

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Keeping Healthy in Cooler Weather

As cool weather sets in and nature prepares for a season of rest and renewal, many of us are also preparing ourselves to do the same. Though many of our schedules are jam-packed around this time of year, it is important to prioritize our health, including making time to rest and recover from the hustle and bustle of life.

Here are some great ways to maintain your health during the 'Ber months:

Stay Active: The American Heart Association recommends about 20 minutes per day (or 150 minutes per week) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity for adults to maintain good health.

- Layering up for a crisp morning walk with the dog, or getting a walk in before the sun sets, are great ways to take advantage of the weather before winter really sets in.
- On rainy days, an indoor walk around the mall, or a 20-minute virtual led at-home workout are both good options to keep your body moving.

Incorporating More Fruits & Vegetables: The University of Maryland Medical System suggests that frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are a good option when your favorite fresh fruits and vegetables are no longer in season. Serve canned veggies as an easy side or add some frozen fruit on top of some warm oatmeal. Penn State Extension provides a guide for making healthier choices when selecting canned or frozen foods.

Fruits

- Look for canned fruit that has been packed in juice or water, and not in syrups. If the fruit you select comes in heavy syrup, drain it.
- Select frozen fruit with no added sugar

Vegetables

- Search for cans labeled "no salt added" whenever possible to limit your sodium intake. When no-salt-added or reduced-sodium options aren't available, drain and rinse salted items (such as canned corn or

green beans) before using them to decrease the overall sodium in your final dish.

- Select plain frozen vegetables without added sauces. These sauces are often high in sodium and, at times, saturated fat.

Prioritize Mental Health: Mental health is just as important to your overall well-being as physical health. To make another case for moving your body, exercising for 20-30 minutes each day can boost your mood by releasing endorphins, otherwise known as “happy hormones.” Aside from physical activity, some other methods to reduce stress that promote mental well-being include relaxing with a warm beverage and a good book or following a guided breathing exercise using an app on your phone.

Rest: We all know we need rest, but getting a full 7-10 hours of sleep each night doesn’t always seem feasible with our busy lives. The National Institute of Health (NIH) notes that over time, not getting enough sleep can lead to an increased risk of heart attack, stroke, and dementia.

Some recommended strategies to get a good night's sleep include limiting screen time before bed, having a consistent bedtime and wake time, and avoiding caffeine at least 6-8 hours before going to bed.

By incorporating these healthy habits into your routine, you and your family can finish the year feeling happy, healthy, and energized!

For more information, visit <https://extension.psu.edu/thriving-through-the-cold-your-guide-to-winter-wellness> or contact Arianna Perkins, Wildcat Extension District Health & Nutrition Program Assistant, at aoehme@ksu.edu or (620) 724-8233.

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