Leave Work on the Job

The ability to be in touch with work and workplace issues 24/7 is both a blessing and a curse. It’s possible to get more done because information, communication, and productivity tools are just a fingertip away at all times. However, the potential for neglecting personal time is high.

Unplug and leave the job behind when you’re done working for the day (or shift). You will return to your tasks refreshed, recharged, and ready to take it all on.

Strategies:

- Schedule definite hours and situations when you will not work, including checking mobile devices. These might include while you’re in bed, during meals, or during family time.
- Establish check-in times and group similar tasks together during those times so you can do them efficiently.
- Turn off your device before you go to bed. Avoid checking in first thing when you wake up. Greet the day unplugged.

Put work aside so you can thrive in all areas of your life.

Wellness Day-by-Day

As we continue to make our way through these ever-changing times we are living through, here are six daily questions to ask ourselves to maintain some sense of balance and resiliency. See if you can incorporate them into your new daily routine to support your well-being.

- What am I grateful for today?
- Who am I checking in on, or connecting with, today?
- What expectations of “normal” am I letting go of today?
- How am I getting outside today?
- How am I moving my body today?
- What beauty am I creating, cultivating, or inviting in today?

Be here now...

Some stress experts say that learning to live in the present can go a long way toward combating stress. You can’t change the past, and fretting about the future won’t alter outcomes. The only time you can change is the present. Work to change that.

“Learning to live in the present moment is part of the path of joy.”

~Sarah Ban Breathnach

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (August 2020)
Five Ways to Take a Break

Research shows that taking a five-minute break after a period of sustained work, such as 25 or 50 minutes, can enhance productivity. However, this doesn’t mean checking in on social media or grabbing junk food. Rather, it is a quick refresher designed to recharge your brain. Try these ideas and then return to your task:

- Listen to music — use earphones so you won’t disturb anyone.
- Write or doodle.
- Sit quietly and reflect. Look out a window or at a pleasant picture.
- Get up, stretch, and move around.
- Work on a different task.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (August 2020) TP Top Performance.

How to Speak Well

Whether you’re speaking in a small conference room, a crowded auditorium, or a Zoom webinar, what you say will have more impact if you say it well. Follow these tips for getting your spoken message across more effectively:

- Keep it simple. Each of your audience members has many demands on their time and attention. If you wander off the subject, use sentences that are too long and complex, or bounce from topic to topic, you risk losing your listeners. Stay on point and be direct and concise.
- Slow down. Talking too fast can make you appear unsure of yourself and cause you to stumble over words. You can also lose volume as you run out of breath. Speak slowly, and don’t be afraid to pause while you gather your thoughts and catch your breath.
- Remember your audience. Remember the purpose for which you are speaking: to communicate clearly with a supervisor, coworker, client, vendor, or other professionals. You might be trying to prove a point or persuade people to agree with you. Communicating how your message affects your listeners will guarantee a better reception.
- Meet your listeners on their level, and treat communication as a 2-way street. You’ll speak better and get heard more often.

Source for Articles: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2019) TP Top Performance.
Three Sources of Support Available

Announcing Coping Circles: Six New Yorkers, Six Weeks, Coping Together

New Yorkers are coping with a lot. Coping Circles are free six-week support and resilience groups, held by video or phone, facilitated by licensed mental health professionals.

Learn more and sign up at ny.gov/copingcircles for a Coping Circle, including specialized Circles for Healthcare Workers and First Responders, Survivors of COVID-19 Infection, Job Loss due to COVID-19, or Loss of a Loved One to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Support: Feeling stressed by the COVID-19 epidemic? You are not alone. New York State Office of Mental Health Emotional Support Line is staffed 7 days a week, 8am-10pm by specially trained volunteers who can help. 1-844-863-9314 https://omh.ny.gov/

SUNY in partnership with the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) has launched Crisis Text Line for students, faculty, and staff who are dealing with emotional challenges. Members of the SUNY community can access the confidential text line 24/7 by texting Got5U to 741-741 for help. The text line can be used to help alleviate depression, anxiety, stress, and suicidal thoughts. It also provides a way for people to talk about substance use, relationship issues, domestic violence, and school stressors, as well stress and anxiety related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Secret of Summer Slumber for Shift Workers

Summer presents challenges for daytime sleepers. The days are longer, so people you live with may be active longer. Plus, rising temperatures may warm your bedroom so sleeping isn’t so comfortable. Take steps so you get the sleep you need for successful shiftwork.

