

JULY 2024

PLAN FOR HEALTH NEWSLETTER

THIS MONTH'S TOPICS:

- **Travel Health and Safety**
- **Unplugging**
- **July Recipe: Summer in a Cup Smoothie**

Travel Health & Safety

Whether you're going on vacation or traveling for work, it's important to stay healthy and safe. Being away from home and out of your normal routine can make it difficult to maintain our healthy habits. Consider these tips to ensure you stay safe and healthy while traveling!

Prepare For Success

Avoid unnecessary stress by preparing to have a great trip! Taking these steps can help you feel assured that you're prioritizing your health as you travel.

- Meet with your healthcare provider 4-6 weeks before you travel to ensure you are healthy enough for travel and are up to date on vaccines.
- Research your destination and see if there are any ongoing health or safety concerns.
- Consider packing a travel health kit with essential items that may be difficult to find at your destination. This could include any prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, first aid kit, insect repellent, sunscreen and hand sanitizer all make great health-kit items.
- Prepare before you go by sharing your travel information with someone you trust. Include your itinerary, addresses and phone numbers of your accommodations and transportation if possible. Wait to post or share details of your trip online after your trip is over. Make your copies of important documents like passports or IDs in the event of theft.

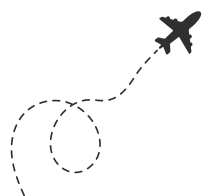
Keep Active While Traveling

Staying active while traveling can be difficult. Implementing these tips can help make sure you keep moving as much as possible while you're getting where you're going.

- If you are flying, avoid the moving walkways and instead of sitting at your gate, walk around the airport to get in extra steps.
- While on the plane, frequently flex your ankles while sitting, move your limbs frequently and consider getting up to walk the aisle to the bathroom from time to time.
- If you are driving, take frequent breaks to stretch and even go for a short walk around rest areas.
- Look for hotels that have a gym, pool or offer fitness classes. Sneaking away for a workout can be a great way to find time for yourself during your trip, reduce stress and stay on track with your health goals.
- When you get to your destination, explore your surroundings on foot. You'll be able to soak in the sights by going for a long walk or a morning jog.

Eat Smart

It can be hard to maintain our healthy diets while we travel. On-the-go food options usually prioritize convenience over nutrition. Packing things like nuts, fruits and granola make it much easier to skip the fast-food options and ensure you have quality food options. When you are eating out at restaurants, opt for healthier choices such as salad, lean meats and vegetables. Find balance, variety and try out local cuisine in your meals and remember, it's okay to treat yourself on vacation.



The Impact of 24/7 Connection

Technology has made many advancements in the last few decades and comes with many benefits. We can stay connected with others easier, perform some job responsibilities from home or watch fun videos online to learn how to cook a new recipe or do our own home project. However, being consumed by our electronics can impact our health.

- **Brain Health** – When you receive a like or a favorable reaction online, it can trigger the release of dopamine in the brain, the “feel good” chemical. This can keep us coming back to social media and result in more scrolling time. Social media can also divide our attention, keeping us distracted from a meaningful moment or completing task. Instead of remembering these moments from our memory, often we may find ourselves remembering them through a phone.
- **Mental and Social Health** – As we look at what others are doing online, you may start to compare yourself to others. Some may feel left out of an event or gathering when they see another's post about it. These moments can start to impact our feelings, self-esteem and may create anxiety, depression, isolation or stress.
- **Physical Health** – Increased stress, anxiety and depression can lead to other physical health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes. Hours of scrolling time can lead us to be more sedentary, impact our sleep and take away time from healthy activities.



The Power of Unplugging

Starting with small steps can help to decrease your social media and screen time.

- Use an app to track how much time you spend on social media.
- Turn off notifications to keep you from checking your phone more frequently.
- Post photos on social media after the moment is over when you have down time. This can allow you to continue to stay connected to those around you during a special event, trip, or gathering.
- Change Your Focus. When you feel like turning to your phone or social media, choose a different activity instead like reading a book, taking a walk or finding a new hobby that you enjoy.

Unplugging doesn't just have to apply to your phone. Disconnecting from TV, computers, and your daily job responsibilities can decrease stress, increase self-esteem and help you be present in life's memorable moments.

- Schedule “screen free” time with your family and friends. Collect everyone's phones and find an activity to do together like game night or get outside. Talk a walk, enjoy nature and get some vitamin D.
- Visit or travel to a new destination.
- Take breaks from news stories. It's good to stay informed but constant discouraging information can be upsetting. Consider limiting how many times you check the news throughout the day.
- Express gratitude, practice mindfulness and take time for personal reflection.

Program Highlight: Boosting Your Hydration

Looking to improve your hydration habits? This program goes over the importance of staying hydrated and gives you some strategies to boost your hydration. Go to your member app or website and explore the Program Library on the Journey tab to learn more.

July Recipe: Summer in Cup Smoothie

PREP TIME: 5minutes minutes
TOTAL TIME: 5minutes minutes
***Gluten-Free, Vegan**

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cup frozen raspberries
- 1 large ripe, sliced and frozen banana (1 banana yields ~1 cup)
- 1/2 cup pomegranate juice
- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 3/4 cup plain unsweetened almond milk or any milk.



Instructions:

1. Add all ingredients to a blender and blend until creamy and smooth, scraping down sides as needed.
2. Taste and adjust flavor as needed. Add more milk or fruit juice if too thick. Add more frozen banana if not sweet enough.

Serve immediately. Freezes well (or make into Popsicles).



Stay tuned for August's topics:
Family and Financial Health

