

Nourish to Flourish

Integrative Medical Group Visit Programs for Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID-19

Week 8: Wellness Review, Yoga, Massage and Graduation

Daily Agenda

- Grounding Meditation
- Check-in
- Discussion: Wellness Review
- Easy Yoga
- Bio-break
- Activity: Self-massage
- Discussion: Reflections
- Sharing of Gifts and Graduation
- Groups in future

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Wellness Review

- In the last 8 weeks together, we have learned a lot about the mind- body-spirit connection and how this contributes to your wellness. Today we will review what we have learned and where to go from here.



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Together, we have learned about:

- The effect stress has on the body, mind, and emotions.
- The importance of healthy sleeping behaviors for overall health and well-being.
- What it means to eat mindfully and the importance of being present while eating.
- The importance of vitamins and minerals and how they affect health.
- Lifestyle strategies that can help decrease inflammation.
- The role of meditation and mindfulness in everyday life.
- Acupressure points and how they can be helpful.
- Dealing with challenging relationships and communication during the COVID-19 era.
- Practicing self-compassion.
- Navigating COVID-related news, and new potential information about long COVID
- Utilizing movement as a form of medicine (yoga and exercise).
- Benefits and techniques related to self-massage for home practice.

What are some things you have found most helpful about this group?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What are five things you want to incorporate into your life from this group?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If you could pass along one thing on to someone you love, what would it be?

1. _____

Tips for Continued Health and Wellbeing:

1. **Breathe.** When you feel tense, take ten slow, deep breaths in through your nose, out through your mouth.
2. **Spend time with your friends and family.** Share the good stuff.

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3. **Stay hydrated.** Aim to drink at least eight glasses of water a day.
4. **Smile** at people that you pass on the street.
5. **Be ok with saying no.** Allow yourself to say no to some requests and Channel your energy into positive opportunities.
6. **Laugh.** See the humor in life and have fun.
7. **Communicate.** Be honest with yourself and others. Ask for what you want. Express your true feelings as they occur.
8. **Eat healthy, nourishing foods** for the body, mind and spirit. Be mindful while eating. Notice feelings and thoughts that arise.
9. **Carve out time in your day to center yourself.** Relax, sit, breathe deeply and quiet your mind.
10. **Make a gratitude list.** Write down three things that are both new and good for which you feel thankful.
11. **Take a bubble bath.** Try scented oils or soaps for aromatherapy.
12. **Clean it up.** Recycle old junk and papers. Cleaning your physical space can help create more emotional and mental space.
13. **Unplug!** At the end of the day, instead of watching TV, surfing the internet or using a phone, take time to reflect on the day and what needs to get done for the next day.
14. **Express and receive love** as often as possible for yourself and others.
15. **Don't be afraid to cry.** Crying is nature's way of releasing toxins from the body, releasing stress, or expressing joy.
16. **Move more.** Walk, stretch, move about. Staying physically active keeps you mentally fit, calm, and at peace.
17. **Be intentional** with your language.
18. **Build community.** Take time in your week to participate in groups or communities that are special to you.
19. **Find a creative outlet** and feel good.
20. **Be forgiving** with yourself and others. Withholding love does not nurture relationships.

Add your own wellness tips below:

21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____
25. _____

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Introduction to Yoga

Yoga is a practice that unites the mind, body and spirit through a series of breathing exercises and holding various postures. There are many different styles of yoga (hatha, restorative, yin, power) and ways to adapt postures for everyone. The core components of yoga can be separated into three parts:

- » **Meditation and Relaxation:** Meditation and mindfulness practices can be incorporated into yoga to help you become more aware of the present moment.
- » **Breathing:** Controlling your breath is an important part of yoga because it can help you control your body, quiet your mind, and become in tune with your emotions.
- » **Poses:** Yoga poses (postures) are movements designed to increase strength and flexibility. Both simple and more physically demanding poses can be therapeutic and are associated with various health benefits. Today, we will focus on simple poses that can be done in a chair.

Health Benefits of Yoga

- Yoga can be beneficial for people of all ages and physical abilities. Talking with a yoga teacher or yoga therapist about your preferences can help you choose a class that is best for your health. Consistent, appropriate yoga practice can
 - Improve strength, balance, and flexibility
 - Relieve back pain
 - Ease arthritis symptoms
 - Benefit heart health
 - Improve sleep patterns
 - Improve energy levels and mood
 - Manage stress
 - Connect you with a community of support.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/9-benefits-of-yoga>

Like with any new physical activity, listen to your body and be mindful of what postures make the most sense for you. Be on the lookout for any sharp pains- discomfort from muscle engagement is ok, but come out of the posture if anything is painful. Feel free to modify and make the postures work for you.

Self-massage

- Massage therapy is a science that has been practiced for over 5,000 years. By applying hand pressure to the muscles, massage therapy relaxes and heals muscles, increases circulation, and allows the mind to become relaxed.
- Self-care massage is where you give yourself a massage treatment, while fully clothed, and sitting in a chair to care for sore, achy muscles and to relax. Options are to use lotion or massage oil on arms and hands, unscented for those with sensitivities to scented products.
- Enjoy taking care of yourself with these massage techniques and feel free to try them with a friend or family member.