♦ Research shows people sleep best in a cool room that is below 70F. Opening your windows can let in the heat. Instead, keep windows closed and covered with dark blinds, and circulate air with a ceiling fan or large upright fan.

♦ Closed windows help block outside noise. Try using a fan, air conditioner, white noise machine, or even a radio turned down low to provide white noise to mask background sounds that might disturb your sleep. If you can sleep with earplugs, use them.

♦ Manage your health. Allergens such as pollen escalate in the summer months. If allergies keep you awake, discuss treatment with your health care provider. Over-the-counter antihistamines and steroid sprays can help relieve symptoms.

♦ Stay on schedule. The fine weather and extended daylight can tempt you to skimp on sleep. Enjoy your free time, but remember work and play are more pleasurable if you are well rested.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (July 2020) SW Shift Worker
Are you finding yourself struggling with any of the following?

- Family, parenting, and relationship issues
- Work stress and conflict
- Substance abuse or dependency
- Elder care
- Mental health concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Legal and/or financial concerns
- Grief and loss
- Or anything else related to work or home that is causing you undue stress and affecting your ability to be as productive as you once were

You don’t have to deal with it alone. Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available to you as an employee benefit.

While no in-person appointments are available due to the current COVID-19 related concerns, virtual appointments for confidential Information, Assessment and Referral Services with EAP are still available by phone and email.

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
518-442-5483
bseckerson@albany.edu

EAP Website: http://www.albany.edu/eap

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8 am—4 pm.
If you need immediate assistance outside of these days/hours, contact NYS EAP office at 518-486-9769.

Early intervention is the key! Contact EAP.
Bidding Farewell—A Note from Brenda Seckerson

As I put the final touches on the August EAP ENewsletter, I am aware that these really are “the final touches.” This edition marks my last one as your EAP Coordinator. My retirement from the University is only a few weeks away now. Before signing off, I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge what an honor it’s been to serve as your EAP Coordinator. It has been a meaningful and enriching experience to oversee the Employee Assistance Program and to be of support to the wonderful faculty and staff we have here at UAlbany. I’m amazed by the individuals who make up our campus community. Kindness, resilience, dedication, and fortitude are just a few words that come to mind when I think of the people I’ve met during my tenure of 14 years.

Working at a college or university was something I had on my professional bucket list. What a great moment it was to be hired at the University of Albany and to make that wish come true! I want to thank all of the current and past EAP Committee members, EAP Ambassadors, and University administration for your support over the years. Thank you to the myriad of employees who put their trust in me to be of assistance in one way or another. And as I wrap up this chapter, I am looking over my personal wish list to see what I want to explore during the next part of my life’s journey. I will hold dear the time I had at UAlbany and look forward to watching the University continue to Unleash Greatness on all fronts. Yes, these are challenging times. But Great Danes are always up for a challenge!

“Begin each day with a grateful heart.”

~Unknown

After Thursday, August 27

Upon my retirement and until further notice, EAP services can be accessed by contacting the NYS EAP office at 518-486-9769. They will put you in touch with another NYS EAP Coordinator to provide confidential services.
Resources to Help You and Your Family Through the COVID-19 Experience

What follows is the list of resources EAP has collected over these last few months to support you and your family’s health and well-being. The most recent resources collected in July are at the top of the list in each category.

**Working From Home:**
- Take steps for your health and well-being while working remotely by reviewing this EAP presentation titled “Managing the Stress of Social Distancing and Working Remotely.”
- “8 Tips for Staying Productive While Working From Home” by Kelsey Libert
- “5 Tips for Staying Productive and Mentally Healthy While You’re Working From Home”

**Financial Well-Being:**
- The National Foundation for Credit Counseling® (NFCC®) is the largest and longest-serving nonprofit financial counseling organization in the U.S., its mission is to help all Americans gain control over their finances.
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Rochester: [https://www.cccsofrochester.org/](https://www.cccsofrochester.org/)
- Consumer Finance Information: Protecting your Finances During the Coronavirus Pandemic [https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/](https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/)
- SEFCU Financial Relief Programs: [https://www.sefcu.com/financial-relief-programs](https://www.sefcu.com/financial-relief-programs)
- Food Pantries for the Capital Region: [http://www.thefoodpantries.org/covid-19-food-access-information-.html](http://www.thefoodpantries.org/covid-19-food-access-information-.html)

