

Community Health

COMMUNITYHEALTHMAGAZINE.COM | SUMMER 2024

Water Works

Hydration and keeping cool
is crucial for people and pets

STORIES INSIDE





Vision & Core Beliefs

Vision Statement

We are a proud, people-first company. We are successful because of trust-based relationships and first-rate products for our families and friends. We better the world by caring for others. **We challenge. We grow. We inspire.**

Core Beliefs

1. People First

- We are a proud, people-first company. We believe in implementing programs that nurture the head, heart, and hands of every team member.
- We never forget that our business begins and ends with people. From our kitchens to your shelves, people and their families matter most to us.

2. Quality & Safety

- In the food business, quality and safety are two sides of the same coin. We take pride in consistently producing the highest quality products and always working to exceed our industry's safety standards.
- Excellence isn't easy, but anything less isn't an option.

3. Tradition & Trust

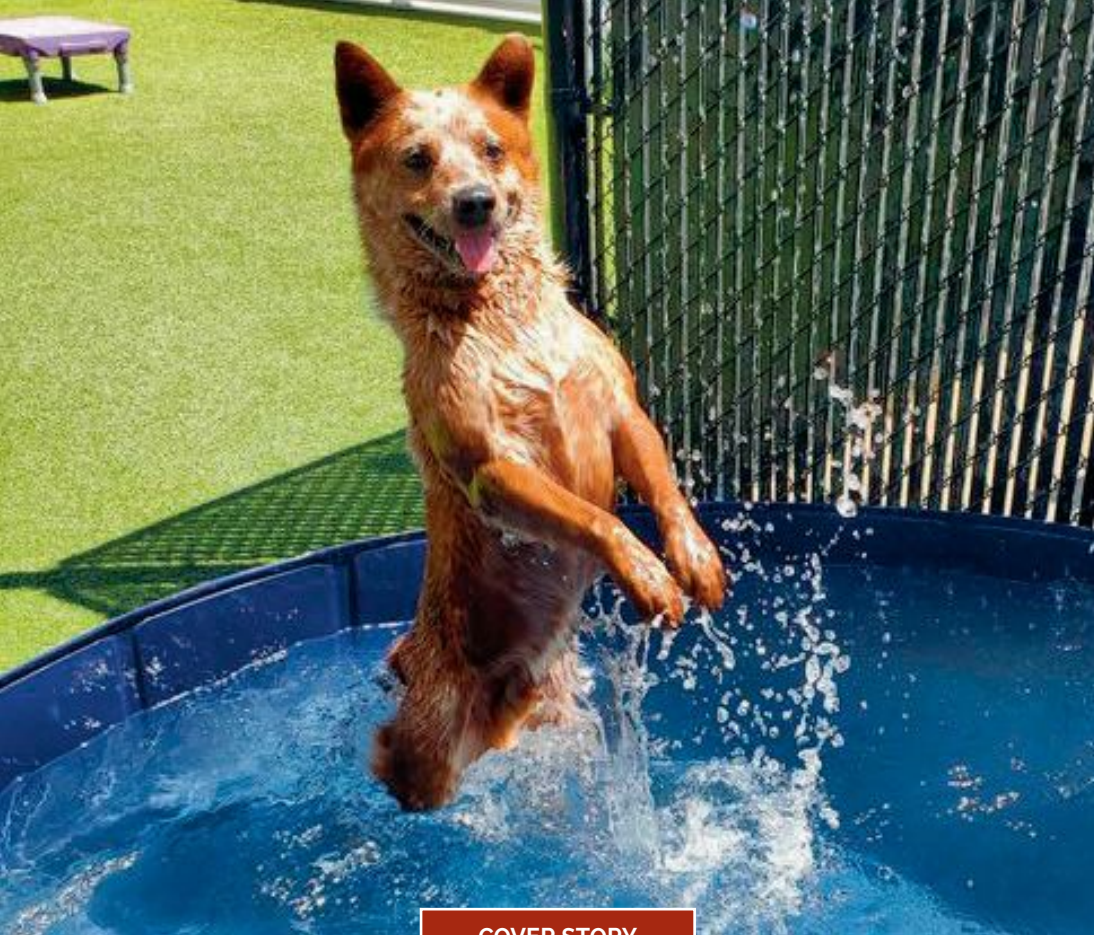
- We honor the legacy of our founders.
- Tuffy and Kenny Nelson set the standards for a successful family business based on unwavering commitment to quality, a stubborn work ethic, and relationships grounded in trust and integrity. We honor our past even as we look to new possibilities and an exciting future for KLN Family Brands.

4. Bold Innovation

- We are progressive.
- Some problems are so big that it's easier to ignore them. That's not our way. We bring creativity and determination to solving problems that matter. And as we collaborate, we try to make each day more fun and fulfilling than the last for all KLN Family Brands team members.

5. Community & Beyond

- We blend passion and compassion to make a difference in the lives of others.
- Our founders believed that good fortune should be repaid where and when it is needed. For 70 years, we have fostered a company culture of compassionate giving, community volunteerism, and support for worthy causes. That's never going to change.



COVER STORY

Fluid Goals

Whether playing, working in the yard or simply chilling this summer, proper hydration is essential for beating the heat — for humans and pets alike. **SEE PAGES 4-7**

Healthy Losses

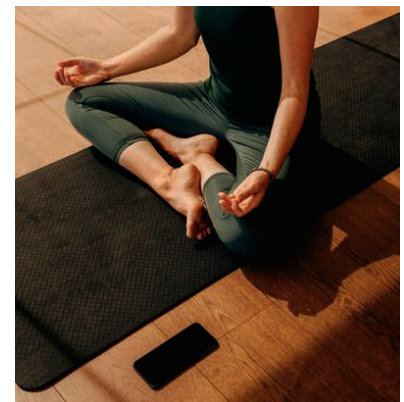
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COMMUNITY

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Putting You First

Hello! Welcome to the summer 2024 edition of *Community Health*, our quarterly health and wellness publication. Hopefully, you've been soaking up all that this time of year has to offer.

KLN Family Brands prides itself on putting people first, and this magazine is part of that effort. Each quarter, we will provide valuable information to inspire you on your wellness journey, along with the resources available to you through the KLN company health plan. We want to present helpful and inspiring resources to assist you along your wellness journey.

The topic of hydration is something I find myself discussing with employees all year round. As much as I stress the importance of water intake to others, I still find myself falling short of how much I should be drinking. Water and electrolytes are important contributors to all sorts of health goals. See pages 4 and 5 for details.

Hydration is important for our pets, too. And that's not all: It's extremely important that we are taking proper care of our animals during this season. Check out pages 6 and 7 to learn more.

Summer can be a busy time for everyone, but it's also a great time to get out and try new things with family and friends. Make sure to take a look at the community calendar on pages 8 and 9 for fun activities in your area this summer and early fall.

We would love to hear more stories about our employees' health, wellness and fitness endeavors. In this edition, Diana Lopez shares about her journey and passion for running. If you have something to share — a workout regimen, healthy eating plan, volunteer activity, interesting hobby, or places you enjoy visiting — please email me at mmoch@klfamilybrands.com.



Marni Moch
WELLNESS COORDINATOR
KLN FAMILY BRANDS

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Fun in the Sun

Keep yourself and others out of harm's way while enjoying summer

By Jeff Vorva

Warmer weather is supposed to correlate to fun.

It can also be innocently hazardous.

And while following a list of rules and advice might not sound like a blast, ignoring guidelines can lead to accidents and health issues.

