



Health & Wellness Guide

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Simple strategies to combat stress

Just about everyone experiences stressful situations. Sometimes a measure of stress can provide motivation to do one's best or strive for an especially lofty goal. However, when stress becomes a chronic condition, it can adversely affect individuals' quality of life and even their overall health.

Harvard Medical School says stress can manifest itself in myriad ways. Stress can cause tension headaches, indigestion, aches and pains, or even heart palpitations, and it may affect the mind by making it hard to concentrate or make decisions. Many people experience stress through emotional or psychological symptoms, such as irritability or feeling down. Learning how to effectively manage stress is essential for individuals' overall well-being.

Exercise regularly

Exercise serves many functions, including acting as a potent stress relief strategy. The Cleveland Clinic says aerobic exercise releases endorphins, which are natural substances that help a person feel better



and maintain a positive attitude. Movement activities like yoga or Tai Chi also can relax the mind and body and promote physical health.

Take media breaks

Overwhelming oneself with a barrage of negative news stories or constant information can increase stress levels. Individuals can strive to remain informed and still build breaks into their schedules. Shut off news programs, turn over the newspaper or tune out of social media from time to time. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that individuals who are stressed out by world events reduce the number of times they read the news or check the headlines each day.

Meditate or perform breathing exercises

Breathing and meditation can help alleviate stress, according to the American Heart Association. A quick meditation can provide some perspective. If a situation is stressful, go for a walk or take a few slow, deep breaths until the body relaxes. Harvard Medical School also says meditation can induce a relaxation response, which is an antidote to stress.

Change negatives to positives

Negative self-talk may increase stress, but positive self-talk can help a person calm down. Individuals should practice positive self-talk every day. Instead of saying, "I hate when this happens," say, "I know how to deal with this, I've done it before."

A small amount of periodic stress can be a good thing. However, chronic stress poses a significant threat to individuals' long-term health.

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Features to look for in a fitness center

find a comfortable, encouraging environment with like-minded people that will keep you going back.

- **Hours of operation:** A center that has flexible hours is important for people balancing careers, families and school schedules. Planet Fitness suggests asking about the general hours of the gym; when trainers are available; whether certain sections of the gym or amenities close at certain times; and when classes are offered.

- **Guest privileges:** Working out with a friend or family member can provide the healthy level of competition needed to keep workouts going. Ask about family membership discounts as well.

- **Equipment:** Equipment is an important consideration as well. Visit each gym you're considering to determine if equipment is modern, well-maintained and clean. Gyms that have several broken down treadmills or outdated strength training equipment may not be worth the membership fee. Determine which equipment is included in the cost of membership as well. Cardio machines, free weights, stretching areas, weight machines, and changing rooms are desirable among many gym members.

The right facility can make all the difference and help people achieve their fitness goals.

Each January, individuals make New Year's resolutions that focus on getting fit. Soon afterwards, the phones at area gyms start ringing off the hook with men and women looking to become new members. In fact, according to IHRSA, The Global Health & Fitness Association, 12 percent of all new gym memberships begin in January.

Gyms are not one-size-fits-all organizations. Gyms that appeal to some might not appeal to others. The following are some features to consider when looking for a new gym.

- **Cost:** IHRSA says 46 percent of former gym members claimed the reason they quit was due to cost. Finding an affordable center is a top priority for many people. The good news is many gyms market themselves as low-cost options with low monthly fees with minimal annual add-on costs.

- **Specialized programs:** Some fitness centers focus on specific workout regimens, such as crossfit facilities. If a certain style of workout is compelling you to get in shape, research gyms that specialize in that program.

- **Atmosphere:** Two gyms may have the same equipment and group classes but may give off completely different vibes. Individuals should take tours to assess who is visiting the gym and what kind of atmosphere exists inside it. The goal is to



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Strategies to solve stamina issues

Athletes know that energy is vital to their training and performance. But every athlete experiences days or periods when energy levels wane. Lack of energy can compromise performance and derail individuals' fitness goals, especially if they can't find ways to increase their stamina.

Individuals can try various strategies to improve their stamina. Certain solutions may be temporarily effective, but people who want to commit to a long-term fitness regimen should forgo fads in favor of long-term remedies to improve their endurance. The following are some strategies athletes can try to overcome stamina issues.

