Healthy People Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2019

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ONEDIGITAL HEALTH AND BENEFITS

This newsletter is interactive! Click a topic to jump directly to the article.

National Health Observances

FEBRUARY | 2019

Age-Related Macular Degeneration Awareness Month

Children's Dental Health Month

Heart Month

Recreational Therapy Month

Wise Health Care Consumer Month

Wear Red Day (1)

Burn Awareness Week (3-9)

PeriAnesthesia Nurse Awareness Week (4-10)

Cardiac Rehabilitation Week (10-16)

Cardiovascular Professionals Week (10-16)

Donor Day (14)

Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Staff Education Week (14-21)

Eating Disorders Awareness Week (Feb 26-Mar 4)

BETTERSAFE
WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY



WHAT YOU NEED TO
Know about Anxiety

Anxiety is an uneasy feeling that something may harm you or a loved one. This feeling can be normal and sometimes even helpful. If you're starting a new job or taking a test, it might make you more alert and ready for action. But sometimes anxiety can linger or become overwhelming. When it gets in the way of good health and peace of mind, it's called an anxiety disorder.

Everybody has anxiety. The tricky part is how to tell the difference between normal and abnormal anxiety. For those with anxiety disorders, fears, worries and anxieties can cause so much distress that they interfere with daily life. The anxiety grows out of proportion to the stressful situation or occurs when there is no real danger.

Anxiety activates the body's stress response. Nearly all the cells, tissues and organs in your body go on high-alert. This stress response can wear your body down over time. People with chronic (long-term) anxiety have a higher risk of both physical and mental health problems. Some people visit their doctors because of headaches, racing heart or other physical complaints without realizing that these symptoms may be connected to how anxious they feel.

There are several kinds of anxiety disorders. The major types include:

» **Phobias.** Intense, irrational fears triggered by things that pose little or no real danger, such as heights, dogs or spiders. Among the anxiety disorders, specific phobias are the most common.

» **Social anxiety disorder.** Leads to extreme anxiety and self-consciousness in everyday social situations. Also known as social phobia.

» **Post-traumatic stress disorder.** Caused by trauma. This condition leads to flashbacks, nightmares and insomnia. Often accompanied by depression or substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder can occur at any age, including childhood.

» **Generalized anxiety disorder.** Excessive worry about a variety of everyday problems.

» **Panic disorder.** Sudden attacks of terror accompanied by physical symptoms that may include heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness, or abdominal distress. Panic disorder is one of the most treatable of anxiety disorders.

» **Obsessive-compulsive disorder.** Persistent, upsetting thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive rituals (compulsions), like hand washing, counting, checking or cleaning. These behaviors are done in the hope of preventing the thoughts or making them go away.

Treatment for anxiety disorders usually includes both medication and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). CBT is a form of talk therapy. It helps people change both the thinking patterns that support their fears and the way they react to anxiety-provoking situations. Current treatments can be highly effective for most people.

If you are troubled by anxiety, the first person to see is your family doctor or nurse practitioner. He or she can check for any underlying physical illness or a related condition. You may be referred to a mental health specialist, who might help to identify the specific type of anxiety disorder and the appropriate treatment. With proper care, most people with anxiety disorders can lead normal, fulfilling lives.

SUSPECT AN ANXIETY DISORDER?

» The first person to see is your family doctor or nurse practitioner.

» The next step may be talking to a mental health professional. Consider finding someone trained in cognitive-behavioral therapy who is also open to using medication if needed.

» Consider joining a self-help or support group to share problems and achievements with others. Stress management techniques and meditation can also help.



DAY IN DAY OUT
WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE



HOW TO INSTILL

Healthy Habits for Your Children

Healthy eating and physical activity are essential for children of any age. They can have many health benefits for children, including promoting heart health and improving mood. Although most of us know that it's a good idea to eat healthy food and move more, it isn't always easy to do. Children aren't likely to change their diet and activity habits on their own. It's up to you to make it easier for your family to make healthy choices.

PARENTAL ROLES

Parents are very important in terms of arranging an environment and setting a model for healthy or unhealthy behavior. Parents bring foods into the house. They control how much time a child can watch TV. They control what kinds of social activities are paired with foods. And kids learn a huge amount about eating and physical activity from watching and imitating their parents.

