

FALL 2020

Healthy Together

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Why Young Adults Need Yearly Flu Shots

If you are like many young, healthy people, you may wonder whether you need a yearly flu shot. You might believe that the flu won't hurt you and your family. Or you might worry that the vaccine itself could give you the flu.

These are common concerns. They help explain why two-thirds of U.S. adults younger than age 50 skip getting a flu shot each year. But here is the truth: You cannot catch the flu from the flu vaccine. And you do get important benefits from the vaccine, even if you are young and healthy.

Remember, everyone 6 months and older needs a flu vaccine each year. Try to get yours before the end of October.

Keeping You and Loved Ones Safe From Illness

Besides getting a flu shot, you can stay healthy by following simple steps. These guidelines can help protect you and your family from flu, colds and COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often. Use soap and water. Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds (about how long it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song 2 times).
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available. Check the label to make sure it is made up of at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Wear a cloth face mask in public places. Wash your hands after taking it off.
- Do not have close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are touched often. This includes doorknobs, handrails and phones.



**We are here to help
any day, any time.
24/7 NURSE ADVICE LINE
1-800-562-4620
Call ANY TIME you want
to talk to a nurse.**

Flu Smarts

To find a location offering flu shots near you, ask your health care provider. Or go to www.cdc.gov/flu and scroll down to use the Flu Vaccine Finder. Turn to the back page to know when to go to the ER or urgent care for flu symptoms.



Provided as a benefit to
Oregon Health Plan Care
Coordination Program clients

Get Your High Blood Pressure Under Control

Many adults have high blood pressure or hypertension. As many as 3 out of 10 may have resistant hypertension, according to a recent study. People with resistant hypertension have a high risk of heart problems. They also often have multiple health conditions that make it harder to get their blood pressure under control.

Lifestyle changes can help you control your blood pressure. Some changes may seem difficult. Controlling high blood pressure is a commitment that will not always feel easy. But it will always be worth the effort. It will help lower your risk for stroke, heart attack, heart failure and kidney failure.

If you have resistant hypertension, you can improve your health. Follow these tips:

- **Manage your weight.** Obesity is linked to high blood pressure readings. Losing weight tends to lower blood pressure. It could also help you control the number of drugs you need to take to manage your condition.

- **Limit sodium intake.** Lowering the amount of dietary salt in your diet can also help you lower your blood pressure. Certain groups sensitive to salt can see their blood pressure drop when they cut back. This population includes older adults, African Americans and people with chronic kidney disease.
- **Drink alcohol in moderation.** Research has linked heavy drinking to high and resistant blood pressure. If you are a man, try to limit yourself to no more than 2 drinks per day. No more than 1 drink per day is the recommendation for women.

Health experts also recommend the following to control blood pressure and prevent hypertension:

- Following a high-fiber, low-fat diet
- Exercising at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) every week
- Managing stress
- Avoiding smoking



health briefs

Take Antibiotics Safely

Antibiotics are powerful drugs that treat illnesses such as pneumonia and strep throat. But taking an antibiotic for something other than a bacterial infection can be dangerous. Only take them as prescribed. And do not take someone else's prescription.



Relief for Crying Babies

Colicky babies cry a lot. They cry at least 3 hours a day at least 3 days a week for more than 3 weeks. If you are nursing, cut these foods from your diet for a few weeks: chocolate, caffeine and dairy products.



Cook More, Spend Less

Replace meat with veggies that cost less. Skip the chicken or fish in your entrée. Use beans to get protein, as well as fiber, iron, potassium and folate.



Practice Mindfulness at Work to Stress Less

Think you have to bend your legs like a pretzel and sit for hours to achieve mindfulness? Think again.

This once-obscure Buddhist concept is growing in popularity—no yoga mat required.

The timing could not be better, either. Recent polls indicate we are more stressed-out than ever. Three in 10 Americans say that their stress has increased in the past year and 20% report that they are experiencing extreme stress.

