

NORTH TEXAS PHP NEWS

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Life in time of Coronavirus

Honestly, do you really need **another reminder** of the current restrictions on your travel, work, entertainment, dining and even social life? I figured not.

We at NTPHP want you to have the best of not only physical health, but also psychological well-being. Therefore, rather than focusing on all the restrictions and cancelled activities, here are some ideas on continuing some of your fun and healthy activities, and possibly expanding upon that list.

- **Outdoor walking or jogging helps the body and the mind.** Taking just a 10 to 15 minute walk can lower your blood pressure and improve blood flow to your vital organs within minutes. Of course, a longer walk for up to 30 minutes at least three days a week will have even bigger benefits. Studies have shown moderate exercise three days a week will reduce the risk of cardiovascular events by 31% and reduce the overall risk of dying by 32%. Other studies also show that moderate exercise programs can lessen the impact or help lower the risk of dementia, atherosclerotic artery disease, obesity, diabetes, depression, anxiety, insomnia, cancer and even libido or sexual problems. Exercise has also been shown to boost brain function, memory, problem-solving skills and creativity.

Of course, during your walks, please practice social distancing and avoid crowded paths or trails. Maintaining a 6-foot distance or more from other walkers is recommended (with the exception of your immediate household already living with you).

- **Practice mindfulness.** In our busy hectic lives where we are rushing from task to task and from place to place, many of us have lost some skills in quieting our minds. However, the practice of mindfulness can help us hone this skill and improve mental energy, memory, focus, sleep, interpersonal relationships, anxiety, stress and even depression. Simply put, mindfulness is a psychological state of awareness of one's present experience without judgment, and without projection of one's thoughts too far into the future or into the past. It would of course, take more print space than is allowed to fully describe and teach mindfulness techniques in this newsletter. There are many good online websites, videos and even smartphone guided meditation apps that can help train you to be more mindful.

At its core, mindfulness is about you and your immediate experience at that moment. Therefore, in the right setting, mindfulness is achievable by simply looking out the window into nature, being outdoors, even just sitting in your backyard, walking your dog, practicing your tennis stroke or even golf.

In fact, most people probably have experienced moments of true mindfulness in their lives without realizing it, when they have engaged in activities that bring them bliss and tranquility.

- **Fight boredom and burnout.** If working from home, please set boundaries so that you turn off your work at a reasonable

time, such as 5 or 6 PM, to allow for personal time to unwind. Finding a variety of activities that you can do on your own or with others in your immediate household is highly recommended (board games, cooking together, walking outside and exercise videos). In fact, Gold's Gym, Planet Fitness and Peloton are offering their workout videos for free for a limited time. Catching up on past hobbies, reading, movies and TV series can also help stave off boredom and provide an emotional outlet. Spiritual or religious practices at home, and spiritual reading and broadcasts can also be extremely helpful to maintain the proper perspective in times of stress and uncertainty.

- **Build stronger relationships with those both at home and outside your home.** An excellent idea would be having meals together, to chat and catch up on each other's lives during this time. Connecting with friends and family by phone, texting, email, video calling or even social media can help spread emotional and social support. Making a special effort to reach out to those who live alone or are otherwise socially isolated is especially important during this time.

- **Avoid over-focusing on minute by minute news developments.** (In other words, please **turn off the news** every once in a while). While it is important to stay informed, watching news channels continuously throughout the day can lead to higher levels of worry and anxiety. A good compromise could be watching one 30-minute local news program, with one more 30-minute national news program per day.

- **Maintain good sleep, hydration and nutrition patterns.** See Page 2 "Healthy Habits" section.

- **Lastly, please be mindful of your own well-being, and the well-being of those around you.** If you or others around you have any of the signs below that are ongoing and not improving with the advice above, then it may be time to seek out the advice of a primary care physician. We at NTPHP, are here for you.

- Excessive or unfounded fear and worrying
- Changes in energy or in patterns of sleep or eating
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of one or more chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other non-prescription substances.

- **Please stay safe, stay at home when possible, and please stay healthy!**

New NTPHP team members

We are excited to announce our newest provider, **Rebecca Cummings, MSN, APRN, NP-C**, now working with Dr. Aggarwal in the Dallas location. In addition, please welcome **Kayla McKinney** as the manager of our Park Cities location. We are very happy that they have joined our NTPHP team.

North Texas Preferred Health Partners Locations

Dallas Office
3417 Gaston Avenue
Suite 700
Dallas, Texas 75246
214-823-4800

Plano Office
4708 Alliance Blvd
Pavilion I, Suite 240
Plano, Texas 75093
972-993-5050

Park Cities Office
8215 Westchester Drive
Suite 320
Dallas, Texas 75225
972-993-5040

Las Colinas Office
440 West I-635
Suite 405
Irving, Texas 75063
972-993-5080

Frisco Office
3535 Victory Group Way
Suite 330
Frisco, Texas 75034
972-993-5070

HEALTHY HABITS

Tips for Mindful Eating

By: Morgan Beeler

1. Eat Slowly

- It takes up to 20min for your stomach to signal to your brain that you are full. Make sure you are taking time to chew your food and you are putting your utensils down between each bite. Spend time taking breaks between bites to enjoy family conversations and learn about each other's day.

2. Avoid Distractions

- Distractions while eating can cause us to not recognize what or how much we are eating, leading to increased hunger. Make sure you sit down at a table as a family and turn off phones, devices and TV.

3. Portion Control

- Make your plate before you start eating. Try to use a smaller plate (e.g. salad plate) to plate your food to decrease your portions and still have a full plate.

4. Appreciate your Food

- Take time to think about what you are putting on your plate and understand how the food will make you feel. Work on having balanced meals that will help you stay full between meals and snacks. Take advantage of the current restaurant closures to enjoy more meals at home and try cooking something healthy and new.

Resources for Healthy Food Kits/Meal Delivery:

Meal Delivery

- Freshly
- Trifecta
- Fresh n' Lean
- Snap Kitchen
- Local Restaurants: Order a lean protein, vegetable/salad and a whole grain

Food Kits

- Hello Fresh
- Green Chef
- Home Chef
- Every Plate

5. Understand Motivations

- Avoid emotional eating and listen to your hunger cues. Check in with yourself before you eat to see if you are eating due to a hunger cue (Ex: decreasing energy) and not due to emotional triggers or boredom. Avoid the stress of tracking your success by the number on the scale and try using food/fitness apps to look back at your progress week to week (e.g.: reducing daily fast food to 1-2x a week of fast food).