



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN MOVEMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH

Movement has a profound impact on mental health. Engaging in physical activity is 1.5 times more effective at alleviating stress, anxiety, and mild-to-moderate symptoms of depression than taking antidepressant medications.

The connection between physical activity and mental health is deeply rooted in the intimate relationship between your mind and body. Let's explore how exercise influences your mental wellbeing:

- **Elevates our mood:** Exercise triggers the release of endorphins - natural brain chemicals that create feelings of happiness and euphoria. This biochemical response enhances your overall sense of wellbeing.
- **Reduces stress:** Physical activity prompts your body's systems to communicate more closely, particularly when responding to physical stress. This heightened communication helps you respond better to stressors of all kinds.
- **Keeps your mind sharp:** Endorphins uplift your mood and sharpen your concentration. Exercise stimulates the production of new brain cells, bolstering memory and helping prevent age-related cognitive decline.
- **Alleviates mental health symptoms:** Regular physical activity can ease symptoms of depression and anxiety, leading to an improvement in mental health.
- **Builds your resilience:** Embracing exercise as a coping mechanism builds resilience in managing emotional challenges. It's a healthier alternative to avoidance strategies, such as alcohol and drug misuse or overeating.



Visit Wellpath This Week for other ways to stay active throughout the month of May.



CHOOSE KINDNESS DAILY

If you haven't yet incorporated exercise into your routine, don't worry! Start with walking or any other low-impact exercise. Experiment with different activities until you discover one that brings you joy and is sustainable in the long run. Your mind and body will thank you for it!





Mental Health & Motion Challenge

May/June Daily Exercise Calendar

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
<p>18</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Name, aloud, one thing you are thankful for.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Meditate/pray after stretch.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Converse with someone in your support group.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Name, aloud, 2 things you are thankful for.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Send email/text/note/ call someone in your support group.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Make a health snack to eat May 25-31.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Take a walk/ walk a dog. Name 3 things you are thankful for.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Name 1 think you are thankful for. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Meditate/pray after stretch.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Do 3 planks to mild fatigue. Converse with someone in your support group (make plans for the weekend).</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Take a walk/ walk a dog. Stretch 10 min. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Make health snack to eat June 1 - 7.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>
<p>1</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Stretch 10 min. Send email/text/note/call someone in your support group.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Take a walk/walk dog. Name 4 things you are thankful for.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Do 3 planks to mild fatigue. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Eat fresh fruit/ vegetable you REALLY like. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Eat fresh fruit/ veggie you like. Converse with someone in your support group (make future plan).</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Take a walk. Eat your favorite healthy meal. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Make a healthy snack to eat June 8 - 14. Name 5 things you are thankful for. Meditate or pray.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Do 3 planks to mild fatigue. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Eat fresh fruit/ vegetable you REALLY like. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Do squats to mild fatigue. Do 3 planks to mild fatigue. Daydream/ meditate about your perfect vacation.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Do push-ups (wall, knee, standard) until mild fatigue. Meditate/ focus on 6 things you are thankful for. Converse with someone in your support group. Make plans for future.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Converse with someone your support group (ask questions/ listen). Intentional act of kindness. Read something inspirational.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Take a walk. Eat your favorite healthy meal. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Make a healthy snack to eat June 15 - 21. Name 6 things you are thankful for. Meditate/pray.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>

Regular movement significantly impacts mental health. On this calendar, you will find low-impact exercises requiring no equipment. Each day you will perform the daily exercise and activity. You will record your feelings after each exercise/activity. Start with small goals and increase duration, frequency, and intensity gradually.





Mental Health & Motion Challenge

June/July Daily Exercise Calendar

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
<p>15</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Meditate/ pray. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?)</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>16</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>17</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Meditate/ pray. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?)</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>18</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>19</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Converse with someone in your support group (make plans). Read something inspirational.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Take a walk. Eat your favorite healthy meal. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Make a healthy snack to eat June 22 - 28. Name 7 things you are thankful for. Meditate/pray.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>
<p>22</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?) Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>23</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?)</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>24</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Read something inspirational. Daydream/ meditate/relive about a very happy day.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>25</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?)</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Eat a fresh fruit/veggie you REALLY like. Send an email/text/note or call someone in your support group. Read something inspirational.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Take a walk. Eat your favorite healthy meal. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Make a healthy snack to eat June 29 - July 5. Name 8 things you are thankful for. Meditate/pray.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>
<p>29</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?) Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>30</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>1</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Read something inspirational. Daydream/ meditate/relive about a very happy day.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>2</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>3</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Compliment a family member/ coworker. Send an email/text/ note or call someone in your support group (make plans).</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Take a walk. Eat your favorite healthy meal. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Make a healthy snack to eat July 6 - 12. Name 9 things you are thankful for. Meditate/pray.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>
<p>6</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Listen to a happy song (sing/dance/ move?) Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>7</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>8</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Read something inspirational. Eat a fresh fruit/veggie you REALLY like.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>9</p> <p>3 planks to mild fatigue. 3 bridges to mild fatigue. Intentional act of kindness.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>10</p> <p>5-minute healthy back yoga. Compliment a family member/ coworker. Send an email/text/ note or call someone in your support group (make plans).</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Take a walk/walk dog. Eat your favorite healthy meal. Journal about a recent positive experience.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Plan your M&M calendar for the remainder of July. Make a healthy snack for July 13 -19. Read something inspirational.</p> <p>☹️ 😐 😊</p>

The M&M Challenge has concluded. Please complete the evaluation sent by WellPath when you have completed the 8 week challenge activities on each day. Questions? Email Wellness@SRPMIC-nsn.gov.

