

# March 2017 Newsletter

# PEIA Pathways to Wellness

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## Four Ways to Make Exercise More FUN!

You probably already know that exercise is great for the body and mind. It can help prevent and/or treat some diseases as well as lower depression/anxiety. During and after exercise your body releases endorphins that help fight depression, so in other words it'll make you feel better to exercise. Still people think and relate exercise to punishment or a displeasing action. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, adults should engage in at least 150 minutes per week but only about five percent of adults hit this number. Exercise doesn't have to be a drag, check out four tips below to spice up your routine

1. **Crank up the tunes:** Music has been shown to improve exercise in a few different ways. First, it will distract you from the work you normally find displeasing. Whether you are power walking, jogging, running, or lifting weights adding music will improve your performance. Pick music you like to make it enjoyable. Also remember that if you are doing a cardiovascular routine to pick tunes with a higher beats per minute (bpm) to help push you even harder during that exercise.

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# Benefits of an “EXERCISE BUDDY” System

By: Charity Duvert

Many people have no problem going out for a walk on their own or motivating themselves when it comes to regular exercise. However, for others, teaming up with an exercise buddy is the missing link to getting started or staying motivated enough to attain fitness goals.

There are many benefits to having an exercise buddy, including:

- **Social support:** With today's busy world, exercising together gives you the chance to catch up and spend some quality time with people, while still working out.
- **Extra motivation:** A buddy can offer you the extra boost of encouragement to work a little harder and get closer to your goals. You might get a chance to try a new activity that you might otherwise be hesitant to attempt alone, or make a seemingly difficult activity feel more bearable.
- **Accountability:** On your own, quitting can be very tempting. However, knowing that your partner is counting on you makes it harder to skip a workout. Additionally, the idea that you are needed gives you a purpose and removes the focus from yourself, which can improve your overall self-esteem.
- **Builds relationships:** Spending time together while exercising can bring you closer and strengthen your bond. You also get a chance to celebrate some milestones together or create some new traditions.
- **Increases variety:** Exercising together makes it easier to include activities that require more than one person, which makes the excitement last even longer. You can also combine different ideas such as some friendly competition for more creative fun.
- **Improved safety:** Having a partner is a great idea when walking or jogging on unfamiliar territory such as trails, or even while on a deserted street in your own neighborhood. Also, some activities in weight lifting may require a spotter, and having someone with you may save you from serious injury.



# Five Important Foods to Help Manage Your Blood Pressure

By: Debbie Turner



**S**eventy-five million Americans over the age of 18 have high blood pressure, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Eating too much salt can raise the amount of sodium in your blood, putting extra fluid and strain on the walls of your arteries. To cope with the extra strain, tiny muscles in the artery walls become stronger and thicker. This can make the space inside the arteries smaller and make blood pressure higher.

Diet and exercise are vital in managing blood pressure. Below are five top foods that have been identified to help manage your blood pressure:

- **Cocoa powder** – contains flavonols that help keep blood vessels healthy and elastic. Add a tablespoon to your oatmeal or coffee in the morning.

- **Spinach** – is rich in potassium and magnesium. Potassium helps negate the effects of sodium in the body. Substitute fresh spinach leaves instead of lettuce on your sandwich or add fresh spinach to your favorite soup.
- **Garlic** – allicin found in garlic helps to keep the lining of the artery walls healthy. It can be used in powder, minced or roasted form.
- **White beans** – are high in fiber, magnesium and calcium. Calcium helps keep the smooth muscles that line your blood vessels toned and aids in the contraction and dilation of blood vessels. Pureed white beans can be used as a substitute for cream in soups.
- **Pumpkin** – is loaded with potassium, which is important to help manage blood pressure. It can help lessen the effects of sodium and flush it out of your system. Pumpkin can be a great replacement for oil in baking.

## ❖ Correction to the February newsletter article:

With our apologies, the names in the 'Partners in Health' success story last month were inadvertently switched. Debbie Hines and Kelly Shockey have both made strides in the Weight Management program and participated in all Pathways to Wellness Programs offered at their worksite.

Kelly completed a 5K race and came in first in her age group. Our apologies for the error and congratulations to both for being such great role models!



