



BeWell

SPRING/SUMMER 2021
EDITION

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8 DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

Our wellness program's mission is to inspire employees to lead a balanced healthy lifestyle across all dimensions of wellness.



INTELLECTUAL



EMOTIONAL



PHYSICAL



SOCIAL



OCCUPATIONAL



FINANCIAL



ENVIRONMENTAL

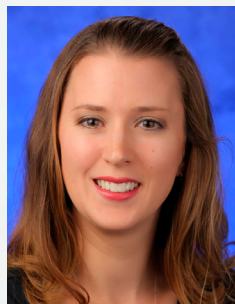


SPIRITUAL

Wellness Tips from the Top

CONVERSATION WITH ABIGAIL RUDY, VICE PRESIDENT OF NURSING FOR PENN STATE HEALTH MILTON S. HERSHEY MEDICAL CENTER.

I sat down with Abigail Rudy for a virtual conversation on all things wellness - her career, redefining personal wellness goals during the COVID-19 pandemic and her vision for supporting our nurses' mental health needs.



Tell me more about yourself.

I grew up in the country, and I mean the *actual* country, where there were no traffic lights and the closest grocery store was 30 minutes away. Currently, I live in Hershey with my family. My husband is my high school sweetheart and we have two boys, ages 8 and 12.

How did you grow into

your current position, VP of Nursing? In 2004, I started working at Hershey Medical Center through the graduate nurse internship program in the Medical ICU. I continued working in this department as a staff nurse and then transitioned into a transplant coordinator, clinical head nurse, nurse manager and now VP of Nursing. I've had my current job for about 4 years.

What do you enjoy about being a leader at Penn State? I enjoy being able to teach new nurses and help people through difficult situations. Being someone that people can count on to make things better brings me a lot of joy.

How do you maintain your personal wellness? I am extremely blessed. I have a strong support system that enables me to take care of my personal health. Running is my mental de-stress. Over the past year, I've needed to adjust my goals to fit my life. I've had to shift my own thinking from being competitive and exercising for 2 hours at a time to thinking about what I could do with the limited time I had. This sometimes means the goal is to get 30 minutes of exercise and then spend time with my family. Sometimes my 30-minute lunch break walks are the best way for me to fit this in.

My spiritual health is also a big priority for me and has looked different this past year. Not being able to go to church functions

and talk about my faith has been difficult at times. So, I've had to adjust what this looks like. Connecting with my spiritual friends over the phone and prioritizing these conversations and relationships has been really helpful to meet this need.

Describe to me the challenges and barriers that many nurses face when it comes to their personal wellness?

Many healthcare professionals sacrifice their own wellbeing for the care of others. In my own experience going back to school and raising a family, the time available to care for myself has waxed and waned. Especially in this past year, in the time of COVID, my work hours were more than I ever remember. My time to support my wellbeing looked different.

What piece of advice would you offer fellow nurses or healthcare professionals who recognize that personal wellbeing is important but find it challenging to put into practice?

I think it starts with reframing your thinking. We all know the healthy practices that we should be doing, but many nurses, including myself at times, feel guilty for taking time to prioritize our own wellbeing. Acknowledging this and reminding ourselves of the value of personal wellbeing is key.

How have you seen the health system prioritize the wellbeing of nurses?

I've seen this the most in the emotional support component. During COVID our chaplain services were available to support the team through emotionally distressing situations. The Medical Intermediate Care Unit also launched a support group program, Tales From the Bedside, for a unit who had transitioned into caring for COVID patients. Nurses could share their experiences in a safe environment and focus on resiliency strategies to work through the difficult emotions. This program will continue to expand even beyond COVID units. Creating opportunities like this one that allows nurses to share experiences and receive support has been invaluable.

By Elizabeth Hivner, CHES, M.Ed, a Project Manager with Penn State PRO Wellness. She manages components of the BeWell employee wellness initiative for Penn State Health employees in partnership with Penn State Health Human Resources.

