



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM
Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



What's Your New Year's Resolution??

As we start 2019 remember, **mental fitness is just as important as physical fitness.** Physical fitness gets plenty of attention, and for good reason. A healthy body can prevent conditions such as heart disease and diabetes, and help you maintain independence as you age. Mental fitness is just as important as physical fitness, and shouldn't be neglected. Including mental dexterity exercises into your daily routine can help you reap the benefits of a sharper mind and a healthier body for years to come.

Mental fitness means keeping your brain and emotional health in tip-top shape. It doesn't mean training for "brain Olympics" or acing an IQ test. It refers to a series of exercises that help you slow down, decompress and boost a flagging memory.

Keeping your mind mentally fit isn't as difficult as getting ready for a marathon, but it's a good analogy. You can add mental exercises to the many activities you already perform, such as reading, daydreaming, finding humor in life, etc.

You might try the following approaches to increase your mental fitness.

1. Stop Multitasking
2. Be Positive with Yourself
3. Try Something Different
4. Play Games
5. Read More
6. Take Time for Yourself

Mental fitness is important to maintaining your brain and your body healthy, especially as you age. For more information visit www.healthline.com

January 2019



Using Screens in the Dark Can Hinder Preteens' Sleep

According to Traci Pedersen, Associate News Editor for psychcentral.com, a new study by U.K. and Swiss researchers suggest preteens who look at a phone or television screen in the dark an hour before bed are at risk of not getting enough sleep. The findings show that night-time use of phones, tablets and laptops is consistently tied to poor sleep quality, insufficient sleep, and poor perceived quality of life. Insufficient sleep has previously been linked to poor immune responses, depression, anxiety and obesity in children and adolescents.

For more information visit psychcentral.com



Researchers Reveal New Risk Factor for Poor Mental Health

A new study has found that some people exposed to a certain toxic metal as children may face poor mental health as adults. This finding may have far-reaching implications for all populations exposed to this risk factor.

Lead is a type of metal that people throughout the world have used in the construction of water pipes, added into paint to prevent corrosion, and put into gasoline to maintain engine durability.

However, over the years, researchers have concluded that lead is toxic and can be extremely dangerous.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "there is no known level of lead exposure that is considered safe." In time, ingested lead particles tend to accumulate in a person's bones, brain, and other organs, increasing the risk of health problems, including high blood pressure, and damage to the kidneys.

Lead that accumulates in the body can also disrupt the central nervous system, and some studies have linked lead exposure during childhood with behavioral and intelligence deficits.

Now, new research from Duke University in Durham, NC, also suggests that exposure to lead during childhood can affect how an individual's personality develops and predispose them to mental health problems in adulthood.

The research findings, which appear in *JAMA Psychiatry*, indicate that people who had high levels of lead in their blood when they were young are more likely to experience mental health issues by the time they turn 38. The study also indicates that they are also more likely to have developed unhealthy personality traits, such as neuroticism.

Allergies and Depression: The Surprising Connection

Allergies and Depression: The Surprising Connection

Are allergies and depression or anxiety related? Allergy symptoms include sneezing, a runny nose, coughing, a sore throat, and a headache. These symptoms range from mild to severe. While some people with allergies can go about their normal daily routine in only slight discomfort, others might feel physically ill.

Connections: If you have depression and anxiety along with allergies, you might think the former conditions have nothing to do with the latter. But as it turns out, there appears to be connections between allergies and depression or anxiety.

Interestingly, allergic rhinitis has been linked with higher rates of depression and suicidal behavior.

Now, this doesn't mean that everyone who has allergies will also have depression or anxiety, and vice versa. But you may be at risk for depression if you have a history of allergies.

What's the connection? Find out more by visiting www.healthline.com



Dear Valued Referral Sources,

We appreciate your referrals in December. Thank you for your trust and confidence in our services. May your New Year be blessed with Peace, Love and Joy! We look forward to the opportunity to continue working with you and your team.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Campbell, MSW, LSW

Program Manager, WHS Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Washington Health System & Washington Physicians Group

Office#: 724-627-2526

WHS Center for Mental Health & Wellbeing



Contact Information:

Inpatient Behavioral Health P:724-223-3195 155 Wilson Ave
Washington, PA 15301
F:724-229-2128

Outpatient Behavioral Health Washington 95 Leonard Ave
Building #1, Suite 301
Washington, PA 15301
P:724-579-1075

Outpatient Behavioral Health Greene 130 Greene Plaza
Waynesburg, PA 15370
P:724-627-2756

Behavioral Health Management:

Jennifer Campbell – Program P:724-627-2526
Manager, Inpatient &
Outpatient Services

Mark Wright – Inpatient Unit P:724-223-3197
Manager

Greene County Crisis Line: (888) 480-7283
Washington County Crisis Line: (877) 225-3567
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-8255
Greenbriar Treatment Facility: (800) 637-4673