# The Musculoskeletal System:

By: Salina Lyter

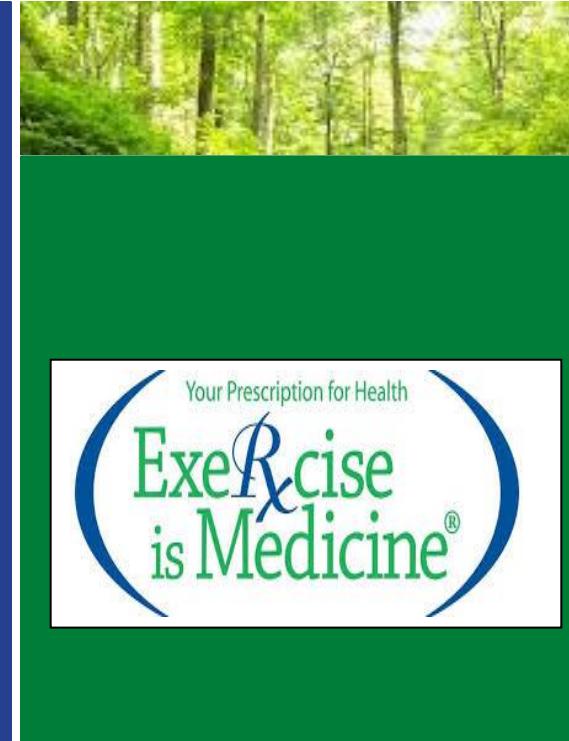


The musculoskeletal system includes bones, muscles, cartilage, tendons, ligaments, joints, and other connective tissue that binds tissues and organs together. The system provides form, support, stability, and movement to the body. It is important to maintain and promote health to this complex system with proper care and attention. Disease and disorders may adversely affect its function and overall effectiveness, which can be detrimental to the body.

Common maladies afflicting the musculoskeletal system are tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, and bone fractures. Risk of developing musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) increases with age and is affected by your occupation, activity level, lifestyle, and family history. Symptoms of MSDs consist of recurrent pain, inflammation, stiff joints, and dull aches. MSDs can manifest in any area of your musculoskeletal system and directly impact activities of daily living.

Minimizing risk is essential for MSD prevention. Regular strengthening exercises and stretching can help keep your tissues strong. Nutrition plays a role as well. Completing routine activities safely, maintaining good posture, and reducing repetitive motions are all critical factors in decreasing risk. Unfortunately, time offers a disadvantage with increased age and the inevitable deterioration of muscles, joints, and bones. However, establishing healthy lifestyle habits now decreases risk for future development of these disorders.

Pathways to Wellness offers a series of presentations addressing common disorders and problem areas associated with the musculoskeletal system. For example, carpal tunnel syndrome, knees, and lower back are all topics immediately available for introduction at your worksite. Visit [www.peiopathways.com](http://www.peiopathways.com) to contact your region's Health Promotion Consultant if interested.



# Food Allergy Awareness:

By: Janelle Humphrey-Rowan, ND Naturopath



Researchers estimate that up to 15 million Americans have food allergies. This number is growing and there currently is no clear reason why. If you have a food allergy, even a tiny amount of the offending food can cause an immediate, severe reaction. Eight foods account for 90 percent of all food-allergic reactions. The list of top allergens includes: eggs, fish, milk, peanuts, shellfish, soy, tree nuts, and wheat. Most allergies to foods begin in the first or second year of life but may also onset in adulthood. Allergies to milk, eggs, wheat or soy, are more likely to be outgrown than allergies to peanuts and shellfish.

A food allergy occurs when the immune system mistakes an ingredient in food as harmful and creates antibodies to fight it. These antibodies create the symptoms of a food allergy. Digestive signs and symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, cramping and diarrhea. Other signs and symptoms can include a tingling in the mouth, hives, and swelling of the lips, face, tongue and throat. It may also cause anxiety, headache, chest pain and shortness of breath. As the allergens travel through the blood vessels, they can cause lightheadedness, weakness, and anaphylaxis. Anaphylactic reactions are severe even when they start off with mild symptoms anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis can cause low blood pressure, shock and loss of consciousness and can be fatal if not treated quickly. Symptoms can quickly develop within seconds or minutes. For some people, it may take hours. It is important to note that

sometimes the symptoms may even go away, only to come back 2, 4, or even 8 hours later. To protect themselves, people who have had anaphylactic reactions to a food should wear medical alert bracelets or necklaces stating that they have a food allergy and that they are subject to severe reactions.

