

Completely Well

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Insurance Agency

The Gift of food, Medical Records, Rituals and Traditions, Exercise on Vacation, Ask the Trainer, and Produce of the Month: Mandarin Oranges

In this Issue

The Importance of Ritual and Tradition

We may be more aware of rituals and traditions during the holiday season than any other time of the year, but rituals and traditions are a part of our everyday life. More importantly, they can offer both emotional comfort and improve physical health.

Rituals and traditions can take many forms. Maybe it is the way you pour milk first then coffee in the morning. Or it could be the way you say the same kind of goodbye to a family member when you head to work. Larger rituals surround important life moments, like a wedding, a child's birth, or the death of a loved one. Whether large or small, the ritual is a calming structure.

We find peace in the repetition of certain rituals, and that peace is stress reducing.

Stress reduction is an important piece to overall health. Reducing stress reduces blood pressure and lowers cortisol levels. Establishing rituals that include exercise and healthy food and drink can add to the health benefits. And if you find that there is a tradition or ritual that stresses you out, it is time to change it.

Pay attention to the habits, rituals, and traditions that you have. Consider which ones are important to you and your family. If you are looking to add some healthy rituals and traditions to your life, consider the list in the next column.

HEALTHY Rituals and Traditions

- Try a cup of green tea before or after dinner.
- Volunteer a couple hours a month at a local food pantry or animal shelter.
- Drive home from work without the radio on. Let the quiet help decompress you from the day.
- Have a dog? Take the dog for a walk each day after dinner. It's good for both of you!
- Sunday dinners once or twice a month with family can keep you connected.



Produce of the Month

Mandarin Oranges

A lunchbox favorite, Mandarin oranges, or clementines, are currently in season. Sweet, seedless, and easy to peel – mandarin oranges are a healthy addition to any meal.

The Basics: Select Mandarin oranges that are not bruised or have obvious soft spots. They may be stored in the refrigerator or on the counter. Wash the peel if you plan on slicing through it.

Try This: Add sliced Mandarin oranges to a stir-fry or salad. Replace the oranges in a favorite orange chicken recipe with Mandarin oranges! It will have an extra sweet taste.

Fact: Each Mandarin orange is an excellent source of Vitamin C and a good source of Vitamin A and fiber.

Healthy Food Gifts


Many food gifts during the holiday season are full of sugar and unhealthy fats. But there are healthy food related gifts you can still purchase. If you are looking for a last minute gift for that health conscious person in your life, consider the following:

- ✓ A reusable lunch box or bento box is just the thing to carry those healthy lunches in to work!
- ✓ An oil mister helps to control the amount of oil used in a pan or on a salad or pasta dish.
- ✓ Hot air popcorn makers are back and more popular than ever. A wide variety of seasonings are available as well.
- ✓ Spiral slicer for vegetables can turn almost any veggie into a low carb noodle!
- ✓ An individualized blender (Oster Blend-N-Go and the Magic Bullet are just 2 examples) allows for single serving smoothies and juices.
- ✓ Fruit of the month club! It's an old standard but will still encourage your gift recipient to eat more fruit and even try a new one!
- ✓ Does your health conscious person have a sweet tooth? Find some dark chocolate to indulge in! Grocery chains like Trader Joe's and Whole Foods offer a variety of dark chocolate options.

Enjoy gift giving this holiday season while still helping those you love to stay healthy!



