



# WELLBEING MATTERS

Shawnee Mission School District Staff Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

December 2019

## Holiday Stress Relief: Start Some Healthy Holiday Traditions

December can be stressful. It often brings extra social and financial obligations. It can cause a breakdown of healthy eating and exercise habits. It can also leave you feeling lonely or depressed.

If this sounds all too familiar, how about trying something new? You and your family can adopt some new traditions that may help ease the season's stress and make your holidays healthy and happy.

### Your physical health

Stress can put extra demands on your body. When the holidays become more than you bargained for, your health can be compromised. Here are some tips on keeping up your health during the holiday season:

- **Don't do too much.** Give yourself some time to relax. Schedule down time into your calendar.
- **Share the workload.** It's more fun if everyone has an active role. Make the holidays a family affair so you're not burdened with all the work.
- **Set priorities.** Say no to some of the demands on your time. You can't do everything.
- **Simplify your life.** Be less elaborate this year. Relax your housekeeping and holiday preparations.
- **Continue to exercise.** Don't let your regular routine lapse. If commitments make it hard to keep up with your regular routine, do a modified workout. Remember, a little is better than nothing.
- **Eat healthy foods.** Limit your consumption of treats high in fat and sugar. Serve healthy food at your family's holiday party.

### Your emotional health

It's easy to become overwrought this time of year, especially if you believe something is lacking in your holiday celebration. Here are some ways to create new holiday traditions that will help level your emotions:

- **Ask yourself if you really enjoy all the rituals.** Perhaps they have merely become habits. Try choosing less elaborate traditions of holidays past.
- **Don't be afraid to scale down gift giving.** You'll probably get a lot of support. It might help relieve others' stress as well.
- **If your yearly party is too much to handle, put it off until after the holidays.** This will give you more time to prepare. It will also help ease post-holiday letdown by giving you something fun to look forward to.
- **If you can't be with your family, get out around people.** Plan to be with friends or volunteer to help others who also may be separated from their families.

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### Additional Newsletters

[Wellbeing Insights](#)

[Work Well Live Well](#)



Find us at "SMSD Health and Wellbeing Program"



## Flu Shots: It's Not Too Late

Did you miss out on getting your flu shot in October? It's not too late to be vaccinated, as flu season can last through May!

PriorityOne Health Center has limited flu shots available and are free for anyone on a Shawnee Mission School District health plan.

Call 913-549-9970 today to schedule an appointment.

# Mindful Eating for the Holidays

by Wendy Petusevsky, registered dietitian

Mindful eating is about enjoying your food more. There is a fine line between satisfying hunger and finding fullness. You need to tell yourself, "When I am comfortably full I will stop eating."

It is important to slow down after each bite and check in so that you can recognize the absence of hunger. Eat slowly, reduce eating distractions, and rate your fullness on a scale of 1-10.

## Hunger level Scale:

1=Extremely hungry, headache, shaky

2=Hard to concentrate, lack of energy

3=Start of physical signs of hunger, stomach may growl

4=Could eat if it were suggested

5=Neutral

6=Satisfied

7=Feeling full

8=Very full

9=Bloated, clothes feel tight, sleepy

10=Physical discomfort

Rate your hunger before you begin to eat. Be sure not to let yourself get to the level of one or two on the hunger scale. It is best to start eating at a level three and stop at a level six.

Over time, we lose touch with how physical hunger and fullness actually feel. The hunger level scale will help you to decide when to eat and when to stop. The scale will help you consume only what your body requires. Mindful eating may help you reach your nutrition goals and fully enjoy the experience of eating with moderation and restraint.

## Here are some additional mindfulness-based practices for the holidays:

- Sit down at the table when you are eating. This will help you practice being present: You'll focus more and multitask less, allowing you to take inventory of your body and recognize when you should stop eating.
- Select a smaller plate. Larger plates make food portions appear smaller. Conversely, small plates look full with less food. This will help you with portion control.
- Take time to savor your food: Enjoy the flavors and textures of your meal before you swallow each bite.
- Resign from the clean plate club.