While it's never too late to start making healthy changes in your family, research suggests that the earlier your kids learn healthy behaviors, the better. Getting young ones to accept fruits and vegetables can be a challenge, but some parents give up too quickly if a child rejects a new food. Research suggests that the more times you offer a food, the more likely a child will be to warm up to it. Some experts note that kids typically have to taste a new food 9 to 15 times to begin to like it.

If your child doesn't like a new food right away, stay positive and keep trying over time. Encouraging kids to take just one bite of a new food can help. But avoid creating conflicts and stress over it. Trying a new food can be exciting and also stressful in general. Studies show that kids are more likely to try a new food if they're eating in a setting that's relaxing and pleasant.

Children under the age of three tend to stop eating on their own when they're full. But after age three, the more you put on their plate, the more they'll eat. So make sure to give your kids child-size portions.

FIND TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Take opportunities to teach young children about feelings of fullness. If your child asks for another helping, instead of saying, 'No, honey, you've had enough,' try saying something like, 'You must really be hungry tonight,' to raise their awareness of their feelings. Or when they stop eating, say, 'Oh, you must feel full now,' to help teach about hunger and feeling satisfied.

Several studies show that parents can effectively influence healthy behaviors by talking in a positive way or avoiding certain situations altogether. Instead of telling your children, 'No, you can't have any more cookies,' just keep cookies out of the house altogether. It's easier to create an environment in the home where there's limited access to unhealthy foods and lots of access to healthy foods."

Experts recommend that most kids get at least an hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. Parents can help by limiting TV and computer time to no more than one or two hours per day.

When it comes to food and physical activity, what you say and do around your children can have a lasting effect. Work together as a family to make healthy habits easy and fun.

HELP KIDS FORM HEALTHY HABITS

» Be a role model. Eat healthy family meals together. Walk or ride bikes instead of watching TV or surfing the Web.

» Make healthy choices easy. Put nutritious food where it's easy to see. Keep balls and other sports gear handy.

» Focus on fun. Play in the park, or walk through the zoo or on a nature trail. Cook a healthy meal together.

» Limit screen time. Don't put a TV in your child's bedroom. Avoid snacks and meals in front of the TV.

» Check with caregivers or schools. Make sure they offer healthy foods, active playtime, and limited TV or video games.

» Change a little at a time. If you drink whole milk, switch to 2% milk for a while, then try even lower fat milks. If you drive everywhere, try walking to a nearby friend's house, then later try walking a little farther.



TAKECHARGE
WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN



GETTING A GRIP ON
Gum Disease

Many adults nationwide have some form of gum disease. It can simply cause swollen gums or give you bad breath. It can also ruin your smile or even make you lose your teeth. The good news is that gum disease can be prevented with daily dental care.

The problem begins with bacteria. Our mouths are packed with these tiny microbes. They combine with mucus and other particles to form a sticky, colorless film—called plaque—on our teeth. Brushing and flossing can get rid of some plaque. But any that remains can harden and form tartar, a yellowish deposit that can become rock-hard.

Plaque and tartar buildup can lead to gum disease—technically known as periodontal disease. The most common and mild type of gum disease is called gingivitis. The gums become red and swollen, and they can bleed easily. Daily brushing and flossing and regular cleanings by dental professionals can usually clear up gingivitis.

If gingivitis is not treated, it can become a more severe type of gum disease called periodontitis. Symptoms of periodontitis include bad breath that won't go away; gums that are red, swollen, tender or bleeding; painful chewing; and loose or sensitive teeth.

In periodontitis, the gums pull away from the teeth and form "pockets" that become infected. Bacterial toxins and your body's natural response to infection start to break down the bone and soft tissues that hold teeth in place. If not treated, the tissues will be destroyed. Your teeth may eventually become loose and have to be removed. If you have periodontitis, your dentist may recommend a deep-cleaning method called scaling and root planing. In more severe cases, you may need surgery.