To keep summer fun, follow a few simple tips when it comes to sun exposure, swimming safely and avoiding food-borne illnesses.

Save Your Skin

For skin, use sunscreen, hats and protective clothing. For eyes, wear sunglasses.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, sunglasses are important because they protect the eyes from ultraviolet rays, including UVA and UVB, that damage the surface tissues, cornea and lens. This damage can lead to cataracts, macular degeneration and other vision impairments.

To prevent damage, look for sunglasses that are labeled "100% UV protection" and wear them consistently, even on cloudy days.

When it comes to sunscreen, the American Academy of Dermatology recommends a water-resistant broad-spectrum option that provides SPF protection of 30 or higher. Remember to reapply every two hours and after sweating or swimming, and don't forget to protect your lips with a protective lip balm or lipstick. Other areas to remember include the feet, neck, ears and top of the head.

One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, according to the AAD, making it the most common form of cancer. Sunscreen is one preventive step, and others include seeking shade and avoiding the sun

during its peak hours between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Wearing protective clothing like lightweight and long-sleeved shirts, pants and wide-brimmed hats can also help.

Swim Safely

Many experts stress the importance of having kids take lessons before going into pools or bodies of water.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission launched a national campaign called "Pool Safely: Simple Steps to Save Lives." Its website offers safety tips for parents and families and urges basic safety practices for everyone.

Never leaving a child unattended, avoiding drains and learning CPR are among the recommendations.

Experts also stress that swimmers know what water safety equipment is available before swimming, follow posted warnings and assign a water watcher to keep an eye on anyone in the water. Using a buddy system and staying in groups is also advised.

Avoid Food-borne Illness

People want to cook and eat outside when the weather is warm, and germ-filled insects want to hang around the food, too.

Keeping cooking areas as clean as possible is essential, experts say. Covering food and only lifting covers to serve can also help deter bugs.

Other safety essentials include keeping food at the right temperature. Those preparing and serving food should also wear gloves and consider facemasks as well to prevent germs from spreading.

One Sip at a Time

Hydration, or a lack thereof, significantly impacts well-being

By Rebecca Fortner

It seems no one leaves the house these days without a water bottle of some sort, whether it's a disposable container or a large stainless-steel bottle.

While we may know hydration is important, do we know how much is really needed and why? And does the source of water and the container used matter?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, water helps maintain normal body temperature, lubricate and cushion joints, protect the spinal cord and other tissues, and rid the body of waste.

It's important for everyone, but needs may vary by individual. "There is no one perfect formula for hydration," says registered dietitian nutritionist Kathleen Garcia-Benson of Top Nutrition Coaching, citing factors like sweat rate, humidity, elevation, activity levels, and intake of high-fluid foods.

The U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine recommends roughly 15.5 cups of fluid daily for men and 11.5 cups for women. This includes all liquid from water, other beverage sources and food. According to the Mayo Clinic, about 20% of daily fluid intake usually comes from food sources, such as fruits and vegetables.

Garcia-Benson says a starting point to determine your specific hydration need is to divide your body weight in half and convert that number into ounces.

"That gives a basic starting point to how many ounces to aim for, which then can be assessed for whether you need more or less," she explains, adding that urine color can be an indicator of whether more or less is needed. "We're aiming for a consistent light straw color. If you're looking after it's mixed with toilet water, recognize it will be diluted and a bit lighter in color."

In addition to supporting digestion, Garcia-Benson says proper hydration also supports kidney health, skin health, cues on hunger and fullness and more.

Milk, juices, flavored waters and even tea and coffee can help with hydration, but Garcia-Benson notes certain teas like green, dandelion and hibiscus, as well as coffee, also have natural diuretic effects, which should be kept in mind if using as a large source of hydration.

When it comes to water, the source depends on personal preference, convenience and local water quality, says Garcia-Benson.

"Tap water can have more stringent requirements than bottles; however, location can impact water taste and quality," she says. "Consider looking at your local water reports, and purchase filters if needed. If you don't like the taste, you likely aren't going to be drinking enough, so consider taste preferences."

As far as containers are concerned, Garcia-Benson says the marketing of water bottles has made a positive impact in promoting hydration. She says her recommendation is to find a container that works best for you.

"It could win 'best cup' awards, but if you find it hard to carry around, it's not worth it," she says. "Look for bottles that are easy to clean, as proper hygiene is crucial to prevent bacterial growth. Insulated cups can keep water cold or hot for extended periods, which may be desired depending on the person. For sustainability purposes and taste, I recommend a stainless steel-lined water bottle."

Garcia-Benson's advice for those wanting to increase their intake is to take it slow, for practical reasons.

"Jumping to the end goal all at once can sometimes be overwhelming due to a sharp increase in bathroom breaks," she says.

Instead, aim to increase by 4 to 8 ounces over three to five days, then add another 4 to 8 ounces over the next three to five days and so on until the goal is reached. Garcia-Benson also suggests sipping throughout the day, rather than trying to drink large amounts at one time.

Fluid Fulfillment

While there are some baselines regarding proper hydration, fluid needs depend on several factors, including physical activity level and the effects of heat, humidity and other climatic factors. These can exacerbate water loss through perspiration and respiration, pronouncing the need for adequate fluid intake when working, playing or otherwise being active in the heat.

The generally accepted rule for adults is to drink a half-liter of water per hour of moderate activity in moderate temperatures. Someone on a challenging hike on an 85-degree day with 50% humidity might want to increase that to 1 liter per hour.

"Summertime clearly means an increase in temperatures, as well as humidity in many states," says James Mayo, co-founder of SOS Hydration Inc., a beverage and hydration company based in San Francisco. "When partaking in exercise or intensive activities like gardening, it's recommended to hydrate with water and electrolytes."

When venturing to places where water sources might be limited, experts recommend bringing no less than a gallon per person. Mayo recommends taking a cooler along and keeping extra water in a vehicle.

"If you are going to be out for several hours in the wild, remember to take some electrolytes," he says. "If possible, try to wear loose-fitting clothing and a cap to help regulate body temperature, so you reduce the amount of sweating and limit dehydration."

Dr. Dana Cohen, author of "Quench," a book about proper hydration, recommends adding electrolytes in the form of salt, lemon juice or a sugarless powder to the first water of the day.

"And if you are sweating a lot you need to replenish that," Cohen adds. "Plain water is fine, but adding an electrolyte powder is a good idea, especially if you are profusely sweating out those electrolytes and water."

DRINK UP

KLN encourages fluid intake by providing tumblers to employees

By Michael Gilbert

KLN Family Brands is doing its part to help employees reach the old adage of eight glasses of water per day.

During the month of April, KLN distributed 40-ounce insulated tumblers to 950 employees across its four brands — Kenny’s Candy & Confections, Tuffy’s Pet Foods, Inc., Tuffy’s Treat Company and The Spot Training Facility — according to receptionist Rendi Morical. The purple tumblers, which easily fit into a cup-holder and feature a handle and the KLN logo, have quickly become a favorite among employees.

“I’ve seen so many employees using their tumblers at work,” Morical says. “People seem to be super excited to receive them. We usually give a gift or two to our employees each year and there always seem to be a couple of boxes left over, but this time we had no leftovers. Everybody wanted their tumbler.”

The suggestion for the tumblers came from executive administrator Jackie Bunkowske in late 2023, Morical says. After the company committed to giving tumblers to its staff this year, Morical says KLN team members voted on the color via the employee app Beekeeper. Purple won in a landslide over white and grey.

