



WELLNESS NEWS

MAY 2024



**Health and wellness resources
for you and your family**

If you have any questions or would like to make any suggestions about programs or content,
feel free to email me at Marcy@Scantichealth.org or call **617-431-6651**

I would love to hear from you!

Sleep and Health



The effects of poor sleep on health are far-reaching, impacting physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Prioritizing healthy sleep habits and addressing sleep disorders can significantly improve overall health and quality of life.

Physical Health

- **Obesity:** Studies have shown a direct link between inadequate sleep and weight gain. Sleep deprivation disrupts hormones that regulate hunger and appetite, leading to overeating and weight gain.
- **Heart Health:** Chronic sleep deprivation is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. Poor sleep can contribute to inflammation, higher stress levels, and irregular heart rhythms.
- **Diabetes:** Insufficient sleep affects glucose metabolism and insulin sensitivity, increasing the risk of type 2 diabetes. Sleep deprivation can lead to higher blood sugar levels and reduced insulin production.

Mental Health

- **Mood Disorders:** Lack of sleep can contribute to mood swings, irritability, and feelings of anxiety or depression. Chronic sleep deprivation is linked to an increased risk of developing mood disorders.
- **Cognitive Function:** Sleep is crucial for cognitive functions such as memory, concentration, and decision-making. Poor sleep can impair cognitive performance, leading to difficulties in learning, problem-solving, and productivity.
- **Mental Health Disorders:** Sleep disturbances are common in individuals with mental health disorders like anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder. Addressing sleep issues is important for overall mental well-being.



Immune System

- **Weakened Immunity:** Sleep plays a vital role in immune function and response. Inadequate sleep can weaken the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to infections, colds, and flu.
- **Inflammation:** Chronic sleep deprivation is associated with increased inflammation in the body, which can contribute to various health problems including autoimmune conditions and chronic diseases.

5 Tips to Help You Get Quality Sleep

1. Maintain a Consistent Sleep Schedule

Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. This helps regulate your body's internal clock, making it easier to fall asleep and wake up feeling refreshed.

2. Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine

Develop a calming pre-sleep ritual like reading a book, taking a warm bath, or practicing deep breathing exercises. Avoid screens (phones, computers, TVs) at least 30 minutes before bed as the blue light can interfere with melatonin production.

3. Optimize Your Sleep Environment

Make sure your bedroom is conducive to sleep by keeping it dark, quiet, and cool. Invest in a comfortable mattress and pillows, and consider using blackout curtains, white noise machines, or earplugs if needed.

4. Watch Your Diet and Exercise

Limit caffeine and heavy meals close to bedtime, as they can disrupt sleep. Regular exercise can promote better sleep, but avoid vigorous activity right before bed as it may energize you instead of relaxing you.

5. Manage Stress and Anxiety

Practice stress-reducing techniques such as meditation, yoga, or journaling to calm your mind before sleep. If you're consistently feeling anxious or overwhelmed, consider talking to your doctor for additional support. Feeling consistently stressed or anxious makes quality sleep difficult.

(Check out the links for meditation for sleep on page 11)

Two Cost Savings Programs

Available to employees and family members who get their insurance through the SVRHT

CanaRX

If You have prescription medications, you can save money with CanaRX. Medications on the list are free to employees who get their insurance from the SVRHT.

CANARX sets the standard for prescription medication safety and savings. Sourced in federally-designated countries, brand-name medications are shipped straight to you in their sealed, original packaging. You pay nothing thanks to the exceptional savings CANARX brings to your health plan when you use this optional program. It's just that simple.

For more information or to sign up for this cost-saving program [click here](#)
You can see if your medications are on the list [here](#)

If you're still not convinced that you should try utilizing CanaRx, [watch this short video](#) that will explain the benefits of this incredible benefit. Passcode is @Zg7uCn

Diabetes Program - Good Health Gateway

If you or a benefit family member has diabetes, Good Health Gateway can save you money on medications and testing supplies.

For more information on this program, [click here](#)

Or you can use the QR code



Wellness Works Incentive Programs Information

The Scantic Valley - Have you started Working on Wellness this year? If you haven't started getting incentive points, you still have time!

The SVRHT Wellness Works Incentive program will run until May 31st.

You will have numerous opportunities to earn incentive points for gift card vouchers that you can use at over 50 different vendors.

All information about the program will be sent to you next week, so be on the lookout for the details.

[Click here for the BCBS information sheet](#)

[Click here for the HNE information sheet](#)

If you have Tufts Health, please email me, and I'll fill you in on how you can participate in the program!



Wellness Incentive Programs

These programs are still available for you!

