

**PHYSICAL WELLBEING
&
YOUR MENTAL
HEALTH**

MAY 2024 ISSUE 1



Supporting Your Mental Health

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Mental Health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well, work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that supports our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships, and shape the world we live in. Learn more about mental health by clicking the link below.

What is Mental Health?

At Sotera Health, our mission of Safeguarding Global Health® recognizes the importance of supporting our employees and their families' mental health. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offered by the company provides that support. The EAP is a confidential resource that can provide information on everyday issues affecting you or your family and can provide counseling when needed. You can access the EAP by clicking on the link below, the company code is **Sotera**.

Your Employee Assistance Program



Mental Health & Nutrition

How we eat and fuel our bodies can influence our mental state, impacting everything from our decision-making and overall cognitive functioning, to our mood and emotional processing. Nuts, lean poultry, seafood, fruit, and vegetables support your mental health. On the other hand, foods that have excessive sodium, solid or saturated fats, and foods with added sugar can harm your mental health. Click on the link below to learn more about the correlation between nutrition and your mental health.

The Link between Food and Mood

Intuitive Eating: An Overview

Soon after birth, infants are skilled at eating when they are hungry and stopping when they are full. But somewhere along the path to adulthood many of us lose the ability to manage our internal hunger cues. Instead, we get triggered to eat by emotions and environmental circumstances, which often results in a pattern of overeating and weight gain.

Intuitive eating (IE) is an anti-diet approach that was created in 1995 by Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch. In their book, *Intuitive Eating*, the authors outlined 10 key principles of intuitive eating:

1. Reject the diet mentality
2. Honor your hunger
3. Make peace with food
4. Challenge the food police
5. Respect your fullness
6. Discover the satisfaction factor
7. Honor your feelings without using food
8. Respect your body
9. Exercise—feel the difference
10. Honor your health with gentle nutrition

At its core, IE is the process of learning how to honor your body by listening to, trusting, and responding to its messages. Proponents of IE criticize diet culture, which commonly encourages behaviors like counting calories, points, or other nutritional metrics rather than allowing your body's innate hunger signals to drive your eating choices. Dieting relies on rules and external cues that disconnect your internal ones.

References:

Tribole, E. and Resch, E. (1995) *Intuitive Eating: A Revolutionary Program That Works*. Saint Martin's Paperbacks, New York.

CNN. Intuitive eating: The anti-diet, or how pleasure from food is the answer, say its creators. Jan 31, 2020. Aug 30, 2023.

Hazzard VM, Telke SE, Simone M, Anderson LM, Larson NJ, Neumark-Sztainer D. Intuitive eating longitudinally predicts better psychological health and lower use of disordered eating behaviors.: findings from EAT 2010-2018. *Eat Weight Disord*. 2021. Feb; 26(1): 287-294.doi:

Tips for Developing an Exercise Routine to Improve Mental Health

Whether you are just starting to exercise or you're a seasoned veteran, there are a few important things to keep in mind when developing your routine, especially if you live with a mental health condition.

Make sure to consult with your doctor before beginning any new exercise routine.

How to ensure success:

Find your ideal time of day - Some people are morning people, while others do best working out in the evening. If you find your ideal time for physical activity, you'll be more likely to stick to your routine.

Set attainable goals - Creating achievable goals is super important for staying motivated. Set small goals and celebrate those wins.

Include exercises you enjoy - It can be hard to stay motivated to exercise if you don't enjoy the activities you're doing. Choose exercises that make you feel good, and try to have fun while doing them.

Work out with a friend or a group - Working out with a friend or group may just give you the motivation and accountability you need to stay consistent.

Work with a personal trainer - If this is an option for you, having a professional guide you through your exercises may provide a boost of motivation and encourage you to get the most out of each session and keep coming back.

Benefits of Exercise for your Mental Health.

