

HEALTHeLIFESTYLE



Also in this Issue:

**Walking as
Strength Training**

**How to
Avoid Social
Exhaustion**

In This Month's Issue:

October 2024

**Know Your Numbers:
How to Prepare for a Visit to the Doctor**

**Fruits with Protein
Wellness Briefs**

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WORKING *Well*

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ADHD and The Blues

There is a complex relationship between ADHD and depression.

So what is ADHD?

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

People with ADHD have a *neurodivergent* brain, meaning their brains are different. Mostly the differences are in *executive functioning*—making it difficult to follow directions, focus, control emotions, attain goals, complete tasks, and catch social cues.

Most children with ADHD are three years behind their peers in their social/emotional functioning. Consistently not measuring up, being corrected for impulsive behavior, missing social cues or not being able to “read” another person can be awkward. For the neurodivergent “awkward” can feel overwhelming like humiliation or rejection, or depression.

ADHD vs Depression

Both ADHD and depression include mood problems, forgetfulness, and inability to focus, but there are differences. To point out a few:

Emotions:

- ADHD moods don’t last and usually follow a disappointment.
- Depressive moods are continual & constant.

Motivation:

- People with ADHD get overwhelmed by decisions.
- Depressed people are generally exhausted and can’t handle doing even simple activities.

Sleep:

- People with ADHD can’t fall asleep.
- Depressed people fall asleep quickly, but wake often during the night.

Follow-up

If you have been treated for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and antidepressants haven’t really helped, make an appointment with a therapist, psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse practitioner to explore if it is Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) or ADHD. If you’re diagnosed with ADHD and depression, treat the condition that causes the greater problems first.

The goal is to reduce frequency and intensity of symptoms that get in the way of living a happy life. Work with your provider to find appropriate medications, and also try lifestyle changes:

- Sleep at least 7 hours.
- Try therapeutic light.
- Reduce carbohydrate intake.
- Spend at least 30 min outdoors daily.
- Exercise every day.
- Try to reduce stress.

NOTE

ADHD is not based on intelligence—many people with ADHD have average and above average IQs. ADHD is considered a disability primarily because we live in a society where schools, most jobs, and social organizations are neurotypical-oriented.

**For more information, join our webinar on ADHD and The Blues & Get Outdoors this Fall:
A Guide to Hiking on Wednesday, October 16th, 2024 at 11:30AM CDT/12:30PM EDT
Northern & Western Indiana Region, Illinois Region CALL 1-800-747-7262
Central (Indianapolis) Region CALL 1-800-963-0060**



Know Your Numbers:

How to Prepare for a Visit to the Doctor

If you don't understand why you should have a primary care health practitioner, then you might want to consider the following statistics:

- 1 in 3 adults have Prediabetes and 90% don't know they have it.
- 50% of the US adult population has high blood pressure. Most need medication, lifestyle changes, and monitoring to manage the condition.

You will want to make sure that you have a practitioner that can understand your overall health, and who can help you manage chronic conditions and risk factors. When necessary, you may be referred to specialists who can treat more specific or advanced illnesses or injuries.

Write it down! Preparing for a medical appointment can help ensure you get the most out of your visit and can help you to keep track of your health questions and concerns, so that you can be sure that they are addressed during your visit.

- It's particularly helpful to be prepared with background information when you are seeing a new health practitioner. They will need to know your medical history such as allergies, chronic conditions, surgeries, diagnosis, and relevant family medical history. It may also be helpful to have a list of other health care practitioners that you see along with their contact information. If you're seeing a new doctor or a specialist, you may want to bring copies of your medical records, test results, and any X-rays, CT scans, or other scans or images. ***A copy of your lab results from a recent Wellness Screening will also be helpful!***
- Make a list of any symptoms you're experiencing, including when they started and how often they occur.
- List all medications you're currently taking, including prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and supplements. Note the dosages and how often you take them. You may also want to make a note of why you take certain medications and the results that you experience by taking them. It might help to take a photo of the medication containers as some medication names and dosages can be confusing.
- Be honest when you discuss your diet, exercise habits, and any use of tobacco, alcohol, or recreational drugs.

Ask for explanations if you don't understand what your practitioner is telling you. If a treatment is being suggested, then ask for the treatment to be explained. Don't leave the doctor's office and do an internet search to fill in the blanks. If you have questions after your appointment, you should not hesitate to ask. This may require another visit, a phone call, or many providers communicate via email, video, or messaging.



Wellness Briefs

October is Healthy Lungs Month and National Fire Prevention Month!

