



Be Well, Live Well, Stay Well

WELLNESS UPDATES

Stress Management

Embracing Self-Care

Making time for self-care is a powerful mood booster and stress buster. And when paired with other treatments, self-care can play an important role in helping to manage most chronic conditions, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Self-care isn't one-size-fits-all making it important to determine if what you are doing is filling the following buckets:

Nourishing. Self-care activities should help relieve tension in your mind and your body. Examples include clearing clutter from a kitchen counter, scheduling overdue health appointments, going for a swim or taking a walk through town.

Routine. Self-care isn't a rare treat. Is there something healing you do occasionally that could become a regular habit? Examples might be turning your once-in-a-while hike into a weekly commitment.

Comforting. Self-care also needs to make you feel good and be satisfying. Examples include sorting junk mail, working on a hobby or talking with a friend about what brings you gratitude.

Whatever you do, don't feel guilty for taking time for self-care.

Source: Renew by UnitedHealthcare, <https://www.renewuhc.com/article/mental-health/renews-happiness-challenge-rethink-self-care>

Strategies to Ease Your Mind

Source: 8 ways to turn around a stressful day. Renew by UnitedHealthcare, <https://www.renewuhc.com/article/mental-health/8-ways-turn-around-stressful-day>

Stress is inevitable and a normal part of day-to-day living. However, when stress keeps you in panic mode constantly it can be unhealthy for your body and mind. Worry that isn't managed is called chronic stress. According to the American Psychological Association, chronic stress doesn't only effect your mind, but it is also related to heart disease, obesity and high blood pressure. To prevent chronic stress you need to find ways to release it. Try these strategies to help ease your mind and body:

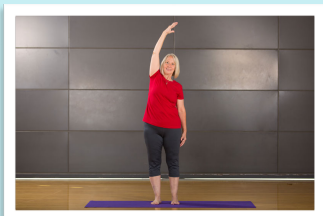


- ☼ **Go for a walk** - as little as 20-30 minutes of moderate daily activity offers benefits to your mind
- ☼ **Breathe deeply** - paying attention to your breathing may be an effective way to rein in stress and relax
- ☼ **Write down your worries** - journaling can help identify stressors and brainstorm ways to resolve them
- ☼ **Pet or play with a furry friend** - pets can not only provide comfort but they can also give you a reason to get active
- ☼ **Phone a friend** - companionship and making connections with others are important for your mental well-being. Sharing stories and laughter may significantly reduce stress.
- ☼ **Set a new happiness target** - Try not to worry about what you haven't accomplished and adjust your goals to smaller, attainable versions.
- ☼ **Get outside** - surrounding yourself with fresh air and greenery may reduce stress.
- ☼ **Relax your muscles** - Stretch out or do a simple control-and-release exercise to tighten and then relax your muscles.

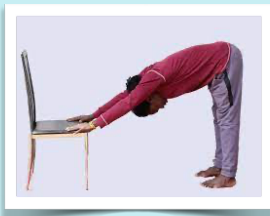
5 Yoga Poses to Try

Source: 3 benefits of yoga that can help you age well. Renew by United Healthcare, <https://www.renewuhc.com/article/fitness/3-benefits-yoga-can-help-you-age-well>

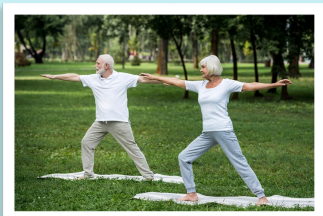
Standing Crescent Moon Pose



Downward Facing Dog with Chair



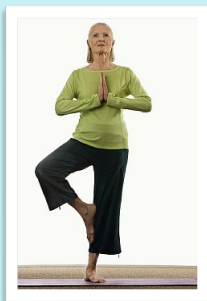
Warrior II Pose



Half Lord of the Fishes with Chair



Tree Pose



Additional resources are available to plan members at <https://www.renewuhc.com> to assist you with your wellness, fitness, nutrition, mental health and lifestyle goals. Renew resources may vary by plan.

Plans are insured through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or one of its affiliated companies, a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract and a Medicare-approved Part D sponsor. Enrollment in these plans depends on the plan's contract renewal with Medicare. Consider also commenting that Renew resources vary by plan.

Learn more about benefits, enrollment and accessing care from your doctor. Visit: <https://retiree.uhc.com/soi>

Yoga Benefits to Help You Age Well

Source: 3 benefits of yoga that can help you age well. Renew by United Healthcare, <https://www.renewuhc.com/article/fitness/3-benefits-yoga-can-help-you-age-well>

We have all heard that brain games and memory training can improve cognition but did you know that in 2017, a *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* study found that practicing yoga has a similar effect? This same study also found that people in the yoga group showed noticeable improvements in their mood, ability to focus and resilience to stress. Yoga doesn't mean you have to learn how to get into a headstand or pretzel your body into complicated knots. In fact, most yoga poses are simple and safe for older adults.

Benefit #1: Power Up Your Concentration and Productivity

- Taking time each day to focus on deep breaths and stretches can relax your mind and improve focus.

Benefit #2: Improved Sleep

- Yoga has been shown to help people fall asleep faster and sleep longer.
- Yoga may help increase your body's levels of melatonin ("the sleep hormone").
- Reduced muscle and joint pain can also help you fall asleep faster

Benefit #3: Stay steady on Your Feet

- Yoga may help improve your strength, balance and coordination to help prevent falls.