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Wellness Matters

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Emotional Intelligence

Get Quality Sleep to Tackle Stress

This month, we focus on how better sleep can boost Emotional Intelligence (EI) by combating stress and more. Both the quantity and quality of sleep affects overall wellbeing.

Why Is Sleep Important?

One in three American adults don't get the recommended seven hours of sleep. While this may not seem problematic, consistently failing to get enough sleep is linked to physical conditions like Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, depression, and obesity. But lack of sleep also can lead to chronic fatigue, which affects how we react to stressful situations.

How Much Sleep Is Enough?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults ages 18 and older should get seven hours or more of sleep per night. The CDC also stresses that all sleep isn't created equal; good sleep

quality is essential to better health and wellbeing. If you are waking up multiple times at night,

awake feeling unrested (even after seven hours of sleep), or experience breathing problems while sleeping,

your sleep quality is lacking. Note while sleep may be improved by better habits, poor sleep quality may be due to a sleep disorder; see your doctor if this could be the case.

Benefits of Better Sleep

Sleep is essential to maintaining a healthy, productive, and low-stress lifestyle; here's why:

- **Improved mental health.** Better sleep eases feelings of fatigue that can cause stress, anxiety, and depression.

Symptoms of fatigue can be drowsiness, loss of energy, or mood swings, making it difficult to interact positively with others and perform daily functions well.

- **Decreased weight gain.** Not allowing your body to rest and regulate itself can lead to an increased appetite. Hormones that cue the feeling of hunger can become irregular, causing overeating.
- **Increased productivity.** When your body goes through all the sleep stages properly, this boosts energy, muscle repair, improved memory, and everyday function.

Improve Your Sleep Habits

Healthier eating, limited use of caffeine and electronics before bedtime, exercise, and more can lead to better sleep and less stress. Learn more at [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org).



March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is a leading cause of death in the United States. It affects all races and genders, but is especially threatening for those ages 50 and older. The good news is that regular screenings can help prevent the majority of cases.

Onset Colorectal cancer begins in the tissues of the colon or rectum. Normally, they grow and divide to form new cells. When this process goes wrong, new cells can form before the body needs them, or old cells do not die. These extra cells can form a mass of tissue, creating a benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous) tumor. When colorectal cancer spreads outside the colon or rectum, it is usually found in nearby lymph nodes and the liver.

Symptoms Signs include a change in bowel habits such as frequent diarrhea and constipation, continuing abdominal cramps, bloating and gas, and blood in stool. Though these symptoms may be due to other medical issues, it's important to be screened for colorectal cancer if you experience them.

Testing Screening is crucial to find polyps or cancer before symptoms arise. Those aged 50+ or at a higher-than-average risk of developing colorectal cancer should be screened. There are several tests available, including colonoscopy, digital rectal exam, or fecal occult blood test.

Prevention The best way to prevent cancer in general is to eat well and not smoke. Some factors, such as genetics, cannot be avoided, which is why it is important to be screened. When colorectal cancer is found early, the five-year survival rate is 90%.



Healthy & Delicious Healthy Eating on a Budget

Eating a well-balanced diet doesn't mean emptying your wallet. Keep these money-saving tips in mind at the grocery store:

- ❑ **Make a weekly meal plan.** Before you go to the store, plan the meals and snacks you want for the week. Make an accurate list of recipe ingredients to avoid a trip back to the store later in the week.
- ❑ **Create a list—and stick to it.** When you get to the store, don't buy anything besides what's on the list.
- ❑ **Plan where you're going to shop.** Many grocery stores run sales or offer coupons for various healthy foods. Check ads and plan your list around what's on sale.
- ❑ **Don't grocery shop when you're hungry.** According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, grocery shopping when you're hungry can cause you to spend more than planned and can increase the odds that you'll buy unhealthy options.
- ❑ **Cook at home as often as possible.** Many foods prepared at home are cheaper and more nutritious than fast food. Go back to the basics and find a few simple and healthy recipes that your family enjoys.

According to a Visa report, the average fast-food lunch costs \$11.14, while the average home-cooked meal only costs \$6.30.