

Health Insights

December 2021

The Link Between Financial and Physical Wellness

We all know that financial stress can be a burden, but it can also have a negative effect on your health. Understanding the relationship between financial and physical wellness can help you improve both areas of your life.

Health Concerns

Financial stress often causes anxiety, depression and hopelessness, and that stress can also contribute to heart disease, high blood pressure, insomnia, more frequent colds and minor illnesses and more. Additionally, many cope with financial stress in unhealthy ways, such as smoking, drinking and overeating, which can decrease overall health.

Impact on Medical Care

Often, people with financial burdens neglect important preventive care or medication regimens. While this saves money in the short term, it often leads to more serious health problems down the road—and more medical bills.

Making Smarter Decisions

Health care is expensive, but it should not be neglected due to financial trouble. Instead, there are ways to spend your money more wisely, which will improve your overall health and ease your financial strain.

- Utilize preventive care services. Screenings and check-ups can help prevent bigger medical problems (and expenses) down the road.
- Manage chronic conditions. By not adhering to treatment and medication regimens, your condition could worsen significantly. Consider mail-order pharmacies to save money on your prescriptions.
- Learn more about your employer's benefit plans. There may be cost-saving options of which you are not taking full advantage.

Coping with Financial Stress

Although the strategies above will help your medical costs and overall health, you likely still face financial worries. Here are healthy ways to cope with that stress and make it more manageable:

- Recognize your unhealthy coping methods and find alternatives such as meditation, exercising, or talking with a friend.
- Take care of yourself. Get enough sleep, eat right, drink plenty of water and exercise regularly. Make time for yourself to just relax and unwind.
- Talk to an advisor regarding your financial troubles. You won't be able to fix them overnight but having a plan of action can help you feel in control and minimize feelings of hopelessness.



Planning for Retirement When There's Little Time Left

What if retirement is just around the corner and you haven't saved enough? Some of these tips may be tough to swallow, but they will all help you toward your goal.

- It's never too late to start, but you should start now. Time is critical.
- Start small, if necessary. Even small contributions can make a big difference given enough time and the right kind of investments.
- Commit everything you can to your tax-sheltered retirement plans and personal savings.
- Find ways to reduce expenses in your budget and funnel the savings into your retirement.
- Take a second job or work extra hours.
- Aim for higher returns, but don't invest in anything that you are uncomfortable with.
- Retire later. Even working part-time after your planned retirement age may be enough.
- Refine your goal. You may have to live a less expensive lifestyle in retirement.
- Delay taking Social Security so that benefits will be higher when you start taking them.
- Sell assets that are not producing income or growth and invest in income-producing assets
- Use automatic deductions from your payroll or your checking account for deposit into mutual funds, your IRA or other investment vehicles.
- Be realistic about investment returns. Never assume that a year or two of high market returns (or market declines) will continue indefinitely.
- Roll over retirement account money if you change jobs.
- Don't dip into retirement savings

Mental Health Moment

Hectic Holiday? Battling Holiday Depression and Stress

Holiday-related stress and depression can cause headaches, excessive alcohol consumption, overeating, and insomnia.

To combat these side effects, it is best to identify the cause of your stress and then take steps to rectify them. Consider the following suggestions:

- Don't feel like you have to attend every party, get the perfect gift for every person, and meet every holiday obligation.
- Ask others for assistance in hosting gatherings, purchasing presents, etc.
- Make a list of priorities in chronological order so you do not become too overwhelmed.
- Consider volunteering to help others, especially if you are feeling lonely.
- Stay active and continue to exercise and eat healthy.
- Do not overspend. Keep tabs on your holiday budget and stick to it.





Slow-Cooker Sausage and White Bean Soup

Ingredient List:

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 (12.8-ounce) package smoked andouille sausage, thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 2 (15-ounce) cans Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 C chicken broth
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 C baby spinach

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add sausage, and cook, stirring frequently, until lightly browned, about 3-4 minutes. Place sausage, garlic, onion, carrots, celery, beans, oregano and bay leaves into a 6-qt slow cooker. Stir in chicken broth and 2 cups water until well combined: season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Cover and cook on low heat for 7-8 hours or high heat for 3-4 hours. Stir in spinach until wilted. Serve immediately.

