

## November Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the November issue of the *Well Aware eNews*! Read on to learn about—

- this month's wellness champions, a high school that took a first step to encourage staff, students, and community members to get healthy by holding a community 5K run/walk;
- a seminar/webinar on strategies for better sleep;
- American Diabetes month;
- getting InStep with Diabetes;
- this year's sweet-free challenge;
- the Great American Smokeout; and
- more!

## Wellness Champions Hold 5K Run/Walk, Kid's Fun Run, and Health Fair to Promote Wellness and Safety

**Renay Johnson, principal, and Nicole Allain, assistant principal, Montgomery Blair High School**

Montgomery Blair High School, under the leadership of Renay C. Johnson, principal, and Nicole Allain, assistant principal, has taken the first step in encouraging its staff, students, and community members to get well and stay safe. The school, along with Montgomery County first responders, held its first annual community 5K run/walk on September 14, 2019.

More than 140 runners/walkers participated in the event to promote wellness and safety. In addition to the 5K, the school put together a kid's fun run and a health fair.

**Watch a video** with highlights from this amazing event!



## Don't Miss It

### This month's free webinar—

### Strategies for Better Sleep

This seminar will provide an opportunity for participants to learn more about the negative consequences of sleep loss, the positive benefits of getting the right amount of sleep, and steps to create healthier sleeping habits.

**Thursday, November 14, 2019**  
10:00–11:00 a.m.

Shady Grove Bus Depot  
16651 Crabbs Branch Way  
Rockville, Maryland 20855

**Wednesday, November 20, 2019**  
10:00–11:00 a.m.

West Farm Bus Depot  
11920 Bournefield Way  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

**Thursday, November 21, 2019**  
4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

**Please register** for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing **Well Aware** with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will receive a link in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. Visit the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

*Presented by: Kaiser Permanente*

## November Is American Diabetes Month

Observed every November, American Diabetes Month is an important part of the American Diabetes Association's efforts to focus our nation's attention on the disease and the tens of millions of people affected by it.

Because there is no cure for diabetes, the focus is on prevention. If you have risk factors or **symptoms**, or are pre-diabetic, the following are ways to prevent or delay onset of diabetes:

**Get physically active.** Just 30 minutes of aerobic exercise, five times a week, reduces your risk of diabetes. If you haven't been active, start with 5–10 minutes a day and gradually work your way up to 30 minutes.

**Eat healthy.** It may seem hard to eat healthy if you are on a budget or always crunched for time. You are more likely to adopt healthy eating habits if you start with small changes. Look for ways to make your meals healthy by choosing—

- Non-starchy vegetables—carrots, broccoli, green beans, kale, and cauliflower
- Lean meats—skinless chicken and turkey and lean cuts of pork and beef
- Low-fat dairy products—skim milk and fat-free yogurts
- Whole grains—brown rice, barley, farro, and quinoa
- Healthy fats in small amounts—olive, canola, sunflower, and peanut oil

**If you smoke or use tobacco—quit.**

Here is additional educational information on diabetes:

- **Gestational Diabetes**
- **Preventing Type 2 Diabetes**

## InStep with Diabetes is Back!

Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente have teamed together again to offer a four-week educational diabetes program called InStep with Diabetes. It is geared towards those diagnosed with diabetes to help control the disease as well as those with pre-diabetes to help prevent a further diagnosis. Are you interested in participating in the next session? **E-mail Well Aware** and we will update you on the dates and locations of upcoming classes.

## Eat Smart Month

Take simple steps to eat healthier by celebrating Eat Smart Month in November. Throughout the month, the American Heart Association is urging Americans to take the first step to commit to healthier eating. Click below to see information on eating smart.

- **Get Smart in the Kitchen**
- **Seek Out Smart Options Away from Home**
- **Stay Smart This Holiday Season**



## Minutes in Motion Is Under Way!

The MCPS Well Aware fall physical activity challenge, *Minutes in Motion*, is well under way! With 200+ teams registered, there is a lot of school and team competition for the grand prize grants! It is not too late to join! *Minutes in Motion* is getting MCPS employees moving! **Learn more.**

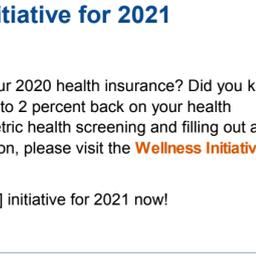
## It Will Soon Be Time to Enter the Sweet-free Zone

During the holiday season, you can be easily tempted to eat and drink foods that are high in fat, sugar, and calories. Social events, parties, and gifts throughout the holiday season can influence you to stray from your healthy diet.

However, there are healthy habits and practices you can follow during the holidays to stay on track with your diet and avoid indulging in an excessive amount of sweets.

- Stay active on a daily basis.
- Drink water to stay hydrated and decrease hunger.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep to help decrease cravings.
- Eat foods rich in natural sugars as opposed to those rich in processed sugars.
- Enjoy your favorite holiday treats, just limit the portion size.

