



# BeWell

WINTER 2023  
EDITION

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- How Does a Busy Person Begin a Meditation Practice? . . . . 2
- Recipe: Oven-Baked Chicken and Steamed Squash . . . . 3
- Upcoming Events . . . . . 3
- Migraine in the Workplace . . . 4
- It's Time to Give Your Own Heart a Little Extra Love . . 6
- University Fitness Center . . . . 7
- WeightWatchers . . . . . 7

## 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 JENNIFER SARFF, VICE PRESIDENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AT PENN STATE HEALTH



**What do you find most rewarding about your job?**  
The people! The people I get to lead serve in very broad and important roles. Although the work that my team and I do is not clinical, we get to help and support the people who help people. The team I am blessed to work with every day is exceptional, and they are really committed to excellence and serving our employees.

**Why do you believe well-being is important for employees?** We should take personal accountability for our health and well-being, but we also must recognize how work impacts our lives. Our mission and vision at Penn State Health is to have programs and resources available to support employees where they are because we all have different unique circumstances. Whether it's work or home, life is hard, and we've seen that over the last couple of years. It's important to understand that everybody needs to find their unique path and learn how to be accountable to ourselves. Still, our vision is to provide resources that people can tap into that are most meaningful to them.

**How do you like to maintain your own well-being?** I walk every day, and when I walk, I like to catch up with people and listen to podcasts. Faith plays a huge role in my well-being, and for me it is tied to how I feel. I also try to focus a lot on sleep, but I do struggle sometimes with that because I have three teenagers and I can't sleep until they're back home. I love to cook and garden and try a variety of new things to stay well.

**How do you encourage your employees to take care of their well-being?** Having individual accountability for health and well-being helps you to know where you're at. The analogy I use with my team is that everybody should know when they're at the point where the air is going to come completely out of the balloon, and it's going to fly all over the room. And that's different for everybody because people have different support systems. They have different stressors in their life, and they have different roles and responsibilities. It's all about awareness and that looks different for everybody. It might be focusing on financial well-being and learning to budget, plan for retirement, or their children's college fund. Some people may want to practice meditation, yoga and different things where they focus inward. For me, it's just about finding yourself and picking resources, for example the offerings on the BeWell website that cover the eight dimensions of wellness. Time is valuable, so we can't spend every day, all day, trying different things for wellness. It's like an experiment that goes on over many years and will shift and change as we grow. It's all about knowing where we're at in any given moment but also recognizing what we need.

**What do you hope employees will say about the culture of wellness at Penn State Health?** We need to make sure we're fulfilling commitments to the organizations and patients we serve, but also to our employees. I hope they feel like this is a supportive place to tap into the provided resources and try some new things. I also hope that our employees recognize that we support people in a variety of ways. It's not just about gym memberships and healthy eating but also taking care of our minds. COVID taught us a lot of things and I think one of those is that wellness is multifaceted and looks different for everybody, and so I hope people feel that in terms of the programs that we offer.

By Kathleen Allen, a Project Coordinator with Penn State PRO Wellness. She facilitates components of the BeWell employee wellness initiatives for Penn State Health employees in partnership with Penn State Health Human Resources.

# How Does a Busy Person Begin a Meditation Practice?



By Dean Ornish with Ornish Living

Many doctors, even those who are interested in nutrition and exercise, often view stress management techniques as being less important to good health. They know that nutrition is important: You have to eat every day, so what you consume becomes part of your awareness. Most people understand and appreciate the importance of exercise—and exercise looks productive like you're doing something. But practicing meditation, even for a few minutes a day, is not often uppermost on your mind.



“Consistency is more important than duration—more is better, but even one minute of meditation each day can make a meaningful difference.”

Stress management techniques are probably not part of your daily routine, so it takes some effort to remind yourself to do them. Also, someone witnessing you sitting with your eyes closed might think you are not doing anything of importance when in reality you are making strides in keeping yourself focused and healthy.

In fact, stress management approaches are very powerful, as many research studies are documenting. Meditation, for example, is about focusing your mental energy. Focusing energy increases its power. When you can concentrate better, you can perform better—in school, in business, in sports. Whatever you do, you can do it more effectively and with less stress.

As with nutrition and exercise, you have many choices when it comes to practicing

stress management techniques; it's not all or nothing. The longer and more often you practice these techniques, the more benefits you receive.

Consistency is more important than duration—more is better, but even one minute of meditation each day can make a meaningful difference. Sometimes, when I'm busy and pressed for time, I'm tempted to skip meditating. Of course, the times that I'm busiest are usually the times that I need it the most.

So, I often play a little game with myself. I'll ask, **“Do I have just one minute to meditate?”** If I don't, then I have to admit to myself that my life is out of balance and it would be better to just go ahead and meditate, even for one minute.

Remember, even 1 minute of meditation has value. Have you ever listened to a song on the radio and found yourself humming it later in the day? It's like that with meditation—you continue to meditate subconsciously throughout the day.

