

Physical Wellness

Over the next couple weeks, we'll focus on the Physical, Spiritual, Mental and Social dimensions of wellness. The dimensions of wellness are all interrelated and each is important to our day-to-day functioning. A harmonious and authentic relationship with each of the dimensions will help you to make and keep healthy lifestyle changes that are sustainable.

Physical wellness is about more than being healthy, or the absence of illness – it's about maintaining a **thriving** lifestyle, one that includes healthy habits like:

- **Routine medical exams**- Scheduling annual exams, ensuring you get any and all injuries/illnesses checked out.
- **Proper sleep hygiene**- Eliminating distraction/stimulation (i.e. TV, cell phones) to ensure you can wind down to sleep through the night.
- **A balanced diet**- It's important to fuel your body with a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins and carbohydrates. Remember the saying, "We are what we eat?" Decrease excess calories and unnecessary sugars from your diet to ensure you are feeling fueled and motivated, not sluggish or over stimulated.
- **Movement**- Just 30 minutes of movement a day (i.e. walking, working out, running) will provide a significant improvement to your physical health, mood and self-image.

Physical wellness is also about avoiding or minimizing unsafe behaviors like:

- **Overuse of alcohol**- Drinking too much and too often can increase your risk of an alcohol use disorder. It is a mild stimulant but long term depressant. It also directly affect your sleep hygiene.
- **Tobacco use**- Tobacco can decrease immune support against illnesses and infections, can shorten a person's life span (480,000 deaths each year in the United States), can cause strokes and coronary heart disease, damages blood vessels, causes lung diseases and **can cause cancer almost anywhere in the body**
- **Excess sugar**- Sugar consumption is strongly associated with some of the world's leading killers... including heart disease, diabetes, obesity and cancer. The body stores excess sugar as fat and studies have shown that sugar is more addictive than drugs (i.e. cocaine).
- **Eating overly processed foods**- These types of foods contain extra sugar, sodium and empty calories. Processed foods are designed to stimulate the pleasure center, making them so incredibly rewarding to our brains that they affect our thoughts, behaviors and moods, making us eat more and more, while feeling worse and worse.



Assessing your **Physical Wellness** is about discovering what healthy habits make you feel better and suit your lifestyle and your level of mobility and fitness. We only get one body, and so far, scientists have not figured out how we can trade them in for newer and younger models, so we need to take great care of them now, while we can. If you need additional support for physical wellness, there are a plethora of apps, devices, websites and people that can assist you in tracking the changes you are making.

For questions, contact us at 363ISRW.363.363ISRW@us.af.mil or 757-764-9316