Summer 2024

Health & Welfare e-Newsletter

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Give your brain a boost

The brain is the hub for our entire body, supporting how we think, feel, and move every day. But as we get older, the brain changes and can become less effective. The good news is there are simple steps you can take to improve your brain health today and into the future.

Exercise regularly

When you're good to your body, your brain benefits too. Regular exercise has been shown to increase development of new brain cells and lower the risk of Alzheimer's and other dementias.

Mix it up

Look for new activities and opportunities to stimulate your brain. Learn a new skill, play a new game, or study a new language. Even things like cooking or baking can improve brain health.

Eat brain-healthy foods

Healthy eating is essential for memory, mood, and focus. Try to limit refined sugar and processed foods in your daily diet and focus on fresh, whole plant-based foods.

Scan the QR code or visit kp.org/brainhealth for more ways to be good to your brain.

Kaiser Permanente health plans around the country: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., in Northern and Southern California and Hawaii • Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Colorado • Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Georgia, Inc., Nine Piedmont Center, 3495 Piedmont Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30305 • Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc., in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., 2101 E. Jefferson St., Rockville, MD 20852 • Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Northwest, 500 NE Multnomah St., Suite 100, Portland, OR 97232 • Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington or Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Washington Options, Inc., 1300 SW 27th St., Renton, WA 98057

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980219299 January 2023

Get quality care whenever you need it

With Kaiser Permanente, you have many options available to get the world-class care you depend on for all your health needs – day or night. Here's how:

Convenient ways to get care

Phone visit
Talk with a clinician over the phone for the same high-quality care as an in-person visit.[1,2] Schedule an appointment or get fast, personalized support 24/7.

Video visit
Meet face-to-face with a clinician by video from your smartphone, tablet, or computer.[1,2] Appointments are optional.

24/7 care advice
Talk with a Kaiser Permanente clinician anytime day or night for advice.

E-visit
Fill out a short questionnaire about your symptoms online and get personalized self-care advice from a Kaiser Permanente clinician.

Email
Message your doctor's office with nonurgent health questions anytime through your kp.org account.

Mail-order pharmacy
Get prescriptions sent straight to your door with our mail-order delivery service.[3]

Making an appointment is easy

Go online:
To choose the kind of care you need, visit **kp.org/getcare** or sign in to the Kaiser Permanente app – and avoid hold times on the phone. For Colorado or Washington members, chat online with a doctor through your kp.org account.

Call us 24/7:
Find your location information below.

California
- Northern California: **1-866-454-8855**
- Southern California: **1-833-574-2273**

Colorado
303-338-4545 or **1-800-218-1059**

Georgia
404-365-0966

Hawaii
- Oahu: **808-432-2000**
- Maui: **808-243-6000**
- Hawaii Island: **808-334-4400**
- Kauai: **808-246-5600**

Maryland/Virginia/Washington, D.C.
1-800-777-7904

Oregon/SW Washington
- Portland: **503-813-2000**
- All other areas: **1-800-813-2000**

Washington
1-800-297-6877

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1. Where appropriate and available. **2.** If you travel out of state, phone appointments and video visits may not be available due to state laws that may prevent doctors from providing care across state lines. Laws differ by state. **3.** Some prescriptions are not available through the mail-order pharmacy. For certain drugs, you can get prescription refills mailed to you through our Kaiser Permanente mail-order pharmacy. You should receive them within 10 business days.

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Learn more at **kp.org/getcare**

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Health tip: Stand for health

Whether it's time spent working (in the office, school or home), driving, eating or watching TV, the impacts of our sedentary lifestyles may be one of the most unanticipated health threats of our modern time.

Standing facts to know.[1]

The amount of time the average person is sitting (aka sedentary) a day.

3.2 million deaths a year are related to physical inactivity.

The 4th leading risk factor for global mortality is physical inactivity.

According to the Mayo Clinic, prolonged periods of sitting is associated with numerous health concerns, including elevated blood pressure, metabolic syndrome, and an increased risk of death by cardiovascular disease or cancer.[2]

Current research is showing that any form of extended sitting, such as at a desk, in front of a screen, or at a wheel, is harmful to the body. An analysis of 13 studies that reviewed sitting time and activity levels found that those who sat for more than eight hours per day with no physical activity had a risk of dying similar to the risks of dying by obesity and smoking.[2]

The term "Sitting Disease" has been coined by the scientific community and is commonly used when referring to the ill-effects of an overly sedentary lifestyle.[1]

Even if you engage in the recommended 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week, you may still experience the negative impact of too much sitting.[1]

Try a new approach[1]:
Alternate between sitting and standing every 30 minutes for improved health.

continued

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Benefits of standing and moving more[1]:

- Reduce major health risk factors
- Support bone health and reduce the risk of osteoporosis
- Enhance brain power and improve mood state
- Burn calories and tone body composition
- Improve circulation
- Aid in pain relief

Changes to help reduce sitting time[2]:

You can make small changes that may reduce your sitting time. For example, you can:

- Take a break from sitting every 30 minutes
- Stand while talking on the phone or watching television
- Do a light workout while watching TV or stand or stretch during commercial breaks
- Park farther away from where you are going
- Stand or walk during conference calls and meetings
- Stand up or take a walk during phone calls
- Make shorter meetings "standing" meetings, if you are the organizer
- If you sit at work try a standing desk, or take a 1- to 2-minute break every hour to stand or walk around
- Take the stairs

[1] Just Stand, The Facts. www.juststand.org/the-facts/. 2023. Accessed August 2023.