Once you have completed one of these programs, email Marcy@scantichealth.org with your insurance carrier and incentives in the subject line (**BCBS Incentives, HNE Incentives, Tufts Incentives**)



Lifelong Vitality Blueprint, a dynamic 4-week corporate wellness journey focusing on creating sustainable, healthy habits.

Each week targets a key aspect: mindset, nutrition, sleep/stress management, and exercise, designed to foster a positive work-life balance and lasting health.

[Here is the link to the program](#). **This program is worth 20 points**

Kick your Sugar Habit - This video will help you understand the negative effect excessive sugar has on your body and how to dramatically reduce your sugar intake.

[Here is the link to the program](#) - **This program is worth 10 points**

Hormone Health for Women - This webinar shows how proper nutrition and certain foods can help women with symptoms from changes in hormones.

[Here is the link to the program](#) **This program is worth 10 points**

Exercise 101 This program will show you how everything you need to know about starting an effective exercise program. If you are confused about all of the conflicting information you see about exercise, this program will help you understand what really works.

[Here is the link to the program](#). **This program is worth 10 points**

*******. New Program this Month*******

Men's Health This powerful webinar discusses all of the health issues that men face. Facilitator Michael Krug breaks down the issues that are specific to men's health and helps men live healthy lives with simple lifestyle changes.

[Here is the link to the program](#)

Fitness Tips - Exercise and Sleep

Regular physical activity is not only beneficial for physical health but also plays a crucial role in improving sleep quality. Here's how exercise, including resistance training, can contribute to better sleep:

1. Regulation of Circadian Rhythm

- Exercise helps regulate your body's internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm. Engaging in physical activity during the day and maintaining a consistent exercise routine can promote a more regular sleep-wake cycle.

2. Reduction of Stress and Anxiety

- Exercise is a natural stress reliever and mood booster. Physical activity releases endorphins, which are neurotransmitters that promote feelings of well-being and reduce stress and anxiety levels. Lowering stress and anxiety can lead to improved sleep quality.

3. Energy Expenditure and Sleep Drive

- Physical exertion during exercise leads to increased energy expenditure and a higher "sleep drive" at night. This can result in deeper and more restorative sleep, as your body's need for recovery is met through quality rest.

4. Improvement in Sleep Duration and Quality

- Studies have shown that individuals who engage in regular exercise, including resistance training, tend to experience longer and more restful sleep cycles. Quality sleep is characterized by sufficient time spent in deep sleep stages, essential for physical and mental recovery.

5. Management of Sleep Disorders

- Exercise can be an effective non-pharmacological intervention for managing sleep disorders such as insomnia and sleep apnea. Regular physical activity improves overall sleep efficiency and reduces the frequency of sleep disturbances.

6. Promotion of Physical Health

- In addition to its direct effects on sleep, exercise contributes to overall physical health, including cardiovascular fitness, weight management, and immune function. A healthy body is more conducive to quality sleep.

If you want to sleep really well, try HIIT training! This is a more advanced workout but if you are up for it, HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) will help you with weight loss, muscle building and better sleep!

If you have clearance from your doctor for more vigorous exercise,

[Try this 40 minute HIIT training](#)





TUFTS
Health Plan

Tufts Health Living Well at Home

Would you like to take a yoga class in your own home? How about developing a mindfulness practice with guided mindfulness and meditation? Or, maybe it would be fun to try a Zumba class with your family - right in your own living room!

Tufts Health Wellness Program has a number of virtual classes available at no cost to you!

Yoga

Mondays and Wednesdays



Mindfulness

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays



Zumba and Strength Training

Tuesdays and Thursdays

These programs are free to everyone (you don't have to have Tufts as your insurance provider to participate).

Check out the Living Well at Home [Page Here](#)

If you have any questions about the wellness program, please contact me at:

Marcymohealth@verizon.net or 561-271-1655

Recipe of the Month

Chipotle-honey Salmon and Broccoli



Ingredients

2 tsp honey (brown rice syrup or maple syrup)

2 tsp honey (brown rice syrup or maple syrup)

1 1/2 tsp chipotle chilli seasoning *or to taste*

2 garlic cloves *minced or 1/4 tsp garlic powder*

10 1/2 oz salmon fillets 2 x 5oz

1 bunch of broccolini (5 1/2 oz bunch) *trimmed*

salt & pepper, to taste

1 1/4 cup (7 oz) microwave brown rice *warmed according to packet directions*

Directions

- 1 Preheat oven to 355°F/fan-forced 325°F
- 1 Preheat oven to 355°F/fan-forced 325°F and line a baking dish with baking paper.
- 2 Whisk honey, chipotle and garlic in a medium bowl. Add salmon and toss to coat.
- 3 Arrange salmon and broccolini in baking dish and season with salt and pepper.
- 4 Bake for 8-10 minutes or until salmon is cooked to your liking and broccolini is crisp-tender and bright green.
- 5 Serve salmon and broccolini with warmed rice.