Typically, if a food allergy is present you'll need to avoid that food entirely. The FDA requires that the ingredients in a food be listed on its label. People can avoid most of the foods to which they are sensitive if they carefully read product labels. Foods that are prepared within the bakery of a store are not subject to this labeling requirement. Many restaurants have allergy information on-site or on their website. A smartphone app, Allergy Eats! can also help with this type of information. When in restaurants avoid ordering foods that might contain ingredients to which you are allergic and ask questions regarding the preparation method for your order. When traveling plan ahead and check menu options at amusement parks and museums for allergy information. Also check out where the nearest hospital is located in the event of an emergency.

For some affected with food allergies their reactions may not only be induced by consuming the offending allergen, but they may also experience symptoms when the allergen comes in contact with the skin or airways. As a result not only do food labels need to be inspected but also those on shampoos, body lotions, and skin care products. If you suspect you may have a food allergy consult your physician for an official diagnosis. To find further information on this topic as well as information on ongoing studies Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE) can be found at: <http://www.foodallergy.org/>.

## Resources:

- <http://www.foodallergy.org/>
- <http://farrp.unl.edu/>
- <http://www.nasn.org/ToolsResources/FoodAllergyandAnaphylaxis>

Smart Phone App: AllergyEatsMobile (free)



# Worksite Spotlight:

## Wyoming East High School

By: Angela Watkins



Motivation is the key to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Motivation can also be defined as one's direction to behavior, or what causes a person to want to repeat a behavior, and vice versa. Wyoming East High School's motivator is teacher Karen Green. Karen has been the Worksite Coordinator for the PEIA Pathways to Wellness Program since its inception. Here are some highlights of experiences in her own words.

I am a Family and Consumer Science teacher at Wyoming East High School in Wyoming County. I have taught in Wyoming County Schools for the 37 years and will be retiring at the conclusion of this school year.

I was asked to be the site coordinator at our school for the PEIA Pathways to Wellness program back in the program's early stages. Since then, our school has participated in many of the program's on-site activities and we have been able to get a large number of faculty and staff to participate through the years. I have also attended several of the Pathways to Wellness state conferences where I was provided with a great deal of useful information regarding our PEIA Insurance as well as beneficial health tips.

As a person who has had a life-long battle with weight and a more recent issue with blood pressure, I can definitely tout the benefits of the Pathways to Wellness program. By participating in numerous activities, I have had my willpower to maintain a healthy lifestyle reinforced frequently. I received many helpful suggestions and guidelines to follow which have helped with diet and exercise. The program has provided me with motivation to stay the course. The Pathways to Wellness Program has been a real benefit to myself and many, many of my co-workers. It has truly led to more healthy tomorrows!

# Exercise of the Month

## Box Jumps

By: Marjan Washington



### Benefits:

As with all plyometric exercises, the box jump combines both strength and cardiovascular training into one exercise. This is beneficial in fat-burning programs as plyometric training has been shown to burn 25% more calories by moving from one exercise to the next in a circuit compared to resistance training alone.

Box jumps aid in developing muscle fibers by extending the muscles of the quads, hamstrings and glutes – and then contracts them in an explosive upward momentum. This exercise will also improve agility, coordination and balance.



### Instructions:

- Perform a low squat. (This motion prepares you to explode upwards--first photo.)
- Explosive Contraction – occurs as you propel yourself upwards, using your explosive fast twitch fibers. (Second photo)
- Land Softly – by cushioning your landing. This is achieved with a slight bend in your knees as your feet hit the platform. You will end in a squat position, similar to when you took off. Landing on your toes will help with the cushioning. (third photo)
- Stand up – straighten your body to a completely erect position. This will emphasize control and overall balance.
- Return to the floor– step down backwards by either jumping or stepping down. If you chose to step back, ensure that you alternate legs as you go. Repeat for 12 reps.