Calories: 319, Total Fat: 16 g, Cholesterol: 28 mg, Sodium: 453 mg, Total Carbs: 29 g, Protein: 17 g

Chungah, R. (2020, September 5). Slow cooker sausage, spinach and white bean soup. Damn Delicious. Image and recipe retrieved November 17, 2021, from <https://damndelicious.net/2015/03/21/slow-cooker-sausage-spinach-and-white-bean-soup/>.



Financial Wellness Quiz

The Link Between Financial and Physical Wellness

1. What health concerns can stress cause?

- a. Anxiety, depression, hopelessness, and stress
- b. Heart disease, high blood pressure, insomnia, cold and minor illness
- c. Unhealthy coping skills (i.e., smoking, drinking, overeating, etc.)
- d. All the above

2. Which of the following was not a suggested way to spend more wisely on health care?

- a. Utilize preventive care services
- b. Manage chronic conditions
- c. Work out regularly, eat well
- d. Learn more about your employer's benefit plan

Planning for Retirement When There's Little Time Left

3. Fill in the blank: Commit everything you can to your _____ and personal savings.

4. Fill in the blank: Use _____ from your payroll or your checking account for deposit into mutual funds, your IRA or other investment vehicles.

Mental Health Moment

5. List one of the suggestions to combat holiday depression and stress:

See page 5 for quiz answers

This is for informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical professional.



Healthy Habits Calendar

December 2021 - Financial Wellness

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Happy December! Remember to start the "Save \$25" Challenge. See page 5 for details.	2 Thirsty Thursday: Drink at least 8 glasses of water today.	3 Friday Finances: Make a detailed budget for the upcoming Holidays.	4
5	6 Motivation Monday: Take 30 minutes to read.	7 Tuesday's Tip: Offer to bring a healthy dish to a holiday party.	8 Wellness Wednesday: Take time to sanitize your workspace and home.	9	10	11 Service Saturday: Take treats or a small gift to someone who may be lonely.
12 Self-Care Sunday Take one hour for yourself.	13	14	15 Wellness Wednesday How's the "Save \$25" challenge going? Set some goals for this week.	16 Thirsty Thursday: Drink at least 8 glasses of water today.	17 Friday Finances: Take some time to evaluate your finances and write down goals for 2022.	18
19	20 Motivation Monday: Listen to a podcast or Ted Talk on a new topic.	21 Tuesday's Tip: Combat Holiday stress with a good workout.	22 Wellness Wednesday: Include colorful fruits and veggies with every meal.	23	24	25 Merry Christmas!
26 Happy Kwanzaa! Self-Care Sunday Start your day with stretching and meditation.	27	28	29 Wellness Wednesday: Go to bed early to kickstart a healthy, post-holiday, sleep schedule.	30 Thirsty Thursday: Drink at least 8 glasses of water today.	31 New Years Eve	



Challenge: Save \$25

30 Day Challenge:

Find a way to save \$25 in addition to what you are already saving each week. You can skip eating out for a meal, watch a movie at home instead of going to a theater, or whatever makes sense for you. At the end of the challenge, you will have an extra \$100 in your bank account. Making it an automatic contribution using online or mobile banking can be a huge help in this challenge.

Week 1

How did you save money this week?	\$ Saved
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Week 2

How did you save money this week?	\$ Saved
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Week 3

How did you save money this week?	\$ Saved
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Week 4

How did you save money this week?	\$ Saved
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Answers to Quiz:

Q1: d. All the above | Q2: c. Work out regularly and eat well | Q3: tax-sheltered retirement plans | Q4: automatic deductions

Q5: Don't feel like you have to meet every holiday expectation / Ask for assistance / Make a list of priorities / Consider volunteering / Stay active / Don't overspend.