**Stress Management, Physical Fitness, and Mental Health:**
- The New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Inc. (NYAPRS) offers a “Start Your Workday Mindfully” five minute retreat via YouTube. New videos are uploaded at 8am each day. [https://www.nyaprs.org/](https://www.nyaprs.org/)
- The Freshman 15… now the Quarantine 15 weight gain? Read the article “Beat Quarantine 15” on the Herkimer County Cornell Cooperative Extension website.
- Free webinar series for parents of teens, and for young adults by The New York Presbyterian Youth Anxiety Center. Recordings of previous webinars available at [https://www.nyp.org/youthanxiety/important-notice](https://www.nyp.org/youthanxiety/important-notice)
- Free online bedtime floor yoga session on YouTube presented by professionally certified Kripalu yoga instructor Judi England

**NOTE:** If you have trouble with a link, please copy the resource name and do a search. If the link doesn’t work, please use the title of the resource to do a search.
Resources to Help You and Your Family Through the COVID-19 Experience (con’t)

Stress Management, Physical Fitness, and Mental Health (con’t):

- **Deskercise! 20 Ways To Get Moving While You Work**: [https://www.nchpad.org/fppics/deskercise%20poster_updated.pdf](https://www.nchpad.org/fppics/deskercise%20poster_updated.pdf)
- **Physical Activity for People with Disability**: [https://www.cdc.gov/features/fitness-disabilities/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/features/fitness-disabilities/index.html)
- **Physical Activities Around New York – Hiking**: [https://wellnys.goer.ny.gov/Physical_Activity/hiking.cfm](https://wellnys.goer.ny.gov/Physical_Activity/hiking.cfm)
- **Free meditation and mindfulness resource for all New York State residents provided by Headspace**: [www.headspace.com/ny](http://www.headspace.com/ny)
- **This Pandemic of Grief by Center for Loss** | Mar 18, 2020 | Article by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.
- **How to Regulate Your Stir-Crazy Emotions: Findings and recommendations from a survey of people on lockdown by Marc Brackett, Ph.D. April 7, 2020**: [https://elemental.medium.com/how-to-regulate-your-stir-crazy-emotions-de432d6410ad](https://elemental.medium.com/how-to-regulate-your-stir-crazy-emotions-de432d6410ad)
- **Covid-19: Fear Zone, Learning Zone, Growth Zone | Check Your Mental Zone Now**
- **Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook: A Tool to Help You Build Resilience During Difficult Times** - Provide tips, tools, and strategies about how to address any anxiety you might be experiencing during uncertain times.
- **New York State Office of Addiction Services and Support**: [https://oasas.ny.gov/](https://oasas.ny.gov/)
- **Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)** [https://www.albany.edu/eap/images/SAMHSA_Coping_With_Stress_Infectious_Disease_Outbreak.pdf](https://www.albany.edu/eap/images/SAMHSA_Coping_With_Stress_Infectious_Disease_Outbreak.pdf)
- **The Ohio State University has a campaign called JustBreathe which focuses on breathing techniques. This web page guides you in syncing your breathing for relaxation and stress reduction**: [https://yp4h.osu.edu/justbreathe](https://yp4h.osu.edu/justbreathe)
- **Dr. Andrew Weil’s website has breathing techniques that can help to increase a sense of calm**: [https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/body-mind-spirit/stress-anxiety/breathing-three-exercises/](https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/body-mind-spirit/stress-anxiety/breathing-three-exercises/)
- **Oprah Winfrey and Deepak Chopra ’s 21 Day Meditation Challenge: Finding Hope in Uncertain Times** - Free
Resources (con’t)

Stress Management, Physical Fitness, and Mental Health (con’t):
- DeStressMonday.org: A nonprofit public health initiative associated with Columbia, Johns Hopkins and Syracuse Universities. [https://www.destressmonday.org/](https://www.destressmonday.org/)
- YMCAs have posted on YouTube video fitness classes to do from the comfort of your home. [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOGt_IpceP_xQhhCMCrut_A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOGt_IpceP_xQhhCMCrut_A)

