



Wellness Path: Stick With It

Statistics show that 65% of those trying to manage their weight lose interest and momentum within the first two weeks of committing to a healthier lifestyle. Has that ever happened to you? There are many obstacles that get in the way of achieving our wellness goals. In order to stick with it, it's important to:

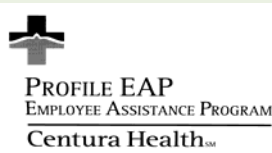
- Be realistic about weight loss—losing .05 - 2 pounds per week is the recommended limit for healthy weight loss.
- Don't focus on what you can't eat, focus on making smarter choices with a wider variety of foods.
- Keep track of what you're eating by creating a food journal. Write down what you ate, how much you ate and why you ate it (bored, very hungry, in social situation, etc.).
- Take baby steps towards your goals—gradually increase your physical activity or water intake.

Why keep a food journal? You may be thinking, "Why bother? I already know what I'm eating right now!" but you may not be paying full attention. Once you start writing down everything that you consume from beverages to that handful of chips, you may learn more about your habits. You could be drinking five sodas a day without thinking about it. Did you know that just one 12 ounce soda a day can add 15 pounds a year to

your weight? Taking stock of what you are eating gives you a sense of what needs to change.

The next step is really important: You have to make a long-term commitment. If you're going to change your eating and exercise habits, you won't be done after six weeks or six months or even six years. You have to decide that you're motivated to make lifestyle changes that will last for the rest of your life.

One key to maintaining a successfully active lifestyle is spreading out your exercise throughout the entire day. For many, it is helpful to set aside structured gym time or time for physical activity. If you are not ready to make that step, there are many small steps you can take to improving your fitness without a gym! Try parking at the end of the lot while visiting the grocery store, taking the stairs instead of the elevator/escalator, enjoy your morning coffee while walking a lap around the parking lot, or do stretches at your desk or the copy machine. You can also work to schedule specific times for fitness each day, whether it be taking a walk with your family after dinner each day or visiting the gym each morning before work. The key to maintaining fitness and overall health is assessing your schedule and doing what works best for you, so take some time to look at your daily routine and decide on ways you can fit fitness in!



May: American Stroke Month: Reduce your Risk

May is American Stroke Month and a good time to remember that stroke is the third leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of adult disabilities. The good news is that more than half of all stroke cases can be prevented! So what are some easy things that you can do to reduce your risk of having a stroke?

- Reduce your salt intake.
- Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise, at least 5 times per week.
- Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all of the food groups.

If you smoke, focus on quitting as soon as possible. Smoking doubles the risk for stroke due to decreased circulation and increased risk for clotting. If you stop smoking today, your risk for stroke will immediately begin to drop, and after 5 to 15 years your risk for stroke will be the same as someone who has never smoked.

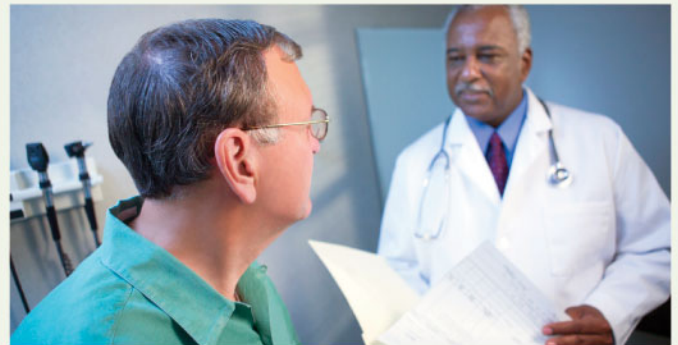
If your blood pressure is elevated, work with your doctor to keep it under control. High blood pressure (hypertension) is a leading cause of stroke. You can check your blood pressure at your doctor's office, at health fairs, at home with an automatic blood pressure machine, or at your local pharmacy or supermarket. If the higher number (your systolic blood pressure) is consistently above 120 or if the lower number (your diastolic blood pressure) is consistently over 80, talk to your doctor. If your doctor decides that you have high blood pressure, s/he may recommend some changes in your diet, regular exercise, or medicine.

If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. More than two alcoholic drinks per day for men and one alcoholic drink per day for women can increase the risk for stroke by as much as three times and can also lead to liver disease, accidents and more. It's also a good idea to ask your doctor or pharmacist if any of the medicines you are taking could interact with alcohol.

June: Self-Care for Men

If you're like most men, you probably take great care of your car, your lawn tractor, and your home; however, you generally don't think very much about taking care of yourself. We'd like to challenge you to start thinking about your body as a machine that also needs routine tune-ups, as well as daily maintenance to stay well. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Don't be a weekend sports-warrior—aim for 30 minutes of daily moderate exercise.
- Get your annual checkup every year.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet and avoid fast food.
- Be aware of your prostate health and have screenings as directed by your physician.
- Talk about life stressors and find support to maintain mental and spiritual health.



According to the American Cancer Society, the discussion about prostate screening should take place between the ages of 45 and 50, depending on your risk factors.

Depression is a serious but treatable medical condition that can strike anyone. In America alone, more than six million men experience depression each year. Whether you're a company executive, a construction worker, a writer, a police officer, or a student; whether you are rich or poor; surrounded by loved ones or alone; you are not immune to depression. Some factors, however, such as family history, undue stress, the loss of a loved one, or serious illnesses can make you more vulnerable. If left untreated, depression can lead to personal, family, and financial difficulties; however, with the appropriate diagnosis and treatment most people recover.

Need help determining what other steps you can take towards wellness? Profile EAP provides wellness coaching as part of your EAP benefit. Any employee, spouse, or dependent child over the age of 18 can use the wellness coaching at Profile EAP. Simply call 719.634.1825 or 800.645.6571 or visit www.ProfileEAP.org for more information.