- Design a multifaceted fitness regimen. Strength training and cardiovascular exercise are often separated, and that can have an adverse effect on stamina. The fitness and wellness retailer Johnson Fitness notes that a healthy combination of strength and cardio training, sometimes referred to as concurrent training, allows the body to perform at its best. When the body is performing at peak capacity, energy levels should not be an issue.

- Remember to rest. It might seem counterintuitive to suggest that rest will actually help athletes avoid prolonged periods characterized by a lack of energy. But rest is vital to recovery. The American Council on Exercise notes that rest allows the body to repair muscle tissue, which is routinely damaged during exercise. Without that time to repair, athletes may feel fatigued when they begin their workouts, and insufficient rest between workouts increases the risk for injury.

- Eat before you exercise. Athletes who exercise on an empty stomach may note their workouts tend to start off sluggish, and that's not a coincidence. The Cleveland Clinic notes that food fuels exercise by providing energy the body needs to get through a workout. Carbohydrates can provide the energy individuals need to make the most of their workout, but men and women who like to exercise in the early morning hours may not reap those rewards. In such instances, a small piece of fruit or granola bar can increase blood sugar levels, which are at their lowest after waking up, and provide a small yet useful energy boost.

- Switch things up. Sagging stamina could be a byproduct of boredom. Experienced fitness enthusiasts know that exercising as part of a daily routine and a routine exercise regimen are not one and the same. Periodically switch up a workout so the body does not grow accustomed to the same exercises and the mind does not grow bored with performing the same exercises. New challenges can reinvigorate a passion for exercise, which should reduce the mental stamina associated with doing the same exercises over and over again.

Many athletes confront a lack of stamina at some point. Various strategies can help athletes overcome a lack of energy so they can stay the course and achieve their fitness goals.



DR. SHERRY O'DONNELL has the Prescription for Michigan

When Covid was at its peak, I spent nine weekends in New York City helping patients with this new, unknown disease. Trust me, Covid is real.

What is *surreal*, however, is how our nation has responded. We've masked. We've locked down. We've vaccinated. We've been asked to trust the science, only to learn that the science is compromised and not true science. We've heard conflicting information and seen leadership flip flop. It has been disastrous for our nation and our medical system.

There are treatments available, and it breaks my heart to know that there are patients suffering and many who have died due to lack of treatment. Big Pharma wants to control what we as medical professionals prescribe. This is dreadful. We need change, and that is why I am running for the U.S. Congress representing Michigan's 5th District.

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The pros and cons of running

Few physical activities inspire the devotion that avid runners have for running. Millions of individuals across the globe lace up their sneakers and run for miles on end each day, and the fitness experts at Fitbit note that running is the most popular activity in the world.

The global popularity of running suggests it's an activity that's all gravy and no grief. However, running can take a toll on a body, and individuals who can't wait to lace up their sneakers and hit the road should consider the pros and cons of running before doing so.

Pros

- **Running and heart health:** Running generally has a positive effect on heart health. The heart is a muscle, and much like weight training can help strengthen muscles like biceps and triceps, running can strengthen the heart and make it more efficient. Cardiologists with the Copenhagen City Heart Study noted that jogging increases oxygen uptake, which makes it easier for the heart to pump a larger amount of blood and do its job more easily. In addition, various studies have found that running can reduce individuals' risk for heart disease by a significant percentage.

- **Running and mental health:** "Runner's high" is a well-documented yet not entirely understood phenomenon. Though it's often associated with the release of mood-enhancing hormones known as endorphins and characterized as a routine and euphoric byproduct of running, experts at Johns Hopkins Medicine note that research indicates very few runners actually experience runner's high. Instead, runners may feel good after running because

physical activity increases levels of endocannabinoids in the bloodstream. Higher levels of endocannabinoids may promote short-term responses like reduced anxiety and a greater feeling of calm. This is an important distinction, as runners who don't feel runner's high after a long run should know that they're likely still gaining some mental benefit from running, even if a long run makes them feel more nauseous than euphoric.