Firepits, small fire pots and woodburning fireplaces are very popular right now. In general, people who burn wood guard against the danger of burns to the skin, but they may not consider that wood smoke poses an often-overlooked danger to lung health.

Smoke is made up of fine, microscopic particles that can enter the respiratory system. These particles can cause burning eyes, allergy reactions, illness such as bronchitis and Asthma attacks (along with all the dangers posed by these attacks). These particles may be particularly dangerous if the fire is built improperly, or if the materials burned contain certain chemicals.

The American Lung Association recommends burning only 100% untreated wood or manufactured fireplace logs. The wood should be properly dried (stored in a dry place for at least 6 months) so that it will burn more efficiently and will emit less smoke pollution. ***Fires that burn hot will emit less smoke.***

Enjoy your relaxing time around the fire, burn safely and with consideration for others!

Some hints to enjoy your time gathered around the fire:

- Never burn materials such as treated lumber, colored paper, plastics, rubber, painted items and other trash. The chemicals released when these items burn can be more harmful to those who breathe the fumes and can increase pollution.
- Always tend to your fire, and do not allow it to smolder. Make sure to completely extinguish the fire when you are ready to leave it.
- Local laws about residential burning (especially outside) should be observed. Be considerate of your neighbors, and others nearby who will be affected by the smoke. People with lung or heart conditions, children, and older adults can be particularly affected by wood smoke. Also, be aware of burn bans during certain weather conditions.
- You may want to use a natural gas or propane fire pit instead of a wood-burning firepit if you are located in a densely populated area as these fuels burn cleaner without the smoke that comes with burning wood.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer that is detected early, and is in the localized stage has a 5-year survival rate of 99%! Breast cancer can be detected earlier if you perform a monthly breast self-exam and have regular clinical exams and mammograms.

Signs and symptoms of breast cancer may not be visible, and pain is not a common symptom of breast cancer.

When you perform monthly self-exams you will look for changes in your breasts as well as check for lumps. If you have a change in the way that your nipple looks or feels, a change in the skin texture of your breast (orange peel texture), or a lump or thickening in your breast or underarm area, then you may want to schedule an appointment for further examination.



Walking as Strength Training



Strength Training is a crucial component of your fitness routine. It plays a vital role in building and maintaining muscle mass, which is essential for overall strength, mobility and healthy weight management. Strength training also helps to strengthen bones, joints and the connective tissues in the joints.

While you may not immediately associate walking with strength training, it is time to reconsider. Walking can be a valuable addition to your strength training regimen, particularly for those just beginning a fitness routine or aiming to increase their cardiovascular workout duration.

There are several ways in which walking can strengthen your muscles, joints and bones. Walking primarily engages and strengthens the muscles of your legs, but it also benefits your core muscles, including your abdominals and lower back, as they work to stabilize your body and maintain proper posture. Walking is a weight-bearing exercise, which means it puts stress on your bones and can help promote bone health. Regular walking can help maintain or improve bone density.

- **Intervals and inclines:** Vary your walking routine by incorporating intervals of increased pace or adding inclines. This variation can challenge your leg muscles further and provide some additional resistance.
- **Incorporate bodyweight exercises:** Combine walking with bodyweight exercises to add strength training elements into your routine. For example, you can pause during your walk to perform squats, lunges, or calf raises. This approach can be especially useful if you're short on time or traveling without access to traditional strength training facilities.
- **Use walking poles:** Nordic walking poles can engage your upper body muscles, including the arms, shoulders, and back, as you walk. This can provide a more comprehensive workout and contribute to overall strength improvement.

Remember, while walking can offer various health benefits, it is still important to include dedicated strength training exercises in your fitness routine to specifically target and develop muscle strength. Consult with a fitness professional or trainer who can guide you in creating a well-rounded exercise program that incorporates both cardiovascular and strength training components.

How to Avoid Social Exhaustion

It may come as a surprise, but both introverts and extroverts can suffer from social exhaustion, often referred to as the “Introvert Hangover.” This phenomenon can affect anyone, especially during the holiday season when our time and energy are in high demand.

Introvert vs. Extrovert Social Preferences:

Introverts: Prefer smaller social interactions or time with a close circle of friends rather than large gatherings. They may find social interactions draining and need solitude to regain energy.

Extroverts: Thrive on social interaction and external stimulation, drawing energy from being around others. They enjoy parties, group discussions, and larger gatherings.

