

Dakota Wellness Program

APRIL 2023

Inside this issue...

Stress management

Monthly book club

Ask the expert

Fitness Center Reimbursement

Maintaining your memory

Preventive health

Avocado chicken salad

Join Sanford Health Plan Wellness team member for our monthly 15-minute wellness webinar.

Click here to register today!



NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

SANFORD
HEALTH PLAN

Stress management

Resilience is defined as the ability for an individual to overcome difficult life situations. Whether personal, like the loss of a loved one, job, or an illness—or shared, like tragic events in society—stressful events can wear on one’s ability to cope and function. Being resilient doesn’t mean that stressful events don’t occur; it means, like training for an athletic event or studying for a big exam, it takes practice to strengthen our stress management muscles.

Start by creating a foundation with strategies that help you prevent and overcome stress

Reject escapism

- Limit alcohol to the recommended amount; take medication as prescribed
- Limit excessive screen time (TV, social media)

Communicate

- Articulate your needs at work and home
- Ask for help at work and home

Acknowledge stress

- Give yourself permission to acknowledge that you’re having a tough time
- Admit to family, friends, or manager that you’re struggling

Try out different coping strategies for when stress is at its peak:

Physical restoration

- Sleep on a set schedule, exercise, and eat nutritious food
- Get outside for vitamin D and fresh air

Rescue remedies

- Take a bath
- Paint or color
- Listen to or play music
- Meditate
- Reach out for help through Employee Assistance Program

Practice Gratitude

- Write down 3-5 things you’re grateful for each day
- Write thank you notes to friends and family

TAKE YOUR LUNCH BREAK



Helpful Tips for Relieving
Work-Related Stress

MASSOMA ALAM CHOCHAN

Book Club

Take Your Lunch Break: Helpful tips for relieving work-related stress

by Massoma Alam Chohan

Take Your Lunch Break: Helpful Tips for Relieving Work-Related Stress contains author Massoma Alam Chohan’s personal story of how anxiety almost cost her job and mental health, plus tons of research and original interviews with mental health professionals and high-performing leaders.

You’ll find twelve chapters packed with insights on:

- Workplace stressors: how they create or trigger feelings of anxiety, so you can act on them
- The root causes of anxiety and their effects on your well-being in the workplace
- Holistic stress management habits you can cultivate to be unshakable
- Ways to navigate performance anxiety, co-worker tension, and burnout to build resilience
- Practical strategies for work, that actually work to create a better work-life balance and how to ask for it

Take Your Lunch Break is for anyone who wants to ignite their passion, create a less stressful workplace, and clear their mind with renewed focus at work and home. Pack your lunch and get ready to embark on a transformational journey!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What are some examples of things that cause stress vs. anxiety for you at work? How does this affect your well-being?**
- 2. What strategies do you plan to apply to create a better work environment for yourself?**
- 3. How will your work improve by applying these strategies? How will your life outside of work improve by applying these strategies at work?**

Ask the Expert

Registered Dietitian

Question: When I am stressed, I eat. What can I do?

It is important to recognize that food is not just food. It is emotional, social, cultural, celebratory, among many other things. It is normal to turn to food as a comfort in times of heightened stress or emotions (positive or negative). If you feel that you are doing this more often than not, try substituting a healthy behavior to help relieve your stress such as having a balanced snack like apples with peanut butter and dark chocolate chips, taking a walk, or calling a friend. Over time, you will build your tool belt with different healthy activities that can help with stress reduction.

Additionally, if you stress-eat from time to time. Pause, and think about how it made you feel. Being aware of the emotions you link to food can be beneficial in increasing mindful eating which has many health benefits.

[Click here](#) for helpful mindful eating strategies and questions to ask yourself when you are stress-eating.



Fitness Center Reimbursement

The Fitness Center Reimbursement program provides up to \$20 monthly reimbursement when you use your fitness center at least 12 days per month. Employees and spouses are eligible to receive up to \$20 each. The reimbursement goes towards your annual \$250 benefit.

How to get started:

To enroll for the first time, have your Sanford Health Plan member ID card and banking information on hand.