Is your school or office interested in taking the sweet-free challenge? Post **this flyer** on the staff lounge or break room door to designate the area as a sweet-free zone. Feel free to share the ideas on the flyer with your school's PTA to promote a culture of wellness during the holiday season. **E-mail Well Aware** to let us know how your staff is celebrating the holiday season in a healthy way.



## Ready to Quit? Start with the Great American Smokeout!

Quitting smoking is not easy. It takes time and a plan. You don't have to stop smoking in one day; you just start with one day. Let this year's **Great American Smokeout on November 21** be the day you start your journey toward a smoke-free life. You will be joining thousands of smokers across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life and reducing your cancer risk. Plus, the American Cancer Society has the **resources and support** you need to quit.

Quitting smoking has immediate and long-term benefits at any age. Quitting is hard, but you can increase your chances of success with help. Getting help through counseling or medications can double or triple your chance of quitting successfully. **Here is how the body recovers after quitting.**

Are you ready to quit? *Quit for Good*, Well Aware's free tobacco cessation program for MCPS employees and their spouses, can help. Tobacco-users who complete the *Quit for Good* tobacco cessation program can have the 25 percent tobacco-user surcharge waived and, depending on when the program is completed, refunded. **Learn more.** If you are interested in getting on the list for the next *Quit for Good* class, **e-mail Well Aware.**

Do you know a smoker and would like to help them quit? Review these **hints to help.**

## You Can Take the [Wellness] Initiative for 2021 as Early as ... Now!

Did you miss the opportunity to save money on your 2020 health insurance? Did you know that each year you have an opportunity to earn up to 2 percent back on your health insurance premiums by simply completing a biometric health screening and filling out an online health risk assessment? For more information, please visit the **Wellness Initiatives for Employees website.**

Avoid the rush next fall. Begin taking the [wellness] initiative for 2021 now!

## Stress Less This Fall

With the sun setting earlier and busier fall schedules setting in, stress can slowly creep up on you. Stress causes a chemical reaction in your body that can increase your heart rate, breathing rhythm, and muscle tension. Although a little bit of stress is okay, being in a state of high-stress for long periods of time can lead to many detrimental health effects such as insomnia, headaches, high blood pressure, obesity, and a weakened immune system. Luckily there are many proven ways to manage stress and welcome the holiday season with reasonable expectations and the energy to realize them.

**Follow these few tips** and join Well Aware for one of the classes below to stay ahead of the game and beat the fall funk.

### Mindfulness and Meditation

Mondays through December 16 (except holidays)  
5:00–5:45 p.m.

Conference Room 223  
Carver Educational Services Center  
850 Hungerford Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Register **here**

### Seated Yoga

Wednesdays

- November 6, 13, 20\*
- December 4, 11

4:45 p.m.  
Café 45 (unless indicated otherwise)  
45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850  
Register **here**

### Yoga

Mondays and Thursdays  
5:00 p.m.

All Purpose Room  
Rockinghorse Road Center  
4910 Macon Road

Rockville, Maryland 20852  
Register **here**

\*Robinson Room

## Fall Physical Activity Classes

Physical activity or exercise can improve your health and reduce the risk of developing several diseases like type 2 diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. Physical activity and exercise can have immediate and long-term health benefits. Most importantly, regular activity can improve your heart, your mind, and your overall wellness. Consider trying one of the classes below to see what kind of physical activity is best for you!

### Zumba

Fridays  
4:30–5:30 p.m.  
Washington Grove Elementary School  
8712 Oakmont Street  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

Register **here**

### Zumba

Mondays  
4:00 p.m.  
Cafeteria  
Carver Educational Services Center  
850 Hungerford Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Register **here**

### Zumba

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
3:00–4:00 p.m.  
Dance Studio  
John F. Kennedy High School  
1901 Randolph Road  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Register **here**

### Zumba

Tuesdays  
4:30–5:30 p.m.  
Gymnasium  
Wheaton Woods Elementary School  
4510 Faroe Place  
Rockville, Maryland 20853

Register **here**

### Zumba

Mondays  
4:30–5:30 p.m.  
Gymnasium  
Flora Slinger Elementary School  
2600 Hayden Drive  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Register **here**

### Zumba

Thursdays through November 7  
3:30–4:30 p.m.  
A Mario Loiederman Middle School  
12701 Goodhill Road  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20906

Register **here**

## Pathways Program

MCPS and Kaiser Permanente are partnering together to offer a program to help you gain control and lose weight in the New Year. This 12-week program, *Pathways*, begins in January 2020, and will offer a variety of topics as well as a weekly weigh-in to keep you accountable in your weight loss journey. For more information **e-mail Well Aware.**

## Flu Awareness

Did you know a cough can travel up to 100 mph and reach as far as 20 feet? Flu season is fast approaching! Ranging from October through April, an estimated 5–20 percent of Americans get the flu each year with symptoms lasting for up to two weeks.

**Here are some easy ways to protect yourself from colds and the flu.**

The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). Learn more about employee wellness by visiting our **website**. View this e-mail newsletter as a **PDF document**. Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or **e-mail Well Aware.**