



### Hot Topics:

Solve the MMHG Wellness Puzzle **Celebrate Earth Day** on page 5 for a chance to win a raffle prize!

The information contained in this newsletter can be used to increase your personal awareness of health and wellness. Always contact your health care provider before beginning a new exercise or nutrition program, and when you have questions and concerns about medical issues impacting you and your family.

### Visit our website

[www.MMHG.org/Wellness](http://www.MMHG.org/Wellness)



Follow **mmhgwellness**  
on Instagram

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## Mayflower Municipal Health Group

Spring 2024  
Issue 45

# Beneficial Wellness Newsletter

## Strive for Optimal Weight Virtual Challenge

April 22nd– June 16th

Learn new strategies to manage your weight! *Win prizes!*

Strive for Your Optimal Weight is a fun, interactive, evidence-based education program leading to healthy, sustainable weight management. The 8-week virtual program is conducted by a registered dietitian, who will also be available for a one on one meeting with participants via Zoom.

**Gain Knowledge:** Participants will have an opportunity to attend live webinars (or view the recordings at their convenience), read the weekly blog posts, participate in pop-up challenges, and test their knowledge by taking quizzes. Participants will also be able to peruse the Library, which is chock full of information, recipes, and resources.

**Get Motivated:** The “Feed” on the user-friendly and virtual platform pulls it all together. It’s where activity and motivation happen. Participants can win raffle prizes throughout the challenge.

**Details:** The Thrive for your Optimal Weight Challenge is open to all MMHG member unit employees, retirees and their dependents age 18+. Spaces are limited. Registration begins April 8th. Visit [www.MMHG.org/wellness](http://www.MMHG.org/wellness) for more information and registration instructions.

## Spring Into Fitness by Moving More

With longer days and milder weather on the horizon it’s the perfect time to refresh your approach to exercise, and maybe even create some new habits. Here are some ways you might spring into fitness this month:

**Outdoor Workouts:** Take advantage of the warmer weather by moving outdoors. Outdoor exercises allow you to soak up the sunshine and enjoy the beauty of nature while staying active.

**Explore New Activities:** Explore new active hobbies or activities that spark your interest. From hiking and gardening to paddle boarding and chair yoga, taking part in exercise that is fun, engaging, and varied will help you be more active, more often.

**Buddy Up:** Exercising with a buddy not only adds an element of accountability but also makes workouts more enjoyable and social. Invite friends, family members, or coworkers to join you, and plan outdoor adventures or fitness challenges together to stay motivated and connected.

**Embrace Spring Cleaning:** Channel your energy into spring cleaning activities that double as workouts. From decluttering and organizing your home to tackling outdoor projects like garden prep and yard work, spring cleaning can provide a surprisingly effective way to burn calories and get your body moving.

**With these tips in mind, you're ready to embrace the spirit of spring and make positive changes that will benefit you for years to come. Happy exercising!**

### Important Information for all MMHG Subscribers

You are required to notify your employer within 30 days of the following life events:

- ~Change of address
- ~Divorce/Remarriage
- ~Medicare eligibility of yourself or of a dependent
- ~Marriage
- ~Birth/adoption/legal guardianship
- ~Dependent loss of status as a dependent (except for turning age 26)

### Medicare Plan Subscribers

- ~Medicare primary subscribers and dependents must continue to pay their Part B premium to be eligible for coverage.
- ~Medicare Plan subscribers do not enroll in another Part D plan without checking with your benefit coordinator first. Enrolling in another Part D plan could automatically cancel your coverage in your current MMHG plan!

### Spring Vegetables in Season:

Arugula, Asparagus, beets, bok choy, Chard, Cilantro, Fiddleheads, Garlic Scapes, Green Onions, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Parsley, Peas, Ramps, Rhubarb, Spinach, Watercress

Find a Farmer's Market Near You:

[www.massfarmersmarkets.org](http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org)

Your health plan is committed to helping you achieve your best health. Rewards for participating in a wellness program are available to all employees. If you think you might be unable to meet a standard for a reward under this wellness program, you might qualify for an opportunity to earn the same reward by different means, contact us at 774-773-9306 or by email [wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org) and we will work with you (and if you wish, with your doctor) to find a wellness program with the same reward that is right for you in light of your health status.

