In Good Health

For the health and wellness of our members

March 2020

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Get PHP Fit!

When working toward healthy behaviors and habits, accountability can be just as important as setting smart goals. The Get PHP Fit! program gives you the opportunity to participate in quarterly health challenges, track your health stats, set interactive goals, and offers online health education classes. Get moving and take advantage of these tools and more to track your journey to a healthier lifestyle.

**PHP members:** Go log-in at phpni.com and click on Wellness Tools > Get PHP Fit! to get started. Let’s set goals, track behavior, and get healthier together in 2020.

### First Quarter Challenge: Get Active!

Don’t forget the Get Active step challenge ends March 31. Go to the Get PHP Fit! site, sync your fitness device or app, and join the Get Active challenge. **Get 250,000 steps by March 31 to be eligible to win prizes.**

* A new challenge is coming April 1, designed to help you reduce stress and develop self-awareness skills. Read next month’s newsletter for more information!

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### RESOURCES FOR YOUR GOOD HEALTH

We want you to be well, and we want to help provide the resources to get you there!

Find classes, videos, and recipes listed under your **Wellness Resources Tab** when you use the Get PHP Fit! site. Click on **Learn** to see great ways to get started on your path to wellness.
March: Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Each year, more than 50,000 people die from colorectal cancer, and it remains the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths. Colorectal cancer also remains one of the most preventable cancers. With proper screening, responsive medical care, and healthy lifestyle choices, colon cancer can be prevented or detected early when it is highly treatable. Discuss concerns with your doctor to determine a screening schedule and option that provides the best choice for you. Screenings save lives!

You may be more at risk if you:

- Are aged 50 and older
- Have a family history or personal history of colorectal cancer
- Have had precancerous polyps
- Have any of the inflammatory bowel disorders
- If you smoke
- If you are obese
- If you do not get enough exercise
- Certain studies have also found potential links between colorectal cancer and alcohol use, diabetes, and exposure to radiation.

Screening recommendations:

Most people should start being screened at age 50. Those with an increased risk may receive a screening earlier. There are a variety of tests that are used to screen for colorectal cancer, including tests that screen stool samples for blood, a digital rectal exam, barium enema, colonoscopy, and flexible sigmoidoscopy. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 60% of deaths from colorectal cancer could be avoided if everyone aged 50 or older were screened regularly.

To prevent colorectal cancer or detect it early:

- See your doctor if you have any changes in your bowel movements, including bloody stools, cramping, change in size, shape or frequency.
- Eat a diet high in fiber rich fruits and vegetables along with healthy fats like coconut oil, avocado, and olive oil to support your intestinal health.
- Avoid alcohol, refined carbohydrates and processed meats.
- Some new research indicates that vitamin D, calcium, and selenium may also help protect your colon. Discuss with your doctor your need for any extra vitamins or minerals.
As a not-for-profit, PHP is dedicated to supporting charitable and civic organizations in the communities we serve. Here are two organizations hosting events this month:

**Cystic Fibrosis Foundation** – dedicated to improving the daily lives of people with cystic fibrosis. Join the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at Festiv-Ale, featuring food from the area’s top restaurants, an array of wines and craft beers, live entertainment, and more. Saturday, March 7, from 6:00 pm – 10:00 pm at Parkview Field in Fort Wayne. [https://events.cff.org/fwfestivale](https://events.cff.org/fwfestivale)

**Passages** – dedicated to helping people with intellectual disabilities or other challenges thrive in the community at work, at home, and at play. Passages is hosting their first Art Auction and Banquet on Thursday, March 12, at 5:30 pm, at Indian Springs Middle School in Columbia City. Come enjoy auctions, dinner, and a wonderful evening! [www.passagesinc.org/auction](http://www.passagesinc.org/auction)

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**Yoga for Lower Back Pain**

Lower back pain is the most common type of back pain for people to experience. The pain can range from a little stiffness in the back to a nagging or extreme pain. These exercises can help strengthen and stretch the lower back to support a healthy spine and prevent injury. These exercises may also help reduce any pain you are currently experiencing. *Talk to your doctor or physical therapist prior to trying a new exercise regimen. If you experience any pain during a stretch or exercise, stop immediately.*

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**Child’s Pose**

On a mat or soft surface, get down on your hands and knees. Hands should be directly below your shoulders and knees directly below your hips. Gently sit back into your heels as you stretch your arms forward on the ground, resting your head on the mat if possible. Continue to take deep breathes and hold the stretch for 20-30 seconds.

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**Cobra Pose**

Lie down on your belly. Bring your hands to chest level and use your palms to slowly lift your upper body off the ground, keeping your pelvis and legs firmly planted on the floor. Lift your chin and take several deep breathes. *Do not twist your spine when in this pose.*
Good Food: Carrots

Carrots are low in calories and a good source of fiber and vitamins. The vitamin A in carrots is known to protect against macular degeneration (the leading cause of blindness) and is also associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and improved lung health.

The Facts > One cup of carrots has approximately 120 calories and is high in vitamin A, K, C, potassium, and fiber.

Simply the Best Carrot Salad

4-5 large carrots, grated
¼ cup raisins or golden raisins
¼ cup dried cranberries
¼ cup chopped walnuts
¼ cup pumpkin seeds
2 tbsp fresh parsley
1 tbsp unsweetened grated coconut
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp honey
¼ tsp salt
1/8 tsp black pepper
½ tsp Dijon mustard

Add all dry ingredients (first seven) in a large mixing bowl. Set aside.

In a separate bowl or mason jar, add vinegar, honey salt, pepper and Dijon mustard. Blend until well combined. Pour over reserved salad mixture and stir well.

Transfer to serving bowl and garnish with more pumpkin seeds, fresh parsley and grated coconut if desired.

Picture and recipe borrowed from thehealthyfoodie.com.
What’s For Breakfast?

We’ve all been told that breakfast is important. Research shows that there are many reasons that breakfast may be the most important meal of the day.

- A study in the journal *Circulation* reported men who regularly skipped breakfast had a 27% higher risk of heart attack and heart disease.
- A Japanese study found a link between eating breakfast and a lower risk of stroke.
- The University of Missouri reported that type 2 diabetics had fewer blood sugar spikes during the day when they ate a protein-rich breakfast.

**Breakfast tips:**

Have oatmeal, whole grains, spinach, sweet potato, lentils, beans or other vegetables to fill your need for a **COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATE**.

**HEALTHY PROTEIN** can come from either animal or plant-based foods. Add eggs or egg whites, chicken, turkey, fish, or dairy to your breakfast or, if you prefer whole-based plant foods, protein can be found in beans, legumes, nuts, soy and most vegetables.

Include **HEALTHY FATS** like omega 3, monounsaturated and plant based saturated fats. Eat avocado, olive oil, coconut oil, flaxseed, almonds, and walnuts.

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**Need a quick meal idea?**

Try one of these:

- Oatmeal with walnuts and blueberries
- Whole grain toast with sliced avocado and hardboiled egg
- Sweet potato with scrambled egg white and spinach