**LOOKING FOR OTHER WAYS TO LIVE A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER LIFE?**  
Reverse heart disease and diabetes, lose weight and reduce your cancer risk with these tips from: [ornish.com/ornish-living](https://www.ornish.com/ornish-living)

# Recipes

## OVEN-BAKED CHICKEN AND STEAMED SQUASH



SERVINGS: 4

### PER SERVING:

Calories: 172  
 Fat: 3.5g  
 Saturated Fat: 1g  
 Cholesterol: 73mg  
 Sodium: 403mg  
 Carbohydrates: 8g  
 Fiber: 2g  
 Protein: 26g



*This super easy oven baked chicken breast with microwave steamed squash is a heart healthy recipe that provides plenty of flavor in every bite.*

### INGREDIENTS:

4 ounces boneless, skinless, halved chicken breasts (all visible fat discarded)	1 small tomato
1/3 cup fat-free Italian or Balsamic Vinaigrette dressing	1 tsp. Italian seasoning
3 medium squash (any combination of zucchini or yellow squash)	3 Tbsp. water

### INSTRUCTIONS:

#### For the Baked Chicken Breast

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly spray a 9 x 13 baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Trim visible fat from chicken (optional – pound to even thickness)
3. Place chicken breast halves in baking dish, spoon half of the dressing evenly over the chicken. Flip chicken with a fork and spread remaining dressing evenly over the chicken.
4. Bake uncovered at 350° for 25-30 minutes until chicken is tender and no longer pink.

#### For the Microwave-Steamed Squash

1. Wash squash and tomato, remove ends of squash with a knife. Slice squash in 1/4 inch thick slices. Dice tomato.
2. Add water to a microwave-safe covered dish. Add squash and tomato and sprinkle with Italian seasoning.
3. Microwave covered on high 5-7 minutes until vegetables reach desired softness.

**Quick Tip:** Allow the chicken to stand at least 10 minutes before you slice it so the juices redistribute throughout the meat.

Recipe Source: <https://professional.heart.org/en/recipes/easy-oven-baked-chicken-breasts-with-microwave-steamed-squash>

## Upcoming Events



### BeWell Challenges!

Beginning in March, BeWell is facilitating quarterly team challenges to promote health and well-being.



### The first challenge:

#### BeHydrated

is a free, four-week virtual hydration challenge that will occur throughout the month of March 2023. This program is great for worksites, so gather your co-workers to form a team of up to three individuals. This is a virtual hydration program, so you may choose to stay hydrated wherever you choose – at work, home, or on the go.

Each person is encouraged to drink an average of 64 ounces of water each day for four weeks. During the program, weekly emails are sent to registrants and will include motivators to keep hydrated and strategies for drinking water throughout the workday. Each week, team captains will be required to report the total number of ounces of water consumed.

### More Information

Visit [bewell.pennstatehealth.org](https://bewell.pennstatehealth.org) for further information, FAQs and tips.

Go to the following link to register: [redcap.link/BeWellHydrationChallenge](https://redcap.link/BeWellHydrationChallenge)

# Migraine in the Workplace



By Angela M. Mohn, RN, MSIS, MSN

Migraine is not just another headache. Migraine is a serious debilitating illness that impacts over 39 million people in the United States. It is a disease that impacts every facet of life that often interferes with education, social life, and career. Migraine is the second of the primary headache disorders after tension-type headache in terms of prevalence and ranks first in terms of disability.

Migraine is an intense and debilitating headache. It's a neurological illness with hallmark characteristics of painful throbbing on one side of the head, hypersensitivity to lights, sounds and smells, nausea/vomiting, and dizziness. Each episode can last several hours to multiple days. Migraineurs who endure 15 or more attacks within 30 days are chronic sufferers.

Migraine affects people differently. Prodromes are warning signals that a migraine attack is imminent. Migraineurs may or may not experience auras, which are visual disturbances that occur before an attack starts. Some people wake up with a migraine attack already underway.

The disease of migraine directly impacts the workplace. Migraine is the sixth leading cause of disability worldwide. Employees with migraines often take more sick days off from work.



## HOW MIGRAINE AFFECTS THE WORKPLACE:

**157M**

About 157 million workdays are lost every year to migraine episodes

**90%**

9 out of 10 migraineurs report an inability to continue working on days the attack begins

**\$14B**

In the United States, migraine costs the economy approximately \$14 billion in direct and indirect costs annually

Unfortunately, employees suffering from migraines face neglect and discrimination in the workplace. This is primarily due to poor public understanding of the disease itself. Migraineurs suffer in silence. Business owners and organizations can play a key role in improving the health and welfare of workers with migraine.

## EMPLOYERS CAN HELP THEIR EMPLOYEES WHO SUFFER WITH MIGRAINES BY DOING A FEW THINGS:

### 1. LISTEN

Managers and supervisors should follow up and check in with your employee to see how he or she is doing. This lets the employee who is coping with migraines feel valued, supported and heard.