## Healthcare IQ : How to be a Savvy Consumer



*The Healthcare IQ Corner is a regular feature of the MMHG Beneficial Wellness Newsletter. With medical costs continuing to rise, consumers are challenged more than ever to make informed decisions about their healthcare.*

### Be a more informed healthcare consumer-- starting today!

Do you know the cost of the MRI you had last month or if you're up-to date on your preventive care and screenings? Looking for a new doctor or thinking about trying acupuncture? Get the most out of your health insurance plan by registering with Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA (My Blue) or Harvard Pilgrim (HP Member Account) through their secure online member sites.

Once registered you'll be able to review your benefits, download a copy of your member ID, check your medical claims for accuracy, find a provider, keep track of prescriptions, copays, deductibles and much more—all with the click of your computer mouse (or smartphone APP)!

Visit the member websites at [Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA](#) and [Harvard Pilgrim](#) to get started.

## Quality Shuteye Starts with your Sleep Space

Having trouble sleeping? Your bedroom may just be the problem. Light, temperature, layout, clutter, and other factors can all affect the quality and duration of your sleep. So how do you go about creating the ideal sleep space? Here are 3 suggestions:

**Keep It Dark:** Light has a major influence on your circadian rhythm, the part of your biological clock that helps regulate sleep, so when it's time for bed, you want to keep your room as dark as possible. If your bedroom receives a lot of exterior light, try using drapes, blackout curtains, or a sleep mask.

**Keep It Quiet:** Too much noise can be disruptive and make it difficult to fall asleep. Sealing the bottom of your bedroom door with a rolled-up towel is a great way to minimize noise coming from adjacent rooms. An oscillating fan gives off a soothing hum that can mask noises and create a sense of calm.

**Keep It Cool:** That's why experts recommend keeping your bedroom temperature somewhere between 60 to 67 degrees Fahrenheit. Don't have a thermostat or an air conditioner? No problem. Use a box fan or an open window, depending on the season.

## What's for Lunch? Easy & Healthy Bento Box Ideas



The Japanese tradition of packing lunch in a bento box, a reusable container with small compartments, has become popular around the world. Compact and practical, curating a bento box can be a fun and creative way to pack a healthy and balanced lunch on the go. What would you pack in your bento box? Here are four suggestions:

1. Hard-boiled egg, tuna, edamame, grapes and rice crackers
2. Rice, grilled salmon or tofu, roasted broccoli, pineapple chunks
3. Sushi, roasted sweet potato wedges, pickled vegetables, oatmeal cookie
4. Cheddar cheese, almonds, carrot sticks, apple slices, whole grain crackers

## Self-Acceptance for Realists: Practical Tips

To many of us, the idea of self-love and acceptance can seem elusive, if not downright unrealistic. It's easy to dismiss as mere "woo-woo" fluff, or wishful thinking.

But self-acceptance is not about blindly embracing a false sense of positivity or denying reality. It's about recognizing your own inherent worth, empowering yourself to live authentically.

Is it possible to embrace self-acceptance without the fluff? Yes! Here are some practical tips:

**Embrace Imperfection:** Nobody is perfect, and that's okay. Embrace quirks, shortcomings, flaws, and imperfections as part of what makes us human.

**Be a Good Friend to Yourself:** Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding that you would offer to a friend in need. Acknowledge and validate feelings and reframe negative self-talk into positive encouragements.

**Set Realistic Expectations:** Realists excel at setting expectations based on objective assessments of their abilities and circumstances. Try to recognize times when you might be setting impossibly high standards for yourself and adjust accordingly.

**Set Boundaries:** Self-acceptance involves recognizing and honoring your own needs, values, and well-being; boundaries help us create the space to do that. They also help clarify what influences may be coming from other environments, individuals, or situations, rather than from our own authentic needs.



*"Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding that you would offer to a friend in need."*

## MMHG Wellness– Current & Upcoming Programs

Here's a sample of some of the virtual MMHG Wellness programs that can be easily accessed using your computer, tablet, or smart phone. MMHG Wellness programs are FREE and open to employees, retirees & dependents of MMHG member units. Visit [www.MMHG.org/Wellness](http://www.MMHG.org/Wellness) for a complete schedule of events and description with registration details. Check back often as new programs are added all the time.