Resources/Activities for Children and Parents/Caregivers:
- Sesame Street offers support for young children and families during the COVID-19 health crisis. Their site is filled with content you can use to spark playful learning, offer children comfort, and focus a bit on yourself, too. [https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring](https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring)
- Storyline Online®, is a great resource for story time. Streams videos featuring celebrated actors reading children’s books alongside creatively produced illustrations. [https://www.storylineonline.net/](https://www.storylineonline.net/)
- 250+ Creative Ways to Keep Your Family Sane During the COVID-19 Crisis. The Kids Out and About website offers fun activities for your family to engage in. [https://rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/content/250-creative-ways-keep-your-family-sane-during-covid-19-crisis#clean](https://rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/content/250-creative-ways-keep-your-family-sane-during-covid-19-crisis#clean)
- Brightside Up, local child care resource and referral agency, is available to assist you with child care issues that arise due to the COVID 19 crisis. Contact them online at [www.brightsideup.org](http://www.brightsideup.org) or by calling one of their Family Educators at 518-426-7181. [https://mailchi.mp/brightsideup/covid19?mc_cid=480585beb5&mc_eid=193439068f](https://mailchi.mp/brightsideup/covid19?mc_cid=480585beb5&mc_eid=193439068f)
- New York State Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies by County: [https://www.albany.edu/eap/images/NYS_Child_Care_Resource_and_Referral_Agencies(1).pdf](https://www.albany.edu/eap/images/NYS_Child_Care_Resource_and_Referral_Agencies(1).pdf)
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA): Coronavirus Family Resources [https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/coronavirus-information](https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/coronavirus-information)
- Scholastic Inc. [https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/coronavirus.html](https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/coronavirus.html)
- Cincinnati Zoo "Home Safari Facebook Live" [http://cincinnatizoo.org/home-safari-resources/](http://cincinnatizoo.org/home-safari-resources/)
- Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History Virtual Tour (And check out other national museums' virtual tours!) [https://naturalhistory.si.edu/visit/virtual-tour](https://naturalhistory.si.edu/visit/virtual-tour)
- US National Park Service/Virtual Tours and Great Photos and History [https://www.nps.gov/index.htm](https://www.nps.gov/index.htm)
EAP Lunchtime Wellness Webinar

Staying Positive During a Crisis

Negative news is coming from all directions. Can you find ways to be positive when everything is negative? Yes, you can. Join NYS EAP Wellness Coordinator Linda Carignan-Everts who will discuss the PERMA Model, the Scientific Theory of Happiness which will guide participants to find happiness through difficult times.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020

Noon—12:30 pm

Registration required to receive the link for the webinar.

https://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

For questions, contact:
Brenda Seckerson,
EAP Coordinator

bseckerson@albany.edu

518.442.5483
Care for Caregivers

As a caregiver, it’s important to address your own needs. According to the National Center on Caregiving, caregivers experience sleep problems, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise. They don’t always take care of themselves when they are sick or keep up with their own health care appointments. Here are some reminders regarding self care.

- Avoid consuming junk food, caffeine, or alcohol to cope with stress. Make time to exercise and rest so you’ll be more resistant to stress and better able to care for the person who depends on you.
- Find neighbors, friends, or family members who can pitch in, especially with tasks that don’t involve your emotional connection with your aging or sick relative. This might include yard work, grocery shopping, picking up medication, and housework.
- Communicate with everyone invested in your loved one’s care and condition. Be calm and assertive, and don’t be afraid to ask for what you need.
- Seek out a counselor, support group, spiritual or religious advisor, supportive friend, or other system to help you cope. Ask for help before you are overwhelmed.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (August 2020) TP Top Performance.

Rediscover Play

All work and no recess can make life pretty dull. When is the last time you did something for the fun of it? Maybe you’re so focused on work and family demands you forget to set aside time for play. When you do find some leisure, how do you spend it? Recent studies show that adults have a lot to gain from playing. Throughout life, maintaining a sense of fun, laughter, and creativity is linked with the ability to feel happy. And maintaining that attitude will help boost your resilience and good health. Specifically, play and humor can relieve stress and boost energy, help solve problems, and improve relationships — on and off work.