**To discover other strategies for developing healthy eating habits and adopting an overall healthier lifestyle, enroll in health coaching at your PriorityOne Health Center. By providing support, education, and encouragement, your PriorityOne clinician can help you learn how to best care for yourself. This act of self-care will be the best gift you could give yourself this holiday season.**



## Appointments

To schedule an appointment, call PriorityOne Health Center at 913-549-9970 or book online at [my.marathon-health.com](http://my.marathon-health.com)

Staff members, pre-Medicare retirees, spouses and dependents age 2 and older enrolled in the Shawnee Mission School District health insurance plan are eligible for services provided by PriorityOne Health Center.

## PriorityOne Health Center

8200 W 71st St., Suite 135  
Shawnee Mission, KS 66204

913-549-9970

Mon/Wed/Fri: 7am-4pm

Tues/Thur: 9am-6pm

[bit.ly/PriorityOneHC](http://bit.ly/PriorityOneHC)



You're familiar with the symptoms of stress -- a pounding heart, increased perspiration, tight neck and shoulder muscles, anxiety and fear. Stress can be triggered by events, ideas, memories, emotions or failed expectations. The following actions can help you counteract the negative effects of stress, according to wellness experts:

**Exercise** A regular workout can release pent-up frustrations. Experts recommend getting 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week. Choose any activity that gets your heart rate up: walking, jogging, bicycling, swimming, stair climbing, step aerobics or strength training.

**Keep communicating** One of the best ways to fight stress is to discuss your problems with a friend or relative, or write in a journal. Our immune systems get a boost when our feelings are released. It may even lead to a solution to your problem.

**Pay attention to your diet and habits** A diet of wholesome, healthful foods can help stabilize your moods. Consuming caffeine, sugar, alcohol, nicotine and prescription or illegal drugs can increase your stress, making coping more difficult.

**Make time for laughter and fun** Surround yourself with happy people who like to laugh. Let the child in you come out, and you'll find laughter is one of the best stress remedies.

**Immerse yourself in a favorite activity or hobby** Give yourself a block of time to focus on a task or activity instead of on the problems in your life. Gardening, carpentry, sewing, working with clay, painting and drawing are good choices.

**Use a variety of relaxation techniques** Deep-breathing exercises, progressive relaxation, visualization, creative imagery, yoga, meditation or listening to relaxation tapes can help.

**Live in the present** Many causes of your stress probably come from thinking about the past or worrying about the future. If you can plant yourself firmly in the present, you can leave worries behind and focus on enjoying the moment.

Whatever your source (or sources) of stress are, your free EAP can help you overcome them. Visit [www.ndbh.com](http://www.ndbh.com) with your company passcode (SMSD) to take a stress assessment to identify what's keeping you up at night and give you tips to tackling worries and woes. Whether it's financial struggles, legal issues, relationship challenges or any number of other stressors, the EAP can help you with counseling, consultations, referrals and behavioral health resources. Call or visit our website to learn more.

**Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through New Directions Behavioral Health is a no cost, confidential benefit for all SMSD staff and immediate family and is available for counseling, online resources and more.**

**Call 800-624-5544 or go online at [www.ndbh.com](http://www.ndbh.com).**

**Company code: SMSD**



SHAWNEE MISSION  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

FITNESS CENTER

FREE fitness center for all SMSD  
employees, spouses and dependents 16  
years of age and older.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.



## “12 Days of Fitness” Challenge



Start with Day 1, and perform that exercise. On Day 2, perform that exercise **and** Day 1's exercise. On Day 3, perform day 3, 2, and 1. Carry on like this until you reach Day 12, where you perform all 12 exercises!

Keep track of what date you performed each day on the provided chart. Turn in to the Fitness Center when you have completed all 12 days. There will be PRIZE drawings 😊

Complete your 12 Days of Fitness by January 3rd. **(They do NOT need to be completed consecutively!)**

Completed sheets will be accepted through January 9th.