“Jackie’s suggestion went really well with what we are trying to accomplish with our wellness program,” Morical says. “The tumblers are a great way to encourage employees to drink more water, stay hydrated and feel better overall.

“We understand that tumblers can be a bit costly and thought these would be the perfect gift just in time for summer.”



WARNING SIGNS



Symptoms of heat stroke in dogs can include:

- Body temperature greater than 105.8
- Increased respiratory efforts
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Red dots on the gum line
- Altered/confused mental state



Paw Patrol

Take care of those furry feet



The Spot Training Facility head canine trainer Rylie Stenstrom says paw protection is imperative for dogs in both hot weather and cold weather.

“When the temperatures get warmer, the asphalt temperature gets significantly hotter than the air temperature,” Stenstrom says. “Dog boots specifically made for hot weather are a great way to keep their feet protected.”

“In the wintertime, a big thing to consider is the salt we lay on the ground to prevent ice. If it is not specifically pet friendly it can burn our furry friend’s feet.”

Stenstrom advises practicing how to put boots on your pet before the dog needs to wear them.

BEWARE of Heat

Pets need extra attention during summer's swelter

By Michael Gilbert

Heat-related illnesses are not solely limited to humans. Animals, especially dogs, are susceptible to heat stroke if their owners fail to take the necessary precautions, according to Dr. Ciarrin Covington-Sailer of All Creatures Veterinary Hospital.

"During the summer months, we typically see two to three cases each week of heat stroke in dogs," says Covington-Sailer. "Owners really need to keep an eye on their dog when the weather heats up."

Covington-Sailer says a few signs dog owners should be aware of include an elevated body temperature greater than 105.8, increased respiratory efforts, vomiting, diarrhea, red dots on the gum line and an altered mental status.

"If your dog starts seizing or is not responsive, that is an emergency situation and it's time for emergency attention," she says. "A dog's normal temperature is around 100 to 102 degrees Fahrenheit, so if you notice your dog's temperature at nearly 106, it can be cause for concern."

Dog owners should be aware of heat stroke during the warmer months, but one thing they shouldn't do is force water down the throat of their pet.

"Never take a hose or use a water bottle and force water into an animal because that can lead to aspiration," Covington-Sailer says. "What I advise is having clean, stainless-steel bowls so they aren't attracting bacteria because both dogs and cats can be extremely finicky about their water source and can tell when it's stale."

While every dog is unique, Covington-Sailer says a 50-pound dog who spends most of its time indoors should drink around a half gallon of water daily.

"That amount does increase if the dog has been out for a walk or run," she says.

Owners who plan on taking their dog out for a walk on a warm day should check the temperature of the pavement before heading out.

"If you put your palm on the surface of the pavement and can't hold your palm down for about three seconds because it's too warm, then it's too warm for your animal," she says. "If that's the case, the animal shouldn't be exercised, or it should be put on the grass or should wear dog booties."

Although heat stroke is uncommon in large farm animals, rabbits and "pocket pets" are at risk when they are brought outdoors.

"When you take a rabbit or a 'pocket pet' like a hamster, mouse, rat or gerbil outside, make sure they have access to water and shade," she says.

It can be unsafe for a pet to be left inside a vehicle. Covington-Sailer says the temperature inside a vehicle can increase by 40 degrees in just one hour.

"When it's 90 degrees outside, it can feel close to 140 inside the car," she says. "Even if you crack a window, there isn't enough airflow to cool down that animal."

Owners looking to cool off their dog should never resort to placing ice on its paws as that can result in restricting circulation, according to Covington-Sailer.

"The best thing to do in that situation is to use lukewarm water, move them to shade, or use a fan or air conditioner on them," she says. "Monitor them and try to get their temperature back into the 102 range."

"Heat stroke can be very serious, but it can also be easily prevented."



Dr. Dr. Ciarrin Covington-Sailer *left* and Dr. Raeanna Covington of All Creatures Veterinary Hospital.



Something for EVERYONE

Area events abound this summer and fall

By Michael Gilbert

If you're looking for something to do this summer and into fall, there are plenty of options. Whether the Art & Craft Affair in Battle Lake or the Monticello Farmers Market, Senior Chair Yoga in Otsego or Music Makers at the Otter Cove Children's Museum, there is something for every interest and age.

Looney Days

Aug. 8-11, Vergas

With the tagline "Birds of a Feather Get Looney Together," one can rest assured they are in for a good time attending "Looney Days" in Vergas. This year's event will feature a parade, bean bag tournament, wiener dog races, egg hunt, children's events, water ski show and live music. Visit the events page at cityofvergas.com for more information.

Art & Craft Affair

Aug. 10, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Railroad Park

MN Hwy 78 and County Road 83, Battle Lake

Hosted by the Arts of the Lakes Association, the annual Art & Craft Affair attracts more than 500 people to shop from dozens of vendors selling their specialties. The all-ages event features face painting and crafts for the little ones and one-of-a-kind arts and crafts for adults. Visit artofthelakes.org to learn more.

Perham Pioneer Fest

Aug. 17, 8 a.m.-10 p.m. and Aug. 18, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Pioneer Village, 1251 Ave. N, Perham

With tractor pulls, a flea market, horse-drawn carriage rides, live music, food vendors, raffles and more, it is no wonder why the Pioneer Fest has been a favorite in Perham for nearly six decades. This year's event also features a Ladies Auxiliary Breakfast from 8-11 a.m. on both days. There is no fee to attend, but a \$5 free-will donation is suggested. Visit perham.com for more information.

Run for the Melon 5K and 10K

Aug. 17, 8 a.m.

Intersection of Hwy 210 and 457th Ave., Vining

Enjoy a nice workout and then bite into a juicy slice of watermelon. That's what hundreds do annually at the Run for the Melon 5K and 10K. Registration is underway. All preregistered participants receive a shirt. Proceeds benefit the OTC cross country and track teams. For more information, visit runforthemelon.com.

Elevate Walking Club

Sept. 3, 10-11 a.m.

Perham Area Community Center

620 3rd Ave. SE

This inclusive gathering where everyone regardless of age or physical abilities is welcome to attend is designed to get individuals moving to benefit their health. Participants are encouraged to walk at their own pace either around the track and building or outside the PACC entryway. The Walking Club meets multiple times throughout the year until the winter season. Call (218) 347-1974 for more information.

Celebrate Aging Expo

Sept. 18, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Perham Area Community Center, 620 3rd Ave. SE

Geared toward individuals 55 and over and open to all ages, the Celebrate Aging Expo will provide information on staying fit and active in one's senior years. The free event will feature tips on aging topics, seminars and the option to interact with experts in the aging field. Visit member.perham.com/events for more information.

Minnesota Oktoberfest 2024

Sept. 20, 5-11 p.m., and Sept. 21, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Delano Central Park, 650 River St. North, Delano

Come enjoy multiple bands — including Alex Meixner and The Dale Pexa Band — and a market featuring fall harvest produce and decor, yard and garden art, jewelry and more from local vendors.

Senior Chair Yoga

Sept. 23, 12:15-12:45 p.m.

Otsego Prairie Center, 8899 Nashua Ave NE

Chair yoga is one of the most popular forms of the practice due to its many benefits including increased circulation, feelings of well-being and decreases in blood pressure, anxiety, inflammation and chronic pain. Open to senior citizens, this class teaches the basics of chair yoga to get participants feeling great for the day ahead. Registration is not required. Learn more at otsego.recdesks.com.



Monticello Farmers Market

Sept. 26, 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Monticello Library Parking Lot, 200 West 6th St.

