

Posted June 12<sup>th</sup>

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Hey everyone!

For those of you who I have not met, I am Alyssa the Health and Wellness summer student 😊:)

I see that Jo has started a weight loss challenge! This is a great way to hold each other accountable while trying to reach your goals. I thought I would post some tips that could help everyone, not just those who are doing the challenge. The best way to successfully lose weight and keep it off is by living a healthy lifestyle and ingraining good habits. So here are some tips to living that healthy lifestyle and feeling your best!

1. Make sure to eat a good breakfast with protein.- this helps kick your metabolism in the morning and sets you up for a good day
2. Drink lots of water- Staying hydrated boosts your metabolism, helps de-bloat, gives you energy, and makes your skin glow!
3. Take your time eating- the stomach takes around 20 minutes to signal the brain that it is full. This makes it easy to over eat. Make sure you are making healthy portions sizes and waiting a bit until you decide to eat more.
4. Eat Lean, Clean and Green meals-this means having whole, unprocessed foods like lean protein, healthy fats, fresh fruits, lots of greens and making clean healthy recipes. (Stay away from junk food and heavily processed foods. Examples- chips, sweet potato fries, tempura, wontons ect.)

If anyone has any questions or would like some help with meal planning or more tips, please don't hesitate to email or come visit me!

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Posted June 19<sup>th</sup>

Hello fellow Worklink employees!

Do you miss the good old days where you could eat anything and not gain a lot of weight? You can thank your young metabolism for that!

Here is some information on your metabolism and tips on how to get it working to your advantage!

### **What is your metabolism?**

Think of your metabolism as the fire inside you. When you eat or drink something, your metabolism is responsible for converting it to energy. Everyone's metabolism operates at a different speed, but the more quickly it works, the more quickly you'll notice changes in your body.

## **How does it work?**

Since the speed of your metabolism depends on how well you take care of it, it's important to understand how it works! When we talk about the "metabolic process" we're referring to two different phases: anabolism and catabolism.

Anabolism is the process of building and repairing. It helps you generate new cells and efficiently store energy that your body will access when you need it!

Catabolism has the opposite role as anabolism. In this phase, your metabolism is breaking down large molecules to convert them to energy. It's this phase that gives your muscles the ability to contract and allows your body to move. It's also during catabolism that your body breaks down waste and sends it out to be removed.

## **How to boost your metabolism**

What you eat, when you eat, and how frequently you exercise all have major effects on the rate of your metabolism. Here are three important ways to speed that metabolism!

### **1. With Protein!**

When you consume protein, it has a thermic (or warming) effect on your body. And as it heats, you burn nearly 30% more calories! That's why it is important to have protein in each of your meals!

### **2. With your Eating Habits!**

The "when" portion of your metabolism is actually almost as important as the "what!" When you eat frequently (nutritionists suggest every 2-3 hours), you're basically sharpening the function of your metabolism. This frequency of consumption will have incredible effects on the speed of your metabolism. And as you eat, be sure to sip too. Hydration is another huge key to upping your metabolic rate.

### **3. With Exercise!**

And finally, your workouts make a MAJOR difference in the function of your metabolism. Exercise gets that heart rate pumping and metabolism working hard. When you incorporate compound moves into your routine, your body calls on multiple muscles groups, which has a boosting effect on your metabolism.

I will continue to elaborate more on these topics in the future! As always, if anyone has any questions feel free to contact or come visit me 😊:)

Snacks! Who doesn't love snacks? Snacking is a good way to retain energy through the long work day and helps fuel your metabolism. But not all snacks are created equal, it is important to stick to nutrient packed snacks and away from processed foods.

Here are some examples of healthy snacks to eat in-between main meals:

- Kale chips (<https://thebusybaker.ca/sea-salt-and-garlic-kale-chips/>)
- Roasted cauliflower florets (<https://www.wholesomeyum.com/recipes/roasted-broccoli-and-cauliflower-recipe-with-parmesan-garlic-low-carb-gluten-free/> )
- Red peppers, carrots or cucumbers with hummus
- Cucumber slices with guacamole
- Hard boiled eggs
- Mixed nuts and a banana
- Trail mix (watch out for high salt contents and sugary dried fruits)
- Celery and peanut butter
- Apples and peanut butter/ Almond butter (personal favorite!)
- Popcorn (watch what you put on it 😊;) )

If none of these sound tasty, let me know and I can work with you to find something that you may like!

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Posted July 6th  
Happy Friday!!

In my previous post, I explained that protein boots your metabolism. Now I want to explain the other positive effects protein has on the body! Protein is kind of a big deal and contains amino acids that have SO many important jobs; including revving your metabolism and helping your muscles recover. And BONUS: you can get protein from a wide range of sources, from beans, to protein powder to fish. Here is some information on protein and what it does for the body!

### **Reduces appetite**

When a sudden urge for a plate of pasta hits you, it's most likely the hormone ghrelin urging you toward the fettuccini. [Studies](#) have found that adding protein to your meals can lower levels of the hunger hormone. Protein also ups levels of the hormone [peptide YY](#), which boosts your satiety and tells your brain that you don't need that extra serving.

### **Builds lean muscle**

Protein keeps your muscles strong and reduces soreness. And [researchers](#) agree: studies show that protein is necessary for building beautiful, lean muscle. For this reason, it is important to have some protein 30 minutes after a workout.

### **Makes maintenance easier**

[Studies](#) show that protein not only helps you lose weight, but keep it off, too! Make sure to include protein in every meal to get the maximum perks.

### **Speeds up your metabolism**

After building lean muscle with the help of protein and your workouts, your body requires EVEN MORE energy to maintain that muscle. This boosts your metabolism and helps you burn even more calories while at rest. (The more muscle you have=the more calories they body will burn)

As always if anyone has any questions or specific topics you want me to cover, let me know!

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Howdy WorkLinkers!

Today I want to promote the importance of moving around during the work day. Active breaks help restore our attention, increase creativity and make us more productive. Research suggests that sitting for long durations may contribute to serious negative health outcomes such as cardiac complications, increased risk for certain cancers, and even early mortality!

Here is a simple 10 minute routine that can be done at your desk. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Dp2rL397jA> It includes a number of simple stretches and exercises that gets the blood flowing. I will post a breakdown of the video in a comment below.

Starting Monday (after the 40th anniversary mayhem) Brianna and I are going to do this 10 minute routine at 2:00 every day. You are welcome to join us in our office!

I hope you can take some time out of your day to fit this in! Remember that you can modify these exercises to best suit your needs! If you have any questions or would like help with technique don't hesitate to ask!

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Posted July 11th

Hi Everyone!

We are in the heat of summertime and who doesn't like to enjoy a nice cocktail to cool down? (I know Karla likes Mojitos!)

However, there are some things to be aware of when consuming alcohol. It is super easy to rack in the extra calories when consuming alcohol. A standard 6oz glass of wine has about 120 calories and a standard 12oz beer varies but is around 150/200 calories. Not to mention the food munchies that comes with drinking! For these reasons, it is important to be mindful with alcohol consumption when trying to maintain a healthy diet. Here are some pointers:

### Enjoy in moderation

It's all about keeping things in moderation. (Keep your shots to espresso!) A lot of trainers I have worked with promote sticking to 1 – 2 drinks, 2 – 3 nights per week.

### Choose wisely

When choosing a drink, think about going more for wine, champagne, or clear alcohol (sorry beer lovers). Wine contains antioxidants for some heart-healthy perks and clear alcohol has fewer calories and congeners, a compound that can cause more severe hangovers, than dark liquors. If you're making a mixed drink, choose high-quality ingredients and steer clear of sugary mixers. Instead, muddle fresh berries or mint in your drink. Yum! It is also popular to mix wine with sparkling water for a refreshing spritzer!

### Dine before your drink

Eat a healthy dinner before you sip. Drinking on an empty stomach causes the alcohol to go right into your bloodstream, which makes you feel the effects more quickly and feel worse the next day. Having food in your stomach, especially healthy protein, fats, and carbs, helps slow down the absorption.

### Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate

I can't say this enough! (you are probably tired of hearing me say it) A good goal is to have a glass of still or sparkling water between each drink. (you will thank yourself the next morning). This keeps you hydrated, helps prevent hangovers, and you still have a glass in your hand!

So continue to enjoy those summer drinks! Just keep these pointers in mind to help maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Here is a link to some tasty cocktail ideas!

<https://www.health.com/health/gallery/0,,20388773,00.html#strawberry-basil-lemon-fizz>

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Posted July 24<sup>th</sup>

Hey Everyone!

Today I want to talk about the importance of stretching! This topic may be daunting to those who can barely touch their toes, but I can assure you that the numerous health benefits are enough to give it a try. Here is some information on how stretching benefits the body!

### Strengthens posture

Stretching helps ensure correct posture by lengthening tight muscles that pull areas of the body away from their intended position and keeping your muscles loose. Stretching the muscles in your lower back, chest and shoulders can help keep the spine in better alignment and improve overall posture.

### Enables flexibility

Did you know that improved flexibility results in an improved range of motion, making your body work less while moving? Also, stretching lessens the likelihood of injuries during exercise or other sports activities.

### Improve energy levels

Sometimes you may have trouble staying awake during your long, dragging day. If you're feeling this way then it might help to get out of your seat and do a few good stretches for a boost of energy, helping your mind and body be more alert. Muscles tighten when we get tired and that makes us feel even more lethargic, so feel free to stand up and do some stretches. It will help you to quickly and efficiently revitalize your energy levels.