*All information, turn-in chart, and exercises can be found at*

<https://www.smsd.org/human-resources/staff-wellness/12-days-of-fitness-2019>

♪ *On the 12th day of Fitness, my trainer gave to me...* ♪

### Winter Break Fitness Center Hours :

Saturday, Dec. 21st: 7AM- 12PM

Monday, Dec. 30th: 5:30AM– 5:30PM

Monday, Dec. 23rd: 5:30AM– 5:30PM

Tuesday, Dec. 31st: **CLOSED**

Tuesday, Dec. 24th: **CLOSED**

Wednesday, Jan. 1st: **CLOSED**

Wednesday, Dec. 25th: **CLOSED**

Thursday, Jan. 2nd: 5:30AM– 5:30PM

Thursday, Dec. 26th: 5:30AM– 5:30PM

Friday, Jan. 3rd: 5:30AM– 6PM

Friday, Dec. 27th: 5:30AM– 5:30PM

Saturday, Jan. 4th: 7AM– 12PM

*Stay tuned for the Winter Break Group Class Schedule!*

## New: BlueKC Diabetes Management Program

We are excited to announce Livongo for Diabetes, a new health benefit being offered at no cost to you if you have diabetes. The Livongo for Diabetes Program makes living with diabetes easier by providing eligible employees with a connected meter, unlimited strips and coaching.

**Eligible Employees:** This program is offered at **no cost to you** or your covered dependents with diabetes through your Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) employer-sponsored health plan.

### Here are some of the benefits of this program:

- **More Than a Standard Meter:** The Livongo meter is connected and provides real-time tips and automatically uploads your blood glucose readings, making log books a thing of the past.
- **Unlimited Strips at No Cost to You:** Get as many strips and lancets as you need with no hidden costs. When you are about to run out, Livongo ships more supplies, right to your door.
- **Coaching Anytime and Anywhere:** The Livongo coaches are Certified Diabetes Educators who are available anytime via phone, text, and our mobile app to give you guidance on your nutrition and lifestyle questions.



### To Learn More or Join:

[join.livongo.com/BLUEKC/now](https://join.livongo.com/BLUEKC/now)

Use registration code: **BLUEKC**

If you have any questions about this program, please call Livongo Member Support at **(800) 945-4355** and mention registration code **BLUEKC**.

SMSD BENEFITS RESOURCE LIST			
Blue Cross Blue Shield of KC	Medical	<a href="http://www.bluekc.com">www.bluekc.com</a>	(816) 395-2270
UMB Bank	Health Savings Account	<a href="https://hsa.umb.com/">https://hsa.umb.com/</a>	(866) 520-4472
Delta Dental of Kansas	Dental	<a href="http://www.deltadentalks.com">www.deltadentalks.com</a>	(800) 234-3375
Vision Service Plan (VSP)	Vision	<a href="http://www.vsp.com">www.vsp.com</a>	(800) 877-7195
Flex Made Easy	Flexible Reimbursement	<a href="http://www.flexmadeeasy.com">www.flexmadeeasy.com</a>	(855) 615-3679
Sun-Life Financial	Short Term Disability	<a href="http://www.slservicerresources.com">www.slservicerresources.com</a>	(800) 451-4531
Standard Life Insurance Co.	Voluntary Life Insurance	<a href="http://www.standard.com">www.standard.com</a>	(800) 378-4668
Benefits Direct	Supplemental Cancer Plan	<a href="http://www.benefits-direct.com">www.benefits-direct.com</a>	(877) 523-0176
New Directions	EAP	<a href="http://www.ndbh.com">www.ndbh.com</a>	(800) 624-5544
PriorityOne Health Center		<a href="http://www.my.marathon-health.com">www.my.marathon-health.com</a>	(913) 549-9970

The SMSD Benefits Office is open Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. to serve the employees of SMSD. If you have questions or concerns about your employee benefits, please call 913-993-6454.

If you would like more details on any information in this newsletter, please contact: Tammie McCoy, Wellbeing Coordinator, 913-993-6494, [tammiemccoy@smsd.org](mailto:tammiemccoy@smsd.org)