Play is finding amusement, humor, joy, and entertainment in your daily life. Enjoy play and fun in personal ways and those you live with — whatever boosts your mood and makes you smile and laugh. You might:

- Explore a favorite locale online.
- Listen to music or learn to play an instrument.
- Get outdoors (observe social distancing and other protective measures if they’re in effect).
- Camp in your backyard with your kids.
- Enjoy humorous movies and books.

Resolve to make play part of every day. And make life easier.

“It is a happy talent to know how to play.” ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (August 2020) TH Top Health
5-2-1-0 Let's Go!

All in the family can fit in good health with a little effort and imagination. Small steps can make a big difference for little tykes through adolescence.

Start with 5-2-1-0 every day. It's a proven program that encourages families and communities to adopt healthful habits with these 4 daily goals:

1. **1 hour or more of physical activity every day:** Take walks or bike after dinner; learn a sport together; or hike and kayak on weekends. Give children games and toys that promote physical activity.

2. **2 hours or less recreational screen time:** The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no screen media for children younger than 2, and 2 hours or less per day for children older than 2 years. Turn off the TV, computer and mobile devices. Enforce specific hours for screen time. Keep media devices, including smartphones, out of children’s bedrooms. Note: Avoid giving children extra screen viewing time as a reward for good behavior.

3. **5 or more fruits and vegetables:** Prepare fruits and vegetables so they’re ready to grab and eat. Enjoy fresh, frozen or canned. Teach by example: Choose fresh fruit instead of juice and snack on produce.

4. **0 sugary drinks:** Always have water or serve low-fat milk instead of sweet drinks. Eat fruit instead of drinking fruit juice.

Making health a family goal creates a lasting bond — one that builds stronger families and makes health a way of life for years to come.
Fun Family Activities...

Five Penny Games

The Five Penny Games are fun activities for entertaining children. There are several approaches. (Use with age appropriate children. Pennies can be a choking hazard.)

♦ Hide 10 shiny pennies around the house and let the kids hunt for them. Add “hot or cold” hints if needed.
♦ Toss 10 pennies into the grass on a sunny day and let them hunt.
♦ Have children sit on the bottom of a set of stairs. Hide a penny in your fist and have them guess if it’s in the left or right hand. If they guess correctly, they move up a step, and if they are wrong, they move down a step. First to the top gets to be the next one who hides the penny while you walk away!
♦ Give the kids all the loose pennies from a jar and ask them to make a design that looks like a dog, a bird, a house, etc.
♦ Have kids sit at a table, while one stands out. Those sitting will pass and pretend to pass the penny around in both directions from hand to hand under the table. The child who is out will watch closely, says STOP when ready to make a guess who really has the penny at that moment. Works best if there is a tablecloth.

Scavenger Hunts

Scavenger hunts can be another way to add some playful fun to the day and keep children active when spending time at home. Check out these ideas for creating a fun hunt!

The Texture and Shapes Scavenger Hunt: Find the following items – something that you can turn; something that is bumpy; something that is metal; something that is round; something you have to put together; something that is shiny; something that is squishy; something that is clear; and something that can bounce.

The Children’s Books Scavenger Hunt: This is a great hunt for a rainy day. Look in books to find the following—an animal in a chair; the word spring; someone helping someone; a picture of a bug; a picture of the sun; a book that makes you laugh; a character eating in a book; a pet in a book; a superhero in a book; a bike in a book.

A Math Scavenger Hunt: Find two pencils and one blue crayon. Find five blocks and two pennies. Find four socks and two stuffed animals. Find three spoons, four books, and one orange item. How many items do you have altogether? How much time did it take you to gather them?

(Credit to Jessica Nicole Barker on Facebook)

Thank you to Laura Davis, NYS Office of Mental Health EAP Coordinator for sharing these activities with UAlbany EAP.
For Your Financial Well-Being...

Expenses You Don’t Think About

Many of us are looking closer at our finances and trying to be smarter when it comes to finding ways to cut back and to save more money. It’s easy to forget about periodic expenses that are sometimes paid automatically, such as annual renewals. Here are a few financial areas to stay on top of so that you don’t waste money because you weren’t paying attention.