Safe Ways to Save Money on Sunscreen



If you've heard that you can save money on sunscreen - cheap is chic these days - by using a body lotion with SPF 15, we've got some bargains that give your skin more burn, wrinkle, and cancer protection. First, think generic. Unless you have super sensitive skin or you're buying sunscreen for a baby, drugstores have plenty of good generic SPF 30s (the minimum you should use). Most generics now offer solid UVA/UVB protection, just like boutique-priced designer brands.

We like formulas that use physical sunscreens, like nanoparticle zinc oxide. Why? Not only does zinc work instantly and stays put well, but also, unlike chemical sunscreens, it isn't absorbed - there's been some recent safety concern about absorbable chemical sunscreens.

Alternatively, if you hate sunscreen more than mosquitoes detest DEET, invest in some UV-protective clothing for the beach. Now, be smart about buying and wearing it:

- **Look for the UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) number.** A top-of-the-line UPF 40–50 label means only about 2% of the sun's rays will get through.
- **Choose a loose, comfy fit.** Tight UPF clothes deliver less protection than their number promises.
- **Don't swim in it.** Wet clothes won't protect you, regardless of the UPF number.

That should keep your skin, wallet, and dermatologist happy this summer and next.



Penn State Health BeWell Champion Spotlight



Penn State Health Medical Group - All About Children has gone to great lengths to help improve health and wellness initiatives for its employees as part of the BeWell Champion Initiative, an initiative that works to enhance wellness within the Penn State Health community. Since the fall of 2019, a network of BeWell Champions across 32 Penn State Health Community Medical Group sites have led employee wellness efforts. This initiative is funded through Penn State Health Human Resources in collaboration with Penn State PRO Wellness.

Bryna Maslayak (Quality Associate), Jessica Sanchez (Medical Office Associate), and Stephanie Phillips (Scheduling Coordinator) are the BeWell Champions for the Penn State Health Medical Group - All About Children clinic. As Champions, they have worked together to host many wellness activities for their staff, including step and water challenges, virtual HIIT classes, and even a yoga in the park session. The step challenges prove to be their most popular initiatives, as they found that staff are still able to do this socially-distanced at home or at work at their own pace. Through the team's efforts, they were able to involve over 50 staff, along with friends and family who also joined in on the fun. As Bryna commented, **"I absolutely love this program. I can't wait to be a part of it next year and see how I can help with the program and company as a whole."**

Four Simple Ways to Practice Gratitude Daily



Do you reflect on the good things in your life? Research suggests that gratitude has a multitude of benefits. Being thankful means you notice - and appreciate - all the things you have instead of focusing on what you don't have. Cultivating that feeling has long been linked to better emotional health, and newer research suggests it may impart physical benefits, too. Even better, an attitude of gratitude isn't something you have, or you don't. **It can be practiced and nurtured over time.**

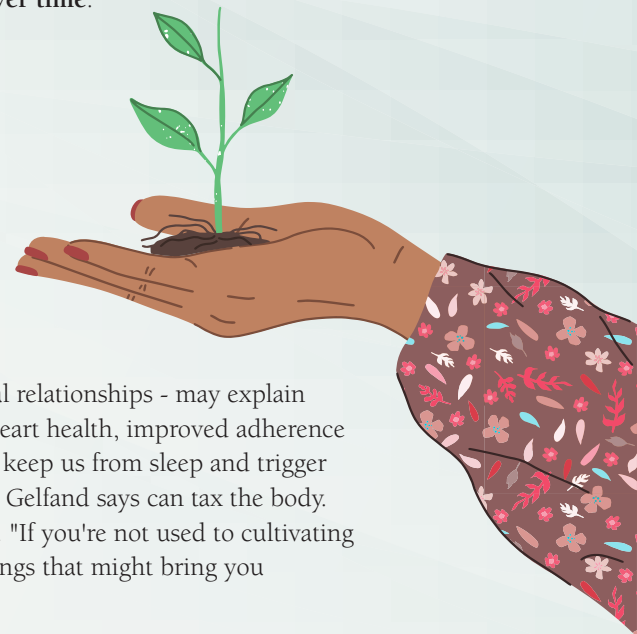
The Perks of Practicing Gratitude

It's no secret: Being thankful is good for your mind. In studies, gratitude is often associated with better psychological wellbeing, including increased happiness, improved depression, boosted motivation, and enhanced romantic relationships. "When we are grateful, it helps us have a better outlook on life," explains Yevgeniy Gelfand, MD, a psychiatrist at Trident Medical Center. "We tend to appreciate things more, and it really does put us in a place of abundance versus a place of need."

