

FEB/
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2022

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CITY OF TACOMA

HealthVine

2023 Wellness Incentive Period

This wellness incentive period runs from Oct. 1, 2021 through Sept. 30, 2022.

Your goal is to earn 25,000 points by the deadline. There are MANY ways for you to earn points on a daily, weekly, monthly, annual and/or onetime basis. [Learn more.](#)

Need help? Watch the 2023 Wellness Incentive Requirements [training video!](#) Don't forget to submit a [smart form](#) for points.

COMING SOON: Double Points



We Appreciate You Campaign:

Friday, March 4 through Friday, March 18

March 4 is employee appreciation day. To show how much we appreciate YOU, we are offering 15 days of double points for most activities. Make sure to visit "Rewards" and "How to Earn" on the Virgin Pulse platform on March 4 to see which activities qualify.



Nutrition and Heart Health

Heart disease is the [leading cause of death](#) for men, women, and people of most racial and ethnic groups in the United States.

A large body of [scientific evidence](#) suggests that nutrition might be the most preventive factor of cardiovascular disease death, and could even reverse heart disease. Here are tips to eating a heart healthy diet:

Control your portion sizes. How much you eat is just as important as what you eat. Overloading your plate, taking seconds and eating until you feel stuffed can lead to eating more calories than you should. Learn more about portion control and mindful eating in [this webinar](#). Don't forget to submit a [smart form](#) for points!

Eat more vegetables and fruit. Fruits and veggies are good sources of vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber. They are also low in calories. Here are fruits and vegetables that you should choose:

- Fresh vegetables like tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli and carrots
- Leafy greens for salads, like Romaine lettuce, spinach, and kale
- Canned vegetables that are low in sodium
- Frozen vegetables without added butter or sauces
- Fresh fruits like apples, oranges, bananas, pears, and peaches
- Canned, frozen, or dried fruit without added sugars

Choose whole grains. Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health. Make sure whole wheat or another whole grain is listed first in the ingredient list. Look for products that say 100% whole grain.

Learn more on Page 3.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Healthy Habit Challenge: See Your Lens

When: Monday, Feb. 14 through Sunday, Feb. 20

What: Think about how you grew up and how that may have shaped your thinking. Revisiting the past can help you see the lens you've been looking through. With this awareness you can understand how the past has shaped you.

Reflecting on the past may also inspire you to:

- Get support to process your experiences
- Feel the emotions that come up
- Give yourself freedom from habits that don't help you
- Reflect on how you want to grow
- Celebrate how far you've come

While we can't always change our situations or experiences, we can shift our mindset to evolve how we view past difficult times or how we feel in the moment.

Points: Earn 200 points for tracking 'YES' five out of the seven-day challenge.

Rest and Recharge Challenge



Quality sleep helps your mind and body stay in tip-top shape. It's the key to waking up feeling energized and focused to tackle a brand-new day. In this challenge, set a goal for how many hours of sleep you want to get, and track it. Create a bedtime routine that helps you disconnect and calm your body and mind. Then, when it's time to sleep, get the rest you've been dreaming of.

Registration: Wednesday, Feb. 16

Duration: Monday, Feb. 21 through Sunday, March 13

Points: Earn up to 950 points for this challenge (this is not including the double points you can earn beginning March 4).

Prizes: There will be four Fitbit Charge 3's awarded; one for each week of the challenge, including a drawing for those who register by Feb. 21.

Understanding the Role Culture Plays in Mental Health

What comes to mind when you think about culture? For a lot of us, we immediately think of what's right in front of us: unique languages, different clothing and diverse food. But a society's culture also impacts a person's beliefs, norms and values. It impacts how you view certain ideas or behaviors. And in the case of mental health, it can impact whether or not you seek help, what type of help you seek and what support you have around you.

Here are four ways culture can impact mental health:

Cultural stigma. Every culture has a different way of looking at mental health. For many, there is growing stigma around mental health, and mental health challenges are considered a weakness and something to hide. This can make it harder for those struggling to talk openly and ask for help.

