Welcome to our December 2020 newsletter!

HPFS Schedule Updates

**Varsity Gym:**
Closed 12/18/20 - 1/4/2021
Re-open 1/4/21 - 1/15/21 8 am - 2 pm
1/19/21 - 5/7/21 8 am - 6 pm

**Levine Hall Lab:**
Closed 12/5 - 1/18/2021
Re-open 1/19 - 5/7 8 am - 1:30 pm

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Stretch for Stress Virtual Class

Come join us Virtually on Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 12:00 pm during the month of December to "stretch through your winter stress." Follow this link to our [website calendar](#).
A letter of thanks

This year has been one for the books. Here at Health Promotion for Faculty and Staff, we have been so blessed by all of you. We've learned how to provide virtual personal training, teach exercise classes virtually, how to COVID proof our facilities by building PODS, and cleaning schedules. We have taught ourselves how to, designing Google Forms with add-ons for all of our program registrations as well. We have offered blood donations and mammogram screenings that filled up within just a few days. We also learned how to plan and implement drive-through flu clinics with Covid Screenings. Our participants have flowed seamlessly with grace and resilience.

Moving into our next year, we are excited to continue to expand our virtual offerings and look forward to in-person programming as well.

We have one true request for our audience, it's to encourage all of you to continue to take care of yourselves. It is so important for us all to keep up with our annual preventative assessments, vaccines, mental health and daily physical activity. I challenge everyone moving into the new year, to put yourself at the top of your list.

A Big (HUGE) thank you to all our participants, IHHS, BCHS, EHS&EM, and AppHealthCare. We would also like to thank Sherri Wilson for 17 years of dedication and service to HPFS.

Wishing all of you a healthy and blessed holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Steff McDaniel, Director HPFS

Exercise and Mental Health
by Ben Wilson, CPT

Many people are feeling that their mental health is declining during the current state of the world. Mental health is often primarily treated by focusing internally, but there is another way to help yourself stay in a good mood. Exercise! Exercise has been shown to stimulate the brain in multiple beneficial ways. When you exercise you release chemicals in the brain that can help increase your mood. These chemicals include endorphins, serotonin, oxytocin, and dopamine.

Click here to read the entire article

Seasonal Affective Disorder
by Seth Pruitt, CPT
Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, 14 percent of people in the United States experience SAD (also known as seasonal depression.) Research shows that 30-60 minutes of exercise and 20 minutes of sunlight exposure can help one cope with SAD. Regular exercise can boost serotonin, endorphins, and other feel-good brain chemicals. Exercise can treat mild to moderate depression as effectively as antidepressant medication and can also help to improve your sleep and boost your self-esteem.

When the desire to curl up by a fire during these early sunsetting days overwhelms you, help motivate yourself to exercise by:
- Eating regularly for energy
- Eating a balanced diet that is rich in vegetables, fruit, grains, and protein
- Drinking 6 to 8 glasses of water each day
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Limiting alcohol consumption to healthy levels (no more than 1 drink per day for women and 2 drinks per day for men)
- Getting outside in the daylight
- Find exercises that are rhythmic and continuous (walking, zumba, etc.)

Other techniques for combating SAD:
- Reach out to family or friends
- Join a support group
- Meet new people
- Eat the right diet: Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Take steps to limit stress
- Daily relaxation techniques
- Force yourself to do things you enjoy
- Get as much natural sunlight as possible
- Open blinds and drapes in your home
- Sit near windows
- Volunteer your time
- Helping others is the best way to feel good about yourself

Happy, Healthy Holidays Start in the Kitchen
by Liv Carman IPC, Nutrition GA

It’s officially the holiday season, so time to cook and gather around the kitchen table with your family! However, your holiday season may look like this year, here are a few dinner tips and recipes for healthy twists on holiday dishes.

6 Tips and Tricks for Holiday Meals

1. **Prepare by packing your shopping cart with plenty of fresh produce:** including sweet potatoes, winter squash, broccoli, carrots, green beans, apples, & cranberries
2. **Eat slowly and savor every bite:** It takes 20 minutes for the stomach to signal the brain that you are full. Enjoy every bite of your favorite holiday dishes.
3. **Spend time with family, not the food:** Move socializing away from the buffet or appetizer table to prevent mindless eating.
4. **Don’t skip meals:** Skipping a meal with the goal of saving calories prior to a big holiday meal can often backfire and lead to overeating. Have a yogurt or...
some fruit to help curb your appetite before the main course.

5. **Bring a healthy side dish**: If you participate in a socially distanced family gathering, ensure at least one nutritious choice available by contributing a side dish full of colorful fruits and veggies.

6. **ENJOY your favorite holiday food!**
   Don’t feel guilty if you feel like you overindulged on a meal. Having treats once a year won’t make or break your weight.

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**A Healthy Twist on Holiday Classics**

This season is a great time to branch out, improve your kitchen skills, and put a creative healthy twist on your family’s favorite recipes! (click to go to recipe)

- **Roasted Brussels Sprouts and Cinnamon Butternut Squash with Pecans and Cranberries**
- **Best Homemade Healthy Green Bean Casserole**
- **Sweet Potato Casserole (vegan and gluten-free)**

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**Virtual Resources to Inspire you**

- **Fitness Blender**
  
  A favorite of our staff, this site is FREE, creative and well designed. If your looking for new exercises, someone to lead you through a workout, target a specific mode of exercise, etc. this is a great resource. Click on Filters to personalize video option. **FitnessBlender**
Yoga with Adriene

Yoga with Adriene offers tons of Yoga videos to fit all levels. This comes highly recommended.

healthpromotion.appstate.edu

| 828-262-6314 | E-mail |