Personal Medical Records: Know Your Rights

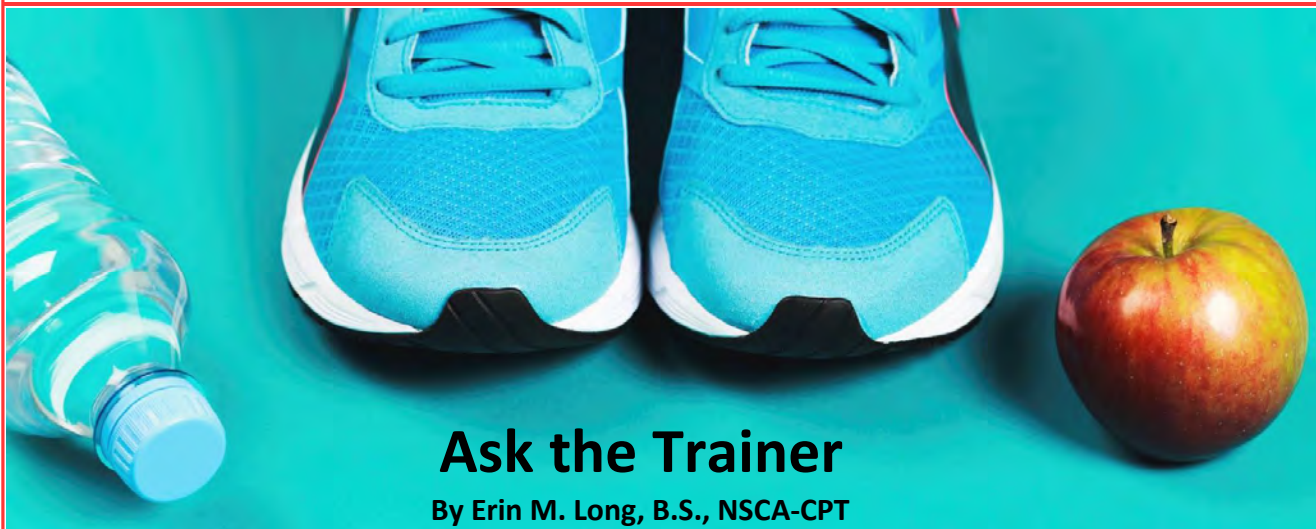


Do you know when you last received a tetanus shot? Or when you were last screened for anemia? Do you know what medicine you received for that upper respiratory infection you had a couple of years ago? Having access to your medical records makes answering these questions possible. Perhaps more importantly, having access to your medical records allows you the opportunity to know each test result, diagnosis, and treatment so you can share this information with other medical professionals that you may wish to see. The HIPAA Privacy Rule gives individuals the right to access and receive a copy of their medical records.

According to the HIPAA Privacy Rule, you have the following rights and procedures regarding your medical records:

- You may request a copy of your records, even if you have an outstanding balance for services.
- A health care provider or health plan may charge you for copying and mailing your records, but those charges must be “reasonable costs,” according to HIPAA.
- You may request that any errors in either medical or billing records be changed and your records amended. If the error is verified, it must be corrected.
- These basic rights are guaranteed, though individual states, health care groups, and hospitals may have additional policies.

Many healthcare providers have gone to electronic medical records with a patient portal. These allow you to access records and often provide a way to make appointments, contact your doctor, and ask for prescription refills. For more information on your rights, go to HHS.gov and search for HIPAA for Individuals.



Ask the Trainer

By Erin M. Long, B.S., NSCA-CPT

Q: Hey Erin! As you know the holidays are here and between holiday parties and shopping, time can be short. Do you have any suggestions on fitting workouts in this time of year?

~Evelyn D

A: HI Evelyn! The holidays are definitely a crazy time of year and many of us back off our workout routines. A large percentage of our society puts on anywhere from 5-10 pounds or more between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Like you said, you have holiday parties and shopping to do so here are a few ideas to stay fit through the Holidays.

Challenge for Yourself. If you look on your portal, I have created many 30 day fitness challenges. One of my challenges consists of doing pushups, squats and crunches each day. We start with a low number and work our way up. It's not a full workout, but it will keep you moving every day.

Shop! Yes I said it, SHOP! You will be doing it anyway, so why not get more bang for your buck? Park as far away from the mall or shopping center as you can to get a few extra steps in. While in the mall, do a few extra laps. It may not be intense cardio but having a goal to walk 10,000 steps in a day can help.

Watch Your Eating. You may splurge on a cookie or two, a piece of pie or other goodies people make this time of year. The big thing to remember is that even if you do, be sure you eat well the rest of the time. We all like to indulge in a tasty treat but that doesn't mean you have to eat bad foods all day long. If you know you are attending a party one night, be extra strict that day. Eat clean and drink plenty of water (but don't skip any meals).

Split Your Workout Up! You may not have 30-45 minutes at one time to get a workout in but you might be able to set aside 10-15 minutes a few times during the day. It's okay to split it up like that and research suggests it's just as effective.

Sign Up Today! Look into signing up for a local holiday race like a Santa 5K. This is a great way to be a part of your community and keep you motivated to work out. Also consider checking to see if your local fitness studios or gyms for any specials or holiday challenges to keep in shape.

I hope these tips help. Good luck this holiday season and happy holidays!

Holiday Fitness

Whether you are heading for someplace warm or merely hanging out at home this holiday season, your workout routine is likely to get interrupted. Here are some tips to end the holidays feeling healthy and fit.

- If you are heading out of town, check to see if your hotel has a gym or has an arrangement with a local gym that can give you short term access at an affordable cost.
- Look for paths, trails, and other recreational opportunities in your travel destination.
- Not going anywhere? Be sure you add your workout times in your calendar. You are more likely to honor the commitment to your health if it's written down!
- Look for opportunities to combine fitness and fun! Get together with friends and head to the local ice rink. Try cross-country skiing or sledding!
- Too cold to go out? There are a large number of fitness classes and programs on your phone and tablet. Some are free and others are a subscription or one time cost. Many will offer a free trial week.



Stay committed to your fitness, which is the most important gift you give yourself throughout the year.

Want to know more? Contact TCU Insurance Agency for information on wellness programs and how they can help reduce healthcare costs and improve employee wellness.



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