Your positivity may even attract some new friends. "We tend to gravitate toward people who feel more grateful and are more appreciative," Dr. Gelfand says. Building strong connections and having a healthy social network - one with robust interpersonal relationships - may explain some of the mental perks of gratitude. Among other advantages, it is linked to better heart health, improved adherence to medical treatment, and even more peaceful slumber - perhaps because "worries can keep us from sleep and trigger insomnia," Gelfand says. Practicing gratitude may help you deal with stress too, which Gelfand says can tax the body. "When you're stressed, you're tired; you have less energy and motivation," he explains. "If you're not used to cultivating gratitude, you expect things to be uncomfortable, so you're likely to shy away from things that might bring you pleasure and joy."

Ready to start nurturing your own sense of appreciation? It's easier than you might think.

Try these tips to get started:



1. Be intentional and detailed.

Every day, take a moment to notice at least one new thing you're grateful for. It can be something in your own life or in the greater world. Dig a little deeper, as well. Instead of saying you're grateful for your best friend or your spouse, for example, identify specific things that a person does that you appreciate, such as being a good listener or making a good cup of coffee.



2. Write it down.

Gelfand encourages his patients to journal regularly. He says that writing down feelings of gratitude lets you reflect on them better than just thinking about them. "It makes it a little more real, and it helps to have something physical in front of you that you can go back and re-read," he explains. Of course, writing is not for everyone, and it's okay to find your own meaningful gratitude practice. It might be taking a walk outside or just saying - out loud - what you are grateful for.



3. Say thank you.

Thanking people who've had a positive influence in your life is good for you - and for them. Verbally saying thank you is great, but some gratitude experts recommend writing your expression of appreciation and hand-delivering it for more impact.



4. Practice.

Although some people naturally tend to be more grateful than others, gratitude is a trait that is developed and honed. "Not only does the practice of doing it helps us feel more gratitude in the moment, but it also has lasting effects," says Gelfand. "The effect snowballs and creates an upward spiral. As we get better at being grateful and cultivating gratitude, it's more readily available to use as a tool. It's almost like muscle memory."

Summer Workout Routines to Have Fun and Lose Weight



Giving in to summer fun can keep you motivated and on track with exercise - key for losing weight, reducing your risk of heart disease and diabetes, and keeping your brain, skin, and love life young.

If the Great Outdoors (beach! mountains! parks! backyards!) are looking way better than that basement treadmill or the weight room at the gym, ditch the same old routine. Obey your instincts and head outside for some fun physical activity that doesn't remotely feel like exercise but has the same benefits. Fun stuff that makes you go "WOO-HOO!" can boost fitness and burn as many or even more calories than your usual workout routine.

Try these:

Spin a Hula-Hoop



Rocking a Hula-Hoop burns 210 calories in 30 minutes and boosts your heart rate as much as a brisk walk. Get a Hula-Hoop for yourself, one for each of your kids and grandkids, and "hoop it up" together!

Toss a Frisbee



This classic summer toy can help you burn 109 to 252 calories in half an hour.

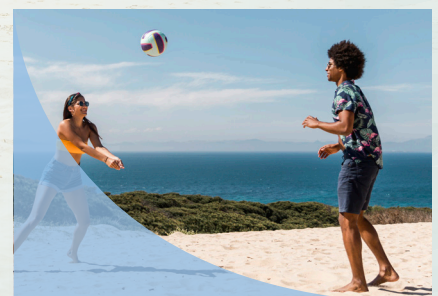
Dance the Summer Away



Join the kids when they play Dance Dance Revolution or hit the dance floor at your niece's wedding. Accept your neighbor's invite to Zumba or Jazzercise class. Dancing can burn many calories (shakin' a samba can burn 10 calories per minute) while boosting fitness health.