The 19th year of the Monticello Farmers Market will conclude on Sept. 26, meaning this is the final time to purchase fresh, local, healthy food from area farmers and food producers. The market, which runs weekly starting in May, also features hand-crafted items and art as well as live music. The market is a popular spot to relax, socialize and enjoy the beauty of Monticello.

Water Lantern Festival

Sept. 28

7991 Main St., Maple Grove

Enjoy food trucks, music and fun as thousands of floating lanterns share personalized positive messages. Ticket price includes lantern kit. Learn more at waterlanternfestival.com

Oktoberfest

Oct. 4-5,

185 E. Main St., Downtown Perham

The annual festival of fall fun returns to Perham Oct. 4-5. Oktoberfest features hayrides, pumpkin carving and painting, crafts, children's activities, pumpkin bowling, fresh apple cider, a petting zoo, inflatables, live music and much more. Learn more at perham.com

Free Blood Pressure Checks

Oct. 23, 9-11 a.m.

Perham Area Community Center, 620 3rd Ave. SE

Around 70% of all Americans will have high blood pressure at some point in their life. Staff at the Perham Area Community Center will be taking blood pressure readings and providing wellness advice. For more information, call (218) 346-7710.



THE RUNNING LIFE

Diana Lopez considers it a privilege to stay active

By Rebecca Fortner



Diana Lopez loves seeing others run and finds it inspiring — especially if she hasn't run that day. Her advice is to not think too hard and “just go out for a run.”

Other recommendations include:

- Find your own comfortable speed.
- Listen to your body.
- Stretch before and after running.
- Purchase running shoes.
- Try out different times of day, weather and locations.
- Try to run with and without food in your belly to better understand which works better for you.
- Keep safety first with items such as reflective clothing when running in the dark.
- Run with friends — and a furry friend, if possible.

“Find people that like to run and go out with them, talk with them about running,” Lopez adds. “That is so much fun.”



Running helps Diana Lopez get to know herself better.

“It has taught me to listen to my body and my mind,” says the KLN Family Brands quality control specialist. “Running has shown me how to be patient and consistent.”

It also helped her get to know Perham.

When she moved to the area, Lopez turned to the activity she learned growing up in an active family in Mexico City.

“When I arrived in Perham, I felt like running was the only thing that I knew how to do,” she explains. “I was very lucky to live by Arvig Park and being able to run there made me feel at home.”

Her first 5K was in Puebla, Mexico, with her dad. The streets were closed and, with thousands of people running, Lopez says it felt like a big party. Some people wore costumes and some participated in wheelchairs. Others ran while pushing babies in strollers.

“Young and old people, people running at different speeds and also so many people cheering the runners,” she recalls. “When I finished that race, I was very tired. I could feel the

dried salt of sweat on my face.”

And she loved it.

Lopez has since run many 5K and 10K races, as well as half-marathons and three full marathons. She ran 5 miles daily for years, but now engages in other activities including rebounder workouts, pickleball, biking, hiking, CrossFit and Zumba. She credits the Perham area for providing a variety of options.

Lopez views running as a competition with herself, one she’s already won just by getting out there. She runs for her health and finds the best sleep comes after a run. The soreness the following day makes her appreciate the privilege of being able to be active.

Running, she says, honors that privilege.

“I usually run by myself and without music,” Lopez says. “It is kind of my meditation. It is my time to talk with God, with nature, with myself. If I am running in the morning, it helps my mind to think about my day; and if I run in the evening, it helps my mind to make plans for the future.”

Perfect Exercise

Yoga provides a chance to stretch while relieving stress and anxiety

By Michael Gilbert



Kylee Jordahl

Perhaps she is a bit biased, but as far as Kylee Jordahl is concerned, yoga is about as perfect an exercise as one will find.

“There are a lot of benefits to doing yoga because not only are you actively meditating, but you are engaging your inner consciousness,” says Jordahl, a marketing manager for NutriSource and an instructor at B Still Yoga in Perham. “Yoga engages your mind, it engages your body, it improves your movement, and you work on breath work, which is big in alleviating stress and anxiety and helps you focus and sleep.”

Although online videos may lead one to believe yoga is an intense workout, Jordahl says it’s actually extremely “beginner-friendly” and suitable for all ages.

“There are a lot of different options when it comes to yoga,” she says. “Chair yoga is great for people looking to get a gentle intro to yoga, but there are other classes [at B Still Yoga] that focus on mobility, toning and meditation.”

Practicing yoga involves plenty of stretching and practicing flexibility, which are two exercises that can help improve one’s alignment and overall well-being, according to Jordahl. For those working desk jobs, Jordahl says it’s critical to find time for yourself to get away, stretch and let your body relax.

“The benefits of finding time to stretch — it can be as little as 5 minutes a day — will have a lasting impact on your mental health, physical health and increasing your mood,” she says. “Taking time to do something like catch your breath, roll your shoulders or stretch your arms out high and letting them slowly come back down can decrease anxiousness and

loosen those muscles that get tense from repetitive motions. Stretching can help rebalance your body and posture and give you a full range of motion.”

Routine stretching is especially necessary as one ages to help offset common ailments including chronic pain, back issues and arthritis, Jordahl says.

“You are going to want that full range of motion even as you age,” she says. “Practicing stretching now will lead to flexibility in your 70s, 80s and 90s that will help with your day-to-day activities.”

Jordahl is a proponent of stretching even before seemingly simple tasks such as casual walking or bike rides.

“Stretching before those types of activities is a great habit to build into your day,” she says. “Before you go for that walk, lean forward and touch your toes or move your fingertips from one side of your feet to the other. Walking engages your core and your arms so it’s not just your legs and that is why it’s important to roll out your neck or your arms to get your body ready for that movement.”

Both walking and yoga have the ability to help one clear their mind and reset their day. Jordahl encourages all who are looking to improve their well-being while experiencing a peaceful activity to visit the B Still Yoga website at bstillyogastudio.com/ to learn more.

“With summer here, it’s easy to neglect your health as the days get really busy with work and family obligations,” she says. “Yoga is a great stress reliever and is full circle to your health.”

A Healthy STRETCH

Reduce injury risk and pain by making it a regular part of your fitness routine

By Erin Yarnall

It may be fun to be able to touch your toes, but there are a host of health benefits that come with improving your body's flexibility. One of the best ways to gain more flexibility is by regularly stretching.

While overstretching may be painful, a typical stretch should be pain-free and can often feel good. Stretching has other benefits beyond that, too, including slowing the aging process, keeping body parts healthy and reducing the risk of injury.

"Stretching helps elongate and loosen muscle fibers, improving their elasticity," says Dr. Robert McLaughlin II, an orthopedic surgeon who specializes in shoulder and knee injuries. "Consistent stretching keeps the muscles supple and adaptable, enhancing overall flexibility. Flexibility decreases the risk of injuries, improves posture, enhances performance in physical activities and can reduce pain in muscles and joints."

A good stretch also improves blood flow, and can release a rush of endorphins, which McLaughlin says can help alleviate pain, in addition to boosting mood.

"Stretching can release endorphins, the body's natural painkillers and mood enhancers," McLaughlin explains. "It can create a sense of well-being and relaxation, which is particularly beneficial for those dealing with chronic pain."

The act of stretching also helps keep muscles young, as a regular stretching regimen can restore some of the range of motion lost due to aging.

"As we age, muscles naturally lose elasticity and strength," McLaughlin says. "Stretching helps maintain muscle tone, flexibility and joint health, which is crucial for reducing the risk of age-related injuries and mobility issues."

