

Physical Wellness  
Screenings  
Routines  
Stress Management  
Eating Well Sleep Rest Physical Activity  
Relaxation Habits

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**Wellness** is not the absence of illness, stress, or disability, but rather the presence of **balance** and **wholeness**. Being well means that, even when we have setbacks or experience stress, we are resilient. We have the **strengths, knowledge, resources, and support** of others to *survive* and *thrive*.

Wellness incorporates eight dimensions: spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, environmental, financial, occupational, and physical. The physical dimension includes **six physical wellness domains** that can be important for overall balance: physical activity, sleep and rest, relaxation and stress management, eating well, habits and routines, and access to health screenings.

This booklet highlights some **physical wellness activities and ideas** that other people have found to be helpful for overall wellness. In each section, you will find a self-assessment and a space where you can record specific ideas and activities you can do to enhance your physical wellness in each area.

This booklet can be used individually, or you can share with a family member or friend. Some people have found it useful in a small group. You might find it helpful to share with others. If you go back and review your answers from time to time, you will see your progress and come up with new ideas and next steps to help maintain your overall wellness.

You can find more wellness resources at [www.cspnj.org](http://www.cspnj.org) (click on “articles” then “wellness resources”). We would love to hear about your ideas and how this booklet was helpful to you.

# Overall Wellness Tips

Wellness is about balance. Stress, trauma, addiction, loss, or disappointment can affect the balance in your life. Many people have found that they can maintain balance by focusing on daily habits and routines including sleep and rest, eating well, physical activity, managing stress levels, and planning activities that are relaxing.

Be aware of what situations get you off balance and make it hard for you to keep up with the things you do to take care of yourself. The 12 step programs identify risky situations using the term *HALT*, which stands for *Hungry, Angry, Lonely, and Tired*.

Because the eight dimensions of wellness are related to each other, it is important to attend to them all. For example, physical wellness, which is the focus of this booklet, helps with your attention and concentration (intellectual wellness), gives you the energy you need to do things that are important to you, like work or leisure activities (occupational wellness).

When making changes in your life, setting goals can be helpful. Choose a small change and come up with an action step that you can take to make that change. Try working on one action step at a time, maybe for about a month or so. Forgive yourself any slips, and recognize what you can learn. One change will build on another.

# Physical Activity

**Physical activity** is any body movement that works your muscles and uses more energy than you use when you're resting.



*Self-assessment:* Check the items that are true for you.

- I am active throughout the day.
- I do things such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator, getting up and stretching every hour, or parking far away from the store.
- I set aside regular times throughout the week for physical activity.
- I enjoy finding new ways to stay physically active that I have not tried before, such as gardening, skiing, biking, swimming, or dancing.
- I am able to comfortably climb a flight of stairs without feeling tired or short of breath.
- I am able to perform daily tasks such as carrying the groceries, vacuuming/cleaning, or exercising without feeling strain or fatigue.

**Ideas for increasing your physical activity:**

1. Walking is one way to add physical activity to your life.
2. Pick an activity you like that fits into your life.
3. Try different physical activities. Variety will help keep you motivated and prevent boredom.
4. Choose activities for strength and flexibility as well as for building your stamina and endurance.
5. Build up gradually. Start small, like exercising only 5 or 10 minutes a day, a few days each week during the first couple of weeks. Once you have a good schedule and feel comfortable and confident, pick up the pace, or increase the length of time you exercise.

*What can you do to enhance your physical activity?*

# Sleep & Rest

**Sleep** is a natural state of rest for the mind and body. Most people require 7-8 hours a night, although some are able to function with 6 hours or less, while others require 9 or more.

**Rest** is limiting your action to create a quiet and effortless state of relaxation. To get a good rest, you need to interrupt both your physical and mental activity.



*Self-assessment:* Check the items that are true for you.

- I follow a regular sleep schedule.
- I stay away from caffeine in the afternoon/evening.
- I wake up each day feeling well rested.
- I am able to be awake and productive all day.
- I fall asleep quickly and I stay asleep all night.
- I take time for a short rest during a busy day.

## **Ideas for improving your sleep and rest:**

1. Go to bed and wake up at the same time, even on weekends. Once you start a routine, sleep will become a habit.
2. Avoid large meals and excessive fluids before bedtime.
3. Make your room as dark as possible. Close the shades and turnoff laptops, television, and other electronics that light up.
4. Minimize distractions before bed by turning off the television, computer, and phone.
5. Try relaxation techniques like deep breathing, stretching or taking a warm bath to rest your mind.
6. Get out in the sun in the morning. This helps set your body's natural clock.

*What can you do to improve your sleep and rest?*



# Relaxation & Stress Management

Any technique developed to help you cope with or lessen the physical and emotional effects of everyday life pressure could be considered **stress management**. **Relaxation** is the refreshment of the body and mind. There are many activities and techniques we can use to manage stress or relax including activities that provide entertainment and a diversion. Stress can come from **events or thoughts** about events that may be perceived as frustrating or anxiety-provoking.

*Self-assessment:* Check the items that are true for you.

- I do not let simple things bother me.
- I laugh and joke with others.
- I practice positive self-talk.
- I do something every day that makes me feel good.
- I consciously practice some form of relaxation.
- I visit places regularly that relax me and that I enjoy.