Dancing could also lower your risk of dementia by an impressive 76%! It's a workout that doesn't feel like work.

Hit the Beach



Dial-up your favorite Beach Boys classics on your phone, slap on plenty of sunscreen, and go coastal. Walking on soft sand can burn 20% to 50% more calories than walking on a hard surface, thanks to the extra effort it takes (the softer the sand, the harder you'll work). Ready for more fun? Look for a beach volleyball game; a 30-minute beach volleyball game burns up to 355 calories!

Walk in Water



Love to hang out at the pool but hate getting your hair wet? Skip the laps and get in some water walking. Water supports your weight but can add up to 12 times more resistance than air, so you'll get a great workout, no bathing cap necessary. Water workouts are also a great option

for individuals with achy joints. A little warm-water exercise can cut joint pain from arthritis and fibromyalgia by as much as a third.

Recipe

SALMON TACOS WITH RED CABBAGE SLAW

SERVINGS: 4

SERVING SIZE: 2 TACOS



These salmon tacos are full of color, great flavor and good-for-you nutrients. Healthy yogurt sauce substitutes for high-fat sour cream and crunchy cabbage slaw keeps the toppings healthy.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 1/2 tsp ground coffee | 1/8 tsp salt |
| 1 tsp brown sugar | Black pepper to taste |
| 1 tsp ground cumin | 1 Tbsp olive oil |
| 1 tsp chopped fresh cilantro | 1 1/2 lbs salmon fillet |
| 1/2 tsp chili powder | 8 corn tacos, warmed |

Yogurt Sauce:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1/4 cup plain yogurt | 1 tsp lime zest |
| 2 garlic cloves, minced fine | 1/2 tsp honey |
| 1 jalapeño pepper, finely minced | 1/8 tsp salt |
| 2 tsp hot sauce | Black pepper to taste |
| 1 tsp fresh lime juice | |

Toppings:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 4 cups thinly sliced red cabbage | 1 lime, cut into wedges |
| Chopped fresh cilantro | |

INSTRUCTIONS:

Tacos

1. Preheat the broiler. In a small bowl, combine the coffee, brown sugar, cumin, cilantro, chili powder, salt and black pepper. Add the olive oil and stir. Brush the coffee mixture over the salmon.
2. Broil the salmon, skin side down, for 8 minutes, or until it flakes easily with a fork. Remove from the heat and break the fillets into chunks.

Yogurt Sauce

1. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the yogurt, garlic, jalapeño, hot sauce, lime juice, lime zest and honey. Add salt and black pepper to taste.

Toppings

3. Fill the taco shells with the salmon. Top the salmon with the yogurt sauce, cabbage and cilantro. Serve with lime wedges.

Recipe Source: http://bit.ly/SalmonTacos_HeartHealthy

Your Highmark Wellness Resources



Sharecare

No matter where you are in your health journey, Sharecare provides personalized insights, information, daily tracking, and one-of-a-kind tools to help you live a healthier life. Sign up to mycare.sharecare.com to discover your RealAge, track your health habits, and more. Sharecare is available to all employees, regardless of your enrollment in Penn State Health medical insurance.

Wellness Coaching

A Highmark personal wellness coach can provide you with expert one-on-one guidance in the areas of weight management, nutrition, physical activity, stress management, and overall wellness. Call **800-650-8442** to reach a wellness coach. Access to wellness coaches is available to all employees, regardless of your enrollment in Penn State Health medical insurance.

Blue365 Member Discounts

With Blue365, get great savings on all of the things you need for a healthy lifestyle. Simply register at blue365deals.com for offers like 20% off at Reebok.com, discounted products through Jenny Craig, or a gym membership for only \$29 a month. Access to Blue365 Member Discounts is available to all employees, regardless of your enrollment in Penn State Health medical insurance.