- **Memberships** — Whether it’s for your gym or a product subscription, review your expenses monthly to catch fees you may forget otherwise. Be honest with yourself as to whether the expense is necessary.

- **Automatic renewal charges** — Reviewing your statements monthly pays off. Keep a calendar of when you signed up for services so that you will know when renewal charges are due. If you want to cancel, create a reminder in your phone or from your email to cancel the membership or service before the renewal date. Note: Some companies, such as software sellers, will email or text you a reminder that the automatic renewal is coming up, giving you the option to not renew. They will also alert you when your credit card or bank account has been charged.

- **Account fees** — Look at your statements for fees. If you aren’t sure why you were charged, call the company for an explanation and request a refund.

- **Discounts** — Do you frequent certain businesses? Ask if repeat customers get loyalty (or patronage) discounts. Do you belong to any organizations that might offer discounts at certain businesses or for services? Learn if you need to do anything to take advantage of these benefits.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (July 2019) *TD Top Dollar*

Breaking Down Your Budget

Have you ever wondered how much you should spend per month on groceries, on auto loans, or on utilities? The following list breaks down the recommended percentages for most budgeted areas and what each includes. Compare these recommended percentages to your personal expenses percentages.

- **20-35%: Housing.** This includes mortgage or lease, insurances, and taxes.
- **12-30%: Necessities.** This area depends on family size. Also, as food prices rise it will become harder to stay within a budget. This includes toiletries and other items used daily.
- **6-20%: Savings.** Use this money for short-term items such as vacations or longer-term goals such as retirement.
- **3-10%: Transportation.** If you drive, make sure you count gas, insurance, maintenance, and parking. If you use public transportation, include your commuter pass or rail card.
- **4-7%: Utilities.** Include energy, phone, and cable bills. Don’t forget to plan for seasonal changes in your heating and air conditioning costs.
- **0-15%: Debt.** If you’re lucky enough to live debt-free, use this slice of your pie toward something else, such as savings or toward an emergency fund.

Understanding Credit Card and Loan Deferments During COVID19

Presented by:
Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS) of Rochester/Rethinking Debt

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

There are many options to help people manage their debts during this time. However, not understanding the terms can cause an unexpected financial burden. In this webinar we will talk about what deferments are, what questions to ask when utilizing them, and how to monitor your credit report. You will also receive helpful guidance about managing these debts once the deferments are over.

CCCS of Rochester/Rethinking Debt can help you stay financially healthy now and in the future.

https://www.rethinkingdebt.org/

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2020

Two Sessions Offered:
11:30 AM or 1:30 PM

Registration required to receive the link for the webinar.

https://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm
Planning for Retirement?

Understanding Your NY Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) Retiree Benefit

**NOTE:** This information is NOT for Research Foundation employees.

The following information provides you with tools and resources to assist you with planning for retirement. The content here should be used in conjunction with resources provided to you by your Health Benefits Administrator (HBA), your retirement system, the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP), and information from other sources such as Medicare and Social Security.

*Notify the UAlbany Benefits Office of your plans to retire 3-4 months prior to your retirement date. This will ensure that they can provide you with information, resources, and paperwork to make your transition to retirement successful.*

**UAlbany Planning for Retirement Guide** - Includes important information on steps to take prior to retirement, retiree health insurance eligibility requirements, and more.

**NYSHIP Publications:**

- Planning for Retirement
- Medicare and NYSHIP
- Retirement and Benefit Informational Presentation - This slide presentation with links to additional information can be found in the description section on the video page. (If you have difficulty accessing this link on YouTube, go to the HR website and scroll to the bottom of the page to access the link there. [https://www.albany.edu/hr/retire.php](https://www.albany.edu/hr/retire.php))

Health Insurance Quick Links

Should you or a family member need access to your health insurance benefits related to COVID-19, here are the quick links that outline the coverage and assistance you can get from your plan.

**NYSHIP Empire Plan:** [https://www.empireblue.com/nys/](https://www.empireblue.com/nys/)  **1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447)**


**MVP:** [https://www.mvphealthcare.com/covid19](https://www.mvphealthcare.com/covid19)  **1-833-693-7669**
For Your Health...