- 1** Complete the Health Assessment in the wellness portal. Must be completed each calendar year to receive your reimbursement.
- 2** Go to [NIHCarewards.org](https://www.nihcarewards.org) and click "First Time Enrollment." Select "Sanford Health Plan" from the drop down menu.
- 3** Search for your fitness center location by zip code. Select your center and click "Enroll Online." If your gym does not appear in the search results, try increasing the search radius.
- 4** Agree to the terms of service, and then enter your contact, health plan, and banking information.
- 5** Click "Submit" and you are enrolled.
- 6** Employees and spouses must enroll individually.

You will receive your reimbursement on the 21st of the month following your workouts. (Ex: You will be reimbursed on May 21st for your April workouts). If your gym membership is less than \$20, you will be reimbursed for the cost of your monthly membership.

Maintaining your memory

Regardless of age, we all forget things here and there. Like, the name of the person we just met or where we put our car keys. Although it is normal to forget things from time to time, memory loss is not something to take lightly. According to Mayo Clinic, here are some tips to help keep your memory sharp as you age:

1. Be physically active every day
2. Stay mentally active
3. Spend time with others
4. Stay organized
5. Sleep well
6. Eat a healthy diet
7. Manage chronic health problems

If you are concerned about memory loss or an increased risk for dementia or Alzheimer's, make an appointment to discuss with your primary health care provider.



Preventive Health

Foot Health

April is National Foot Health Awareness Month. It is important to keep our feet healthy and prevent any foot problems or discomfort, especially if you have diabetes.

Suggestions to keep your feet healthy:

1. It is important to stay active and keep your weight at a healthy level as extra weight may increase pressure to your feet causing pain and limited mobility.
2. Wear comfortable, well-fitting shoes that support your feet.
3. Keeping your feet moisturized will prevent the skin from cracking and leading to pain or irritation.
4. Keep your feet clean, dry and toenails trimmed (trim straight across to prevent ingrown toenails).
5. Change your position throughout the day. Elevate your feet when sitting as this will help keep the blood circulating.
6. It is important to see a physician if you have problems with your feet. If you are diabetic, see your physician yearly to inspect your foot health.



Avocado chicken salad

Serving size: 1/2 cup

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1/2 c cilantro leaves | 1/3 c mayonnaise (choose low fat or made with olive oil for a lower fat option) |
| 1/2 c chopped chives | |
| 1/4 c dill 1 Tbsp capers | 1/4 c greek yogurt |
| 1 tsp lemon zest | 3 c shredded chicken breast |
| 1 Tbsp lemon juice | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 2 cloves garlic | |
| 2 ripe avocados, halved and pitted, divided | |

Directions:

1. Combine cilantro, chives, dill, capers, lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic salt, pepper and the flesh from 1 avocado in a food processor; process until finely chopped, about 30 seconds. Add mayonnaise and yogurt; process until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Dice the remaining avocado and place in a medium bowl. Add chicken and the dressing; stir gently until combined and evenly coated. Serve at room temperature or refrigerate until cold, about 2 hours. Garnish with additional chives and lemon zest, if desired.
3. Enjoy on whole grain bread, whole grain crackers, lettuce wraps, or on a bed of greens.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories: 320 | Total fat: 22g | Saturated Fat: 4g
Total Carbohydrate: 7g | Total Sugar: 1g
Dietary Fiber: 5g | Total Protein: 24g | Sodium: 460mg
Nutrition information compiled using MyNetDiary.com



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Monthly Observances

Alcohol

Autism

Cancer control

Donate life

Stress

6 - Alcohol screening

16 - Healthcare decisions

22 - Earth

2-8 - Public health

16-22 - Volunteer

QUICK LINKS

sanfordhealthplan.com/ndpers

SET-UP A

mySanfordHealthPlan

ONLINE ACCOUNT

sanfordhealthplan.com/memberlogin

CONTACT US

[NDPERSwellness@](mailto:NDPERSwellness@sanfordhealthplan.com)

sanfordhealthplan.com

(800) 499-3416



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The information in this newsletter should not be considered medical advice and is not a substitute for individual patient care and treatment decisions.