Understanding symptoms. Culture can influence how people describe and feel about their symptoms. It can affect whether someone chooses to recognize and talk about only physical symptoms, only emotional symptoms or both.

Community support. Cultural factors can determine how much support someone gets from their family and community when it comes to mental health. Because of existing stigma, minorities are sometimes left to find mental health treatment and support alone.

Resources. When looking for mental health treatment, you want to talk to someone who understands your specific experiences and concerns. It can sometimes be difficult or time-consuming to find resources and treatment options that take into account specific cultures factors and needs.

These are only a few ways culture can impact the perception of and treatment for mental health. Every culture and person is different and face a unique journey to recovery.

You can help address the mental health of minorities by understanding the role culture plays in mental health and by showing support to those around you. Use [these tips](#) from Mental Health First Aid to get started.



Nutrition and Heart Health, Cont.

Limit unhealthy fats. Limiting how much saturated and trans fats you eat is an important step to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease. A high blood cholesterol level can lead to a buildup of plaques in your arteries, called atherosclerosis, which can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke. Watch [this webinar](#) to learn more about what healthy fats to choose. Don't forget to submit a [smart form](#) for points!

Select low-fat protein sources. Lean meat, skinless poultry, low-fat dairy products, and eggs are some of your best sources of protein. Additionally, fish is a good protein choice and certain kinds are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which can lower blood fats called triglycerides. The highest amounts of omega-3 fatty acids are found in cold-water fish, such as salmon, mackerel and herring. Other sources are flaxseed, walnuts, soybeans and canola oil.

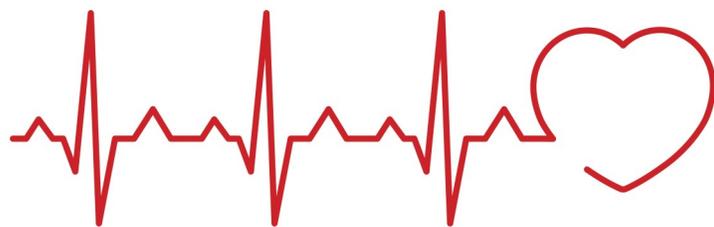
Legumes — beans, peas and lentils — also are good, low-fat sources of protein and contain no cholesterol, making them good substitutes for meat. Substituting plant protein for animal protein — for example, a soy or bean burger for a hamburger — will reduce your fat and cholesterol intake and increase your fiber intake.

Reduce the salt/sodium in your food. Eating too much salt can lead to high blood pressure. Although reducing the amount of salt you add to food at the table or while cooking is a good first step, much of the salt you eat comes from canned or processed foods, such as soups, baked goods and frozen dinners. Eating fresh foods and making your own soups and stews can reduce the amount of salt you eat.

Plan ahead and create daily menus. Create daily menus using the six strategies listed above. When selecting foods for each meal and snack, emphasize vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Choose lean protein sources and healthy fats, and limit salty foods. Watch your portion sizes and add variety to your menu choices. Learn more about meal planning by watching [this webinar](#). Don't forget to submit a [smart form](#) for points.

Allow yourself an occasional treat. Indulge every now and then. A candy bar or handful of potato chips won't derail your heart-healthy diet. But don't let it turn into an excuse for giving up on your healthy eating plan.

**Adapted from the [Mayo Clinic](#)*



Heart Healthy Journey Recommendations

A Journey is a digital coaching tool designed to help you easily make changes to your health and wellbeing, one small step at a time. You can earn 30 points per stage AND 150 points for finishing the Journey. You can complete up to 12 Journeys per program year.

Eat For Health

This Journey takes 11 days to complete. Want to be healthy? Start with nutritious foods. Then, eat them on a regular schedule. Prep meals that are balanced with a variety of food groups. Combine protein, carbohydrates and fats for the most satisfying meals. Stop skipping meals or avoiding certain foods. And add snacks to prevent hunger. Stock your kitchen to help you plan quick and easy meals.