Promotes blood circulation

Stretching increases blood flow to the muscles that not helps reduce post-workout soreness and shorten recovery time, but it will improve overall health. Greater blood circulation helps promote cell growth and organ function. The heart rate will also lower since it doesn't have to work as hard and blood pressure will become more even and consistent!

Now that I have you ready to start stretching on a regular bases, here are some pointers:

- Start with performing each exercise a few times, and as your muscles become more supple, you can increase the amount of time you spend on each one.
- Listen to your body and if a stretch is causing you pain, stop immediately (Stretches should only produce mild tension, so don't force yourself into a difficult stretch)
- Stretches should be held for 20 to 30 seconds
- Movements should be smooth (jerky movements should be avoided)
- Keep a regular breathing rhythm while stretching and avoid holding your breath

If you have any questions or would like help learn some stretches feel free to come by! I will post a link of stretches you can do at your desk with pictures that are easy to follow below!

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Posted Aug 2<sup>nd</sup>

Hello all fellow WorkLinkers!

It is well known that physical activity is important for our health and improves quality of life. There are countless studies showing that physical activity has positive effects on not only our bodies but also the brain. (Study [here](#), and interesting Ted Talk [Here](#) ) Some of the benefits of physical activity include: decreased aging, improved reaction time and attention, increased energy and lifted mood.

So if we know this, why do we have such a hard time fitting in physical activity in our schedules? The truth is after a long day when we are tired, the last thing we want to do is physically exert ourselves. However, that is exactly what we should be doing. Physical activity is looked at as a chore and on the bottom on the priority list when it should be intertwined in our daily routine. Here are some tips to making physical activity a priority in your life:

## **Make it a scheduled appointment**

You know that calendar in your phone with all your scheduled appointments and gatherings? Schedule a meeting for physical activity. This way it is blocked out in your day and is viewed as a commitment.

## **Find an activity you like**

This can be hiking in our beautiful city, a Zumba class with friends, swimming, yoga- whatever activity gets you up and moving. The best exercise is the one you like, as you are more likely to stick with it over time.

## **Meet a friend for cardio, not coffee**

Hangouts do not always have to revolve around food, coffee, alcohol or movies. Working out with a friend can help keep you accountable, since no one wants to disappoint a pal who's counting on them to make it to a workout. Some research has shown that exercising with a close friend gives people more energy, higher spirits and less fatigue.

## **Use a fitness tracker**

Fitbits, My Fitness pal, and many other apps are out there to gather information like step-counts, total calories burned, calories consumed and sleep patterns. The dynamic process of monitoring your behaviour and tracking will keep you accountable and show you what behaviour change needs to happen (ex. eating less calories, more steps in a day, more sleep)

When starting a new routine, keep in mind it takes approximately 66 days to form a new habit. Being more active is not going to come overnight. But with discipline, dedication and time, physical activity will become YOUR new habit. No tips or fitness trackers are going to change your life style, that part is up to you!

If you have any questions or would love some fitness suggestions feel free to come by my office or email me!

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Posted aug 8th

Hello WorkLinkers!

I am here today to talk about mindfulness!

In the busy world around us, it is easy to get caught up in craziness of life. We are constantly surrounded by stressors: a RFP application, ICM, tough clients, and life in general! When it comes to stress and life, there are a lot of things we cannot change. One way to cope is to practice Mindfulness. Mindfulness refers to any practice in which you concentrate and try to remain aware of your experience moment to moment. That experience is anchored by an object (like the breath) a sensation (like walking), a sound, a visual, or more, and ultimately aims to

cultivate mental stability. Being mindful in our daily lives can lower our stress, reduce brain chatter and strengthen our immune system.

Here are ways to practice mindfulness in your daily life:

#### Observe your breathing

Your breathing occurs naturally and rhythmically. When you pay attention to it, it takes you out of your mind and into your body. You momentarily free yourself from your churning thoughts, worries and fears, and you remind yourself of who you really are – your inner spirit, not your thoughts.

#### Connect with your senses

Your senses-tough, smells, taste, sound and sight- are your getaway into the present moment. But when you are lost in thought, you don't experience what your senses are picking up. Pause to soak up the beautiful aroma of your coffee, the salty ocean air, the grass under your feet. Put the love and attention into the simple tasks of your day and you will be amazed how much joy and peace they can bring you.

#### Pause between actions

Pause and listen to the sound of the phone ringing before answering it. Pause and feel the weight of your body in your chair before beginning your work for the day. Putting mini pauses between actions in your day can ground you in your inner being, clear your mind, and provide you with fresh energy for the task ahead.