Recognizing the Signs of Social Exhaustion:

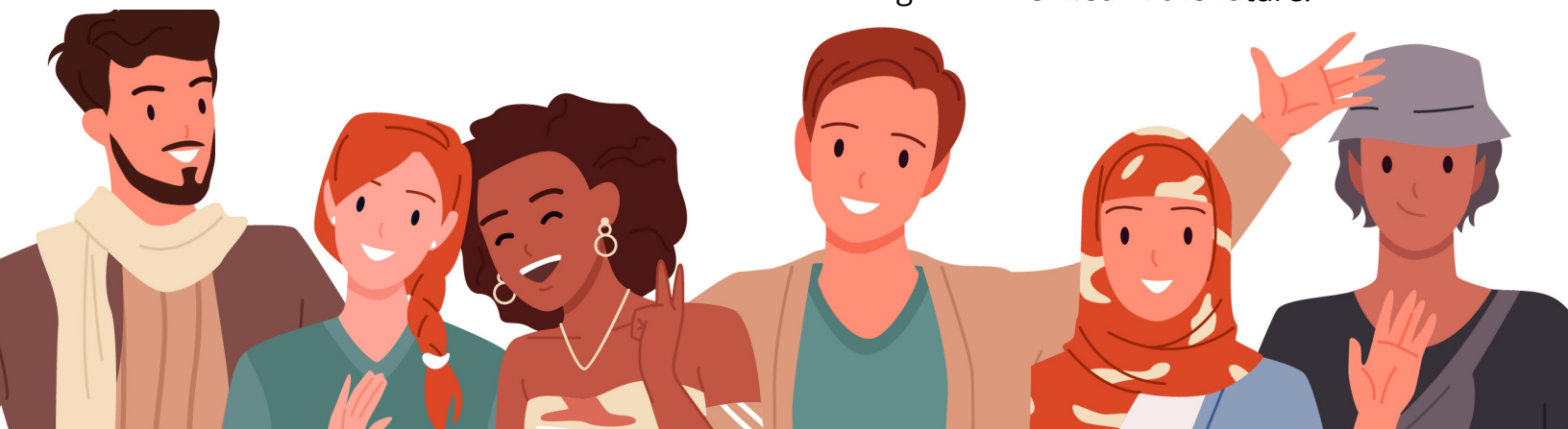
Social exhaustion can manifest as physical and mental fatigue, overwhelming stress, irritability, feeling constantly “on edge,” difficulty concentrating, and an increased desire to avoid social interactions. Symptoms often include headaches, muscle tension, and difficulty sleeping.

Recovery Strategies for Social Exhaustion:

Introverts can feel overwhelmed by anything remotely “social” when exhausted. Even non-intrusive interactions, like responding to texts, can become too taxing. The key is to communicate honestly with loved ones or colleagues, letting them know you need alone time to recharge. Convey this personal need positively, and use your alone time for self-care.

Extroverts with wide social circles can also face social exhaustion, becoming physically drained and irritable during busy social seasons. Overcommitment may lead to late arrivals, forgotten commitments, and regret. Extroverts should find low-key social activities to replenish their social energy, such as a leisurely walk with a friend, visiting a museum, or watching a movie. Deliberately choose smaller gatherings and leave some free time in your schedule. Evaluate carefully with whom you spend your time.

Regardless of whether you identify as an introvert or an extrovert, it’s important to reflect on your experience of social exhaustion, recognize your symptoms, and manage your social energy to prevent feeling overwhelmed in the future.





Fruits With Protein

Protein is essential to a healthy diet, and foods such as meat, eggs, and other animal products are what most people associate with protein sources. If you're trying to get your protein from plant-based sources, then you may have seen suggestions to eat beans, lentils, soy products, nuts, seeds, and certain grains. While fruits aren't typically known for their high protein content compared to other food groups, some fruits do contain protein.

The amount of protein that you need each day depends on factors such as your age, health and activity level. The average sedentary man should eat about 56 grams of protein per day, and the average woman should eat about 46 grams.

Here are a few examples of fruits with protein:

- Guava is one of the highest-protein fruits, with about 4.2 grams of protein per cup.
- Avocado has around 3 grams of protein per cup.
- Blackberries provide about 2 grams of protein per cup.
- Kiwi has approximately 2 grams of protein per cup.
- Dried apricots have about 2.2 grams per half cup. (Watch for added sugar though!)
- Raspberries contain about 2.7 grams of protein per cup.
- Oranges provide about 1.2 grams of protein per cup.
- Cherries have about 2.5 grams of protein per cup.

Combine these fruits with other protein-rich foods to reach the recommended amount of protein per day.

Want to know more?

Connect with Working Well for more information on wellness programs and how they can help you reduce healthcare costs and improve employee well-being.



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