

Health Promotion & Wellness

May/June 2020

Health Promotion and Wellness in the time of Coronavirus

We have received many questions about what to do during these challenging times. Many of us are teleworking, have been pulled to different jobs to support clinical efforts, or have even been told to suspend work until further notice. Our lives are certainly different than they were a couple of months ago.

We hear you.

We are also teleworking and have the same challenges of getting to documents that are not available from home. New products are becoming available, like Microsoft Teams, to assist with online meetings and gaining access to items needed to complete tasks. We are actively learning about these brand new programs and coming up with ideas to potentially meet with you soon to discuss ideas and the great projects you are already working on. You have inspired us with your flexibility and ability to adapt your focus to help prevent COVID-19.

We support you.

There have been challenges for some commands to access documents needed to complete Blue H submissions. Bob MacDonald, creator and maestro of this award, retired December of 2019. Our learning curve was much steeper than anticipated! We have extended deadlines, made phone calls, and sent many emails to ensure all submissions are complete. We apologize for those of you who got yours in on time. This has certainly been a unique year. We are in the final phase of review and corrections. We aim to have the Surgeon General's letter sent up the chain for signature before the middle of May.

Our social media team has been sending out great messages and valid information on coronavirus to nearly all social media sites. If you haven't already, "like" our pages and use/share/retweet the information we send so you can use it for your command as well.

We applaud you.

Even though this trying time challenges our efforts at encouraging healthy behaviors, we know many of you are stepping up and taking it on! We see the Health Promotion and Wellness (HPW) Team at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, VA send out daily messages of support and resources to inspire our caregivers to not forget to take care of themselves. We hear how Camp Pendleton HPW Team created an at home workout using readily available items. We have no doubt more is going on than we know.

Our typical work is currently disrupted and the focus is on physical distancing, wearing masks appropriately, and not being exposed to the coronavirus as much as possible. We will be emailing HPW teams as we come up with plans to share ideas and information.

Please take care of yourself, wear your mask appropriately, stay fit, and stay healthy!

Best resource for coronavirus information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

We thank you for taking care of our Sailors, Marines, Families, and Veterans.



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May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

NMCPHC challenges you to increase your physical activity by 30 minutes each day.

Benefits include:

- Reducing or preventing chronic diseases such as heart disease.
- Improving mental health, cognitive function, and sleep.
- Promoting weight loss.
- Managing tobacco cravings.

Additional information: <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/about-physical-activity/why-it-matters.html>

Making Time For Fitness

- Identify available time slots. Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least five 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity.
- Add physical activity to your daily routine. It is challenging now with physical distancing, but you can aim to take the stairs in your home 20 times today, walk or ride your bike while keeping at least 6 feet from others, walk the dog more often, pace your house while on a conference call, exercise while you watch TV, etc.
- Select activities, such as walking, jogging, or stair climbing that you can do based on the time that you have available (e.g., 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 20 minutes).
- Take advantage of the many free online workouts now available. During phone calls try to stand, stretch, move, and pace when possible.

<https://www.navyfitness.org/fitness/noffs-training/noffs-overview/applications>

Sleep and Fitness

Did you know that 1 in 3 adults do not get proper sleep? Increasing daily physical activity can help improve sleep by helping you fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer.

Getting 7-8 hours of sleep on a regular basis can help decrease the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes.

Timing is everything when it comes to getting better sleep. Exercising right before bed can cause the opposite affects by making it difficult to get to sleep. It is recommended to perform any physical activity in the morning or during the day for at least 30 minutes.

Schedule at least an hour before sleep to turn off your devices, relax, read, and get ready for bed.

Getting enough sleep and physical activity is important to a long healthy life.



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June is Men's Health Month

June is Men's Health Month, a national observance used to raise awareness about health care for men and focus on encouraging boys, men, and their families to practice and implement healthy living decisions, such as exercising and eating healthy. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, men in the United States, on average, die 5 years earlier than women and die at higher rates from nine of the top 10 leading causes of death. During Men's Health Month, we encourage men to take control of their health, and for families to teach young boys healthy habits throughout childhood.

5 power plays for men to stay at the top of their game

FIRST - Protect your heart: Heart disease is the #1 killer of men. Healthier food choices build a healthier heart. Make vegetables and fruits half of your plate.

SECOND - You don't have to lift: Getting just 30 minutes of exercise each day can help you live longer and healthier.

THIRD - Preventive maintenance: Getting regular check-ups can catch small problems before they become big ones.

FOURTH - Quitting time: Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, and ... a greater risk of erectile dysfunction.

FIFTH - Do a self "buddy check": Life can get tough and discussing things with a mental health professional can help.

Responsible Drinking During COVID-19

Excessive alcohol use can impact the health and readiness of Sailors and Marines. Some people may be turning to alcohol to cope with isolation or the stressors from the COVID-19 pandemic. It's a good time to learn about the responsible way to drink alcohol if you choose to drink. If you're looking for resources on drinking responsibly, check out the following:

- [Navy Alcohol Abuse Prevention](#) including the [Keep What You've Earned](#) campaign
- The DoD's responsible drinking campaign [Own Your Limits](#) which includes an anonymous [drinking habits quiz](#)
- NMCPHC's resources on [Preventing Drug Abuse and Excessive Alcohol Use](#)

Creating a Healthy Mindset During a Pandemic

This pandemic has created havoc in so many areas of our lives. Schools are out, we are working from home, so many negative comments on social media, a life-threatening virus running amuck. Scary times. It can be easy to become anxious, not sleep, and not take care of yourself. Be sure when anxiety hits that you take stock of your options. The link below is a great resource to help discover some options, get back on track and in control.

https://deploymentpsych.org/system/files/member_resource/Pandemic_Anxiety_17APR2020_0.pdf

