Health Without the Haunt This Holiday Season

Life & Work Connections
October 2017

Does the thought of weight management send a spooky chill up your spine? Wellness does not have to be frightful during the holidays. University of Arizona employees have access to campus resources related to healthy eating and stress management.

For a positive launch to the holiday season, enjoy the October "WellBeing in Action" [1] video.

Follow-up with these seven strategies for an intentionally healthy fall.

Build a basic activity plan now and stick with it throughout the season

Carve out time before or after your workday to exercise. If that is not feasible, try a more active commute, walking or stair climbing on campus. Check out a no-cost Life & Work Connections' resistance bands [2] or tai chi class [3]. Campus Recreation has several activity classes [4] to choose from or you can schedule a Life & Work Connections fitness coaching session [5] with a certified personal trainer to discuss an individualized activity plan. Do not include anything in this basic plan that requires a herculean effort to execute.

Know your numbers

Be ready to compare your health numbers in January. This can be as simple as a quick weight and body composition check or by joining the annual Maintain, No Gain Holiday Challenge. [6] Consider scheduling an individual or metabolic syndrome screening [7] before and after the season if you need to self-monitor at a higher level due to personal or family health history.

Maximize nutrition early in the day

Plan breakfast, lunch and snacks in advance. Incorporate adequate calories and nutrient-dense foods early in the day to fuel energy and creativity. Research supports consuming your largest meal at breakfast for weight management. Eating calories throughout the workday can eliminate poor food choices in the evening. For help with meal planning, schedule a nutrition coaching [5] session.

Batch up some basics

Prepare simple recipes during the weekends. Cook a new grain, roast some vegetables or grill lean protein. Fire up your slow cooker to make lentils or beans. These items can be portioned and kept in the refrigerator or freezer. Check out the Healthy Recipe of the Month [8] for help getting started or schedule a nutrition coaching session. Departments can learn from a registered dietitian nutritionist how to plan a week’s worth of delicious meals [9].
Throw in something new

Incorporate fun into your fitness and nutritional goals. Here are a few ideas to get you started: plant a container garden [10] (fall is perfect for herbs and greens), tackle Tumamoc Hill (check out the new Tumamoc app [11]), join an intramural [12] sport or try Cyclovia Tucson [13] (Oct. 29).

Engage your support

Whether it is a family member, friend, co-worker or your whole department, camaraderie and accountability are crucial to establishing and sustaining healthy habits. Plan for beyond the holiday season and start recruiting your Walk Across Arizona [14] team today.

Savor the good things in life

When we focus on the good things in life, our mind, body and spirit reap the benefits. Take an intentional moment each day to notice good things. Slow down and breathe in the simple moments, such as a hug from someone you love, a wonderful meal, or subtle fall breezes. Consider keeping a gratitude journal at your desk or bedside. Visit us [15] to learn more ways to incorporate a simple mindfulness practice into your daily life.

Jodi Charvoz is senior coordinator for employee wellness and health promotion. Susan Pickering is an employee assistance counselor.

Source URL: https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/health-without-haunt-holiday-season

Links:
[1] https://lifework.arizona.edu/wsw/wellbeing-in-action
[2] https://lifework.arizona.edu/wsw/strength_training
[3] https://lifework.arizona.edu/wsw/classes/taichi
[7] https://lifework.arizona.edu/wsw/health_screenings
[8] https://lifework.arizona.edu/wsw/healthy-recipes
[9] https://lifework.arizona.edu/presentations/one-week-meals-dietitians-example
[10] https://lifework.arizona.edu/presentations/container-gardening
[12] https://rec.arizona.edu/about-intramural-sports
[14] https://lifework.arizona.edu/wsw/wellnessopps/walkacrossarizona
[15] https://lifework.arizona.edu/ea/stress-management