

# LIFE IN **BALANCE**

Your guide to healthy living.

## Taking a Break from Social Media for 5 Days Reduces Stress Levels

A new study has found that taking a break from Facebook and other social media for just five days reduces the level of the hormone “cortisol”. Cortisol is increased by stress and is known to result in weight gain, memory problems, other medical issues, and disrupted sleep.

Social media works by rewarding the brain in a similar way as smoking, drinking alcohol, and gambling; becoming very addictive in the same way. Many times, people feel depressed when they compare their own lives with what other people post, and the results of constant distraction and disruption makes concentration more difficult, shortening attention spans, and can harm long term memory. Young people often turn to social media as they attempt to reduce tension, and to cope with stress rather than addressing issues directly.

Our bodies and mind act as one unit and therefore it is important to care for both our emotional and mental states as well as our physical health. Look to changing your health by changing your habits if you find yourself out of balance.

Sources: Paul Joseph Watson – April 4, 2018  
Psychology Today – May 6, 2018



# Mental Health Month

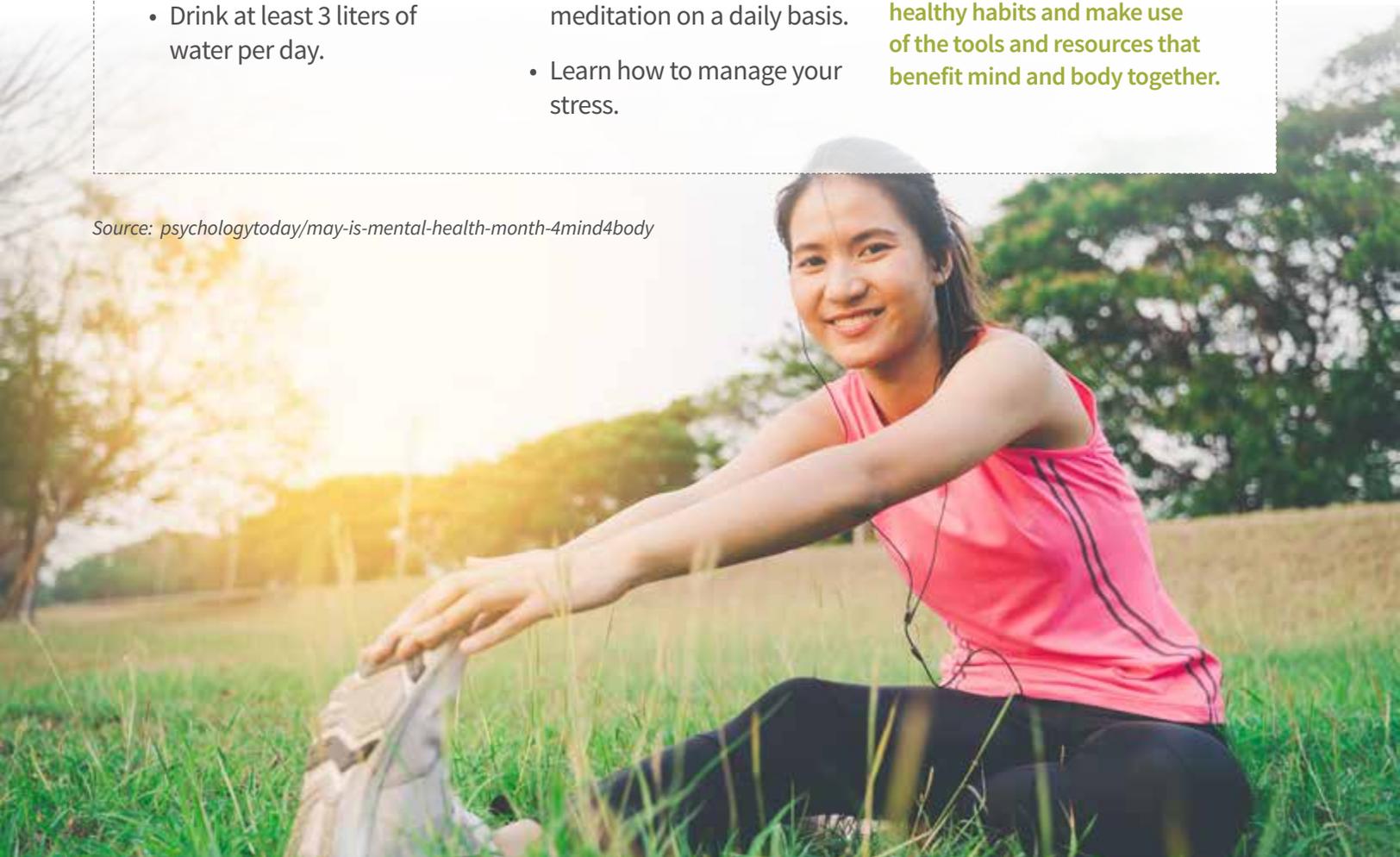
Health is all-encompassing; mental health is important for our physical health and vice versa. A well-balanced diet, a healthy sleep schedule, exercise, gut health, and hydration all affect our mental health and our physical health equally. Studies have shown that individuals who have chronic medical illnesses such as diabetes, high blood pressure or autoimmune disorders have a higher likelihood of being diagnosed with a mental health disorder such as depression or anxiety

