



AUGUST TOOLKIT:

NATIONAL Wellness MONTH



***AUGUST IS NATIONAL WELLNESS MONTH, EMPHASIZING SELF-CARE,
STRESS MANAGEMENT AND HEALTHY ROUTINES.***

Take time to create a personalized wellness culture by intentionally building sustainable, daily habits across physical, mental and emotional dimensions.

STEP 1: UNDERSTANDING SELF-CARE

The World Health Organization defines self-care as “the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider”.

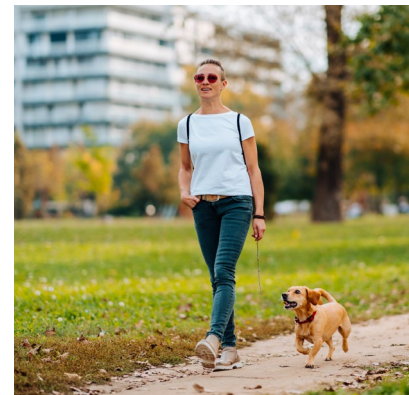
In practice, this means using available knowledge and information to empower individuals to look after their own health efficiently and conveniently, in collaboration with health and social care professionals as needed.

SELF-CARE INVOLVES:

1. **Making healthy lifestyle choices:** Being physically active and eating healthy.
2. **Avoiding unhealthy lifestyle habits:** Avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.
3. **Responsible use of medications:** Both prescription and nonprescription.
4. **Self-recognition of symptoms:** Assessing and addressing symptoms, in partnership with a healthcare professional when necessary.
5. **Self-monitoring:** Checking for signs of deterioration or improvement.
6. **Self-management:** Managing symptoms of disease, either alone, in partnership with healthcare professionals or alongside other people with the same health condition.

IDEAS FOR SELF-CARE AT WORK:

- **Physical movement:** Take short walk breaks, have walking meetings or move around throughout your day.
- **Brain breaks:** Shut down the computer, step out for some sunshine with co-workers, or simply watch the trees sway in the wind.
- **Saying no:** Finding balance is an essential component of self-care. Don't be afraid to decline tasks that would overload you.



IDEAS FOR SELF-CARE AT HOME:

- Play backyard baseball or shoot hoops in your driveway.
- Turn up some music and dance around your living room.
- Call a friend or loved one.
- Watch your favorite TV show.
- Take a nap.



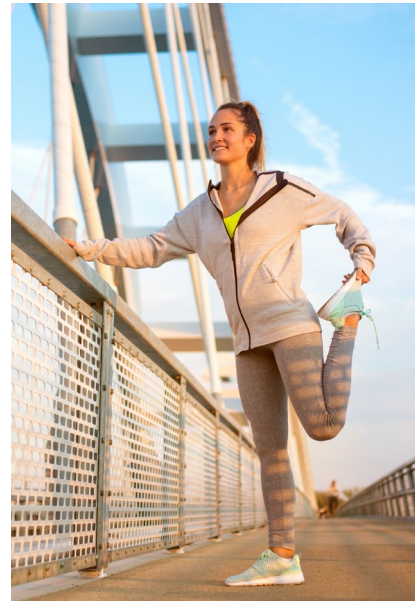
STEP 2: MANAGING STRESS



Managing stress effectively starts with identifying personal triggers and building healthy daily habits. Incorporate these evidence-based strategies into your routine to support your overall well-being.

1. TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY.

- **Prioritize sleep:** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Adults should aim for seven to nine hours of quality sleep each night.
- **Get active:** Regular physical activity, such as walking, yoga or stretching, releases endorphins that can help reduce stress.
- **Eat well:** Fuel your body with balanced meals that include fruits, vegetables and lean proteins. Limit caffeine, sugar and alcohol.



2. PRACTICE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES.

- **Deep breathing:** Take slow, deep breaths to lower your blood pressure and slow your heart rate.
- **Mindfulness and meditation:** Use guided exercises or apps to ground yourself in the present moment. You can also try the 3-3-3 rule: Find and mentally or quietly name three things you see, close your eyes and identify three sounds you hear, and move three body parts.
- **Unplug:** Take short breaks from social media, news and screens to reduce mental overload.

3. ADJUST YOUR HABITS AND MINDSET.

- **Set boundaries:** Learn to say "no." Know your limits and avoid taking on more responsibilities than you can handle.
- **Prioritize your to-do list:** Distinguish between tasks that must be completed and those that can wait. Delegate or eliminate nonessential tasks when possible.
- **Practice gratitude:** Write down or reflect on specific things you are grateful for each day to support emotional well-being.



4. CONNECT WITH OTHERS AND SEEK SUPPORT.

- **Reach out:** Spend time with friends, family members or community groups. Talking with someone you trust can help put challenges into perspective.
- **Seek professional help:** If stress becomes overwhelming or difficult to manage, contact a doctor or mental health professional for support.

STEP 3: CHANGING YOUR HABITS

You don't have to wait until Jan. 1 to change habits. This month, we encourage you to recycle an old habit you can't shake and adopt a new one that enhances your well-being. Focus on small, consistent and enjoyable changes rather than intense overhauls. James Clear, author of "Atomic Habits," says even tiny changes can bring remarkable results.

THERE'S NO BETTER TIME TO START THAN NOW!

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS:

QUIT FAST FOOD

- Adopt healthy options. Something simple like incorporating more fruits and vegetables or bringing your lunch to work can make a huge difference.

QUIT INACTIVITY

- Adopt a movement plan. Doing something you enjoy is key. Try a short walk with a friend, learn a new dance, or join a recreation league; just plan it and enjoy the process.

QUIT NEGATIVE THINKING

- For every negative thought you have, think of a positive thought. Dr. Daniel Amen suggests asking yourself if there was truth to that thought. You can also choose to focus on the positive side of the situation.

QUIT YOUR REGULAR ROUTINE

- Try something new and fun. Breaking out of a rut doesn't require a massive lifestyle overhaul. Small adjustments – like changing your morning commute, swapping your usual coffee spot or rearranging your living space – can make daily life feel fresh.