It's also one of the most helpful ways to avoid future injuries. Through stretching, muscles prepare to take on physical activity through increased blood flow and increased flexibility, which helps the muscles react better and lowers the risk of future injury while exercising, playing sports or doing any other activities.

"Stretching prepares the muscles for activity by increasing blood flow and flexibility, reducing the risk of strains and sprains during physical exertion," McLaughlin says. "For example, athletes who perform dynamic stretches before a game are less likely to experience muscle pulls."

Making stretching part of your daily routine doesn't require a big commitment, and it's not required to do a full yoga class every day in order to improve flexibility. McLaughlin recommends doing a few basic stretches every day to help retain and improve flexibility, and potentially alleviate pain.

"Everyone should include hamstring stretches, hip flexor stretches and shoulder stretches in their routine," he says. "These target key muscle groups that, when tight, can cause widespread issues, such as back pain or poor posture."

While stretching may seem simple enough, McLaughlin says warmups should be done before stretching and he warns against stretching to the point of pain.

"Always warm up before stretching to increase muscle temperature and prevent injuries," McLaughlin says. "Stay consistent, as stretching a few minutes a day is more effective than occasional long sessions. Also, never stretch to the point of pain — a gentle pull is enough."



A hand is shown holding a realistic, metallic brain on a horizontal metal rod. The background is a bright, cloudy sky. The word "BRAIN" is written in large, colorful, outlined letters (B: red, R: green, A: blue, I: yellow, N: gold) above the word "food" which is written in a black, cursive script.

BRAIN food

Nutrition can impact mood, energy and mental health

By Erin Yarnall

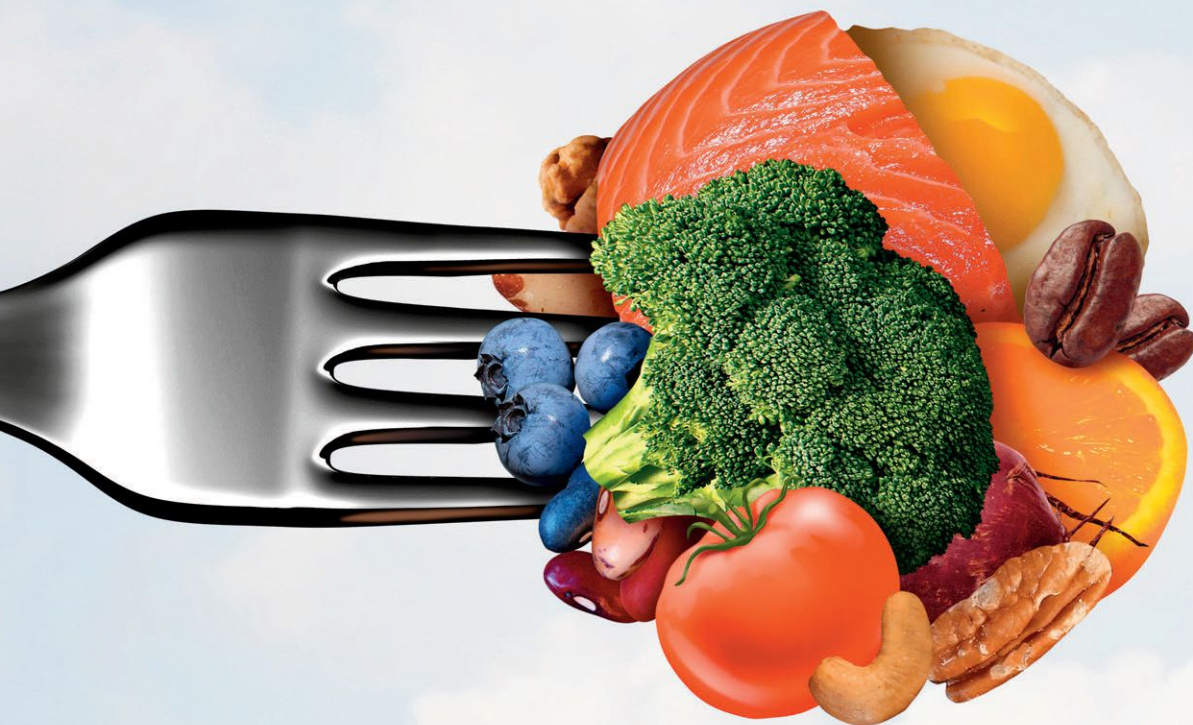
It's no secret that making nutrition a priority improves physical health, but having good nutrition can also boost mental health, including improved mood, energy levels and cognitive function.

"Many people don't realize the link between food and mental well-being," says Signe Svanfeldt, lead nutritionist at Lifesum, a global healthy-eating platform. "A nutritious, balanced diet positively impacts our energy and mood, as well as our gut microbiota, which influences our mental well-being."

While having an overall balanced diet is important, Svanfeldt also recommends making several dietary changes, like increasing your prebiotic intake.

"Prebiotics can be obtained from various dietary sources, including certain fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes," says Trista Best, a registered dietitian at Balance One Supplements. "These foods contain naturally occurring prebiotic fibers. Prebiotic supplements, on the other hand, are also available and typically contain concentrated forms of prebiotic fibers like inulin or oligosaccharides, which can be consumed alongside a balanced diet to further support gut health."

In addition to improving the body's gut health, prebiotics



can also have a positive impact on mental health. Prebiotics and probiotics have been found to improve mental health by reducing inflammation and by increasing the availability of neurotransmitters, including serotonin, a hormone that regulates mood and reduces symptoms of stress and anxiety.

Svanfeldt also recommends eating foods rich in probiotics, including fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kombucha, and dairy products including yogurt and kefir.

“Prebiotics are non-digestible fibers and compounds found in certain foods that serve as food for beneficial bacteria in the gut,” Best says. “They differ from probiotics, which are live, beneficial bacteria themselves. While probiotics introduce beneficial bacteria into the gut, prebiotics nourish the existing good bacteria, promoting their growth and activity.”

Probiotics help regulate the composition and activity of the gut microbiome, which can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety and enhance stress resilience. A diet rich in omega-3 fats has also been proven to help alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Eating polyphenol-rich fruits such as apples, grapes and kiwi is also beneficial. Polyphenols can also be found in nuts and

some vegetables including peppers, red cabbage and spinach. Polyphenols, which are plant compounds, can protect the brain from oxidative stress and inflammation.

“Polyphenols have a role in maintaining steady blood sugar levels and keeping your cholesterol in balance,” says Catherine Rall, a registered dietitian at Happy V.

Svanfeldt also recommends increasing intakes of complex carbohydrates, like oats, barley and buckwheat, which are high in fiber and have been linked to reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression.

“Complex carbohydrates take longer to break down than simple carbohydrates, meaning that they will be less likely to spike your blood sugar,” Rall explains.

Nutrition plays an important role in the body’s overall wellness, including mental health, and making choices to include more nutritionally dense foods in your diet could result in improved mental health.

“What you eat today will either empower or deplete your mental health tomorrow,” Svanfeldt says. “By nourishing ourselves with wholesome foods, we lay the foundation for greater engagement, productivity, and overall well-being in and out of the workplace.”



TRAUMA IMPACT

Techniques to reduce distress and supportive relationships can play a role in treatment

By **Rebecca Fortner**
Assistant Editor

Seventy percent of adults in the United States — or more than 223 million people — have experienced a traumatic event at least once in their lives, according to the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

And while the impact is different for each person, experts say talking about it, seeking treatment when needed and being there for each other can make a difference.