**Focus on the following healthy aspects in daily living to promote mental wellness:**

- Maintain uninterrupted sleep for 8 hours each night.
- Avoid sugars, greasy foods, salts, processed foods and saturated fats.
- Consume more whole grains, greens, unprocessed foods, lean meats and unsaturated fats.
- Eat 2-3 well-balanced meals per day.
- Drink at least 3 liters of water per day.
- Consume natural probiotics such as yogurt, miso, sauerkraut, kefir, and kimchi.
- Engage in a physical for at least 30 minutes a day.
- Stay away from toxic thoughts, toxic people, and toxic conversations.
- Engage in positive thoughts and conversations.
- Practice mindfulness or meditation on a daily basis.
- Learn how to manage your stress.
- Stay present in your daily relationships.
- Avoid “screen time” and engage in more “in person time”.
- Visit your doctor for preventative health and cancer screenings.
- Take time for yourself every day.

**See the whole person; practice healthy habits and make use of the tools and resources that benefit mind and body together.**

Source: [psychologytoday.com/us/psychology/may-is-mental-health-month-4mind4body](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/psychology/may-is-mental-health-month-4mind4body)





## Behavioral Issues in Children: **Can Food Be the Cause?**

Peanuts, red dye, soy, dairy and shellfish: all common foods that can wreak havoc for a child. In the United States there are about 15 million people with food allergies, and that is why the third week of May is dedicated to Food Allergy Awareness. Food allergy awareness has become vital today, as it can mean life or death for a child. There is also food intolerance for parents to contend with. But, how do allergies and intolerance of food impact children and their behavior?

Behavior challenges can result when a child reacts to a food to which s/he is intolerant. If your child has a glass of milk and the body begins to produce cytokines, the resulting inflammation in the brain can lead to such things as meltdowns, irritability, anxiety, depression, or trouble concentrating. This does lead many parents to report symptoms similar to Attention Deficit in children with food intolerance.

With food allergies, children can become sad, withdrawn, angry, agitated, or act out because foods are being restricted from them. This restriction also can isolate the child, thus leading to feelings of loneliness or abandonment.

**If you suspect your child or teenager has a food allergy or intolerance, see your pediatrician or an allergist. The doctor can identify which food(s) are causing the problem and help you develop a treatment plan. With a proper diagnosis you cannot only help your child physically, but emotionally as well.**



# May is Better Sleep Month

In May 1985, the Better Sleep Council launched “Better Sleep Month” to get people thinking about the quality of their sleep and taking action to improve it.

Healthy sleep is a necessity. It affects every aspect of your life — from your productivity, to your health, to your mood. While some assume that sleep hours cut into productive hours, we’re actually more productive when we get sufficient sleep! Your production will increase because you’ll have more energy, and you’ll be able to think more clearly while working smarter and more efficiently.

## Most people can feel the consequences of insufficient sleep. Sleep deprivation can impair:

- Learning
- Alertness
- Problem solving
- Mood
- Concentration
- Reasoning
- Memory
- Judgment

## Research also suggests that sleep deprivation may lead to:

- Weight gain
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Bone loss
- Stroke
- Depression

These are only a few of the health issues sleep deprivation creates. So now we know that sleep is necessary, but it’s up to each of us to make sure we get enough rest. In the end, getting better sleep helps you lead a better life.

The National Sleep Foundation Sleep Duration Recommendations, listed below, will help individuals make sleep schedules that are within a healthy range. They also serve as a useful starting point for individuals to discuss their sleep with their health care providers as needed.

SLEEP

- ▶ **Newborns (0-3 months):** 14-17 hours each day
- ▶ **Infants (4-11 months):** 12-15 hours
- ▶ **Toddlers (1-2 years):** 11-14 hours
- ▶ **Preschoolers (3-5):** 10-13 hours
- ▶ **School age children (6-13):** 9-11 hours
- ▶ **Teenagers (14-17):** 8-10 hours
- ▶ **Younger adults (18-25):** 7-9 hours
- ▶ **Adults (26-64):** 7-9 hours
- ▶ **Older adults (65+):** 7-8 hours

*Adapted from: [bettersleep.org/sleep-extras/consequences-of-poor-sleep/](http://bettersleep.org/sleep-extras/consequences-of-poor-sleep/)  
[sleepfoundation.org/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times](http://sleepfoundation.org/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times)*

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## Confidential Helpline

# 800.236.4457

Counselors available 24/7