Protein. 39.8 g

Fat. 22.7 g

Sat. Fat. 4.5 g

Carbs. 39.5 g

Sugar. 7 g

Meal Planning

If you think meal planning would be something you would like to try but don't quite understand it, take a look at this [guide to mastering meal planning](#).

This month's meal planning is all about fish. Fish is a food that seems to be something people either really love or, "not so much". These recipes might just change your mind in you are a "not so much" fish person. If you love fish, you will really love these recipes!!

[Here is the link to the pescatarian meal plan](#)

[Here is the link to the pescatarian recipe pack](#)



Here are a few of the benefits of eating fish

Rich Source of Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Fish, especially fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, and sardines, are abundant in omega-3 fatty acids. These essential fats are crucial for brain health, reducing inflammation, and supporting heart health. Omega-3s are also linked to improved mood, cognitive function, and a lower risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease and arthritis.

High-Quality Protein: Fish is an excellent source of high-quality protein, containing all the essential amino acids your body needs for growth, repair, and maintenance of tissues. Protein from fish is easily digestible and can help support muscle mass, boost metabolism, and keep you feeling full and satisfied, making it a valuable component of a balanced diet.



Mindfulness and Meditation

Sleep Better with Meditation

The Science Behind How Meditation Improves Sleep

Meditation is a powerful tool that can significantly improve sleep quality and promote overall well-being. Here are science-based tips on how meditation can help with sleep:

1. Stress Reduction

- **Cortisol Regulation:** Meditation helps regulate cortisol levels, the hormone associated with stress. Lowering cortisol levels through meditation can reduce anxiety and promote relaxation, making it easier to fall asleep.

2. Calming the Mind

- **Mindfulness Practices:** Meditation techniques, such as mindfulness meditation, encourage focusing on the present moment and letting go of racing thoughts. This calms the mind and prevents rumination, which can interfere with sleep.

3. Enhancing Sleep Quality

- **Deep Relaxation:** Meditation induces a state of deep relaxation, leading to improved sleep quality. Regular meditation can help you achieve deeper, more restorative sleep cycles.

4. Managing Insomnia

- **Insomnia Relief:** Studies have shown that mindfulness-based interventions, including meditation, can be effective in reducing symptoms of insomnia. Meditation promotes relaxation and reduces hyperarousal, common in insomnia sufferers.

5. Establishing a Bedtime Routine

- **Pre-Sleep Meditation:** Incorporating a short meditation session into your bedtime routine signals to your body that it's time to unwind and prepare for sleep. This routine helps establish a sleep-inducing environment.

6. Improving Sleep Duration

- **Regulating Sleep Patterns:** Consistent meditation practice can help regulate sleep-wake cycles, leading to more predictable and adequate sleep duration. Meditation promotes a sense of balance and harmony in daily routines.

[Guided Meditation for Anxiety and Stress](#)

[Try this 10 minute meditation for better sleep](#)



Spring is Allergy Season

Spring brings blooming flowers and warmer weather, but for many, it also means allergy season. Here are some practical tips to help you manage spring allergies and enjoy the season to the fullest:

1. Monitor Pollen Levels

Check Pollen Counts: Stay informed about local pollen levels using weather apps or websites. Try to stay indoors when pollen counts are high, usually in the morning and on windy days.

2. Keep Your Home Allergy-Free

Use Air Purifiers: Consider using HEPA air purifiers in your home to remove allergens like pollen, dust, and pet dander from the air.

Keep Windows Closed: Keep windows and doors closed during peak pollen seasons to prevent outdoor allergens from entering your home.

3. Practice Good Personal Hygiene

Shower and Change Clothes: After spending time outdoors, shower to rinse off pollen and change into clean clothes to avoid bringing allergens indoors.

Wash Bedding Regularly: Wash bedding, including pillowcases and sheets, in hot water regularly to remove allergens.

4. Manage Indoor Allergens

Dust and Vacuum: Regularly dust surfaces and vacuum carpets to reduce indoor allergens like dust mites and pet dander.

Use Allergy-Proof Covers: Consider using allergen-proof covers for pillows, mattresses, and duvets to minimize exposure to dust mites.

5. Limit Outdoor Exposure

If you suffer from more severe allergies, wear protective gear. When working outdoors, wear a pollen mask, sunglasses, and a hat to reduce exposure to pollen.

Dry Laundry Indoors: Avoid hanging laundry outside during pollen season, as clothes can collect allergens.