“The brain can heal itself in the right environment with the conditions of supportive relationships,” says Dr. Jessica Gomez, a bilingual clinical psychologist and executive director of the Momentous Institute in Dallas.

What is Trauma?

When discussing trauma, traumatic events and post-traumatic stress disorder, it’s important to make distinctions among terms, experts advise.

The term trauma is used to refer to an event, and the term traumatization refers to the negative emotional reaction to the event, according to Dr. Steven Gold, a licensed clinical psychologist who served as editor-in-chief for the American Psychological Association’s “Handbook of Trauma Psychology.”

“This is especially important because not everyone who encounters a traumatic event will be traumatized by it,” he notes, explaining that 12% to 15% of combat veterans will be traumatized by the experience, while almost 50% of rape survivors will suffer traumatization. As a result, the term “potentially traumatic event” is often used.

“The most commonly used definition of trauma in the sense of traumatic events is experiencing or witnessing potential or actual death, serious physical injury or sexual assault,” Gold says.

Traumatization is more widely discussed in recent years, he explains. The diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder was officially recognized in 1980, but was met with skepticism for many years.

“Over time, there has been growing interest in and wide-ranging discussion of trauma, including in the popular media, so

few people, either professionals or members of the general public, question the reality of trauma and traumatization,” Gold says. “If anything, the term trauma is used too broadly and indiscriminately to refer to anything that someone finds disturbing.”

What is PTSD?

If someone experiences or witnesses a traumatic event or series of events, they may develop post-traumatic stress disorder, says Anna Deibel, a licensed clinical professional counselor at Grow Therapy.

“Someone may experience these events or circumstances in emotionally, physically harmful or life-threatening ways,” she says. “As a result, the person can be left with an impacted mental, physical, social and/or spiritual well-being long after the trauma has taken place.”

Experts note PTSD and trauma are not interchangeable terms. To be considered for a PTSD diag-

nosis, signs and symptoms must last for more than a month and be severe enough to interfere with school, work or relationships.

Risk factors for PTSD, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, include exposure to previous traumatic experiences, especially as a child, getting hurt or seeing people hurt or killed, feeling horror, helplessness or extreme fear, having little to no social support after the event, facing pain, injury or other stress after the event, and having a personal or family history of mental illness or substance abuse.

PTSD can affect anyone, but Deibel notes the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs says about 5% of adults in the U.S. have it in any given year. Women are more likely to develop PTSD than men, partly due to the types of traumatic events, including sexual assault, women are more likely to experience.

What Causes Traumatization?

Gold explains that when the “fight-flight-freeze” reflex is triggered, it increases the likelihood of surviving life-threatening situations. Freezing is set off when the other two options are not possible.

“It can easily be misunderstood by outside observers as reflecting that the person was unaffected by the traumatic event, or even disturbingly unmoved by it,” Gold says. “When the FFF response continues to be activated, or is triggered by cues that are in some way reminiscent of the event a month or more after the traumatic event has ended, this is the mechanism driving PTSD.”

Gold notes depression, substance abuse or dissociative disorders can also be responses to traumatization.

Trauma can come in different forms, Deibel says, including a single overwhelming incident, chronic or complex trauma, as well as insidious trauma, which can be gradual and subtle, but still harmful. This includes racism and homophobia, for example. Vicarious trauma may impact health care professionals, social workers, caregivers and therapists. A large-scale natural disaster may cause mass trauma, affecting many people. Intergenerational trauma is trauma that may be passed from one generation to the next.

“This is because trauma can actually change a person’s DNA, which is then passed on to biological children,” Deibel explains.

Historical trauma — including genocide, slavery, colonialism and war — can last many years and span multiple generations.

Gomez and other experts make a distinction as well between “Big T” events, such as an assault or a natural disaster that can bring on an overwhelming sense of helplessness, and “small t” events that may include divorce, financial difficulties or personal conflict. But a cumulative effect of smaller traumas can also bring on distress and difficulties. Gomez stresses trauma looks different for different people.

“It just depends on the individual, how they’re going to react to it,” she says.

Gomez also notes more than 60% of adults have experienced adverse childhood experiences, with 16% experiencing four or more ACEs, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These are potentially traumatic events that may include violence, abuse or growing up in a family with mental illness or substance use problems, says the CDC. The “toxic stress” can alter brain development and stress responses. Chronic health problems, mental illness and substance abuse can be linked.

“We know that the more adverse experiences you have, they stack,” Gomez says.

How Is It Treated?

Symptoms of traumatization may include anxiety and depression, flashbacks, hypervigilance, sleep disorders, and the inability to accept positive emotions. Symptoms of PTSD may include intrusive thoughts, reliving traumatic events, avoidance, changes in thinking, mood, sleep patterns and concentration, as well as self-destructive behavior.

Ongoing trauma can also affect and shape entire communities, Gold says.

“Entire communities, and in the case of war, entire generations, can be affected by these forms of traumatizing danger and shape the cultural and social frameworks shared by the affected community,” he explains. “For example, gun violence and the commonplace occurrence of gun-related killings in the U.S. fosters a sense of vulnerability, alertness and looming danger that are noticeably absent in other countries where gun ownership is an exceedingly rare phenomenon.”

Gold says treatment may include revisiting the original event through describing it, writing about it or picturing it mentally. But this may not be effective or may increase traumatization, especially for those subjected to repeated or prolonged traumatic events. Treatment, says Gold, is instead generally started with distress-reduction techniques and coping strategies.

“Much like working out physically, where regular exercise leads to noticeable changes in the body, engaging in distress-reduction methods regularly can lead to lasting changes in one’s mental state,” Gold says.

Identifying cues related to the traumatic event and gradually approaching them also can be effective, he notes.

Gomez stresses there is no “cookie-cutter treatment.” For some, it may be cognitive behavior therapy, but others may use play therapy or dance and other movements. She stresses the importance of relationships, as well as being mindful of what is consumed, especially at a time when constant news and information can be overwhelming.

“I think you have to monitor the impact and give yourself permission to disconnect,” she says.

Deibel notes not all people who experience PTSD need treatment, especially if a strong support system is available. But when treatment is needed, the sooner it is accessed, the better chance for recovery. Deibel says this may include therapy, medication and support groups.

“While support groups haven’t been shown to reduce PTSD symptoms, they can help in other ways, such as giving you a feeling of connection to other people who have been through similar circumstances,” she says. “Sharing the challenges that occur in daily life might diminish any feelings of isolation and help you learn new perspectives on how others deal with it.”

How Can We Help?

Gold says those close to someone who has experienced traumatization can help by “having the humility to understand that you cannot fully grasp what your loved one affected by trauma is going through, and simply listening without giving advice. Above all, understanding that traumatization is not a choice. When it occurs, it is the expression of the fight-flight-freeze reflex that was triggered by the original traumatic event.”

Gomez says she has seen “an elevation of these themes” both during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, and “an explosion of need” among youth, especially those of color. The effects also filter to educators and other adults in caregiving roles. She says significant interventions are needed, both for children and adults.

“We have a real opportunity to really destigmatize mental health and trauma,” she stresses, and notes teaching children as early as kindergarten about their brain and its functions can help. So can not separating mental health from general health.

“We have to stop treating these two separately,” she says. “They’re interwoven.”

Gomez also stresses the “right” words aren’t necessarily needed when providing comfort to a loved one.

“If you don’t have the words, there is nothing more important than the presence of being,” she says. “I think it’s one of the biggest gifts we can give each other.”