Most people don't show signs of gum disease until they're in their 30s or 40s. But getting older doesn't necessarily mean you'll get gum disease. Daily dental care and regular visits to your dentist can reduce your risk of gum disease.





Smoking greatly increases your risk for periodontitis—another reason not to smoke. Other factors that boost your risk include hormonal changes in women, certain medications and some illnesses like diabetes, cancer and AIDS.

Researchers are working to learn more about preventing and treating gum problems. Some are exploring whether stem cells might help to restore damaged tissues that support the teeth. Others are searching for genes and proteins produced by our bodies and by the bacteria in our mouths to see how they interact to affect gum health.

Some studies suggest that gum disease may increase the risk of heart attack or stroke or cause other health problems. But so far, it hasn't been confirmed that gum disease contributes to these conditions.

Although many aspects of gum disease are still being investigated, one thing is clear: controlling gum disease can save your teeth. That alone is an excellent reason to take good care of your teeth and gums every day.

TO PREVENT GUM DISEASE

- Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss every day.
- Visit the dentist routinely for a check-up and professional cleaning.
- Don't smoke.

TOYOURHEALTH
WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN



FILL UP ON SOME FIBER!

Fiber—you know it's good for you. But if you're like many Americans, you don't get enough. Dietary fiber is found in the plants you eat, including fruits, vegetables and whole grains. It's sometimes called bulk or roughage. You've probably heard that it can help with digestion. So it may seem odd that fiber is a substance that your body can't digest. It passes through your digestive system practically unchanged.

Fiber can relieve constipation and normalize your bowel movements. Some studies suggest that high-fiber diets might also help with weight loss and reduce the risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer. Experts suggest that men get about 30 to 38 grams of fiber a day, and women about 25 grams.

The strongest evidence of fiber's benefits is related to cardiovascular health. Several large studies that followed people for many years found that those who ate the most fiber had a lower risk for heart disease. Fiber may also lessen the risk for type 2 diabetes, the most common form of diabetes. Fiber in the intestines can slow the absorption of sugar, which helps prevent blood sugar from spiking.

Weight loss is another area where fiber might help. High-fiber foods generally make you feel fuller for longer. Fiber adds bulk but few calories. In studies where people are put on different types of diets, those on the high-fiber diets typically eat about 10% fewer calories. Other large studies have found that people with high fiber intake tend to weigh less.

Scientists have also looked into links between fiber and different types of cancer, with mixed results. Much research has focused on colorectal cancer, the second-leading cause of cancer death nationwide. Protection against colorectal cancer is sometimes stronger when scientists look at whole-grain intake rather than just fiber

Different types of fiber might affect your health in different ways. There are two categories of fiber: soluble

and insoluble. Soluble fiber may help to lower blood sugar and cholesterol. It's found in oat bran, beans, peas and most fruits. Insoluble fiber is often used to treat or prevent constipation and diverticular disease, which affects the large intestine, or colon. Insoluble fiber is found in wheat bran and some vegetables.

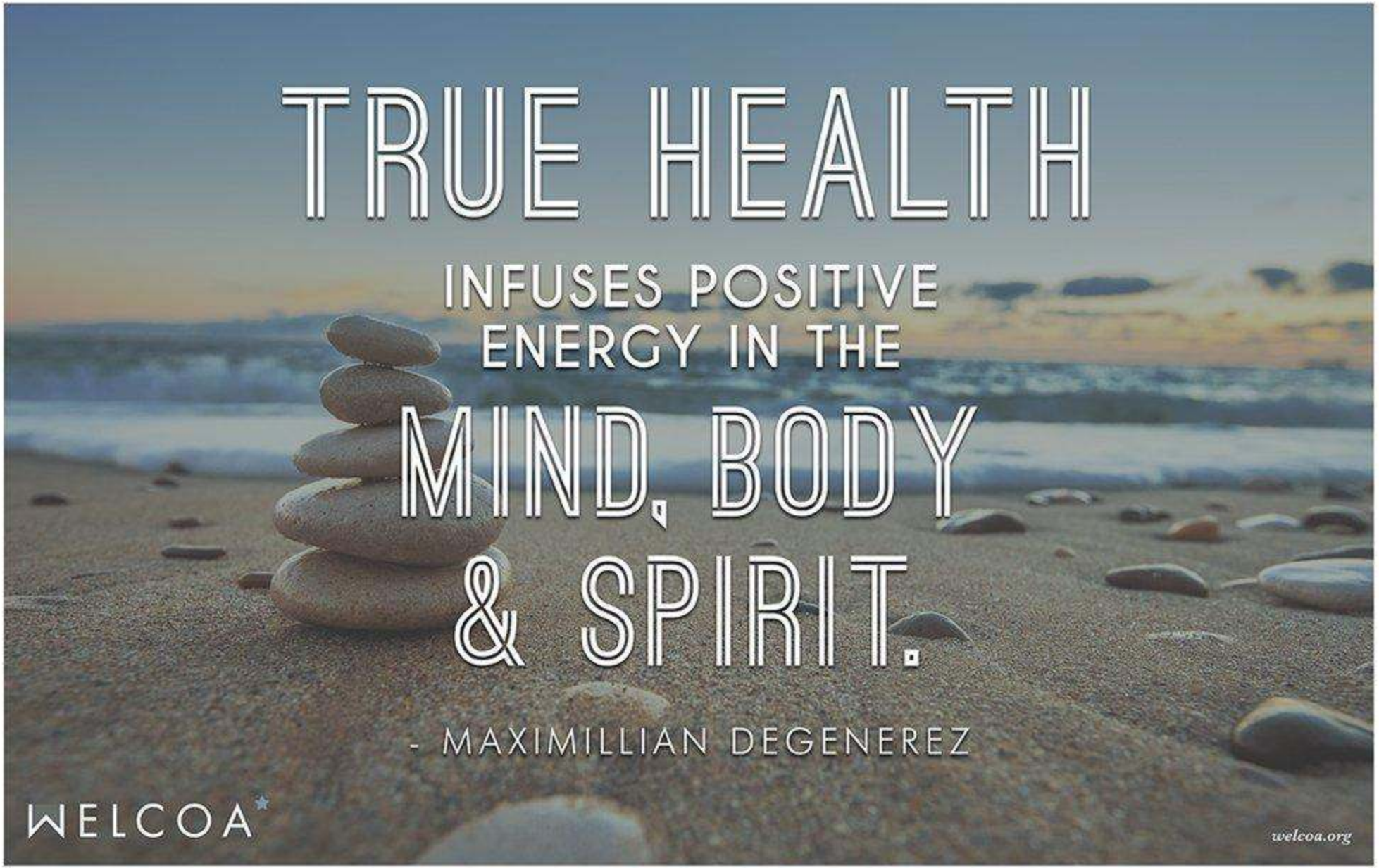
Still, experts say the type of fiber you eat is less important than making sure you get enough overall. In general, people should not be too concerned by the specific type of fiber. The focus should be more on eating diets that are rich in whole grains, vegetables and fruits to get the daily fiber requirement.

Increase your fiber intake gradually, so your body can get used to it. Adding fiber slowly helps you avoid gas, bloating and cramps. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nuts to add a mix of different fibers and a wide range of nutrients to your diet. A fiber-rich diet can help your health in many ways.



TIPS TO GET MORE FIBER IN YOUR DIET

- **Bulk up your breakfast.** Choose a high-fiber cereal (5 or more grams per serving) or make a bowl of oatmeal and top it with nuts and fruit.
- **Switch to whole grains.** Look for bread that lists whole-grain flour as the first ingredient. Experiment with barley, wild or brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat pasta and bulgur.
- **Add a vegetable.** Keep a bag of frozen mixed vegetables, spinach or broccoli florets for a quick addition to any pasta sauce or rice dish. Start dinners with a tossed salad.
- **Don't forget legumes.** Try peas, different kinds of beans (pinto, kidney, lima, navy and garbanzo) and lentils.
- **Snack on fruit, nuts and seeds.** Grab a piece of fruit such as an apple, pear or banana. Keep some almonds, sunflower seeds and pistachios handy. Low-fat popcorn or sliced vegetables and hummus also make a great snack.


TRUE HEALTH
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MIND, BODY & SPIRIT.
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