

Healthy U @ Work

March 2018

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 **Franciscan**
WORKING Well

Get Organized and Reduce Stress



Whether you consider yourself a regimented neat freak or a creative free spirit, we all need ways to stay organized to reduce stress and increase productivity. Excess clutter not only makes it hard to find what you need, it creates a feeling of being out of control. It's time to take a look at the usual spots that could use a little organization!

The Entryway Having a place to put your purse or briefcase, the mail, and keys is essential. Many people like to put up hooks or shelving. If that doesn't work for you, a small table by the door with a tray or bowl for keys and mail can do the trick. Consider placing a small stool near the table for when you need to sit down to tie your shoe or set your work bag down when you get home.

The Kitchen Consider getting rid of your junk drawer. You can buy a clear plastic box for odds and ends. This can be stored in a closet or cabinet, freeing one of your drawers for more kitchen items. Drawer and cabinet organizers can help with stray lids, utensils, and food storage containers. Create your own using shoe boxes or other small boxes or plastic

storage bins. Store or donate any small kitchen appliances you never use, and make a point of tidying counters and wiping counters and sink each night.

The Bathroom Bathroom cabinets are often a collection of free samples and travel sizes, cluttering cabinets and drawers. The key here is to keep what you use and store or get rid of what you don't. To organize your bathroom supplies, use jars, drawer organizers, and transparent plastic boxes to store like items.

Work Spaces Whether at home or work, keeping your workspace clutter free is important. Set aside 5 minutes a day to go through email and delete what you don't need. If 5 minutes isn't enough, try 5 minutes twice a day. Use stackable trays for items that need your attention and for those that are ready to be sent or picked up. File folders in a variety of colors can also help you organize different tasks and materials. Don't hesitate to find a system that works for you and stick with it.

Take a little time to organize your home and workspace. You will get more done and be more relaxed!



Colon Cancer Prevention

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, promoting screening and healthy behaviors to help reduce colorectal cancer risk. Each year, more than 50,000 people die from colorectal cancer, and it remains the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths. Yet, colorectal cancer remains one of the most preventable cancers. With proper screening, responsive medical care, and healthy lifestyle choices, colon cancer can be prevented or detected early when it is highly treatable.

Men and women are both at risk for colorectal cancer, especially aged 50 and older. Those with a family history or personal history of colorectal cancer or precancerous polyps are also at an increased risk, including a family or personal history of any of the inflammatory bowel diseases. Colorectal cancer risk increases for those who smoke, are obese, and for those who do not get enough exercise. Certain studies have also found potential links between colorectal cancer and alcohol use, diabetes, and exposure to radiation.

For most people, screening beginning at age 50 is recommended. Those with an increased risk may begin screening earlier. There are a variety of tests that are used to screen for colorectal cancer, including tests that screen stool samples for blood, a digital rectal exam, barium enema, colonoscopy, and flexible sigmoidoscopy. Both the colonoscopy and flexible sigmoidoscopy use video technology to examine all or part of the colon and rectum. You should discuss your risk factors and screening options with your doctor to determine what is right for you.

Article continued on page 3.



Produce of the Month

Carrots

There are few vegetables as common and undervalued as carrots. Carrot shavings decorate many salads, and they are on nearly every veggie and dip tray. Carrots are full of health benefits and can add a sweet crunch to meals and snacks. Carrots are low in calories and a good source of fiber and vitamins. The vitamin A in carrots is known to protect against macular degeneration (the leading cause of blindness) but is also associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and improved lung health.

The Basics: Though most of the carrots we see are orange, carrots come in a variety of colors, including yellow, purple, and even white. Carrots are a root vegetable and can vary in size, since there are over 100 different varieties. Carrots can be bought bagged or loose. Many bagged carrots are called “baby carrots,” though most of them are larger carrots cut into small “baby carrot” sized pieces. Actual baby carrots are picked before they have had a chance to mature. Fully-grown carrots are available bagged or loose and will need to be washed and peeled before eating. Choose carrots that are deep in color and are not highly cracked. Store carrots in a refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Prepare carrots (washed and peeled) according to your favorite recipe.

Try This: Carrots make a great snack for kids and adults alike. Pair with ranch, hummus, or guacamole for dipping. You can also add shredded carrot to your favorite salad, slaw, or soup. Carrots and raisins go great together in whole grain muffins or bread. Skip to page 7 for this month’s featured recipe!

The Facts: One cup of carrots has approximately 120 calories and is high in vitamin A, K, C, potassium, and fiber.

