In Good Health

For the health and wellness of our members

February 2020

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

2  Get PHP Fit!, PHP in the Community
3  Staying Connected for Better Health, Ready for Spring?
4  Focus on Nutrition, Bananas
5  Staying Active in Cold Weather
Get PHP Fit!

Your PHP Health Risk Assessment measures your health risk considering your current nutrition, fitness, lifestyle, and preventive health. Complete your 10-minute assessment and receive a personalized HRA Report showing your health risk by category along with tailored recommendations to improve your health.

**PHP members:** Go [phpni.com](http://phpni.com) and click on Wellness Tools>Get PHP Fit! to complete your 2020 Health Risk Assessment. Let’s set goals based on our own health and wellness needs, and get healthier together in 2020!

1st Quarter Challenge in Progress: Remember, there’s still time to log steps for our first quarter challenge, “Get Active.” Simply log in to your member account and select Wellness Tools > Get PHP Fit! to sync your fitness device, and you’re on your way to 250,000 steps by March 31!

PHP in the Community

PHP is proud to sponsor two community events in the month of February.

Do Re Mi is a fun-filled evening of music and entertainment. Several choirs will perform and stories will be shared about the impact of this program on students and professionals in Northeast Indiana. Do Re Mi is an opportunity to ensure that the gift of music will be available to all children who desire to be a part of it.

Do Re Mi will be February 8, 2020 at the International Ballroom at Walb Student Union, Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Tickets can be purchased by calling the office at (260) 481-0481 or online, [here](http://philipshealthplan.com).

Community Transportation Network’s 6th annual gala, Dine For Rides, benefits over 7,500 clients of all ages and abilities who acquire transportation through CTN to healthcare, community events, schools, and field trips.

This year’s gala will be Valentine’s-themed and will feature dinner, drinks, live and silent auctions and more!

Dine for Rides will be held Friday, February 7 from 6-10 pm at Parkview Mirro Center, 10622 Parkview Plaza Dr. Fort Wayne, IN 46845.
Stay Connected for Better Health

Having a strong social support is good for emotional and physical health!

Research reports that a good social support system can help lower blood pressure and fight depression, even during times of conflict and stress.

A strong social support can also help individuals follow medical advice and make healthy lifestyle choices. Patients with good support are more likely to keep doctor’s appointments, take prescribed medications, and keep track of important health data, such as weight, blood pressure, blood sugars, and waist size. Additionally, friends and family can help individuals make good lifestyle choices that are heart healthy like eating a healthier diet, getting regular exercise, and quitting smoking.

It’s important to note that some friends and family can have the opposite effect, encouraging less healthy behaviors. If this is the case, just changing when and where one socializes can help. For example, rather than going out to dinner with someone who might encourage ordering fried appetizers and alcohol, choose to go out for coffee. Swap a late-night outing that might include food and drinks for a morning walk instead. Making healthy changes can be hard, and having friends and family who are supportive can make it much easier.

Heart health is critical to day to day life, and a healthy lifestyle is critical to heart health. It doesn’t matter if the support system is a large group or one good friend. Having someone who supports healthy behaviors can make all the difference.

Ready for Spring? Try these tips to help boost your mood and beat the winter blues.

- Let the light in! Open the curtains or blinds and bring in as much natural light as possible.
- Get outside. Even just a short time each day can make a real difference.
- Exercise and eat right. Regular exercise helps reduce the effects of stress and anxiety and releases feel-good hormones called endorphins. Eating healthy whole foods like fruit, vegetables, and quality lean protein help to maintain your blood sugar levels.
- Make plans. Get together with friends and family, or plan a trip during the winter months.
- Reduce stress. Try meditation or journaling and ask for help with chores or work when possible.
- Try light therapy. Consider purchasing a light therapy box – an indoor lamp designed to help treat Seasonal Affective Disorder.
There is a lot of advice out there about what and how much to eat. Should you eat Paleo, raw, Atkins, Vegan, or something else? For most of us, we try to find some way to eat better only to slip back into our usual eating habits. It’s time to forget about dieting and focus on nutrition. Nutrition is about choosing food that is essential for health and healing. We need vitamins and minerals from fruits and vegetables, quality protein, and healthy fats for optimum health. The following are recommendations for better nutrition:

