

WELLNESS review



Prevention is better than cure

Is it not better to prevent yourself from getting sick by living a life of wellness than to get sick and then try to get better? Your goal should be wellness! Living a life of wellness improves health, energy and wellbeing, whilst reducing the risk of developing chronic disease. Wellness promotes positive health, and positive health promotes a healthy mind, body and spirit.

Laughter is the best medicine

One of the most important factors in wellness is laughter! Various authors have suggested that laughter:

- Exercises and relaxes muscles,
- Improves respiration,
- Stimulates circulation,
- Increases the production of pain killing endorphins,
- Decreases the production of stress related hormones, and
- Enhances immunity.

Remember also that humour induces positive emotions that have beneficial effects in the absence of laughter!

When was the last time you took time out to relax?

Taking regular time out to relax is also vital for wellness. Relaxation activities, such as yoga, meditation or simply taking time out to read a book or spend time with family or friends, will increase the levels of chemicals in your brain that make you feel happy.

Diets fail, lifestyle changes succeed

Diet and lifestyle are also extremely important for long-term wellness. How many times have you started a diet with the best of intentions, only to find it too difficult to stick to for more than a few weeks? Let's be honest, there is only so long you can live on a fad diet. In order to achieve long term goals, what you need are positive lifestyle changes.

You are what you "most consistently" eat

We have all heard the saying "you are what you eat," but the truth is, "you are what you most consistently eat." The best way to achieve your goal of wellness is to consume a diet you can sustain for the long term.

You will eat an average of 21 meals in a week. Not every one of those meals must be "perfect". Allow yourself one or two meals a week to eat whatever you want and then go straight back to healthy eating for the next meal.

Seven steps to Healthy Eating

There are seven key steps to help you eat well and be healthy:

1. **Include protein rich foods in each meal or snack:** Protein foods include fish, seafood, poultry, meat, eggs, dairy, soy and legumes.
2. **Enjoy a minimum of three cups of fresh vegetables daily:** Increased vegetable consumption is recommended for long-term health and vitality.
3. **Enjoy a minimum of two pieces or one cup of fresh fruit every day:** Daily fruit consumption is recommended. However, it is recommended that those people who are trying to lose weight or control blood sugar levels should aim for a maximum of four pieces of fruit daily.
4. **Limit starchy carbohydrates to two small serves per day:** Limit high glycaemic load foods such as bread, rice, pasta and cereal to one to two servings daily.
5. **Include nuts, seeds and healthy oils in your diet:** Healthy fats are encouraged through the consumption of healthy oils, nuts and seeds. Limit cooking and salad oils to 2 tablespoons, and nuts and seeds to a small handful or ¼ cup daily.
6. **Drink a minimum of eight glasses of pure water every day:** Use natural flavourings such as fresh lemon, lime and mint in water instead of soft drinks and cordials. Reduce excessive consumption of caffeinated beverages to 1-2 per day.
7. **Enjoy a "freedom" meal once a week:** A "wellness program" is a life-long diet and lifestyle program. Allow yourself one or two meals a week to eat whatever you want and then go straight back to the program for the next meal.

You can achieve your goal of wellness

Your goal of wellness can be achieved by combining a wellness diet with regular exercise, relaxation, fun and key nutritional supplementation. If you would like to improve your energy, health and wellbeing please come in and see me today. I can offer guidance in living that promotes optimal health long term. As a health care professional my aim is your wellbeing, and self understanding. Please come in and get today your wellness prescription.