- **Running and brain power:** Running also has been found to benefit brain power. Researchers at the University of Ulm in Germany found that individuals who jogged for 30 minutes per day three times a week benefitted from a substantial improvement in concentration and visual memory.

Cons

- **Running and joint health:** Though many medical professionals now dispute that there's a link between running and osteoarthritis, running can lead to wear and tear on the joints over time. It's important to note that such degeneration can occur even in non-runners, especially those who live sedentary lifestyles. Being physically active is an important part of maintain-

ing long-term joint health, but individuals who like to run should be sure to devise a balanced workout regimen that includes strength training to make the muscles and tissues around joints stronger. Running without strength training could contribute to unhealthy joints.

- **Running and injury risk:** All physical activities involve some measure of injury risk, but it's still worth noting that runners are not immune to such risks. The Cleveland Clinic notes as many as 60 percent of runners will experience injuries that sideline them for several weeks or months. Plantar fasciitis, runner's knee, shin splits, and Achilles tendinitis are some injuries commonly suffered by runners. Common running injuries can make it hard to perform any cardiovascular exercise, which can have a significant and adverse effect on runners' overall health.

Though medical experts generally suggest the rewards of running outweigh the risks for healthy individuals, it's still important that men and women weigh the pros and cons before lacing up their running shoes.



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Age-based health screening guidelines

Early detection is crucial to overcoming serious illnesses. Preventive care is something parents prioritize when raising children, but it's a crucial component of healthy living as an adult as well.

Health professionals recommend various age-specific screenings and tests, and these can serve as a guideline for individuals as they navigate adulthood. The following age-specific health screening recommendations, courtesy of Beaumont Health and Columbia Doctors Primary Care, can serve as an preventive care guideline, though doctors may advise patients to get more frequent screenings depending on their medical histories.

18 to 39 years old

- **Cholesterol:** A cholesterol check should occur around age 20, then every five years until age 35. Afterward it can occur annually.

- **Skin screening:** An annual full body screening will identify any suspicious moles or skin lesions.

- **Cervical cancer:** Women in this age range should receive a Pap smear every three years and an annual pelvic exam.

- **Breast exam:** Self-examination of the breasts and examination by a clinical provider should take place every year.

- **Testicular exam:** Men should conduct self exams for testicular abnormalities. Doctors may examine the testicles during annual physicals as well.

- **Tdap vaccine:** All adults should get the Tdap vaccine if they did not receive it as an adolescent to protect against pertussis, and then a Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster shot every 10 years.

- **HPV vaccine:** The human papilloma virus vaccine is recommended if you did not receive it as an adolescent.



40 to 64

- **Zoster (Shingles) vaccine:** Two doses of this vaccine will be administered between two and six months apart starting at age 50 and up.

- **Colorectal screening:** A colonoscopy to detect any colorectal illnesses is recommended beginning at age 50.

- **Prostate screening:** Prostate screenings begin at age 50 unless you are a high-risk individual, in which case screenings begin at age 40.

- **Osteoporosis:** Doctors may recommend a bone density test and osteoporosis screening at age 50 and up if certain risk factors are present.

- **Lung cancer screening:** If you are a past or current smoker, it's wise to have an annual lung cancer screening. The American Lung Association says adults age 55 and up can have this screening covered by health insurance.

- **Mammogram:** Women should begin receiving annual mammograms at age 40.

65 years and older

- **Cervical cancer:** Most women can stop getting Pap smears at this age if they have no history of cervical cancer. Women who have had a hysterectomy may no longer need pelvic exams after age 65.

- **Pneumococcal and pneumonia vaccines:** These are recommended every five years for certain conditions and risk factors.

- **Cognitive health:** Doctors may assess your cognitive health to see if there are any risk factors for dementias.

In addition to these screenings, doctors may conduct annual depression screenings to assess mental health. Routine blood glucose monitoring may be necessary based on risk factors for diabetes.

Individuals are urged to speak to their doctors to map out a health screening schedule specific to their needs.

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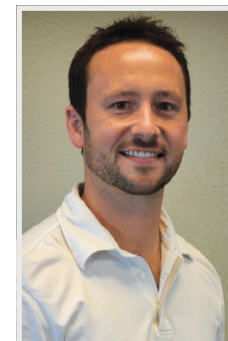
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Pain occurs for a variety of reasons. Pain may be a byproduct of overuse of a particular part of the body, or it could signal an underlying illness or condition. Sometimes injury is at the heart of aches and pains.