Eat Well for Healthy Cholesterol

This Journey takes 14 days to complete. Watching your cholesterol? Do it with a menu that celebrates flavor, crunch and satisfaction. You'll enjoy a mix of carbs, protein and fats that fill you up and keep your energy steady all day. Plus, you'll learn tricks to make eating well quick, easy and budget-friendly. What are you waiting for?

Fit in More Fruit

This Journey takes 10 days to complete. Want a delicious idea for meals and snacks? One that is high in nutrients, fiber, vitamins and minerals? Reach for the fruit bowl. Discover new fruits or fall back in love with your favorites. Learn to plan ahead so fruit is on hand. Get quick and easy ideas to add fruit to meals and snacks more often.

More Veggies in No Time

This Journey takes 10 days to complete. Looking for a nutritious addition to meals and snacks? Choose vegetables! You'll add fiber and nutrients to your diet. You'll increase your energy. Reduce risks of heart disease and diabetes. Learn how to buy, store and prep veggies. Discover new varieties and how to cook them. You'll be a veggie master in no time.

Live Healthy: Blood Pressure

This Journey takes 17 days to complete. Let's take the mystery out of blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure (also called hypertension) or are at a risk, this is the place for you. There's a lot you can do to improve. All it takes is finding the healthy eating, activity and stress-less strategies that work best for you.



Financial Wellness: Pre-Retirement Seminars

It is never too early to start planning for retirement!

City of Tacoma employees and their family members are invited to attend any of our retirement planning seminars. All sessions will be held via Zoom. **Space is limited to 100 participants per presentation.**

City of Tacoma Retirement Resources

When: March 16 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ([register](#))

Retirement Director Tim Allen will give an overview of retirement system benefits. He will demonstrate the online retirement benefits calculator tool, explore various options and show you how to better estimate your future benefit.

Human Resources Specialist Monica Rutledge will provide an overview of the 457 deferred compensation and HRA VEBA plans. Employees can save and invest in their futures with tax advantages when participating in deferred compensation. The HRA VEBA is a post-separation account-based health plan. The overview will cover general rules and benefit options for eligible employees. Monica will also discuss post-retirement health care options and eligibility requirements.

Social Security 101

When: March 23 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ([register](#))

Kirk Larson is a Washington public affairs representative for the Social Security Administration. He will answer all of your Social Security questions, including (but not limited to):

- When you are eligible to receive retirement benefits
- How early retirement affects your benefits
- How to get the most from your benefit
- What the future of Social Security looks like

We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the “my Social Security” online services prior to this presentation. To do so, go to ssa.gov/myaccount to create an account and print out your Social Security.

Medicare 101

When: March 30 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ([register](#))

Jenny Stark from Regence will help you gain the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and pick a



plan that works best for you when the time comes. You'll learn about:

- Basics of Social Security
- When you should enroll into original Parts A and B
- How to avoid Parts B and D penalties
- The difference between Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement plans
- What is the Part D prescription coverage gap (otherwise known as the “donut hole”)
- What you should know if you're still working and participating in an employer-sponsored plan when you turn 65
- What you need to know if you're currently participating in a Health Savings Account (HSA) and are, or soon will be, eligible for Medicare

10 Question Retiree Guide

When: April 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. ([register](#))

Douglas Headley of MissionSquare Retirement will cover 10 key questions you should ask, from saving, to Social Security and Medicare, and managing your investments, withdrawals, and taxes.

LEOFF II Retirement Resources (Fire, Police, PPSMA)

When: April 13 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. ([register](#))

Catherine Cadoo from the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems will cover your LEOFF pension plan and benefit options.

HR Specialist Monica Rutledge will provide an overview of the post-retirement medical and COBRA options and eligibility requirements. Monica will also cover the 457 deferred compensation plans*.

**Representatives from MissionSquare and Nationwide will be to answer more in-depth questions.*

VEBA Consultant Brian Rihs from Gallagher will cover the general rules and benefit options of the post-separation account-based health plan for eligible employees.

Becky Wallen from DiMartino Associates will cover the Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP). This is a fire employee only plan.