**Ideas for relaxation and stress management:**

1. Keep a journal to getting your thoughts out of your mind and onto paper and to make room for positive affirmations.
2. Do something that makes you laugh and lifts your spirits. Spend time in a relaxing environment such as the park or a beach.
3. Create something!
4. Make time for yourself every day to do the things that help you to wind down and clear your mind.
5. Try yoga, meditation, mindfulness or other mind-body practices to help you connect with your inner self and stay centered.
6. Use positive thoughts and positive talk in place of the negative ones to change your stress level as you react to a situation.

*What can you do to relax and manage stress better?*

# Eating Well

Your diet and nutrition are an important part of physical wellness.



Eating well includes “healthy” foods, such as lean meats, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.

*Self-assessment:* Check the items that are true for you.

- I eat at least five fruits and vegetables every day.
- I replace refined grains such as white rice and bread with whole grains such as brown rice and whole wheat bread.
- I eat lean or low fat protein sources such as tofu, beans, turkey, or chicken without skin more often than high fat protein sources such as cheese, pork, or red meat.
- I avoid eating processed foods, such as deli meats or frozen dinners, and other foods that are high in fat and salt.
- I eat moderate portion sizes.
- I avoid foods high in sugar, including soda or other sweetened beverages.
- I avoid fast food restaurants.
- I read food labels, so I know what I’m eating.

**Ideas for eating well:**

1. Use a smaller plate to help you with portion control. This will help you eat less and feel satisfied without eating too much.
2. Keep track of what you eat every day to see what you are taking in and to choose what adjustments to make to improve your diet.
3. Decrease your intake of sugary beverages such as soda and sweetened iced tea. Limit fruit juices (eat fruit instead).
4. Increase your intake of fresh fruits and vegetables.
5. Reading labels to find ingredients, along with nutritional information such as amount of calories, protein, fiber, salt, or fat. Pay special attention to portion size!

*What can you do to be sure you are eating well?*



# Habits and Routines

A **habit** is an automatic behavior. Habits can be positive, like showering, brushing your teeth, and keeping your environment clean. Some habits can be harmful, like smoking, drinking too much alcohol, or using other harmful substances.

**Routines** are patterns of behaviors that provide structure for your day. For example, a morning routine might include eating a healthy breakfast, brushing your teeth, getting dressed, showering, going to work, or a bedtime routine might include brushing your teeth, reading a book, and meditating before going to sleep. Like habits, routines can be healthy or harmful.

*Self-assessment:* Check the items that are true for you.

- I follow personal hygiene routines each day.
- I brush and floss my teeth every day.
- I put on sunscreen when going out into the sun.
- I take my medication as prescribed by my doctor.
- I set aside time each week to keep my environment clean.
- I set regular time aside each week for healthy activities such as nutritious meals, exercise, and relaxation.

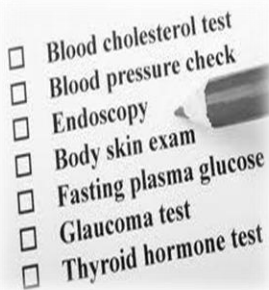
## **Ideas for good habits and routines:**

1. Start a morning and evening routine. Getting your day started and winding down as the day ends will help you by structuring your day and building in good habits.
2. Stay on schedule. Be sure to take your medications as prescribed by your doctor, every day. Use prompts and reminders, such as a pill box placed where it is easily seen each day—near your toothbrush where you eat your meals.
3. Stay away from drugs, nicotine, alcohol, and other harmful substances. If drugs, alcohol, or other substances are getting in your way of your social, school, or work life get help and work on a plan to quit.

*What can you do to establish healthy habits and routines?*

# Screenings

Routine, preventative services can keep you up to date on where your health is, and prevent more major diseases in the future. **Some of the screenings you should keep up to date on are:**



- Annual Physical
- Eye Screening
- Dental Exam
- Blood Pressure
- Blood Sugar (Glucose)
- Cholesterol
- Other tests that relate to age, gender, family history, and weight

**Self-assessment:** Check the items that are true for you.

- I have a regular doctor.
- I have already scheduled my next annual physical.
- I have a regular dentist.
- I have dental cleanings at least twice each year.
- I know my blood pressure numbers.
- I can explain why I take each of the medications that are prescribed for me.

## **Ideas for keeping up to date with health screenings:**

1. Make regular appointments with your doctor and dentist. They can treat any health conditions you have, and can advise you on what you can do to prevent other illnesses.
2. If you are nervous about seeing a doctor or dentist, ask someone to go with you to help you keep your appointment and stay calm.
3. Take action! After your appointment, talk with your doctor or supporters about the results and what you can do.
4. Keep track of your health history by using a form, like the one on the next page.

*What can you do to get regular health screenings?*

## Healthcare Tracking Form

- Primary Doctor Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary Doctor Phone number \_\_\_\_\_
- Last Eye Exam (date) \_\_\_\_\_
- Last Dental Exam (date) \_\_\_\_\_
- Tests recommended for your age, history, health conditions:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Blood Sugar (Glucose) \_\_\_\_\_
- Cholesterol \_\_\_\_\_
- Blood Pressure \_\_\_\_\_

Current Medications:

Health conditions that people in my family have or had:

*Brothers/sisters:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Mother:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Father:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Grandparents:* \_\_\_\_\_



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