ...TAKE A BREAK FOR 20 SECONDS... ...AND LOOK AT AN OBJECT 20 FEET AWAY.

What Is the Impact?

Americans report experiencing the following symptoms of digital eye strain:



Video gaming

Too much video gaming can lead to repetitive stress injuries in your wrist, hand and thumb that can make it difficult to grasp objects. It can also cause headaches and eyestrain, back pain and sleep disturbances.

What to do?

1. **Set time limits.** Take a break every 30 minutes to get up and move around.
2. **Stop playing** if you're experiencing pain in your hands or thumbs.
3. **Unplug for a good night's sleep.** Turn off video games at least one hour before bedtime.

Smartphone or tablet

Frequent use can lead to throbbing hand, finger and thumb pain. It can also cause text neck, an injury that's caused by constantly looking down at your device.

What to do?

1. **Raise up your device.** Keep devices at a comfortable distance just below eye level to avoid putting pressure on your neck.
2. **Stretch it out.** Relieve muscle tightness by looking up and arching your upper back.
3. **Flex your fingers.** Try these exercises (hold each position for 5 to 10 seconds and repeat 10 times).
 - Extend and flex wrists forward and backward
 - Rotate forearms so palms face up and then down
 - Make a fist, then spread your fingers out

Americans are becoming increasingly digitized, with more of our daily tasks moving online. For example:



PREVENT Skin Cancer: Protect Yourself From The Sun

Sun exposure is the most preventable risk factor for all skin cancers, including melanoma. You can have fun in the sun and decrease your risk of skin cancer.

Here's how to protect yourself from the sun:

- **Seek shade** when appropriate, remembering that the sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. If your shadow is shorter than you are, seek shade.
- **Wear protective clothing**, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses, when possible.
- **Generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen** with an SPF of 30 or higher to all exposed skin. Broad-spectrum sunscreen provides protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Reapply approximately every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.
- **Use extra caution near water, snow and sand**, as they reflect the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chance of skin cancer.
- **Get vitamin D safely** through a healthy diet that may include vitamin supplements. Don't seek the sun.
- **Avoid tanning beds.** Ultraviolet light from the sun and tanning beds can cause skin cancer and premature skin aging. If you want to look like you've been in the sun, consider using a sunless self-tanning product, but continue to use sunscreen with it.



Resource: For more information visit [The American Academy of Dermatology Association](http://www.aad.org)



DETECT Skin Cancer: Body Mole Map

1 The ABCDEs of Melanoma What to Look for:

Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. However, when detected early, melanoma is highly treatable. You can identify the warning signs of melanoma by looking for the following:



A = Asymmetry

One half is unlike the other half.



B = Border

An irregular, scalloped or poorly defined border.



C = Color

Is varied from one area to another; has shades of tan, brown or black, or is sometimes white, red, or blue.



D = Diameter

Melanomas are usually greater than 6mm (the size of a pencil eraser) when diagnosed, but they can be smaller.



E = Evolving

A mole or skin lesion that looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape or color.

3 Record Your Spots

Make notes of your spots on the images below so you can regularly track changes.

If you notice any new or changing spots, contact your dermatologist to make an appointment. If you don't have one, visit <https://find-a-derm.aad.org> to find a board-certified dermatologist in your area.

Resource: For more information visit The American Academy of Dermatology Association

2 Skin Cancer Self-Examination How to Check Your Spots:

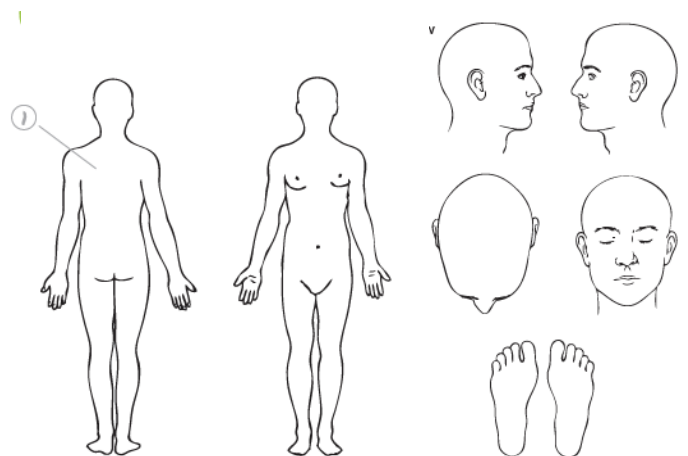
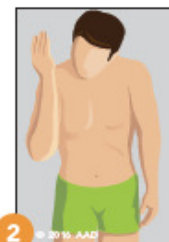
Checking your skin means taking note of all the spots on your body, from moles to freckles to age spots. Skin cancer can develop anywhere on the skin and is one of the few cancers you can usually see. Ask someone for help when checking your skin, especially in hard-to-see places.

1) Examine body front and back in mirror, especially legs.

2) Bend elbows; look carefully at forearms, back of upper arms, and palms.

3) Look at feet, spaces between toes and soles.

4) Examine back of neck and scalp with a hand mirror. Part hair and lift.



What Is Mental Health?

May is Mental Health Month. But what is meant by “mental health”? Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health problems

Early Warning Signs

Not sure if you or someone you know is living with mental health problems? Experiencing one or more of the following feelings or behaviors could be an early warning sign of a problem:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others

Having any of these systems at times is normal, however, if you start to see a pattern, it may be time to seek professional support.

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

Go to:

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/what-to-look-for>

And find out more about the types of mental health conditions typically seen.

Go to:

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/get-help>

And find out how you or a loved one can get the needed help.

Resource:
www.mentalhealth.gov

Resource:
www.mentalhealth.gov

Some Tips To Boost Mental Health and Overall Well-being

Track gratitude and achievement with a journal. Include 3 things you were grateful for and 3 things you accomplished each day.



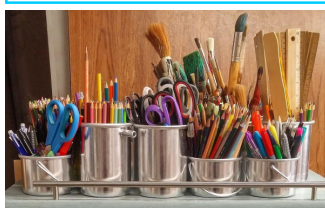
Go off the grid. Leave your smart phone at home for a day and disconnect from constant emails, alerts, and other interruptions. Spend time doing something fun with someone face-to-face.

“You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” - Martin Luther King Jr.

Think of something in your life you want to improve, and figure out what you can do to take a step in the right direction.

Work your strengths. Do something you are good at to build self-confidence, then tackle a tougher task.

Experiment with a new recipe, write a poem, paint or try a Pinterest project. Creative expression and overall well-being are linked.



Set up a getaway. The act of planning a vacation and having something to look forward to can boost your overall happiness for up to 8 weeks!



Sometimes, we don't need to add new activities to get more pleasure. We just need to soak up the joy in the ones we've already got. Trying to be optimistic doesn't mean ignoring the uglier sides of life. It just means focusing on the positive as much as possible. Look at those “ugly” times as lessons. Not easy to do but worth the effort.



The "Magic" of Mushrooms

Now that I have your attention, I'm not referring to "magic mushrooms" but rather those mushrooms typically found right in our local grocery store: cremini (also spelled crimini). You might not know, but they are packed with a ton of essential vitamins and minerals that promote many health benefits!

First off, mushrooms are a kind of fungus, native to North America and Europe. They are known for their mild, earthy flavor and meaty texture, which is why they are a perfect meat substitute for many vegan and whole food plant-based dishes. Here are a few additional facts:

- ◆ When exposed to ultraviolet light while raised, they are a good source of Vitamin D.
- ◆ Excellent source of zinc which is an essential trace element that is vital for a strong immune system.
- ◆ Rich source of potassium, known to reduce the negative impact of sodium on the body. In turn this often leads to lowering ones blood pressure.
- ◆ Their anti-inflammatory qualities can greatly improve the efficiency of the immune system. This helps in our defense against foreign bodies and makes us less susceptible to serious illnesses.
- ◆ Replacing some of the meat produces with this "meaty product" can also have a huge impact on your waste-line, reducing BMI and belly circumference. 😊

In summary: mushrooms are rich, low calorie sources of fiber, protein, and antioxidants. They mitigate risk of developing serious health conditions, such as Alzheimer's, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.



When buying mushrooms, avoid ones with dark, soft, or mushy spots. You want them to be firm and have their gills covered as you'll see in the picture.

Be sure to clean your mushrooms before eating or cooking. Most store bought can be cleaned using a dry cloth or paper towel to wipe off excess "dirt" they were grown in. I personally prefer to wash them under cold, running water and then pat them dry.