**Tip:** Avoid looking down to ensure that your head and neck stay in a neutral position.

\*\*\*If jumping is too advance for you at this time, you can hop up with one leg and then the other on top of the box. This will help you work towards a jump\*\*\*

# Get Your Fiber!

By: Grace Matthews



Why is fiber important to your diet? It plays an important role in your body by keeping the food you consume moving efficiently. Dietary fiber includes the parts of plant foods that your body is unable to digest or absorb. Instead, they pass through your stomach, the small intestines, colon and then out of your body. The recommended daily amount of fiber for women is 25 grams and the recommended daily amount for men is 38 grams. After the age of 50, the recommended daily amount of fiber decreases to 21g/day for women and 30g/day for men. Fiber is known for its many health benefits and can help prevent:

- **Heart disease:** Fiber helps heart disease by helping to lower your cholesterol.
- **Diabetes:** Fiber can help control blood sugar levels.
- **Digestive issues:** Adequate fiber intake can help prevent constipation and hemorrhoids.
- **Weight gain:** Including high fiber foods in your diet can lower calories and help you feel full and satisfied.

Dietary fiber is found mostly in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes. Foods that are high in fiber include: lentils, avocados, artichokes, edamame, strawberries, sweet potatoes, chickpeas, pears, coconuts, raspberries, kidney beans, black beans, apples and okra, among others. Try incorporating some of these high fibers food from the list above into your everyday diet and notice a healthier, happier you!



# Region Summaries



## 1 Region 1 - (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler, Doddridge, Marion, Harrison, Pleasants, and Gilmer):

The northern part of the state kicked two new Fitness classes. Yoga Started at John Manchin Senior Health Care Center and Tai Chi began at the Harrison County State Building. PiYo is still taking place at John Marshall High School and a fitness class series may also be coming to Fairview Middle School. Work It Out individualized fitness assessment follow-ups took place at Short Line Elementary School. The 6-week Dynaband challenge kicked off at the WV DEP Marion County office, Ohio County DHHR, and Marion County Public Library. It is being planned for the Marion County Health Department. The Marion County DEP office also participated in the carpal tunnel syndrome and knee presentations. The Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority participated in the Deep Relaxation presentation. John Manchin Senior Health Care Center will be participating in the knee presentation at the end of the month. Healthy Tomorrows flyers were distributed to various PCP offices in Marion, Harrison, and Ohio counties. Next month the Marion County Board of Education and WV DHHR in Hancock County will be starting the Back on Path Walking program. Oak Glen Middle School will be participating in the knee presentation. We are currently scheduling programs, individual health coaching, and Work It Out assessments to help support Healthy Tomorrows goals and conducting presentations on various musculoskeletal issues.

## 2 Region - (Monongalia, Taylor, Barbour, Preston, and Lewis):

A yoga class continues at WVU's One Waterfront place and personal life style coaching continues at other WVU sites, including Allen Hall, Martin Hall and also at one Waterfront Place. Elsewhere in Monongalia Co., the employees of North Elementary are enjoying their hydration during this unbelievably warm weather, who will soon be joined by the employees at Dorsey Learning Center. Brookhaven will start a walking challenge, while South Middle went with fitness assessments for the Work It Out Program. In Barbour Co., a big group of employees took advantage of Personal Lifestyle Coaching as their program of choice.

**3 Region - (Upshur, Tucker, Hardy, Grant, Pendleton, and Randolph):** Pendleton – WIO participation at DHHR and Dynaband program were presented at FES, follow up health coaching at North Fork Elementary. Grant County BOE and Bus Garage employees. Hardy – Department of Agriculture and Moorefield High School participated in health coaching. Randolph – Beverly Elementary is a busy site participating in the cardio fitness class on Tuesday and Thursday, they are continuing with the H2OGo program and have participated in health coaching, we will be following up with WIO fitness assessments and the walking program in the spring. George Ward has begun their six week walking program.

## 4 Region - (Monroe, Mercer, McDowell, Wyoming, Raleigh, and Summers):

Work It Out fitness assessments led to several health coaching sessions throughout the entire region. Mercer County Board of Education launched the H2O Go Program to promote drinking more water. Princeton Community Hospital, in Mercer County, will participate in the Work It out Fitness assessments for Human Resource Week later this month, and a wellness fair. WV Division of Rehabilitation, in Mercer County, hosted the Carpal Tunnel Syndrome presentation for staff. Raleigh County Board of Education will participate in Work It Out Fitness Assessments. Fairdale Elementary in Raleigh County is going strong with a Zumba class.