Case Management

Navigate your health with a personal care team. Call the number on the back of your member ID card to reach a nurse health coach.

Baby BluePrints

Baby Blueprints is a maternity education and support program that helps expectant mothers better understand every pregnancy stage and make more informed care and lifestyle-related decisions.

Baby Blueprints also gives participants access to individualized support throughout their pregnancy from a nurse health coach. Call **866-918-5267** to enroll.

For additional questions or to learn more, call Member Services at the number on the back of your medical ID card.





10 Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition

1 Eat Breakfast

Start your day with a healthy breakfast that includes lean protein, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Try making a breakfast burrito with scrambled eggs, low-fat cheese, salsa, and a whole wheat tortilla or a parfait with low-fat plain yogurt, fruit, and whole-grain cereal.

2 Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and veggies add color, flavor and texture, vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber to your plate. Make 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables your daily goal - experiment with different types, including fresh, frozen, and canned.

3 Watch Portion Sizes

Use half your plate for fruits and vegetables and the other half for grains and lean protein foods. Complete the meal with a serving of fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt. Measuring cups may also help you compare portions to the recommended serving size.

4 Be Active

Regular physical activity has many health benefits. Start by doing what exercise you can, adults should strive for a minimum of two hours and 30 minutes per week. You don't have to hit the gym - take a walk after dinner or put on music and dance at home.

5 Get to Know Food Labels

Reading the Nutrition Facts panel can help you choose foods and drinks to meet your nutrient needs.

6 Fix Healthy Snacks

Healthy snacks can sustain your energy levels between meals, mainly when they include a combination of foods. Choose from two or more of the MyPlate food groups: grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein. Try raw veggies with low-fat cottage cheese or hummus or a tablespoon of nut or seed butter with an apple or banana.

7 Drink More Water

Quench your thirst with water instead of drinks with added sugars. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water, especially if you are active, an older adult, or live or work in hot conditions.

8 Order Out without Ditching Goals

You can eat out and stick to your healthy eating plan! The key is to plan ahead, ask questions and choose foods carefully. Compare nutrition information, if available, and look for healthier options that are grilled, baked, broiled, or steamed.

9 Banish Brown Bag Boredom

Whether it's for work or school, prevent brown bag boredom with easy-to-make, healthy lunch ideas. Try a whole-wheat pita pocket with veggies and hummus or a low sodium vegetable soup with whole-grain crackers, or a salad of mixed greens with low-fat dressing and a hard-boiled egg.

10 Eat Seafood Twice a Week

Seafood - fish and shellfish - contains a range of nutrients, including healthy omega-3 fats. Salmon, trout, oysters, and sardines are high in omega-3s and lower in mercury.



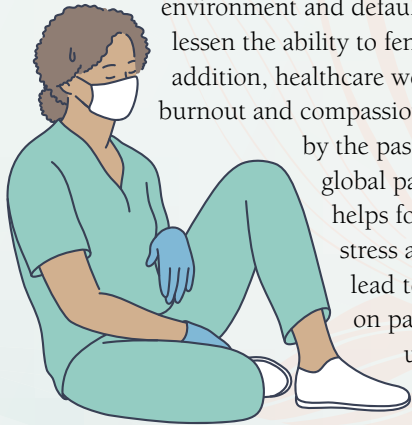
Fight Stress with Mindfulness



By: Lindsay B. Curtin, PharmD, BCPS

Lindsay is a critical care trained pharmacist and Hatha yoga teacher. She serves the Penn State Health patient population as a staff pharmacist at the Hershey Medical Center campus.

Each day people defend themselves against physical, mental, and emotional threats to their wellbeing. The high-stress healthcare environment and default to destructive coping skills lessen the ability to fend off enemies of wellness. In addition, healthcare workers are especially prone to burnout and compassion fatigue, uniquely exacerbated by the past year of uncertainty in the global pandemic. While acute stress helps focus on the task at hand, chronic stress and negative coping skills can lead to risky behaviors like taking on patients' problems, overworking, unhealthy sleeping and eating habits, and substance abuse. These short-term fixes and distractions could create long-term problems.



