

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter

Take a Break

A few minutes of downtime can help relieve stress and boost productivity.

Our days are wall-to-wall. Between work and life responsibilities, we're feeling more pressure and a higher level of stress. And it's taking its toll on our health as a nation. So what can we do about it? Maybe, for a few minutes, we can take a break. Because a little down time — be it a five-minute timeout or a walk at lunchtime — can be a great way to re-charge and reduce stress. Here are a few ways to take a break for stress relief:

Be present Slow down. Take five minutes and focus on one behavior. For example, walking. Be mindful of how it sounds when your feet hit the ground. Feel the muscles moving to make each step.

Decompress Place a warm heat wrap around your neck and shoulders for 10 minutes. Close your eyes and relax your face, neck, upper chest and back muscles.

Laugh out loud A good belly laugh lowers cortisol, your body's stress hormone, and boosts endorphins, which help your mood. Lighten up by tuning in to your favorite comedy, reading a funny book or chatting with someone who makes you laugh.

Crank up the tunes Research shows that listening to soothing music can lower blood pressure, heart rate and anxiety. Create a playlist of peaceful songs or nature sounds.

Meditate Just a few minutes of meditation can help relieve anxiety and may even make you more resilient to stress. It's easy.

- Sit up straight with both feet on the floor,
- Close your eyes
- Note in the moment how you are feeling physically and emotionally. Pay attention to your thoughts without judging them as good or bad



Get moving All forms of exercise, from walking to cross-fit training, release feel-good chemicals in your brain that can help ease depression and anxiety.

Reach out Talk to family and friends -- preferably face-to-face, or at least on the phone. Share what's going on.

Tune in to your body Mentally scan your body to sense how stress affects it. Lie on your back or sit with your feet on the floor. Start at your toes and work your way up to your scalp, noticing how your body feels.

Be grateful Keep a gratitude journal to help you remember the things that are good in your life. Celebrate all your everyday accomplishments.

Breathe deeply Take a five-minute break and focus on your breathing. By practicing deep breathing, you can reduce the effects of stress by slowing your heart rate and lowering your blood pressure.

- Sit up straight with your eyes closed, with a hand on your belly.
- Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling your breath as it fills your abdomen and chest.
- Reverse the process, as you exhale through your mouth.

Article from Anthem's Time Well Spent site: <http://timewellspent.anthem.com>

Spring Roll Salad

Check out this recipe from EatingWell.com!

All the tastes, color and fun of a spring roll without all the work! This healthy salad recipe is bursting with the colors of rainbow from generous amounts of fresh vegetables, shrimp and whole grains all topped with a peanut dressing for the ultimate satisfying salad.

Ingredients

1 tablespoon smooth natural peanut butter

1½ teaspoons sesame oil

1½ teaspoons rice vinegar

1 teaspoon maple syrup

1 teaspoon tamari or soy sauce

1 teaspoon water

½ teaspoon minced garlic

Pinch of crushed red pepper (optional)

3 cups torn Boston or butter lettuce

3 ounces cooked shrimp

½ cup cooked brown rice

¼ cup chopped red cabbage

¼ cup julienned bell pepper

¼ cup julienned carrots

¼ cup julienned cucumber

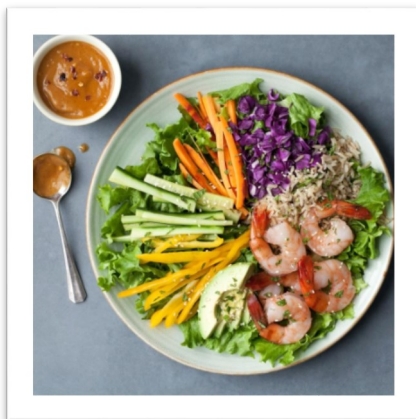
¼ cup avocado

Fresh mint and sesame seeds for garnish

Preparation

1. Whisk peanut butter, oil, rice vinegar, maple syrup, tamari (or soy sauce), water, garlic and crushed red pepper (if using) in a small bowl until smooth.
2. Combine lettuce, shrimp, rice, cabbage, bell pepper, carrot, cucumber and avocado in a bowl. Add dressing and toss to combine. Garnish with mint and sesame seeds, if desired.

Per serving: 523 calories; 25 g fat(4 g sat); 9 g fiber; 45 g carbohydrates; 31 g protein;172 mg cholesterol; 10 g sugars; 4 g added sugars; 927 mg potassium



Wellness Corner

Spring to Life!



Carrie from New Hampshire here! Who doesn't love the spring? Between the warm weather and the sneezing... I can't get enough! I like to take this time to reenergize, clean-up, de-clutter... those typical spring things. This is how I like to embrace our fresh season.

Get Outside!

I love being outside and I especially enjoy checking out the new plant life in the spring. I go out in the woods in search of spring wildflowers (trillium!) and for the exercise. I have a network of active friends that are interested in spending time outside also, this is a helpful motivation for me to get out as much as I can and reconnect with people in a place with less distraction.

Spring Clean and De-Clutter my Spaces

Desk, home, car... I'm considering what I can donate while giving everything a good cleaning!

Reflect on a Highlight of the Day

At the end of each day, I say at least one thing about the day that was great. Did I get a workout in? Meet someone? Learn something? Try this! It's a great way to get yourself thinking positively.



Wellness Bites for your Quick Wellness Weeds!

Skin Cancer Awareness Month

Did you know? More people are diagnosed with skin cancer each year in the U.S. than all other cancers combined.



Since its inception in 1979, The Skin Cancer Foundation has always recommended using a sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher as one important part of a complete sun protection regimen. Sunscreen alone is not enough, however. Read our full list of skin cancer prevention tips.

- Seek the shade, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.
- Do not burn.
- Avoid tanning and UV tanning beds.
- Cover up with sun-protective clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.
- Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.
- Keep newborns out of the sun. Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months.
- Examine your skin head-to-toe every month.
- See your physician every year for a professional skin exam.

Article and statistics from:
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2018/cancer-facts-and-figures-2018.pdf>
<https://www.skincancer.org/prevention/sun-protection/prevention-guidelines>

Seasonal Allergies



If you're a person with allergies, you know what a pain they can be. But by taking the right steps, you can get back in control. The key is to know what you're allergic to, avoid triggers — and find the right treatments. Most common allergy treatments: medication and immunotherapy (aka allergy shots).

Medications

Allergy symptoms happen when your body overreacts to normally harmless things by perceiving them as attackers. Allergy medicines work to interrupt that reaction, which can reduce or eliminate symptoms.

Antihistamines can help relieve runny noses, watery eyes, scratchy throats, sneezing and itching. Your allergist can help determine which option is best for you.

Decongestants help relieve nasal congestion. They're available in nasal sprays or as pills or liquids. Use these only as directed to keep symptoms from coming back. Before taking a decongestant, clear it with your doctor.

Nasal steroid sprays can help with sneezing, an itchy, stuffy or runny nose. Because they can take up to two weeks to work, they're not a fast fix. Instead, they have to be used on a regular basis. As with all medicines, be sure and talk with your doctor or pharmacist about what's right for you.

Allergy Shots

If your allergies can't be controlled by medicines or trigger avoidance, your doctor may recommend allergy shots. Shots expose you to small doses of the allergen that bothers you. The goal is that over time your body will get used to it. The dose is gradually increased until your body can go the distance — with little or no reaction. Allergy shots are not for everyone and they're not a quick fix. Your doctor can help decide if they are a good choice for you.

National May Health Observances

Website for More Information

Women's Health Week (May 13-19)

www.cdc.gov/women/

Food Allergy Action Month

www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies