MFC Benefits
Employee Benefits & HR Solutions

Live Well, Work Well

August 2025

Taking Care of Yourself During National Wellness Month

National Wellness Month, recognized annually in August, is meant to encourage people to prioritize self-care, build healthy routines and support their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Wellness goes beyond physical health. It encompasses mental clarity, emotional resilience and a sense of balance in daily life.

When we invest in our well-being, we're better equipped to handle stress, maintain relationships and perform at our best—both personally and professionally. This month is an opportunity to slow down and focus on the following key well-being components:

- **Movement**—You don't need a gym membership to stay active. Stretch in the morning, take the stairs or go for a walk during lunch. Movement boosts mood and energy.
- **Nutrition**—Fuel your body with whole foods, stay hydrated and avoid skipping meals. Even small changes, such as swapping soda for water, can make a big difference.
- **Mindfulness**—This skill involves focusing on being present. Try meditation apps, journaling or simply taking a few deep breaths during stressful moments.
- **Self-care**—It's important to take time each day to do something just for you. Whether it's reading, listening to music or having a cup of tea, self-care helps you recharge.
- **Stress management**—Identify your stress triggers and create healthy coping strategies. These could include setting boundaries, unplugging from screens or talking to a friend.

You can start taking small steps now to prioritize both your body and mind. Over time, these habits build a foundation for a healthier, more balanced you. If you're struggling with any aspect of your wellness, seek help from health care professionals, including therapists, counselors or wellness coaches. They can provide tailored guidance and support for your personal needs.

This article is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as professional advice. Readers should contact a health professional for appropriate advice. © 2025 Zywave, Inc. All rights reserved.

Understanding Your Cortisol Levels

Cortisol levels continue to trend on social media as people want to understand energy levels, manage stress and boost their overall well-being. So, what exactly is cortisol? It's your body's primary stress hormone, helping regulate various functions, such as metabolism, blood sugar, blood pressure, immune response and energy. While it's normal for cortisol to fluctuate throughout the day (usually going up in the morning and slowly down during the day), consistently high or low levels can cause health issues. Ideal cortisol levels fall within a specific range that varies slightly based on the time of day and the type of test used.

To get a better understanding of your cortisol levels, seek the advice of a medical professional who can administer a cortisol test that measures the cortisol in your blood, urine or saliva. Standard blood panels generally don't test for cortisol levels. Cortisol testing is usually ordered separately by a physician to learn more about your health conditions.

Understanding how cortisol works can help you stay aware of potential symptoms that could indicate an imbalance. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

Medications That Make It Hard to Handle the Heat

Commonly prescribed medications can impact people more in the heat, causing dehydration or sun sensitivity or limiting the body's ability to regulate body temperature. As such, these medications have heat intolerance, photosensitivity or similar documented side effects:

- **Antibiotics** and **nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** like ibuprofen may make you more sensitive to sun exposure, resulting in severe sunburn or rashes.
- **Antidepressants** can cause excessive sweating, dehydration and UV light sensitivity. They could also decrease sweat production, preventing the body from cooling down.
- **Antihistamines** can make your body produce less sweat, making it difficult to regulate body temperature in hot weather.
- **Blood pressure medications** can increase sweat production and dehydration. Sun exposure can cause a blood pressure dip, too.
- **Decongestants** like pseudoephedrine can decrease the blood flow to the skin, making it more difficult to sweat and regulate.
- **Stimulants** can increase your metabolic rate, impairing the body's ability to cool down.

Keep in mind that the heat can also degrade certain medications like insulin, inhalers and EpiPens.

The first sign of heat intolerance is feeling hot or uncomfortable. You may also experience headaches, dizziness, cramps, nausea or vomiting, weakness or flushed skin. If you experience heat-related symptoms, go inside immediately and try to cool down. In addition to monitoring for symptoms, it's important to stay hydrated, limit your exposure to direct sunlight and wear protective clothing.

If you have questions about your medications or potential side effects, talk to your doctor. Also, don't discontinue taking any prescribed medications without consulting your doctor first.

Recipe of the Month

Cucumber Salad With Tomatoes

Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients

- 2 cups cucumber (diced)
- 1 cup tomato (seeded and diced)
- ¼ cup sweet onion (chopped)
- 2 cups couscous (cooked)
- 2 tsp. dill weed (chopped)
- ½ cup low-fat Italian salad dressing

Preparations

1. Toss together the cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, couscous, dill and salad dressing.
2. Chill for 1 hour.
3. Serve.

Nutritional Information

(per serving)

Total calories	137
Total fat	2 g
Protein	4 g
Sodium	252 mg
Carbohydrate	25 g
Dietary fiber	2 g
Saturated fat	0 g
Total sugars	5 g

Source: MyPlate