What if the solution is to tune in to ourselves to turn down the outside world's volume?

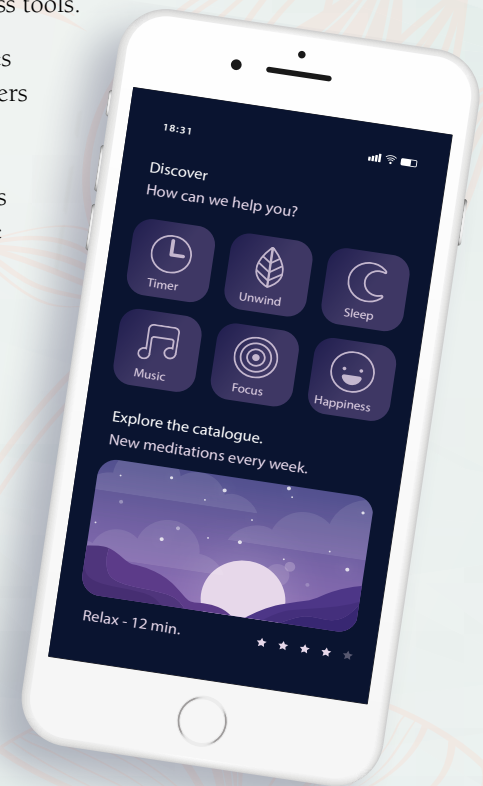
When people practice mindfulness, they tune in to the present moment on purpose without judging. They pause thoughts about the past and stop worrying about the future. They note sensations in the mind and body and move from one moment to the next, paying attention to what arises. With steady attention, they can connect the mind and body and regulate physical and emotional reactions. It is a valuable defense mechanism against stress in the healthcare workplace.

Regular practice of mindfulness-based meditation can improve health and wellness by **reducing stress, enhancing self-compassion, reducing inner and outer conflict, and increasing empathy**. Physical practices like yoga, tai chi, or breathing techniques blend mental and physical exercises, while mindfulness-based stress reduction programs target the regulation of stress reactions, coping strategies, and emotional resilience. Guided meditations may present a set of breathing cues, provide body awareness reminders, or narrate a mental journey to steady the mind's attention. An individual may find favor of one type of meditation over another. Additionally, they may want to practice a variety of mindfulness techniques. The good news is that there is a multitude of techniques to try.

Meditation researchers study a variety of mindful practices, and many report positive impacts on health and wellness. Meditation studies usually involve a prescribed training program or routine, and health results show **improvement in pain management and mental health, among other disease states**. A recent study of healthcare workers evaluated a training program of mindfulness and yoga. Healthcare workers learned yoga, body scan methods, breathing awareness, walking meditation, and open meditation once per week for four weeks. Participants received exercises to complete at home and work and filled out surveys to assess various outcomes. They reported **improvement in quality of life, stress, and anxiety scores**. Despite the significant impact on wellness, study authors note that over 40% of initial participants dropped out of the study due to scheduling conflicts at work. They acknowledge that these tools are beneficial, but only when healthcare workers have ready access to programs and mindfulness tools.

Meditations of a few minutes can be beneficial, so beginners may want to set a goal of meditating regularly rather than trying long meditations at first. Apps like **Sharecare** and **Ten Percent Happier** have free content and help set reminders. If you'd like to hear what Penn State Health offers in mindfulness meditation, email mindfulness@pennstatehealth.psu.edu.

Getting started may seem intimidating, but it is as simple as stopping for *one deep breath*.



Sources: Conversano, et al. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01683>
La Torre, et al. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jcm9041037>

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Are you having a wellness event or do you lead an employee program that may be of interest to Penn State Health employees? Please consider submitting content for our next BeWell newsletter. Photos are welcomed and encouraged along with your submission! Send all submissions to BeWell@pennstatehealth.psu.edu.



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PennState PRO Wellness

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sip

diabetic-friendly

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heart-healthy options