### Ongoing:

**On Demand Fitness:** FREE 24/7 access to professionally filmed fitness classes with top fitness trainers

**Learn to Live:** Free & confidential online mental health program

**Savory Living:** 12 session online, evidence-based, healthy eating food as medicine program. Limited FREE spaces for MMHG members

**EX Program:** FREE online smoking cessation program

**Virtual Mindfulness Sessions:** Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays, 8:30– 9:00 a.m.

**Virtual Strength Training:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7:30–8:00a.m.

**Virtual Yoga:** Mondays & Wednesdays, 5:15- 6:15 p.m.

**Virtual Zumba:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:15- 6:15 p.m.

### Upcoming Highlights:

**Strive for Optimal Weight Program:** April 22nd– June 16th

**Spring Walking Challenge:** April 29th– June 9th

**Mindful Movement Desk Yoga:** April 16th & May 21st 12– 12:30 p.m.

### Webinars:

**Environmental Wellness:** April 10th, 12:15– 1:00 p.m.

**Living Simply:** April 17th, 1– 1:30 p.m.

**Go Outside and Explore:** April 24th, 1– 1:30 p.m.

**Managing Stress and Worry:** April 25th, 3– 3:30 p.m.

**Raising Future Ready Kids- Resilience & Grit:** May 15th, 1– 1:30 p.m. and May 21st, 12– 12:30 p.m.

Find webinar recordings at [www.mmhg.org/wellness](http://www.mmhg.org/wellness)

# LEARN TO LIVE BULLETIN

## *Your guide in wellness & mental health*

### Social Media Resilience

Most of us know someone who has felt bad, shamed, or even bullied on social media. For some of us, we've found ourselves in that situation. It's impossible to ignore the increasingly pervasive influence of social media on our collective mental health and well-being. Constant exposure to curated lifestyles and cyberbullying can corrupt how we perceive ourselves and the world around us as well as contribute to increased symptoms of depression and anxiety.



Social media resilience refers to an individual's ability to navigate the digital landscape in a way that protects their mental and emotional well-being. It is reported that almost 93% of teens are active on social media. Social media is a place for self-expression, connection, and support; however, improper social media use can pose risks. Cyberbullying, unrealistic social comparisons, and the pressure for constant validation can negatively impact well-being. It is essential for individuals, especially adolescents, who are still growing and developing, to consider how to cultivate a healthy relationship with social media.

### Building Social Media Resilience

The best way to build social media resilience for young children & teens is to delay exposure to social media. Delayed exposure allows adolescents to be more engaged in the world, it limits their access to harmful content, and promotes more face-to-face interaction with their peers.

For those who are already using social media, there are other ways you can build resilience. This may include:

**Being on the lookout for ANTs.** ANTs, or Automatic Negative Thinking Traps, cause us to ignore important information or make snap judgments. Be on the lookout for these in your own thinking and in what's shared from others online. Some of these ANTs include:

- **All-or-nothing Thinking:** Stating thoughts/opinions in extremes – it's a huge success or epic failure
- **Feeling Makes Fact:** Saying it's true because we feel it so strongly (and ignoring that there are other perspectives)
- **Labeling:** applying harsh labels to someone and ignoring that each one of us is complex and valuable

**Setting boundaries and managing screen time.** Unfollow, block, or turn off notifications from those who are falling into ANTs, constantly sharing negative thoughts/experiences, or being unkind to others. Set limits for yourself or the children and teens in your life. Make sure there are social media free portions of the day. Encourage having as many in-person conversation as on social media.

**Fostering healthy online connections.** Research has shown that to build and maintain healthy relationships, there is a 5:1 ratio we can follow. For every negative comment we make, we should be making 5 positive, kind comments. Follow this ratio when interacting online. And disconnect from others who don't seem to follow it.

### Getting Started

By building social media resilience, we can mitigate the negative effects that can come from these platforms. There are many accessible, evidence-based tools within our Learn to Live Resilience program that focus on gratitude, optimism, and building stronger relationship. To start building resilience or address other mental health concerns, visit [learntolive.com/partners](https://learntolive.com/partners) and enter access code **MMHG**. Learn to Live is available to you and your family members, ages 13 and older at no cost.