No Heat Required

You know those days when it’s too hot to cook dinner? If the temperature is soaring, why not consider a nutritious supper without your stove. Here are some ideas:

Start with salad. Farm-fresh fruits and vegetables are abundant in the summer and are delicious without any heat required. Tomatoes, cucumbers, leafy greens, peppers, carrots, and fresh herbs are available at grocery stores, farmers markets, or from your own garden. They form the base for easy salads and side dishes. Round out the vegetables with no-cook protein options, such as canned tuna or salmon; canned chickpeas or lentils; nuts; seeds; cheese; or store-bought rotisserie chicken.

Take the heat off with cool carbs. Instead of boiling pasta, potatoes, or rice, consider ready-to-use corn tortillas, as well as whole-grain breads and crackers. Make simple sandwiches and wraps, or artfully combine crackers, cheese, olives, turkey breast, and marinated vegetables for tapas.

Use appliances that don’t heat up your kitchen — your freezer, for example. Serve a frozen shrimp ring at room temperature or use in salads, fresh Vietnamese-style spring rolls, or shrimp po'boy sandwiches. Whip up a cold watermelon soup or zesty gazpacho with a blender. And don’t forget your can opener. A corn and black bean salad or a simple tuna sandwich is just a twist away. By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

With a little ingenuity, it’s easy to eat well and keep your cool.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (July 2020) Smart Moves

A Benefit for Employees With the Empire Plan Health Insurance

COVID-19 and Mental Wellness

During this stressful time, myStrength is here for you. Learn ways to manage extreme stress, get tips for parenting during challenging times, and find support to help you take care of your emotional health.

The COVID-19 and Mental Wellness resources are available to you and your friends and family at no cost through the end of August. https://bh.mystrength.com/beaconcovidsupport
If you are experiencing domestic violence...

NYS launched a new texting program and confidential service to help New Yorkers experiencing domestic violence. Abuse victims are often closely watched by their abuser, making these tools needed. You are not alone and you do not have to stay in a dangerous situation.

Text 844-997-2121 or visit www.opdv.ny.gov to confidentially chat with a professional at any time of day or night.

**New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline:

1-800-942-6906  https://opdv.ny.gov/help/you-are-not-alone.html

 Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking for even ONE day is a step toward better health. Sixteen million Americans live with smoking-related diseases, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

Smokers are more likely to face increased risk of developing a serious infection from the coronavirus. Smokers can reduce the risk of a serious COVID-19 illness by quitting. If you smoke and you want to stop (or you want to help a friend or relative quit), find support through these resources:

NYS Smoker’s Quitline  Butt Stops Here Virtual Program
Smokefree.gov  American Cancer Society

WellNYS Everyday August Challenge

Want a way to help you stay focused on your healthy behaviors during 2020? Participate in the WellNYS Everyday Monthly Challenges sponsored by New York State EAP. This self-paced program completed on an honor system provides you with a different challenge at the beginning of each month. Tracking your progress makes it easier to meet your goals. The August challenge is “eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.” Invite a colleague or family member to join you in the monthly wellness challenge fun! In addition to the monthly challenges program, WellNYS Everyday also offers a wellness “Daily To-Do” which can be emailed to you. NOTE: You don’t have to participate in the monthly challenges to receive the Daily To-Do email. To learn more and to register to participate, go to: https://wellnys.goer.ny.gov/.
Mental Training

Can practicing mindfulness help our mental health? Studies suggest it can change our brains in ways that produce positive thinking and engagement, and ultimately help us cope with physical or emotional distress.

In a study of 144 workers, participants completed an 8-week mindfulness training program with weekly 2-hour classes at work and 45 minutes of daily meditation homework. Upon study completion, participants reported feeling less fatigue, stress and depression; improved relations with people; as well as better sleep and fewer aches and pains.

Mindfulness meditation involves focusing purposefully on what you’re experiencing, in the moment, without judgment. This includes awareness of your body sensations as well as awareness of your thoughts and feelings. It uses breath and body practices that relax the body and mind to reduce stress. Think of it as a form of mental training, and value it as you do physical training.

**15-minute easy ways to practice mindfulness:**

- Do a body scan focused on any tension or stress.
- Meditate as you focus on relaxing your muscles.
- Focus on your breathing and allow it to become relaxed as it relaxes you.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2020) TH Top Health

**During COVID-19, New York State residents have access to free meditation and mindfulness resources provided by Headspace:** [www.headspace.com/ny](http://www.headspace.com/ny)

“Despite knowing they won’t be here for long, they still choose to live their brightest lives—sunflowers.”

