The Counseling & Wellness Center Newsletter

Healthy Lifestyle Tips

Discover how to live healthy in mind, body, and spirit in an unhealthy world. The reason lifestyle is so important is because how you live determines your choices, and these choices decide how healthy you are and whether you are on the road to weight loss.

According to Bond and Hodgekiss, a recent study found that four unhealthy behaviors; smoking, drinking too much alcohol, not exercising, and not eating enough fruits and veggies can have a negative effect on your body and age you by as many as 12 years. When deciding on what to eat, eat the rainbow: greens, oranges, reds, purples, yellows. Eating the rainbow will supply your body with a range of disease-fighting phytonutrients, and will naturally fill you up to help you cut back on unhealthy foods, says Dr. Lipman.

By deciding what to eat, look at it as an 80/20 run, which is understood as the following: eat healthy 80% of the time and save 20% for splurges.

This is important to understand because stressing over eating is not about perfection, and as we mentioned earlier, it can be pleasurable too. Healthy eating should be about positive choices, focusing on foods that provide the nutrients you need to maintain good health. Making just a few changes in your lifestyle can help you live longer.

References:

Beat The Flu
Dr. Rose Duchane
PGY-1 Community Pharmacy Resident

What is the flu?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 200,000 people are hospitalized every year for flu complications. During the 2015-2016 flu season, over 1,300 people in Louisiana died from influenza and pneumonia complications. Influenza aka “the flu” is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Contracting the flu can lead to serious complications such as pneumonia (lungs are filled with fluid and bacteria begin to colonize). Although people can get the flu year round, increase number of flu cases begin in October and peak between late November and March.

What are the 2016-2017 flu season recommendations?

- All patients aged ≥6 months to 64 years old should receive one of the two types (no preference) of intramuscular inactivated vaccines annually:
  - Trivalent: contains 3 influenza strains
  - Quadrivalent: contains 4 strains (trivalent plus one additional strain)
- Patients ≥65 years old should receive a high dose inactivated intramuscular vaccine annually
- The intranasal vaccine is NOT recommended this season.
In addition to getting the flu shot, you should do the following:
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Stay home when sick
- Cover nose and mouth with a tissue or use sleeve when coughing or sneezing
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Maintain healthy lifestyle choices (plenty of water, nutritious eating, etc)

It is recommended to get the flu shot before the end of October! You can go to any pharmacy or physician’s office. It’s free with most prescription insurances. If your insurance doesn’t cover it, it costs about $33, but much cheaper than getting the flu.

References:
“Influenza (Flu)”. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. 09-2016. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

Blessed or Too Stressed?
LaKeisha Williams, PharmD, MSPH

Mental health is a very important aspect of total well-being. It involves the presence of positive characteristics and the ability to cope with life’s challenges, handle stress, build strong relationships, and recover from setbacks. When faced with stressful situations, such as studying for exams, having a high workload or dealing with a life crisis or traumatic experience, it is vital to stay prayerful, positive, and surround yourself with supportive people. Walking or engaging in some physical activity in-between classes or during your lunch break can help clear your thoughts, and improve your physical health and mental well-being. Eating healthier food choices, such as leafy vegetables, nuts, fresh fruits and fatty fish rich in omega 3 (i.e. salmon) can boost your energy, while unhealthy foods (i.e. caffeine, fried foods, sugary snacks) can take a toll on your brain and mood.

Having your own “quality time” improves your mood, mental and emotional state. A power nap, short walk through the courtyard or an hour break off-campus with friends or colleagues can make you cheerful and more productive. It is also imperative not to ignore the emotional messages that tell us something is wrong, or even feeling that we can tough it out by distracting ourselves through destructive behaviors. If you ever find yourself feeling down, hopeless, or helpless; using drugs or alcohol to cope with difficult emotions, experiencing negative or self-destructive thoughts, such as thoughts of death or suicide, then it is time to seek immediate attention.

The University’s Counseling and Wellness Center has several licensed counselors and mental health professionals that can help you cope with your situation, and develop strategies to improve your stress level. Even if you need someone to talk to, they are available (www.counseling@xula.edu, St. Joseph Resource Center, Suite 202 or 504-520-7315.

Remember that you are never alone in this journey of life. Sit back, smile and observe everything around you; then will you realize that you are too blessed to be stressed.

A Few Tips to Relieve Stress:
- Spend time with positive people
- Find a Hobby
- Take a Break
- Listen to Soothing Music
- Exercise: (Walk, Yoga or Dance

Editor Shirley F. Labbe