Daily aches and pains may be seen as a normal byproduct of aging, but that does not mean aging individuals should simply accept pain. In fact, daily discomfort can be remedied with some relatively easy techniques.

- **Get moving.** Lower back pain is common among adults, and most often appears when individuals are in their mid-30s and 40s. Strength training and cardio exercises can remedy this pain because these activities increase blood flow and help build core muscles, which support the spine. Support can alleviate pressure on the discs in the back. Exercising also will build strength in other areas of the body and support joints.

- **Practice good posture.** Sitting and standing with optimal posture can help the body feel better. The body is designed to stand in a “neutral” position that stacks the pelvis, head and torso, according to DMC Healthcare. When posture is out of whack, this puts undue stress on muscles, leading to pain. Dropping your head or shoulders also can create unnecessary tension that leads to headaches. Good posture can alleviate this.

- **Exercise more often.** Certain pains arise when exercising for the first time or performing a new activity. Allan H. Goldfarb, Ph.D., a professor and exercise physiologist at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, says when you do the same activity again and again, your muscles will start to get used to it and soreness will be reduced. Don’t give up on exercise too soon, but include off days in your routine to give your body time to become more acclimated to increased physical activity.

- **Get tested.** Speak with your doctor if you have chronic pain in one or more areas. Such pain may be a sign of osteoarthritis, an inflammatory condition that is associated with aging. Rheumatoid arthritis and other autoimmune conditions can cause aches and pains as well, leaving the joints and tendons inflamed and a body with low energy. A doctor can rule out these conditions or help you get the therapy and medications you need.

- **Increase stretching and movement exercises.** Incorporate stretching and movement exercises like yoga or tai chi into your daily regimen. These activities slowly stretch areas of the body and can improve range of motion and flexibility over time.

These are just a few ways to address common aches and pains. Medical interventions, physical therapy, occupational therapy and ergonomics assessments, and massage therapy also may help to alleviate aches and pains.

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Congratulations, Dr. Kutzner!

After 33 years of service, **DR. DEANN KUTZNER** has announced plans to retire in the summer of 2022. During her career at SSWHC, she has cared for thousands of Berrien County women and babies. Her and her husband have 3 grown children and 1 grandchild. We will miss her!

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DR. RACHAEL PROCTOR earned her MD degree at Loma Linda University School of Medicine and completed an Obstetrics and Gynecology residency at Grand Rapids Medical Education and Research Center through Michigan State University. She is board certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and has been with South Shore Women's Health Care since 2002. She has 5 children.



Welcome to our new nurse practitioner, **JENNIFER SOPER, WHNP**. Jennifer has a BS in Nursing from Ferris State University and a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Cincinnati. Prior to becoming a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner, she was a labor and delivery nurse for 25 years. She has been seeing patients at SSWHC since December 2021.



DR. HEIDI GRABEMEYER-LAYMAN earned her MD degree at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine and completed an Obstetrics and Gynecology residency at Grand Rapids Medical Education and Research Center through Michigan State University. She is board certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and has been with SSWHC since 2011. She has 3 children.



EMILY SHERMAN, RDMS, RVT, is our new Diagnostic Medical Sonographer. She earned her degree in sonography at Lake Michigan College and started her career at Spectrum Health Lakeland. Emily also teaches part-time at LMC in the Sonography program. She especially loves sharing the joy and excitement of patients when they get to see their babies in the womb. **We offer Obstetric Ultrasound including 3D and GYN ultrasounds on site.**

DR. MICHELE ASHTON earned her MD degree at the University of Michigan Medical School and completed an Obstetrics and Gynecology residency at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She is board certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and has been with South Shore Women's Health Care since 2019. She has 3 children.



GINA KRUCK, RT (R) (M) is our mammographer. She earned her degree from Lake Michigan College. She has more than 30 years of experience performing mammography in Michigan and Indiana and has been with South Shore Women's Health Care for the past 3 years. **We offer 2D and 3D digital mammography on site.**