- Eat a variety of vegetables. Vegetables provide essential vitamins and fiber to help you feel full and fuel your cells. Vegetables also include necessary protein and complex carbohydrates.
- Make sure to add fruits to your diet. Fruits also provide vitamins, fiber, and carbohydrates. Fruit is nature’s way of satisfying our sweet tooth.
- Healthy fats and oils are important for cellular health, hormone balance, and brain function. Choose nuts, avocado, olive oil, coconut oil, and grass-fed butter or ghee.
- Whole grains add fiber and important vitamins and minerals to your diet. Quinoa and 100% organic rolled oats are good choices to include in your meal plan.
- For quality protein, try chicken or turkey breast, pork loin, sirloin, or eggs. To vary your protein (or if you are a vegetarian), including beans, nuts, seeds and a variety of vegetables can provide all the protein your body needs.
- Reduce excess salt and sugar from your diet by reading your food labels and minimizing processed foods such as fast food, deli meats, boxed foods, candy, soda, and desserts.

When you focus on nutrition, your body will be nourished, cravings will be reduced, and you will have more energy. Give it a try and see how you feel!

Bananas

The ubiquitous banana is an easy-to-eat health goldmine! With a distinctive flavor, bananas are a high fiber, potassium rich food, known to be heart healthy and easy on the digestive system.

Most bananas are the sweet variety - the traditional yellow skinned version in every grocery store. There are also plantain bananas which are starchier and are often cooked and served as a vegetable. Choose bananas without soft spots or noticeable bruising and look for green bananas if you plan on using them later in the week. Store bananas at room temperature. If you store them in the refrigerator to prevent ripening, know that the skin will turn brown but it doesn’t affect the fruit. It is best to peel and prepare the bananas just before eating to prevent browning.

Peel bananas and store them in the freezer to add to creamy fruit smoothies. Mash ripe bananas with a fork and use as a substitute for oil in your favorite baking recipes. For a healthier dessert option: melt chocolate chips with a little butter (4 tablespoons butter to a 32-ounce bag chocolate chips). Dip whole bananas in the chocolate and freeze!

A medium banana has about 100 calories, and is a good source of fiber, vitamin B6, vitamin C and potassium.
Staying Active in Cold Weather

Baby, it’s cold outside! But that doesn’t mean that you can’t continue working out! Of course, you can head to the gym or workout at home, but unless the weather is dangerous (think subzero wind chills), there are ways to enjoy exercise outside. Don’t let winter stop you from exercising. Keep moving - indoors or outdoors.

Stay Safe. Avoid excess cold or exercising during weather events that will make it hard for others to see you. If you are heading out at night, wear light colored clothing and reflective gear. If you walk, run, or ride your bike late at night, be sure to go with a partner or vary your route. Ease into your workout, making sure you warm up your heart and muscles. Getting in a warm up is especially important if you plan to be active outside in cold weather. Working out in the cold puts an additional strain on your heart and lungs, so be sure that it is safe for you to do so. Discuss this with your doctor.

Stay Warm. Dress in layers, with the closest layer to your skin one that draws sweat away from your body. Don’t neglect your extremities, wear a hat, gloves and heavy socks as needed. You may need a different shoe for winter workouts, one that can handle snow and ice on the ground and can accommodate a thicker sock. Consider wearing a facemask or wrapping a scarf around your mouth to protect your skin and help warm the air you breath.

Stay Hydrated. Though you may not feel like you need water, you do! Drink enough water before and during your workout to boost your metabolism and immunity.