



# WELL~CONNECTED

Fall 2016

## FIT TIP:

Stretch Often to  
Reduce Back Pain &  
Improve Posture



## Upper Back

Clasp your hands in front of you and round your shoulders back, separating your shoulder blades. Keep your chin close to your chest and take 3 deep breaths in and out, then release to a flat back. Repeat 3x's.

## Lower Back

Lie flat on your back with toes pointed to the sky. Slowly bend your right knee and pull your leg up to your chest. Wrap your arms around your thigh, knee or shin, and gently pull the knee towards your chest. Hold for 20 seconds and slowly extend the leg to starting position. Repeat

## Spine Stretch

Place hands and knees on ground shoulder-width apart, engage abs by pressing your bellybutton to your spine, back flat. With abs engaged, round back toward the ceiling while exhaling. Allow head and neck to fall naturally between arms.



## The Power of Prevention

The value of prevention and its powerful impact on our personal health should be an undeniable priority, yet it's easy to lose perspective and become immersed in tasks demanding immediate attention while letting other, seemingly less time-critical matters such as personal health, sink down to the bottom of the priority list. With chronic disease attributing to 86% of our national healthcare costs and 7 in 10 deaths each year<sup>1</sup>, America is at a critical crossroads in its fight for prevention. The good news is, if key risk factors were eliminated through diet, exercise and tobacco use, at least 80% of all heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes would be prevented and over 40% of cancer would be prevented<sup>2</sup>. Pursuing a healthy lifestyle centered on activity and nutrition is not always the easiest, fastest and most convenient choice; however, it is an extremely important one that needs to remain at the top of the priority list. Your personal health impacts your hobbies, career, family, relationships, and virtually every aspect of your life. Take a moment to step back and evaluate where personal health sits on your priority list. Are you taking full advantage of the methods below and allowing the power of prevention to work for you?

### GET REGULAR HEALTH CHECK-UPS

Regular check-ups and testing can help you identify health problems before they start or early enough for treatment and cure. By getting the right health services, screenings and treatments, you are taking steps that will help you live a longer, healthier life.

### EXERCISE DAILY

Exercising the recommended 5 days a week helps to lower risk factors for chronic disease such as high blood pressure and excess body weight.

### EAT FRUITS AND VEGGIES

38% of adults report they eat fruit less than once a day and 23% eat vegetables less than once a day<sup>3</sup>. Eating a balanced diet helps to regulate blood sugar, lower LDL while increasing HDL and reduce excess body weight. Eating the recommended 5 servings of vegetables and 3 servings of fruit a day will help you maintain a balanced diet.

### CONTROL YOUR CONDITION

About half of all adults in the United States have one or more chronic health conditions<sup>3</sup> and 99% of disease management is in the hands of individuals and their families<sup>4</sup>. If you suffer from a chronic disease, work with a healthcare professional to set achievable steps and goals to assist you in living a healthy lifestyle. Control your chronic condition, rather than allowing your condition to control you.

Understanding the value of prevention and the impact it has on all generations is the first step in America's critical battle against chronic disease. Make your health a priority and capitalize on the power of prevention.

*Preventing an illness is much easier and less expensive  
than managing or curing one after it has begun.*

1 <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/>  
2 [http://www.who.int/chp/chronic\\_disease\\_report/part1/en/index11.html](http://www.who.int/chp/chronic_disease_report/part1/en/index11.html)  
3 <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/overview/index.htm>  
4 <http://cmcd.sph.umich.edu/>

## Grab the Reins on Change



Change is a given in our lives. Since this can be challenging at times, let's take a moment to explore "change." Change is a natural progression over time. Whether change is planned or a surprise, anxiety is often present. How do you react to change? Do you resist change, or do you welcome it with open arms? It's natural to resist change, yet over time new-found excitement and appreciation emerges as you learn to handle change and its outcomes.

Rest assured time trumps change. Everyone goes through a period of adjustment, but time works in favor to make our change successful. One way to help you cope is to keep a record of change. Create a journal. Log the change that is taking place. Write all your feelings toward the change; positive and negative feelings are okay. Next, list in detail the steps you will need to take to overcome any negative feelings you have about the transition. Remain resilient and optimistic. Sometimes it's harder than other times to keep moving forward into change. Acknowledge "You made it!" at the end of every day. Congratulate yourself for making it through the negatives thus far and being able to notice the positives to re-amp yourself.

Learning how to move through change gracefully pays big dividends. No matter how big or how small a change you are conquering, the payoff is immeasurable. Once you have adjusted to a new change, challenge yourself to grab the next one by the reins and know you have a head start on it. Make your transitions easier by knowing there will always be another change after this one. It just takes time.



## Fitbit Challenge Winners

### April

**Katine Flournoy-Walker**  
Lago Vista ISD

**Nell Martin**  
Whiteface CISD

**Mary Turner**  
Moody ISD



### May

**Michael Simmons**  
Godley ISD

**Angie Mohon**  
Levelland ISD

**Valerie Perez**  
Cotulla ISD

### June

**Bob Dickenson**  
Hudspeth County

**Cindy Magby**  
Muleshoe ISD

**Maria Silos**  
Carrizo Springs

### July

**Emily Hinton**  
Liberty-Eylau ISD

**Kristie Hix**  
Denver City ISD

**Wanda Canales**  
Benavides ISD

## Ask the Health Coach

**Q:** I really want to reach my weight goal. I have been on diets. I understand the principle of "calories in" versus "calories out," or think I do; but it's not working for me. Can you help?

**A:** Great question! Here's my take on this. Let me give you the technical answer first. If your weight is staying about the same and you are neither gaining nor losing weight, then there are three ways to lose one pound. You can:

- A) Eat 500 fewer calories each day for a week
- B) Burn 500 more calories than you consume per day by increasing your physical activity; **or**
- C) Combine increased exercise with reduced calories.

For example, you could eat 300 fewer calories and burn 200 more calories a day by exercising. This would give you the 3,500 deficit which would lead to 1lb a week weight loss. That, as I said, is the technical answer.

More generally, we have to remember that our bodies are complex mechanisms and they don't always respond in the simplistic way of an equation. There are so many factors that can affect your weight loss rate along the way that it can be easy to become disheartened.

If you really want to lose weight this time around, I would focus on a goal of leading a healthy lifestyle rather than reaching a particular weight - eating nutritiously, avoiding processed foods, minimizing stress, and exercising in ways that bring you joy. Equally important is to look at what's going on in your "whole" life when you make unhealthy behavior choices. The solution may be as simple as "calories in" verses "calories out", or it may be more complex. Both well worth the effort!

*Good Luck!*  
*The Health Coach*