#### Get in the flow of doing things you love

We all have certain activities we love doing- they connect us with our inner spirit and bring us fully alive. For you it could be cooking, dancing, singing, gardening, writing, painting, walking. We love doing these things so much that we often loose ourselves in them. That is, we lose our smaller self-our churning thoughts and worries- because we are pouring all of our love and attention into the present moment.

#### Mediate Daily

Meditation has huge benefits and increases your levels of energy, happiness, inspiration and inner peace. It does not have to take long. Even 10 minutes a day can have a position impact on your life. It will also strengthen your mindfulness muscles, so you'll find it much easier to become present throughout the day.

Hopefully mindfulness will be something you will incorporate in your daily lives and experience the benefits. If anyone would has any questions or would like more information on the topic please come see me!

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Posted on 08/17/2018

Hello everyone!



Today I want to talk about stress management! Chronic stress is a one of the biggest problems in North America. One in four Canadians cite stress as the reason for leaving their job, while 73% of all working adults aged 20 to 64 report at least some level of stress. So what is the best way to help people? Adults have heard the popular stress busting tips like eating healthy, exercise, meditation and many others. But yet most adults still struggle with chronic stress. I did a stress management workshop this week so I picked some of the pointers from the workshop.

1. Recognize what you can change and accept what you cannot. Look for the things you have no control over. Then look to release the things you cannot change. Release the pressure when it shows up. Allow yourself to relax and have some self-compassion.
2. Re-frame your mistakes and challenges in terms of growth. When we do this brain responds to these challenges differently. They no longer send us into a panicked downward spiral
3. Use stress to your advantage. You can let it tear you down, or use it as fuel and motivation. Keep focused on what you have control over and let go of what you don't.
4. Observe and label each thought, without any judgment. With stress come foggy brains and an overload of thoughts constantly circling. When "observing" your thoughts, you'll notice that they fall into specific categories, and you probably have some types of thoughts you rethink many, many, many times a day. When I observe and label my thoughts, I notice how often I'm in "planning" mode. I'll be planning my list of things to do, thinking about how I need to do something for work
5. Talk to your brain instead of listening. When we get stressed, we often get negative. Keep a positive outlook and instead of letting your brain go to negative thoughts. Stop yourself and counteract it with positive thoughts. Keep in mind now powerful negative thoughts are: for every one negative thought, you need at least five to counteract it.
6. Create Structure. Maintain a healthy daily routine: plan meals a head of time, organize chores, make a to-do list. When structure is put in place it takes away responsibility from your brain to remember things.

Avoiding burnout and managing stress takes practice just like any other skill. Hopefully these are some new skill that can help you in managing your stress.

If anyone has any questions or would like some handouts from the workshop, feel free to come by my office!!

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Aug/21/2018

Hello fellow Co-workers,

I wanted to inform you about the Life Works counseling line WorkLink employers get to use. Mental health is something that should be taken seriously and it is important to know the resources that you can go to for help. Through your benefits, WorkLink can use the resources at Life Works. LifeWorks

provides counseling services over the phone, Skype session or in person. Here is how to connect to services through LifeWorks:

- You can call the “Lifeworks” phone number at 1-866-331-6851 – an intake worker will open a file on you with your personal info, contact info etc. This number operates 24/7.
- You can book a one-hour session over the phone – this is a single session that can help address immediate needs.
- Or, if you need ongoing support, you can talk to intake about other options for ongoing counselling.

There are many resources and information on Lifeworks.com

Sign in with this User Name and Password:

User Name: health

Password: Support

You also get 500 dollars towards counseling outside of LifeWorks from your benefits.

This is a friendly reminder to make sure you are taking time out of your busy schedule for yourself ☺

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Last post!

I hope I have covered some topics that have raised awareness and provoked some thinking.

Want I want you to learn from these posts and from my time here overall:

-it is a life style choice-changes are made in your daily routines

-moderation is key- enjoy life and the food that comes with it. But don not overdo it. Keep in mind portion sizes and

-Get Active

-have fun with fitness

-don't ve afraid to try something new., whether that is a spin class, yoga, it is different for everyone.

Remember you are not the only one and everyone was a beginner at some point. (put links to trampoline fitness in Langford.

-Support each other- whe someone wants to go on a walking meeting, everyone benefits, not just you.

During my time here, I feel like I excelled in listening actively and communicating effectively with others. I really worked hard to make sure I wrote clearly and accurately in all formats. Carried

At my time at WorkLink I think I did the best I could to integrate health and wellness initiatives into the workplace. I had positive feedback from my stretching sessions and the other initiatives. Overall thought I did well in bringing in what I have learned about Health and Wellness into the WorkLink.

<https://www.uvic.ca/coopandcareer/assets/docs/student-docs/co-op/worktermsubmissions/EPHE-PosterAlternatives.pdf>