Techniques for Self-massage:

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» **Hand massage**

1. Begin with massage to the hands- gently rubbing the hands together, to create warmth. Close both hands making a fist, then open them and spread your fingers out like a fan. Repeat a few times making a fist with both hands closed, then open both hands and fan your fingers out.
2. Gently massage one hand, the “receiving” hand, starting on the top of the hand, applying pressure that is comfortable for you. Turn your hand over and massage the palm, pressing into each area, the pads or heel of the hand, the middle and upper palm.
3. Now gently grasp and squeeze each finger, one at a time. Practice mindful breathing as you give your hand a massage, being aware of what you feel and notice as you massage your hand.
4. Now switch hands, and repeat this massage to the “massaging/giving hand.” (Optional: Finish the hand massage by rolling a tennis ball between your hands, clockwise and then counterclockwise.)
5. Shake your hands, like after washing them and shaking water off. Rest for a moment. Notice how your hands feel.

» **Wrist and arm massage**

1. Rotate your wrists clockwise and counterclockwise and massage them.
2. Massage your forearm, lower arm, from the wrists to the elbow, gently squeezing each area from wrist to elbow. Continue to the upper arm, gently massage and knead the bicep, the large muscle on top of your upper arm, and the triceps, the muscles beneath your upper arm.
3. Grasp your shoulder muscle and massage, kneading it like bread dough. Then grasp the top of your shoulder, the trapezius, and gently massage, kneading it like bread dough.
4. Repeat on the opposite, “giving” side, beginning with the forearm and moving up the arm.
5. Notice how your arms and shoulders feel now.
6. Optional: Use tennis balls to massage these areas. Hold a tennis ball in the giving hand and roll it over the hands, arms and shoulders. Place the tennis ball in a sock and tie a knot in the sock for more leverage. Try using fists, palms, or knuckles instead of fingers alone to massage.

» **Neck and back massage**

1. Knead the back of the neck gently. Form a letter “C” with your “giving” hand and massage the neck. Notice any tension present.
2. Using two tennis balls tied inside a sock, place these on your back, on the large muscles, not on the spine.
3. You may sit in a chair with the balls between your back and the chair, or stand against a wall, with the balls between your back and the wall. Move your body from side to side, and up and down, so the balls are giving your back a massage. Or, simply stand or sit still with the balls still and against your back.
4. Notice how you feel.

» **Leg and foot massage**

1. Place a paper towel on the floor and put a tennis ball on the paper.

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2. Place one foot on top of a ball and roll your foot over it, massaging your foot. Repeat on your other foot. You can try this with golf balls inside a sock too, if your foot can take the firm, deeper pressure.
3. Hold a tennis ball in hand and massage your legs, thighs, hips, low back and buttocks if you have sciatic pain.
4. Notice how you feel.

» **Scalp massage**

1. Gently massage the scalp, with fingertips, moving to the temples in front of the ears, the forehead, eyebrows, around the eyes, the cheeks, and jaw.
2. Gently yawn, stretching the mouth open, then make a frowning face, closing eyes, closing the mouth, and tightening the face.
3. Hold a moment, and then open the eyes wide.
4. Breathe in deeply, breath out. Relax.

Disclosure: Always notice areas that are tender to the touch, and stop or avoid massaging these areas. Notice if swelling is present and avoid massage there. And never massage an area with a bruise or open sore or wound, this could cause more damage to the injured area. If the massage causes any irritation, or increases pain or symptoms already present, then stop.

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Recipe: Smoothies

Smoothies are a great way to increase your fruit and vegetable intake. Here are some ideas for ingredients. Experiment with mixing and matching to find you favorite combinations.

Fruits: Bananas, berries, pineapple, kiwi, papaya, mango, melons, pears, others...

Vegetables: Greens (spinach, kale, collards, lettuce), carrots, beets, avocados, cucumbers, others...

- Vegetables can be added raw or steamed before blending.

Texture: Citrus (lemon, lime, orange, grapefruit), milk (dairy, almond, soy, rice), kefir, yogurt, nut butters, oats, silken tofu, bananas, ice.

Healthy Sweeteners: Honey, agave, maple syrup, stevia, applesauce.



Image credit: www.marthastewart.com

Poem and Quotes

There's a Hole in My Sidewalk

1) I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I fall in.
I am lost...
I am hopeless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

2) I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I'm in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

3) I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in...it's a habit
My eyes are open; I know where I am;
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

4) I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

5) I walk down another street.

- *Portia Nelson, There's a Hole in My Sidewalk: The Romance of Self-Discovery*

“Most people have it backwards.
They think they live by what they want.
But what really guides them is what they're afraid of.
What they don't want.”

- *Khaled Hosseini, Excerpt from And the Mountains Echoed*