What are Cremini mushrooms?

Agaricus bisporus mushrooms which are the same as white and portabella with the only difference being their stage of maturity.

Stages:

- ◆ Youngest (least mature) are the white mushrooms.
- ◆ Light brown are next and are often labeled "baby portabella"
- ◆ Darker "full-grown" portabella are much larger and have the meatiest consistency.



This is a photo of a baby bella I had just taken out of a new container in preparation of my daily salad. Look how happy it was to see me!

Something I have learned: cooking your mushrooms (vs eating them raw) releases much more of their nutrients that are health benefiting!



Mushroom Lentil "Meatloaf"



Recipe from Making "Thyme" for Health

YIELD: 2 LOAFS // 10 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 45

COOK TIME: 45

TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES

<https://www.makingthymeforhealth.com/mushroom-lentil-loaf/>



INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 1 cup dry brown lentils (approx. 3 cups cooked)
- ◆ 3 cup vegetable broth (or water for a low-sodium option)
- ◆ 3 large carrots, shredded (approx. 1 cup)
- ◆ 1 large yellow onion (approx. 1 and 1/2 cup)
- ◆ 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, diced (approx. 3 cups)
- ◆ 4 garlic cloves, minced (approx. 2 tablespoons)
- ◆ 1 green bell pepper, diced (approx. 3/4 cup) (or celery)
- ◆ 1 cup whole-wheat panko breadcrumbs (can also use gluten-free)
- ◆ 1 cup flour (whole wheat, spelt or oat flour*)
- ◆ 1/2 cup walnuts, finely chopped (sub sunflower seeds for nut allergies)
- ◆ 1/2 cup sunflower seeds, finely chopped
- ◆ 4 tablespoons tomato paste
- ◆ 3 tablespoons (vegan) Worcestershire
- ◆ 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- ◆ 2 tablespoons dried thyme
- ◆ 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- ◆ 1 tablespoons ground chia or flax seed + 3 tablespoons water in place of an egg

BALSAMIC GLAZE

- ◆ 1/3 cup ketchup
- ◆ 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ◆ 1 teaspoon maple syrup

DIRECTIONS:

1. Rinse the lentils and then combine them with the vegetable broth in a medium-size pot over high heat. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to low and simmer for about 30 minutes. Once they are tender drain them and then set aside in a large bowl.
2. Next preheat the oven to 375°F and line two loaf pans with parchment paper. (If you only have one loaf pan, you can cook each loaf one at a time or half the recipe.) Combine the ground chia seed (or flax) with water and then set aside to thicken.
3. Using a food processor, finely chop the onion, garlic, mushroom and pepper by pulsing a few times. Warm about 2 tablespoons olive oil (or water) in a large skillet over medium-heat and then add the onion. Sprinkle with salt & pepper then cook for 2-3 minutes, until translucent. Add the mushrooms, garlic, carrot and green pepper then cook for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
4. Using the food processor again, mash half of the lentils by pulsing a few times. Add them back to the bowl along with the remaining lentils and sautéed vegetables.
5. Process the remaining ingredients to finely chop (*oats for oat flour, bread for breadcrumbs, walnuts and sunflower seeds) then add them to the bowl along with the herbs.
6. Mix the Worcestershire and the tomato paste into the chia seed mixture and then add to the bowl. Stir everything together until the liquid is evenly distributed. Pour half of the mixture into each loaf pan then smooth it down with a spatula (or the back of the spoon) to create the shape of a loaf.
7. Lastly, combine the ingredients for the balsamic glaze in a small bowl and mix together. Spread it over the top of each loaf then cook in the oven for 40-45 minutes. Allow to cool for about 10-15 minutes before serving.

If you would like to freeze this recipe, allow it to cool completely before transferring to an airtight container, then freeze. When ready to serve, defrost at room temperature then reheat in the oven at 350 degrees for 20 minutes, or until heated through.

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As a Certified Health and Wellness Coach (NBC-HWC), I can help you tackle these lifestyle challenges keeping you from living the life you want. Working as your advocate to help keep you accountable to yourself, you will see that making those changes most important to you are within your reach. It's about tapping into your inner wisdom; sometimes it takes a little guidance to help you see that. Reach out to me via email or phone to discuss if coaching might be a option for you. (Group or one-on-one coaching options available.)