## 5 Region - (Greenbrier, Nicholas, Webster, Pocahontas, Fayette, and Braxton):

Region 5 is springing ahead this season. West Virginia Parole Office in Lewisburg, Western Greenbrier Middle Eastern Greenbrier Middle, Frankford Elementary, Braxton County Board of Education, Flatwoods Elementary, Braxton County Middle, Frame town Elementary, and Little Birch Elementary are all pledging to stay hydrated and reduce their sweetened beverages with H2O Go. Greenbrier West High has begun a very successful walking program with Back on Path! West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection Oak Hill Office is holding their Work It Out 6 month follow up and reducing their stress with Stress Reduction. Many wellness initiatives are in the works for all the counties in the region.

**6** Region - (Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Mineral, and Hampshire): Region 6 has continued to stay active in 2017. The DHHR in Martinsburg is staying busy with their onsite yoga class. Hedgesville Elementary will start Zumba this month. Tomahawk Intermediate in Berkeley County participated in the dynaband presentation in February. The Jefferson County Public Service District will complete the H20GO challenge. Potomac State College participated in the work it out fitness assessment. Keyser High School and The DHHR in Martinsburg will also participate in the work it out fitness assessment in the upcoming programs.

**7** Region - (Kanawha (non-school sites), Boone, Logan, Lincoln, and Calhoun): Region 7 is wrapping up winter in a blanket of wellness! DEP and DDS began H2O Go Challenges. The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission launched the first of multiple presentations and programs with the newly released On Your Knees presentation focused on injury prevention. Work It Out was conducted at PEIA where several participants received an initial fitness assessment, followed by an exercise prescription to utilize. Region 7 will continue to bloom into healthy potential with spring's arrival!

**8** Region 8- (Mingo, Mason, Wayne, Cabell, and Putnam): Mingo County is back on the Pathways map! Tug Valley HS and Mingo Central are beginning their new Pounds Fitness Class. They will also participate in the H2O Go program in conjunction with the fitness class. Kermit Pk-8 is also interested in beginning their first fitness class. In Putnam County, the courthouse will be sending participation list for the Work It Out program. Hurricane High School is also in the process of getting staff together to begin their first fitness class along with the walking program. In Mason County, Beale Elementary will begin their fitness class at the end of February. In Cabell County, Huntington East Middle School is participating in Work It Out on February 22nd and will be starting a fitness class as well. Huntington High School is beginning their first Yoga class along with the Back on Path Program. Huntington Middle School has begun their Zumba Class and Southside Elementary Zumba class is almost at an end. Milton Elementary school will begin their Boot camp class soon. Culloden Elementary is continuing their Boot camp fitness class.

**9** Region 9 - (Clay, Ritchie, Wood, Wirt, Jackson, Roane, and Kanawha County Schools): Region 9 has had a great past month. Our three new presentations that discuss knee Pain, back pain, and carpal tunnel syndrome have been very popular. Sites like the DRS have already participated in all three and had good engagement with the presentations. Other sites like Hayes Middle and Lakewood Elementary have started their Zumba class which has had great attendance. Region 9 has also signed up our Work It Out program for Cedar Grove Elementary and Middle schools. The Jackson County BOE has participated in a health training day which they participated in our three new presentations along with our Dynaband program. Health coaching is also doing well with sights like Bridge Elementary and WV DRS participating this month. If any of these programs sound like something your site might be interested in please contact me.

## Four Ways to Make Exercise More Fun... (Continued from Page 1)...

2. **Head Outside:** You probably don't need science to confirm that a jog through the woods is more enjoyable than pounding away on a treadmill, but exercising outdoors can help decrease feelings of tension and depression, while helping the person feel more energized.

An hour of hiking burns 530 calories and moving your average run from the treadmill to outside can still burn 780 calories per hour. Unplug from the electronic world and start to take in the sights, the smells, the sounds around you. Nature can be very therapeutic.

3. **Be Your Own Cheerleader:** Everyone usually does better when they have someone to hold them accountable but it's time to take your health into your own hands. It may not be as hard as you think. Setting short term and long term smart goals is a great way to keep you on track and accountable. Tracking your daily exercise and nutrition can also be a tool to keep you heading in the right direction. Leaving yourself notes to remind you to keep the engagement strong and to hit daily goals is also a great idea.

4. **Partnering Up:** Partnering with a significant other or friend can give your exercise a good boost. People are five times more likely to exercise if their spouse/friend did, according to recent studies. This can help you stick to your exercise plans. We are social creatures and this helps explain the continued success of group fitness and the growth of small group training (almost doubled since 2007). A support system brings camaraderie, accountability, and sometimes some friendly competition.

