

NEWSLETTER

January 2024

Happy New Year!



The New Year is often a time of self-reflection and goal setting. Many peoples' New Year's resolutions tend to involve lifestyle habits, including healthy eating exercise, and reducing stress.

These also happen to be three of the pillars of the lifestyle medicine clinic at the St. Peter's Health Medical Group – North Clinic. In general, lifestyle medicine uses therapeutic lifestyle interventions as a primary method to treat chronic conditions including, but not limited to, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and obesity. Practitioners within the lifestyle medicine clinic at SPH include physicians, dietitians, nurses, and physical therapists. We use evidence-based, whole-person techniques to help optimize the health of the individual. The six pillars of lifestyle medicine include:

- Nutrition (a whole food, plant predominant eating pattern)
- Regular physical activity
- Restorative sleep
- Stress management
- Positive social connection
- Avoidance of risky substances (such as tobacco and excessive alcohol)

At SPH, we also recognize the power of nature in the ability to positively impact health. If you have lifestyle related goals this New Year, consider the following sustainable approaches, which can be adapted to your own personal preferences:

Eating Habits:

Rather than start yet another restrictive diet, instead focus on what you can ADD to your diet that will improve your overall health. In general, most folks can improve their eating habits by adding more plant foods (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes). Plant foods are generally high in fiber (good for your gut health), and have a plethora of healthy vitamins and minerals. Montana is one of the top producers of pulses (peas, lentils, legumes) in the US, so you can even look for some locally grown plants to add to your diet. For some recipe ideas, visit the SPH Lifestyle Medicine clinic website.

www.sphealth.org/specialties-treatments/lifestyle-medicine



Therapist highlights:



Erin Gallagher,
Physical Therapist,
North Rehab Clinic

When she's not working, you can find Erin hiking with her dogs, floating rivers with her family and playing music.

Which rehab location do you work at and how long have you worked with St. Peter's Health? I have worked with the Lifestyle Medicine team out of our North Rehab building since February 2023.

What are your favorite types of patients to see? I work exclusively with the Lifestyle Medicine clinic, as I love seeing those folks and helping them reach their goals.

What are your life/professional aspirations? My aspiration is to live my best life, and help those around me live their best lives as well.

What is a unique or fun fact about you? I play many instruments, including the piano, guitar, mandolin, banjo, saxophone and drums.

Movement:

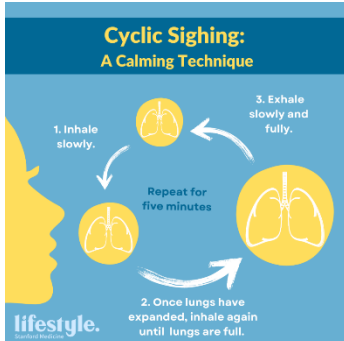
Regular movement (physical activity) has several benefits, including improved sleep, decreased brain fog, improved cardiovascular fitness, improved mood, reduced stress, and improved digestion. Not sure where to start? Consider a 5 minute walk after meals. Or parking farther away when you run errands to get some extra steps in your day. What counts as physical activity? Anything that gets you moving beyond your normal activities of daily living. The best way to reap the benefits of physical activity is to make sure you're consistent. It doesn't have to be an hour to be meaningful, but short, consistent bouts of physical activity can really send you in the right direction of improving your physical health.

Restorative Sleep:

The general recommendation is that most adults get approximately 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night. Feel like you're falling short? Here are some good general sleep hygiene habits:

- Dim your lights after dinner (or use side lamps instead of overhead lights) to prepare your brain for sleep
- Get outside in the morning after the sun comes up to allow light to hit your eyes, as this helps set the stage for melatonin release later in the evening.
 - Avoid alcohol and caffeine for several hours before bed
 - Avoid screens for the hour before bed
 - Ensure you get some physical activity into your daily routine can help improve your ability to fall asleep.

Stress Management:



Consider including mindful meditation of cyclical breathing to your routine. To perform cyclical breathing, or a physiological sigh, you take one deep, slow breath in through your nose. Once your lungs fully expand, inhale again. Hold briefly, then slowly and fully exhale through your mouth. Repeat for a few minutes (with breaks to breathe regularly as needed).

Visit one of our three locations:

Regional Medical Center: 2475 Broadway | 406-444-2340

Capital City Health Club: 1280 North Montana Ave. | 406-447-2755

North Montana Clinic: 3439 Ptarmigan Lane | 406-441-5131

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30 Minute Chili



This is a great meal by itself, or over a bed of whole grains such as brown rice or quinoa. This recipe makes plenty of servings, so freeze whatever you don't eat for a quick meal later in the week.

Ingredients

- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 cups chopped red peppers
- 3 tablespoons mild chili powder
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 4 cloves minced garlic (to make easier buy in a jar)
- 2 15-ounce cans pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 28-ounce can of diced tomatoes
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- Salt substitute (potassium chloride) and black pepper to taste

Directions

1. In a large pot, saute the onions and peppers over medium heat for about five minutes, or until softened. Add water 1-2 tablespoons at a time to prevent sticking.
2. Add in chili powder, oregano, cumin and garlic. Cook for about one minute.
3. Add beans, tomatoes and vegetable broth. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
4. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Simmer for about 20 minutes.
5. Season with salt substitute and pepper.