Don't Burn Out

Establishing healthy boundaries is one step toward reducing symptoms

By Erin Yarnall

When a person is in a state of complete physical, emotional and mental exhaustion, that's burnout.

There are many factors that can lead someone to suffer from burnout, including overwhelming work demands. Burnout can also result from personal responsibilities like caring for children, aging parents or a sick partner.

Most typically associated with stress, whether from work or family commitments, burnout can also happen from self-created pressure, according to Dr. Sarah Bonza, who specializes in lifestyle medicine at Bonza Health.

"Some of the personal causes of burnout include perfectionism, high personal expectations and work-life imbalance," Bonza says.

Symptoms of burnout can appear gradually but tend to grow worse over time. When unchecked, burnout can damage several facets of a person's health and can become so debilitating that it interferes with a person's ability to cope with everyday life.

Burnout can impact not just a person's mental health but also their physical and behavioral health, causing them to be short-tempered, moody, unfocused and disorganized.

"Physically, as burnout is taking its toll on your emotions, burnout can leave you feeling exhausted and overwhelmed, with little energy for doing the things you need and want to do," says Ashley Murry, chief clinical officer at Sana Lake



Recovery Centers.

Beyond the exhaustion that burnout can cause, many other severe physical health problems can develop, including heart disease and infections.

“Burnout is a chronic stress that causes complications such as hypertension, heart diseases and raises the possibility of a stroke,” Bonza explains. “It can also damage the immune system, meaning people can easily get infected from diseases.”

While burnout can be debilitating, there are steps that can reduce symptoms and boost resilience, like getting enough sleep, maintaining a healthy diet, exercising regularly, taking regular breaks, enforcing healthy boundaries and receiving support from friends, family and co-workers. Bonza also recommends creating a routine to help stay organized and avoid unnecessary stress.

“To avoid burnout, it is recommended to exercise, eat well and sleep well, as well as take breaks when needed,” Bonza says. “One should try to set a routine schedule and also ensure that they make the necessary changes at home or at work to ensure that they are not overwhelmed.”

She adds it’s important to understand the underlying cause of stress, as stress and burnout can be more easily avoided.

“It is also useful to control stressors and learn how to say no and not to take on more than one can handle,” Bonza says.

Another option for anyone who is suffering from burnout is seeking professional help with a psychologist or a counselor.

“Seeking professional help is advisable for anyone dealing with burnout, especially if it significantly impacts their daily life and functioning,” Bonza said. “Mental health professionals, such as psychologists or counselors, can provide therapy to address the underlying causes of burnout and develop coping strategies. In some cases, medication may be prescribed to manage symptoms of depression or anxiety.”

SAIL INTO SUMMER

Lots of flavor with little hassle



Cucumber Vinegar Salad

Ingredients

6 Persian or mini cucumbers
2 tsp granulated sugar
1/2 tsp salt
1 cup thinly sliced red onion
1/4 cup white-wine vinegar
2 Tbsp chopped fresh dill
1/4 tsp ground pepper

Directions

Using a mandolin or a knife, thinly slice cucumbers 1/4 inch thick. Transfer the cucumber slices to a fine-mesh strainer set over a large bowl; sprinkle with sugar and salt. Toss to combine. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Discard any liquid in the bowl and wipe the bowl dry. Transfer the cucumbers to the bowl and toss with onion, vinegar, dill and pepper. Let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes. Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to three days.

Pineapple BBQ Chicken

Ingredients

1 small pineapple
1 medium red onion
1 medium green bell pepper
2 cups barbecue sauce, divided
1 tsp kosher salt, divided
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper, divided
4 (6 oz) boneless, skinless chicken breasts

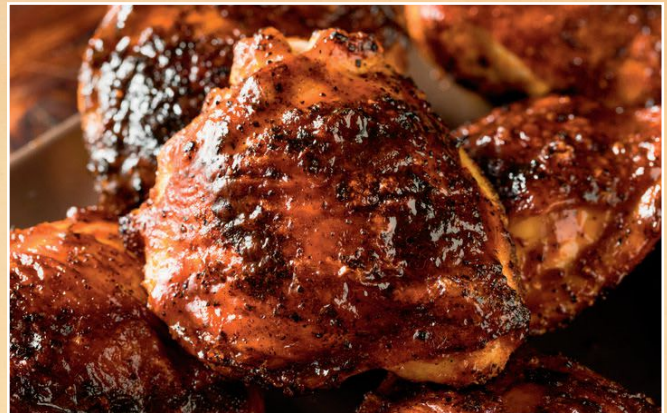
Directions

Heat an outdoor grill to medium-high, direct heat. Prepare four (10-inch long) sheets of aluminum foil.

Prepare the following, placing them all in the same large bowl: Peel, core and dice 1 small pineapple to get 2 cups, thinly slice one medium red onion and slice one medium green bell pepper. Add 1 cup of the barbecue sauce, 1/2 tsp of the kosher salt and 1/2 tsp of the black pepper. Toss to combine.

Divide the vegetable mixture between the four sheets of foil, leaving a 2-inch border on all sides. Season four boneless, skinless chicken breasts with the remaining 1/2 tsp kosher salt and remaining 1/2 tsp black pepper, then place a breast on each vegetable pile. Pour the remaining 1 cup barbecue sauce over the chicken.

Fold the sides of the foil to meet over the center, then crimp the edges together to create completely sealed packets. Place the packets directly on the grill grates, cover, and grill until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes before opening the packets and serving.





Easy Grilled Vegetables

Ingredients

2 medium zucchini
1 large sweet onion
1 large red bell pepper
1/2 cup Italian salad dressing as marinade
pinch of dried herbs such as thyme, oregano, ground fennel, or dried basil (optional)
salt and fresh ground black pepper to season vegetables after grilling

Directions

Cut ends off the zucchini, slice in half lengthwise and cut into slices not quite 2 inches thick.

Peel onion, cut off ends, cut in half, then break apart into individual layers and slice each into same-size pieces.

Cut red bell pepper in half, cut out seeds and stem, and slice into pieces the same size as onion and zucchini.

Put the vegetables into sealable bag or plastic container with tight-fitting lid. Pour in enough dressing to coat the vegetables, about 1/2 cup. Add dried herbs if desired, close the bag or container and marinate in fridge for 4-6 hours.

Preheat grill and grill pan to medium-high heat. Drain vegetables.

When grill and pan are hot, pour vegetables in pan and spread around so as many as possible are touching the surface of the pan.

Cook with grill lid closed, stirring every 5 minutes or so to ensure vegetables are lightly browned on all sides. Cook about 15-20 minutes, or until vegetables are cooked but still slightly crisp and starting to char on the edges.

Serve hot, with salt and fresh ground pepper to season.



Key Lime Pie

Ingredients

1 pre-baked graham cracker pie crust
4 egg yolks
1 (14 oz) can sweetened condensed milk
2 tsp lime zest
1/2 cup key lime juice

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a large mixing bowl, beat egg yolks with a mixer until thickened and light yellow (about 2-3 minutes)

Add the sweetened condensed milk, lime zest, and key lime juice and beat on low until just combined. Do not overmix.

Pour into pre-baked pie crust and bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes or until just set.

Let cool completely before serving and store in fridge.



HEALTHY HABITS

Lifestyle practices are key to shedding those unwanted pounds and keeping them off

By Community Health Staff



Obesity is a life-altering medical condition that can increase the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and other chronic illnesses. It can also have consequences in the workplace, including absenteeism, lost productivity and costly medical claims.