[2] Mayo Clinic, What are the Risks of Sitting Too Much? www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/expert-answers/sitting/faq-20058005. July 2022. Accessed August 2023.

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DELTA DENTAL

Relax for a Better Smile

How stress can affect your oral health

Have you been feeling stressed or anxious lately? Talk to your dentist. A number of stress-related disorders can affect your mouth. Seeing your dentist for regular cleanings and exams can help identify and treat these problems.

TEETH GRINDING (Bruxism)

What is it?

Bruxism is the technical term for grinding your teeth and clenching your jaw.

Causes

- Stress and anxiety
- Sleep disorders
- Abnormal bite and missing or crooked teeth

Symptoms

Nervous tension, anger and frustration can be accompanied by these signs in the mouth:

- Teeth with flat tips
- Sensitive teeth
- Tongue indentations
- Decreasing tooth enamel

TMJ (Temporomandibular disorders)

What is it?

TMJ (also known as TMD) refers to a group of conditions that affect the temporomandibular (jaw) joint and associated muscles. Stressful situations can aggravate TMJ by causing you to overuse jaw muscles.

Causes

- Stress
- Clenching or grinding teeth

Symptoms

- Popping or clicking of the jaw
- Jaw joint pain
- Teeth with flat tips
- Decreasing tooth enamel

deltadentalins.com/enrollees

GUM DISEASE (Periodontitis)

What is it?

Gum disease is a bacterial infection that causes chronic inflammation of the gums and surrounding tissue. It is the major cause of adult tooth loss and affects nearly 80% of people at some point in their life. In its early stages, the disease is known as gingivitis, before progressing into periodontitis, or gum disease.

Causes

The most commonly known causes of gum disease are poor oral hygiene, poor diet and smoking. You may be surprised to know that emotional factors can also play a significant role in the development of adult gum disease.[1] Researchers have discovered that the disease can become more severe as a person's stress level increases.

Symptoms

- Red, swollen or tender gums
- Gums that bleed while brushing or flossing
- Gums that pull away from the teeth
- Teeth that are loose or separating from each other
- Persistent bad breath or a bad taste in the mouth
- A change in the fit of dentures

Maintain your oral health when stressed

- **See your dentist.** If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, it's a good idea to see your dentist. Your dentist may be able to recommend specific treatments if you have bruxism or TMJ, such as a custom mouthguard or orthodontic treatment.
- **Take the time to unwind.** Consider ways of relieving stress by engaging in relaxing activities such as meditation, massage or yoga. You may even find exercise, physical therapy or counseling to be a good outlet to reduce tension.

[1] Peruzzo et al. A systematic review of stress and psychological factors as possible risk factors for periodontal disease. Journal of Periodontology. 2007.

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LIBERTY cares about more than just teeth!

Adult Care

help sheet: Daily Oral Hygiene Tips

*For most of us, thorough daily oral hygiene lays the groundwork for a healthy smile. Just a simple routine of **brushing** and **flossing**, in addition to regular **dental checkups**, can be enough in most cases to help prevent tooth decay, gum disease and bad breath.*

Brushing up on technique

Since there are various techniques for brushing your teeth, it's a good idea to ask your dentist which one to use. Here are a few tips to help you develop a good brushing routine:

Brush twice a day
Brush your teeth in the morning and before bed

Use a toothpaste with **fluoride** to help prevent tooth decay

Brushing gums
Hold your toothbrush at a slight angle toward the gums when brushing along the gum line.

Concentrate on brushing all surfaces
Use a gentle touch—it doesn't take much pressure to remove the plaque from your teeth, and a vigorous scrubbing could irritate your gums

Brushing your tongue
Brushing your tongue gently can help remove bacteria that cause bad breath

The importance of flossing

Cleaning between your teeth is every bit as important as brushing. Since brushing can not effectively clean between teeth, it's important to use floss to get to those areas.

- Other items also are available to help you clean between your teeth. Ask your dentist which ones to use
- As with brushing, use a gentle touch to avoid injuring your gum tissue
- Clean between your teeth once a day

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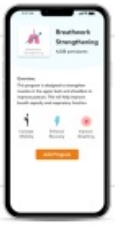
The Connection Between Mental and Physical Health

Did you know that your mental and physical health are closely connected? Understanding the ways you can positively impact both is key to our overall well-being.

In today's fast-paced world, issues like depression, anxiety, and stress can take a toll on our mental health, affecting our ability to function optimally in our daily lives. Fortunately, there's a powerful antidote: physical activity.

Engaging in regular physical activity isn't just about breaking a sweat—it's about reclaiming control over your health and happiness. By incorporating exercise into your routine, you not only strengthen your muscles and joints but also support critical bodily systems such as metabolism, respiration, and cardiovascular function. This proactive approach can help prevent chronic conditions and keep you feeling your best.

But the benefits don't stop there. Physical activity has a profound impact on mental health as well. It stimulates the release of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, which are known for their mood-enhancing properties. Additionally, regular exercise can sharpen cognition and boost self-esteem, leading to a more positive outlook on life.



How to get started

1. Download the SimpleTherapy app
2. Enter your employer's name
3. Enter your name and date of birth

SimpleTherapy® does not offer medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, and is not a replacement for a physical therapist or doctor. Please consult with your physical therapist or doctor if you have any questions about incorporating the SimpleTherapy sessions into your health and well-being program. Your information is confidential. We will not share it with your employer.

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