~Rupi Kuar, *The Sun And Her Flowers*
Growing Teens Into Healthy Adults

Convincing teens to eat well, exercise, and get enough sleep is not always easy, especially when parents are competing with junk food advertising and binge-worthy shows that keep kids on the sofa for hours. And there’s still peer pressure to deal with.

Here are five tips to help you positively influence your teen’s lifestyle choices as they navigate puberty and growth spurts:

- **Trust them to know their appetite.** They should eat when they are hungry and stop when full. Don’t berate them for wanting seconds, or for eating more one day than the next — that’s normal as they grow.

- **Teach by example.** Teens will mirror your food choices and your view of your own body. Eat well and be positive about what you love about yourself — and them.

- **Teach moderation.** Teens are independent and make many of their own food choices. That often means fast food, sugary beverages, salty snacks, and candy. That’s okay sometimes. Explain it in terms they can understand, such as the 80/20 idea: Eat well 80% of the time, and enjoy treats 20% of the time.

- **Sleep matters.** How tall your child will be is mostly determined by genetics, but factors such as eating well, getting enough sleep, and being active also matter. The human growth hormone is mostly released while a child is asleep, so encourage a normal bedtime.

- **Make healthy choices easy.** Keep nutritious grab-and-go snacks on hand for busy teens. Include nuts, fruit, hummus, yogurt, whole-grain crackers, cheese, and ready-to-eat vegetables.

Remember: If teens learn healthy habits at home, they will know how to care for themselves as they become young adults. ~ Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (August 2019) TH Top Health

Reminder to Complete the 2020 Census

April 1, 2020 was Census Day. This marked the start of the next decennial census; the nation's once-per-decade, constitutionally-mandated count of every American, **regardless of their citizenship status.** The decennial census is one of the nation's most important programs. It provides the allocation for the fair share of federal funds for programs essential to health care, education, housing, economic development, and transportation, as well as our congressional representation in Washington. All of this depends on an accurate and fully-counted census response. If you haven’t completed the census form, take a few minutes to do so.

**Go to:** [https://www.ny.gov/programs/2020-census](https://www.ny.gov/programs/2020-census)
Compliments of Personal Best Publications

MAKE A GREAT PLATE.

Sheet Pan Chicken Fajitas

INGREDIENTS
5 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp chili powder
½ tsp each garlic powder, dried oregano, cumin and salt
1½ lbs (24 oz.) raw chicken breast, cut into strips
2 bell peppers, any color, seeded and sliced
1 sweet onion, sliced

DIRECTIONS
Preheat oven to 400°F. Line baking sheet with foil or parchment. Combine oil, spices and chicken in large, resealable container; shake to mix. Marinate in refrigerator at least 15 minutes. Spread chicken mixture onto prepared sheet pan. Add peppers and onions to pan. Bake, stirring halfway through, about 20 minutes, or until chicken is cooked to 165°F. Serve with whole grain tortillas and salsa.

Makes 4 Servings. Each 279 calories • 32g protein • 14g total fat • 6g carb • 3g sugar • 3g fiber • 160mg sodium • 2g saturated fat • 1g mono fat • 2g poly fat

MAKE A GREAT PLATE.

Mediterranean Zucchini Salad

INGREDIENTS
2 medium zucchini
2 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup grape tomatoes
½ cup artichoke hearts, chopped
¼ cup Kalamata olives, pitted
1 tsp dried oregano
¼ tsp salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS
Slice zucchini into noodles using a julienne peeler, vegetable spiralizer or knife. In a large bowl, toss zucchini with lemon juice, olive oil, tomatoes, artichoke, olives and oregano. Salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings. Each 106 calories • 2g protein • 8g total fat • 9g carb • 2g sugar • 3g fiber • 65mg sodium

Disclaimer: Material presented in this newsletter is intended for educational or informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health professional.

EAP-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany & Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, retirees and GSEU members.

EAP is a joint labor-management program and is part of the NYS Employee Assistance Program. Contact Info: 2 Empire State Plaza, 11th Floor Albany, NY 12223 ~ 518.486.9769

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