Americans spend billions of dollars on weight-loss programs each year, and healthy eating and exercise are core components of nearly all workplace wellness programs, yet the problem persists.

Fortunately, there are potential solutions.

Healthy Weight Loss

When weight is in a healthy range, blood circulates more efficiently, fluid levels are more easily managed, and the risk of disease decreases. Other benefits include more self-confidence and energy.

While there are tools available like weight loss medications, maintaining the weight loss also requires lifestyle changes in diet and activity levels. A few basic tips include setting realistic goals, using a food diary or tracking app, managing portion sizes, making smart food choices and increasing physical activity.

Most fad diets and quick weight-loss schemes don't work

because they don't help you learn to maintain a healthy weight. Nearly all dieters regain lost weight within five years, and many regain more weight than was lost.

Restricting high-risk foods and maintaining portion control is vital, as is eating healthy carbohydrates, fats and proteins, experts say. The latter helps build appetite control and a healthy metabolism. High-risk foods include traditional fast foods, sweetened beverages, and refined carbs and sweets.

In addition to burning calories, exercise preserves muscle mass, which is important to maintain a healthy metabolism. It also improves the action and effectiveness of the hormone insulin. When this hormone doesn't work properly, insulin resistance can occur, leading to obesity and increased risks of developing heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

Increasing physical activity is vital, especially for those who sit at a desk for hours each day.

Current guidelines recommend adults get 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity and at least two days of muscle strengthening activity per week. This can be broken up into 30 minutes most days.



Maintaining Weight Loss

Experts emphasize that positive healthy diet changes and regular physical activity are key to maintaining weight loss. To make changes that can be sustainable and permanent, they should be implemented at a pace that fits your life and personality.

When working to maintain weight loss, slipping into old habits can happen. A relapse is when old habits return for several days or weeks. It's important to remember that this is not a failure, and you can get back on track. Some tips include:

- Understand your triggers, roadblocks and excuses
- Realize this is a long-term effort
- Learn from others who have succeeded
- Build a social support network
- Find healthy motivation
- Hold yourself accountable
- Remember that exercise is essential

A New WEAPON

Medications for weight loss may be one piece of comprehensive obesity treatment

By Rebecca Fortner

It's no surprise there is growing interest in weight loss medications.

Consider the most recent statistics regarding obesity in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Nearly 42% of adults are considered obese, with nearly 10% severely obese.
- Nearly 20% — or 14.7 million — of children ages 2 to 17 are considered obese.
- Health conditions related to obesity include high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancers — all leading causes of preventable and premature death.
- The estimated medical cost of obesity was nearly \$173 billion in 2019 dollars, and medical costs for adults with obesity were \$1,861 higher than those with a healthier weight.

Dr. Lisa Breslow of ChristianaCare in West Grove, Pennsylvania notes obesity is a chronic, relapsing medical condition.

“Patients with obesity shouldn't feel ashamed or like it's their fault,” she says, adding the condition requires a multifaceted treatment plan that takes time, and when weight loss is achieved, other related conditions tend to improve.

Breslow, who previously worked as a family physician, is board certified in obesity medicine and now focuses specifically on the condition. She says obesity medicine is a growing and needed field.

“It is so, so very important to patients because a lot of patients struggle with being overweight and obese.”

Weight Loss Medications

Obesity is defined as having a body mass index — which compares height and weight — of 30 or higher. A BMI of 25 to 30 is considered overweight, while a BMI of 40 or higher is considered severe obesity. For children, obesity is defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile on the CDC BMI-for-age growth charts.

But losing weight isn't as simple as “calories in and calories out,” Breslow says. Hormones in the brain and gut communicate to signal hunger and fullness. And that's where medication can help.

Ozempic is one medicine that has been in the news more recently. It is indicated for people with Type 2 diabetes, but can

continued on page 24

By the Numbers

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continued from page 23

lead to weight loss in people without diabetes. Wegovy, a similar medication, is FDA-approved for weight loss in non-diabetics, as is the more recently approved Zepbound. These are injectable medications, but there also are oral medications available.

One of the ways the injectable medications work is by manipulating the gut hormones that talk to the brain, signaling the stomach is full more quickly and for longer periods of time, Breslow says.

“It’s that piece that we use medication to manipulate that patients have no control over,” she explains.

Breslow stresses the medications are indicated for specific patients. They may be prescribed to those with a BMI of 30 or higher, or a BMI of 27 or higher with weight-related conditions like diabetes, high cholesterol or high blood pressure.

Breslow notes that side effects come with any medication. For these weight loss medications, two of the most common side effects include nausea and constipation, and the drugs can exacerbate existing conditions like acid reflux and gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD.

Breslow cautions compounded versions of the medications “are not at all approved or regulated” by the Food and Drug Administration.

Other factors to keep in mind regarding the medications include the fact that the drugs need to be taken to maintain weight loss; once they are stopped, weight may be gained. Insurance also may not cover the drugs, which can be expensive, for the purpose of losing weight, and there have been shortages due to rising interest.

Multifaceted Treatment

Breslow is excited there are medications available to treat obesity, but stresses they are just one piece of a multifaceted treatment.

“These medications do work well to treat obesity, however, there is no panacea to treat obesity,” she says. “For that reason, people need to be aware of the array of tools and resources already available and accessible to them that can help them successfully lose weight in a healthy way.”

Those tools include examining and changing diet and exercise habits, as well as screening for disorders that can adversely impact weight, such as binge-eating and night-eating syndrome. A registered dietitian, for example, can help establish healthier eating habits.



Building Blocks

Real Appeal includes coaching and access to a variety of resources

By Community Health Staff

KLN Family Brands employees and their dependents can get help to establish healthy habits through the Real Appeal program.

Available through health insurance at no additional cost, the healthy lifestyle and weight management program focuses on nutrition education and empowering members to make healthy choices.

A Success Kit includes scales and access to science-based fitness and nutrition information. The program can help participants set achievable nutrition, exercise and weight loss goals that can be tracked on a personalized dashboard.

Online group sessions are led by expert coaches and participants can connect with a supportive community. Individual coaching is also available.

Participants can also access the Wellness Series through Real Appeal. Explore topics and join group sessions in subjects that are of interest to you. Choose from a growing list of health topics focusing on fitness, nutrition, family wellness and more.



**Get started at
gethealthy.realappeal.com**



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Choose from a growing list of health topics, including:



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Family Wellness



... and more to come!



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*The Wellness Series is available to members who have completed the first 4 weeks of the Real Appeal program.

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of cancer deaths are caused by cancers not commonly screened for.

Only 5 types of cancer have recommended screening tests—colorectal, lung, breast, cervical, and prostate. Adding Galleri multi-cancer early detection test can help find cancer early.

How the Galleri test works

Galleri screens your blood sample for cell-free DNA and identifies whether it comes from healthy or cancer cells. DNA from cancer cells has specific methylation patterns that can identify it as cancer.

Who is Galleri for?

The Galleri test is being offered at no cost to KLN employees aged 50 years or older. It is not recommended if you are pregnant or undergoing active cancer treatment.

Key benefits are



Multi-cancer early detection
Improves your chance to find cancer early. It detects a signal shared by dozens of cancers that don't have screening tests.



Testing with ease
Screen with a simple blood draw easily added to your cancer screening plan.



More information about your health
If a cancer signal is found, the results can predict the tissue or organ associated. This helps your healthcare provider guide the next steps with the cancer signal.

The Galleri test does not detect all cancers and not all cancers can be detected in the blood.



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