STRESS, ANXIETY & WORRY | SOCIAL ANXIETY  
| DEPRESSION | INSOMNIA | SUBSTANCE USE



## WIN A *Sustainability* TO-GO KIT !

Print, solve and return the completed puzzle to MMHG no later than **June 5th** and you'll be entered in a random drawing to win **one of four-- Sustainability to-go Kits**. This kit includes items to help reduce your carbon footprint: a set of wool dryer balls, a reusable silicone food storage pouch, an eco-friendly sponge and beeswax paper, all packaged in a recycled cotton drawstring bag.

**BONUS: Complete the poll below for a chance to win a \$50 gift card voucher!**

Return your completed puzzle via:

**Email-**

wellness@mmhg.org

**or FAX-**

774-773-9403

**or Mail-**

MMHG

PO Box 6008

North Plymouth, MA 02362

If you would like a printed copy of the puzzle mailed to you call 774-773-9306 or request by email at wellness@mmhg.org.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Member Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (to send prize if you're a winner)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility: Raffle is open to all employees, retirees, dependents 18+ of MMHG member units. \*Your member unit is the municipal entity (town, district etc.) you work at or retired from.

**Winners will be notified by email on June 6th.**

*Winter and Spring Puzzle Raffle Winners will be published in the Summer Newsletter.*

## SOLVE THE MMHG WELLNESS PUZZLE

### *Celebrate Earth Day!*

**Monday, April 22, 2024**

**Earthday.org** founders organized the first Earth Day in 1970. Since then Earth Day has been commemorated annually all over the world. This year's Earth Day theme, **Planet vs. Plastics** seeks to change human attitudes and behavior toward plastics and reduce plastic pollution. How can you reduce the use of plastics in your day to day life?

**Puzzle Directions: Circle or highlight the in the word search puzzle below. Words appear straight across, backwards, straight across, up and down, down and up, and diagonally.**



Biodiversity

Compost

Conserve

Earth

Ecosystem

Energy

Environment

Green

Habitat

Ocean

Organic

Planet

Reduce

Refuse

Reuse

Recycle  
Remove



### **\*\*BONUS\*\* Poll**

**How are you limiting your use of single-use plastics?**

- ☐ I Bring Reusable Bags for Shopping
- ☐ I Carry a Reusable Water Bottle
- ☐ I Avoid Plastic Plates, Cups, Straws, bags etc.
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Select all that apply and/or write in (other) for a chance to win a \$50 gift card voucher. We'll share poll results in the summer newsletter!**



Everyone has a story.

And every story matters.

During the month of May, we invite you to participate in the **Learn to Live Mental Health Month Challenge** for an opportunity to win an Amazon e-gift card!

To enter, do one or more of the following:

- ☐ Enroll in a Learn to Live program
- or
- ☐ Complete a lesson in your program



This Mental Health Awareness Month  
Scan or visit: [learntolive.com/partners](https://learntolive.com/partners)  
and enter code: MMHG



Learn to Live's Online Programs

RESILIENCE | STRESS, ANXIETY AND WORRY | SOCIAL ANXIETY | DEPRESSION | INSOMNIA | SUBSTANCE USE | PANIC

## Mayflower Municipal Health Group



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[www.MMHG.org](http://www.MMHG.org)  
Contact us at [wellness@mmhg.org](mailto:wellness@mmhg.org)

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

### MAYFLOWER MUNICIPAL HEALTH GROUP CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING TOWN/GOVERNMENTAL UNITS:

Bridgewater ~ Brockton Area Transit Authority ~ Carver-Marion-Wareham Regional Refuse Disposal District ~ Dartmouth Fire District No. 3 ~ Greater Attleboro  
Taunton Regional Transit Authority ~ Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District ~ Halifax ~ Hanover ~ Hanson ~ Hull ~ Kingston ~ Marshfield ~  
Norfolk County ~ North River Collaborative ~ Onset Fire District ~ Pembroke ~ Plympton ~ Plymouth County ~ Plymouth County Retirement Association ~ Rochester ~  
Silver Lake Regional School District ~ Southeastern Regional Transit Authority ~ South Shore Educational Collaborative ~ South Shore Regional Emergency  
Communication Center ~ South Shore Regional School District ~ Southfield Redevelopment Authority ~ Wareham ~ Wareham Fire District ~ West Bridgewater ~  
Whitman ~ Whitman-Hanson Regional School District ~