Fish and Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Nearly all diets recommend quality proteins, such as chicken breast, pork loin, sirloin, beans, nuts, seeds, and legumes; but one type of protein that may not get enough attention for its health benefits is fish. Fish provides heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

Omega-3 fatty acids are actually a type of polyunsaturated fats. The main ones are ALA, DHA, and EPA. ALA (alpha-linolenic acid) is found in vegetable oils, nuts, and some leafy greens. DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) are found in fish and fish oils. These fatty acids help lower triglyceride levels and can help prevent the risk of arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythms). They can slow the growth of plaque in the arteries and may help lower blood pressure. Omega-3 fatty acids are especially helpful for those who suffer from rheumatoid arthritis and depression.

The recommendations for how much omega-3s we need each day vary. Some health professionals recommend 500 - 1000 mg of omega-3s while others state that 4000 mg is more effective to support brain, joint, and digestive health, as well as fight inflammation in the body.

Though available in pill form, getting omega-3 fatty acids from food is recommended. Choose salmon (wild, not farmed), trout, tuna, anchovies, herring, sardines, and mackerel. Aim for about two 3-4-ounce servings of fish a week. One 3-ounce serving of Alaskan wild-caught salmon contains 1,716 mg of omega-3 fatty acids. Fish may have moderate to high levels of PCBs, mercury, or other toxins. To avoid exposure to these toxins, choose a variety of fish rather than one kind and avoid farmed fish. If you are pregnant or have any other specific concerns regarding fish intake, consult your medical professional.



Colon Cancer Prevention *continued from page 2.*

To prevent colorectal cancer or detect it early, it is important to see your doctor if you have any changes in your bowel movements, including bloody stools, cramping, change in size, shape or frequency. Discuss your complete personal and family history with your doctor to set up screening recommendations.

Eating a diet high in fiber-full fruits and vegetables and healthy fats like coconut oil, avocado, olive oil, eggs, and fish is great way to support your intestinal health. Additionally, avoid alcohol, refined carbohydrates and processed meats. Some new research indicates that vitamin D, calcium, and selenium may also help protect your colon. Discuss with your doctor your need for any extra vitamins or minerals. Maintaining a healthy weight and getting regular exercise can also reduce your overall risk.

If you smoke, quit! Quitting smoking will reduce your risk of many diseases, including colon cancer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 60% of deaths from colorectal cancer could be avoided if everyone aged 50 or older were screened regularly. Discuss all of your concerns with your doctor to determine a screening schedule and option that provides the best choice for you. Screenings save lives!

Exercise for Lower Back Pain

The lower back is the most common back pain that people experience. It can range from a little stiff, to nagging, to extreme pain. Back pain can result from sitting too long, having weak abdominal muscles, lifting improperly, practicing poor posture, or injury. The exercises featured in this article can help you strengthen and stretch the low back to support a healthy spine and prevent injury. These exercises may also help reduce any pain you are currently experiencing. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist prior to trying a new exercise regimen. If you experience any pain during a stretch or exercise, stop immediately.

Now, if you are ready to start, try the following:

Child's Pose – A yoga pose: child's pose is a great stretch for the lower back. On a mat or soft surface, get down on your hands and knees. Hands should be directly below your shoulders and knees directly below your hips. Gently sit back into your heels as you stretch your arms forward on the ground, resting your head on the mat if possible. Continue to take deep breathes and hold the stretch for 20-30 seconds.

Hamstring Stretch – Tight hamstrings are a common cause of lower back pain. Regularly stretch the hamstring by lying on your back and bending one knee, keeping that foot on the floor. Raise the other leg and gently pull the leg back toward your head. You may use a strap or towel to extend the stretch if you are too stiff to hold your leg comfortably.

Figure Four Stretch – Sitting in a sturdy chair, place your left ankle on the top of your right knee, while keeping your right foot on the floor. Sit straight up and, bending at your hips, gently lean forward until you feel a stretch. Then repeat on other side by placing your right ankle over your left knee. You can also perform this stretch lying on your back; but, instead of leaning your upper body forward, bring your legs in closer to your chest.

Cobra Pose – Lie down on your belly. Bring your hands to chest level and use your palms to slowly lift your upper body off the ground, keeping your pelvis and legs firmly planted on the floor. Lift your chin and take several deep breathes. Do not twist your spine when in this pose.

Abdominal Strengthening – Practicing planks and pelvic lifts can start to build strength in the abdominal muscles, which help to stabilize your back. If the plank pose seems too difficult, start with a partial plank pose by resting your knees on the floor. Throughout the moves, pull your abdominal muscles in to secure your back.

Walking – Walking is great exercise for the back and can relieve a lot of pressure if you have been sitting or standing all day. While walking, be sure to wear well-fitted supportive shoes, keep your shoulders back, keep your abdominal muscles tight, and maintain a steady pace by keeping your arms in motion.

Child's Pose is great for relieving tension in the lower back and hips.



Cobra Pose can help open up the chest while stretching and strengthening the spine.