### 2. HAVE A DEDICATED "DARK ROOM"

Often, a migraineur wants some time in a quiet and dark place to deal with their symptoms. A work environment is often overload with bright lights and sounds. A cool, quiet room can be very helpful.

### 3. ALLOW FOR SOME SCHEDULE FLEXIBILITY

Workers suffering with migraines should be allowed to take time off work, work from home (if applicable) or work for a shorter amount of time. This helps to ease the stress of coping with an active attack during working hours.

Migraine is a debilitating illness that is costly to both employee and employer. By working together, the stigma of migraine can be lifted, and an understanding established. The health care setting as a workplace is an ideal place to identify, support and provide care to those suffering from migraines. By working together, an employee can achieve a better work-life balance.

## ADDITIONAL INFO

For more information about migraine, please visit the American Migraine Foundation at [americanmigrainefoundation.org](https://americanmigrainefoundation.org)



“Migraine is a debilitating illness that is costly to both employee and employer. By working together, the stigma of migraine can be lifted, and an understanding established.”

BeWell

## 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](mailto:BeWell@pennstatehealth.psu.edu).

# It's Time to Give Your Own Heart a Little Extra Love



“It’s vital that we all take time to focus on practicing self-care and learning more about healthy lifestyles that nurture our physical and mental health.”

February is a time for hearts—and not just on Valentine’s Day. February is American Heart Month, a good reminder to give some extra care to our own cardiovascular health.

Heart health is the highest priority of Penn State Health’s dedicated Heart and Vascular service line, which was established as one of the health system’s key focus areas. Penn State Health combines resources to provide comprehensive and seamless care to all patients.

However, it’s not enough to help keep our patients and community healthy—we strive to keep our employees healthy as well. Our physicians and other health care providers are experts and leaders in promoting cardiovascular health—not just during Heart Month but all year long.

“The mission of Penn State Health is to continually improve the health and well-being of the people of Pennsylvania, and beyond,” says Dr. Steven Ettinger, vice president of the Heart and Vascular service line at Penn State Health. “It’s vital that we all take time to focus on practicing self-care and learning more about healthy lifestyles that nurture our physical and mental health.”

Dr. Ettinger encourages all Penn State Health employees to make a commitment to their personal well-being, their families, friends and communities. One way of promoting cardiovascular health in the community is by supporting the upcoming Give from the Heart campaign by Development and Alumni Relations at Penn State Health and Penn State College of Medicine.

**“Between Friday, Feb. 3 and Valentine’s Day, the Give from the Heart campaign** raises funds that benefit the delivery of advanced, personalized cardiac care and the high-value, close-to-home care people with heart and vascular diseases need,” says Holly Roush, who also serves as a vice president of the Heart and Vascular service line. “This initiative directly aligns with our service line’s outreach efforts to help keep the hearts of our community members healthy.”

Explore ways to keep your heart healthy throughout the year. Visit Penn State Health’s BeWell website for tips, wellness programs, recipes and other valuable information at [bewell.pennstatehealth.org](http://bewell.pennstatehealth.org)



# University Fitness Center

By Jennifer Price, B.S., DMI-MPT®, Senior Exercise Physiologist at Penn State Health

While the University Fitness Center (UFC) is a convenient worksite location for employees at Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, **UFC membership is open to all Penn State Health employees and their spouses/partners and dependent children.** Even for those who work at a Medical Group practice site, our central location and early morning hours can help you stay committed to your health and wellness goals.

Walk our indoor walking track, participate in pick-up pickleball or take advantage of

our group fitness classes included free with membership at \$24.50 per month.

Do the cold weather and dark nights kill your motivation? If you need accountability and individualized attention then we're the place for you. No pre-programmed "personal training" here. Our one-on-one sessions start at \$25 or \$240 for packages.

For more information please visit our website or find us on Facebook:

[ufc.pennstatehealth.org](http://ufc.pennstatehealth.org)  
[@pennstatehealthufc](https://www.facebook.com/pennstatehealthufc)



Walk our indoor walking track, participate in pick-up pickleball or take advantage of our group fitness classes included free with membership at **\$24.50 per month.**



# WeightWatchers



No fads, just proven science and 24/7 support! WeightWatchers (WW) uses the latest research, advanced nutrition and expert coaching to deliver a truly livable program that helps you build healthy habits while reaching your wellness goals.

**In a recent study, members agreed that WW:**

- Is flexible and personalized, so they never feel hungry.
- Has made them more mindful of their food choices.
- Is helping them feel happier and more confident.



**FREE SCALE!**

**\$8.48/mo**

**DETAILS**

Sign up by Feb. 28 and get a free WW Bluetooth® body weight scale.\*\* The scale auto-syncs to the WW app to make tracking even easier.

Join WeightWatchers through Penn State Health for as low as \$8.48 per month (up to six months per year)\*\* on select plans—50% off the retail price!

Learn more at [WW.com/PennStateHealth](http://WW.com/PennStateHealth). Then get your scale at [WW.com/freescale](http://WW.com/freescale).