**Tackle These Mini Wellness Challenges for a Healthy and Happy Spring**

Spring is finally in the air! Warmer weather and blooming flowers are awesome motivators for getting more active and boosting your health. Plus, summer is just around the corner! Many of us lose a bit of motivation to lead healthy lifestyles during the winter months – mainly due to the holidays, cold weather, and less daylight. Picking things back up during the springtime will help you get back on track before the summer months take over!

One of the best ways to get back into the swing of things is to challenge yourself to some mini wellness challenges. Wellness challenges are a fun way to pick up on new healthy habits. From now until June 21st (the first day of summer), we challenge you to boost your health and happiness this spring with some of these mini wellness challenges:

**Engage in an outdoor activity.** Spending more time outdoors comes with some awesome health benefits. Research has found that spending time in nature helps reduce stress and anxiety, and helps manage the symptoms of [depression](https://www.everydayhealth.com/hs/major-depression-resource-center/how-nature-helps-depression/). Find an outdoor activity that you enjoy, and challenge yourself to practice that outdoor activity for at least 10 minutes every day of spring. Some ideas include walking your dog, photography, hiking, or gardening.

**Grow your own produce.** Now is the perfect time to start your very own garden! Growing your own produce is an inexpensive and fun way to ensure your home is filled with nutritious options. Vegetables like spinach, kale, and peas are all easy springtime veggies to grow. If you don’t have the resources to start your own garden at your home, try starting a [community garden](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/what-we-learned-fromour-community-garden-project) at your work!

**Practice positive thinking.** Researchers estimated that we have [up to 60,000 thoughts a day](http://www.jenniferhawthorne.com/articles/change_your_thoughts.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_hplink). Unfortunately, the majority of these thoughts are negative. Negative self-talk can diminish your self-esteem and prevent you from being productive. By [practicing positive thinking](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/what-we-learned-fromour-community-garden-project), you can transform how you view and handle difficult situations – which will greatly reduce stress. Challenge yourself to stay conscious of your thoughts and choose to speak to yourself in a positive manner. Try tracking your thoughts in a mood journal to make things easier.

**Try new recipes.** Many people find eating healthy to be “boring.” But most of the time this is because they haven’t tried a variety of healthy dishes and snacks. Challenge yourself to cook one new healthy recipe once a week throughout spring. You’ll learn just how delicious (and easy!) cooking healthy meals can be. Plus, you’ll save yourself a lot of money and calories from less dining out.

**Create a healthy morning routine.** The morning is arguably the most important time of the day! How you feel in the morning sets the tone for the rest of your day. Develop a healthy morning routine to practice throughout spring. Eat a nutritious breakfast, get in some [morning exercise](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/6-amazing-benefits-of-morning-exercise), and engage in a stress-relief activity. For more tips on creating a healthy morning routine, check out this [blog post](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/7-steps-to-a-healthy-morning-routine)!

**Tackle the Real Food Challenge.** Highly processed foods are full of fat, calories, added sugar, and yucky chemicals – plus very little nutrients. Focusing your diet on real foods (like veggies, fruits, and whole-grains) will help you maintain a more balanced diet. Participate in our [Real Food Challenge](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/help-your-employees-eatreal-with-the-real-food-challenge) and swap out one processed food with one real food every day for six weeks.

**Volunteer.** Making others feel good makes you feel good. Being healthy isn’t just about fitness and nutrition, it’s also about being emotionally and mentally well. Challenge yourself to volunteer in your community at least once this spring. Spending time volunteering and doing good for your community will help you [practice gratitude](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/grateful-today-happier-tomorrow-the-benefits-of-gratitude) and boost your feelings of self-worth.

**Start a walking club.** It’s finally getting warmer out, which means you should be taking advantage of the nice weather! Start a walking club at your company and take an outdoor walking break with co-workers for 10 minutes, twice a workday. If your company already has a walking club in place, be sure to join in and participate all spring long.

**Practice mindfulness.** Mindfulness has an awesome impact on health and wellness. [Mastering mindfulness](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/tap-the-power-of-mindfulness-free-guide) helps you manage stress, reduce anxiety, and help you feel happier in the present moment. Start practicing at least one mindfulness activity once a day for 10 minutes. Some ideas include coloring, meditating, and yoga.

**Engage in self-care.** Self-care is so important. Unfortunately, most people don’t practice self-care like they should. Practicing self-care boosts emotional and mental wellbeing, and helps you gain self-worth. Challenge yourself to engage in self-care once a day for at least 15 minutes throughout spring. There are many different ways to [practice self-care](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/little-ways-to-practice-self-care), but some ideas include visiting a spa, getting a massage, reading a book, or taking a warm bath.

Use this list of mini wellness challenges as a guideline for a healthy spring season. Feel free to customize it to fit your personal goals and schedule. Be sure to ask some of your colleagues to join in for a healthy dose of competition!