The Gift of Presence

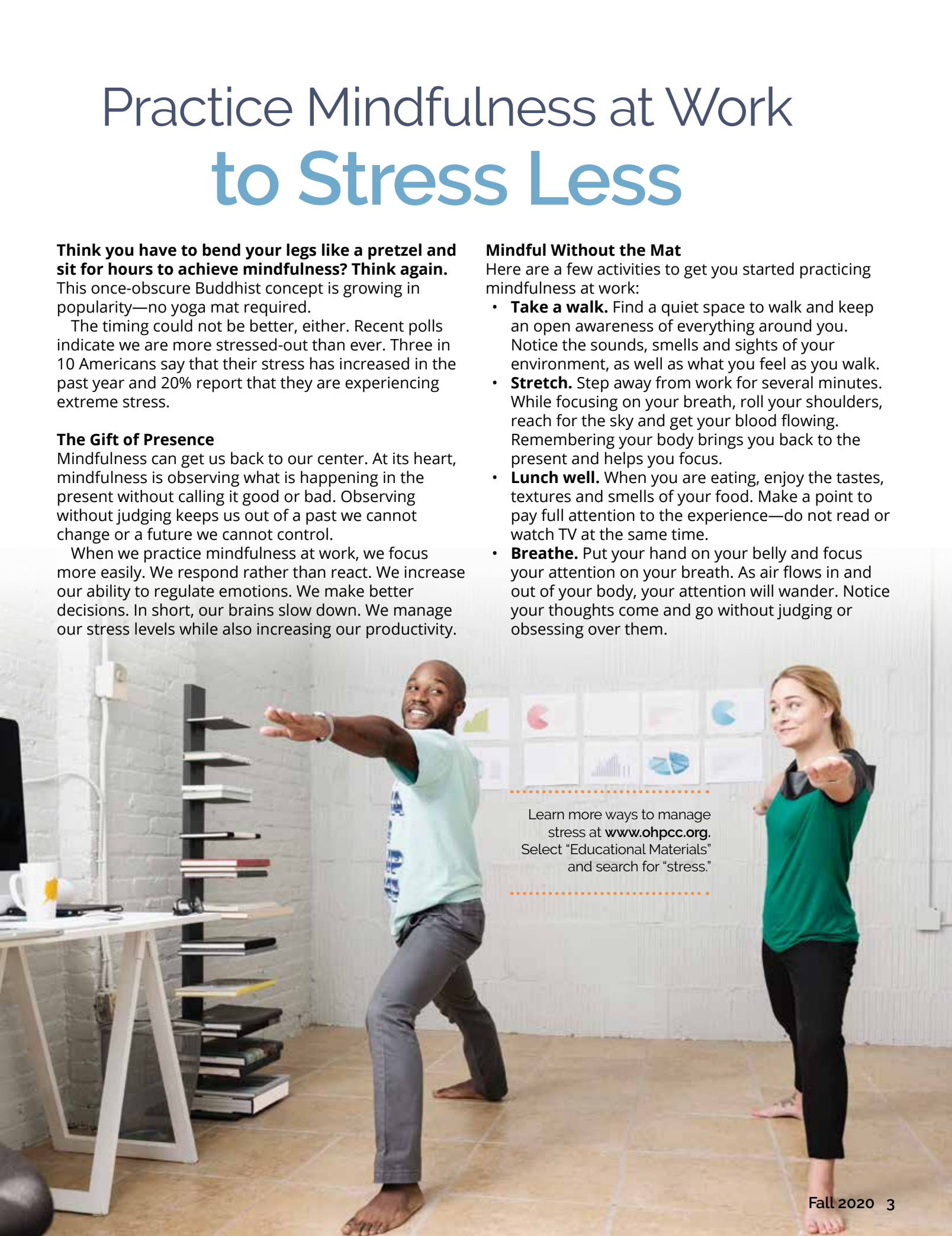
Mindfulness can get us back to our center. At its heart, mindfulness is observing what is happening in the present without calling it good or bad. Observing without judging keeps us out of a past we cannot change or a future we cannot control.

When we practice mindfulness at work, we focus more easily. We respond rather than react. We increase our ability to regulate emotions. We make better decisions. In short, our brains slow down. We manage our stress levels while also increasing our productivity.

Mindful Without the Mat

Here are a few activities to get you started practicing mindfulness at work:

- **Take a walk.** Find a quiet space to walk and keep an open awareness of everything around you. Notice the sounds, smells and sights of your environment, as well as what you feel as you walk.
- **Stretch.** Step away from work for several minutes. While focusing on your breath, roll your shoulders, reach for the sky and get your blood flowing. Remembering your body brings you back to the present and helps you focus.
- **Lunch well.** When you are eating, enjoy the tastes, textures and smells of your food. Make a point to pay full attention to the experience—do not read or watch TV at the same time.
- **Breathe.** Put your hand on your belly and focus your attention on your breath. As air flows in and out of your body, your attention will wander. Notice your thoughts come and go without judging or obsessing over them.



Learn more ways to manage stress at www.ohpcc.org. Select "Educational Materials" and search for "stress."



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Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or any other health issues. Visit our Website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Developed by StayWell

The ER or the
Urgent Care Center:
**Do You Know
Where to Go?**

Making choices can be tough. That is especially true when you or someone in your family needs quick medical attention. You may not have much time to decide where to go for help.

Use this guide to help you know where to go for care for common medical concerns. It can help you make a confident choice. And it can also keep you out of the emergency room when you do not need that level of care. That helps save emergency services for those who may need it.

YOUR FAST CARE GUIDE

Go to the **EMERGENCY ROOM** if you experience:



Trouble breathing



Sudden changes in vision



Head trauma, confusion or changes in mental status



Uncontrollable bleeding, vomiting or diarrhea



Chest pain or pressure



Urges to hurt yourself or someone else



Sudden, severe problems that are life- or limb-threatening

Go to the **URGENT CARE CENTER** if you experience:



Ear infections



Sprains, strains and simple fractures



Minor cuts and burns



An ailment or injury that needs fast treatment but is not life- or limb-threatening



DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

For other, nonurgent issues, or if you are unsure where to go, call your doctor.