Super Foods

A message from your Healthy U @ Work Wellness Champion:
Pamela Johnson, BS, HHP-AADP, CFMP, RYT



We all want more energy, but how do we get it naturally? The answer is quite simple. We need to give the body the proper fuel in order to run. How to do that is a bit more complex, since we each require an equation of essential nutrients to function properly.

Vitamins and minerals facilitate every chemical reaction in the body. For example, folate (found in greens) is essential for making neurotransmitters, regulating DNA and determining which genes get turned on and off. It plays a role in preventing cancer, heart disease and dementia, according to Dr. Mark Hyman in "Setting the Record Straight on Supplements."

So now what? The market of non-regulated supplements is overwhelming. It takes research to find a pure, whole food source and because we all have different nutritional needs, it is not possible to recommend supplements for the masses. However, there are some basic guidelines to follow. According to Mark Hyman, MD, some of the most common deficiencies he sees are Omega 3 fat, Vitamin D3, magnesium and folate. Most experts agree that we need a high quality, whole food sourced multi-vitamin and mineral supplement, essential fatty acids, a quality probiotic, and greens.

The quality of a supplement is very important because most minerals in multivitamin/mineral supplements have poor absorption rates. According to Dr. John Douillard, in his article, "True or False: You Need a Multivitamin," he states that in some cases toxic forms of minerals are used and the microbes in the body (which make up 90% of each human) will not recognize synthetic vitamins (those not derived from whole foods).

Many people do not realize how good they can feel when addressing just one nutrient deficiency. If you are feeling fatigued or suspect that you may be missing something in your nutrient mix, you may benefit from having lab work done to check for essential nutrients, such as vitamin D. It is never advised to over supplement without knowing if you are deficient in a nutrient.

Once you find an absorbable whole food vitamin/mineral supplement, then you can begin to enhance your diet with nutrient rich foods. Begin by adding in more, non-processed whole foods, organic fruit and vegetables, and organic dark leafy greens. Hopefully this will help crowd out some of the packaged and preserved foods.

Next consider adding super foods, which are a class of the most potent, super-concentrated and nutrient rich foods available. Some of these foods include, Cacao (raw chocolate), Goji berries, raw honey, hemp seeds, sea vegetables, spirulina and blue-green algae. Many of these super foods come in a concentrated powder form of organic antioxidants, probiotics and trace minerals. Making a smoothie with a scoop of greens, coconut milk and a half banana is great way to begin to supercharge your day with essential nutrients.

Once you have the right balance of nutrients, you will not only have more energy but food cravings begin to lessen and it can help you combat chronic disease by reducing inflammation.





Q: Hi Erin. I'm looking to lose 45 pounds this spring and I keep hearing mixed reviews on whether I should do interval training or steady state cardio to help with my weight loss. I was wondering if you have an opinion on which is better for helping me reach my goals?

-Tom Q., 46

A: Hey Tom! Thank you for reaching out. I'm so excited to hear you are getting ready to start this journey! I would love to give you my thoughts on the subject. First off, you should know both interval training and steady state cardio have its place, and both can help you achieve your goal. However, in many recent studies interval training is shown to help you slim down quicker than steady state, and without having to spend hours running. Another advantage interval training has is that it allows you to keep mixing up your workouts with different intervals rather than just running at the same pace for a certain period of time. However, steady state cardio has certain cardiovascular benefits that you cannot get with just interval training so I would highly recommend incorporating them both. For example, if you plan to be active 3 days a week to start out, maybe do 2 interval training days and 1 steady state day, and eventually add on to that if you need or want too. On a side note, to enhance your weight loss efforts and help you reach your goal, I would make sure you are on a good eating plan. Also try to incorporate a few days of strength training at some point to help you burn fat and gain strength. You don't want to get in the pattern of doing the same thing all the time; make sure you are changing it up.

I wish you the best of luck with your weight loss journey Tom! Good things are in your future!

Dedicated to your success,

Erin M Long



Simply the Best Carrot Salad

4-5 large carrots, grated	1 tbsp white wine vinegar
¼ cup raisins or golden raisins	1 tsp honey
¼ cup dried cranberries	¼ tsp salt
¼ cup chopped walnuts	1/8 tsp black pepper
¼ cup pumpkin seeds	½ tsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp fresh parsley	
1 tbsp unsweetened grated coconut	

Add all dry ingredients (left column) in a large mixing bowl. Set aside.

In a separate bowl or mason jar, add vinegar, honey salt, pepper and Dijon mustard. Blend until well combined. Pour over reserved salad and stir well.

Transfer to serving bowl and garnish with more pumpkin seeds, fresh parsley and grated coconut if desired.

Picture and recipe borrowed from thehealthyfoodie.com.

Want to Know More? Contact Working Well for more information on wellness programs and how they can help you reduce healthcare costs and improve employee wellness.



4111 S. Franklin St.
Michigan City, IN 46360
1-866-552-WELL (9355)
www.workingwell.org