

Benefits Bulletin

February is

American Heart Health Month

Information provided by the American Heart Association and the CDC

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, affects nearly one in two U.S. adults and is a major preventable risk factor for heart disease and stroke. If left uncontrolled, hypertension can increase a person's risk of developing other health conditions, including heart failure, kidney disease, pregnancy complications and cognitive decline in later life.

One of the best ways to know if you are at risk for, or have hypertension is to have your annual wellness exam with your primary care provider (PCP). During your wellness exam your PCP will perform a series of tests/screenings to get a general sense of your overall health. Some of these screenings include:

- **Checking your weight, height and body mass index (BMI).** Your weight, height and BMI are important measurements that give your doctor an idea of how healthy you are for your age.

- **Checking your heart rate and blood pressure.** Many things can affect your blood pressure, including stress, sleep habits, smoking, diet and exercise habits. Having too high or too low levels of blood pressure are both risk factors for chronic (long-term) health problems.
- **Listening to your lungs and heart.** This is done to check for any breathing problems, including wheezing or coughing. Your health care provider may listen for heart murmurs (unusual sounds between each heartbeat) or extra sounds that can indicate a possible problem with your heart.
- **Performing a physical exam.** Your provider will look at all the important areas of your body to make sure there are no signs of health problems. This includes checking the color and size of your eyes, looking for bumps or lumps on your skin, checking your stomach area and checking your reflexes.

Annual wellness exams are available at no additional cost for OCPS Cigna members. OCPS employees covered under one of the Cigna plans who complete the health assessment on www.myCigna.com and receive their annual wellness exam are eligible for \$50* through the *MotivateMe* health incentive program.

Schedule your annual wellness exam today by contacting your PCP or find an in-network provider by visiting www.myCigna.com.

*Year 10 of *MotivateMe* runs Oct. 1, 2023 through Sept. 30, 2024. Rewards are disbursed twice a year (May 2024 and November/December 2024) and are considered taxable income. Should you receive a reward in error, the recovery of this overpayment will occur on your next regularly scheduled check. The incentive will be forfeited if termination of employment occurs prior to the scheduled reward disbursement. Maximum payroll deposit is \$100. The health assessment and annual physical must be completed in order to be eligible for the additional \$25 rewards.

Beyond Burnout

Stress Solution

Four Weeks to Overcome Stress, Worry and Burnout

The 24/7 demands of today's world can leave us stressed out, burned out and unhealthy. Suffering the effects of burnout greatly affects job performance, quality of relationships and overall attitude. Improving and prioritizing your needs can create career longevity, improve engagement and reignite purpose at work and home. When we take an active role in dealing with stress, we are able to show up as our best selves for our work, community and, most importantly, our loved ones.

If you are interested in this FREE four-week online course, register now at <https://www.overcomingucourses.com/OCPSSignUp/>.

Course objectives:

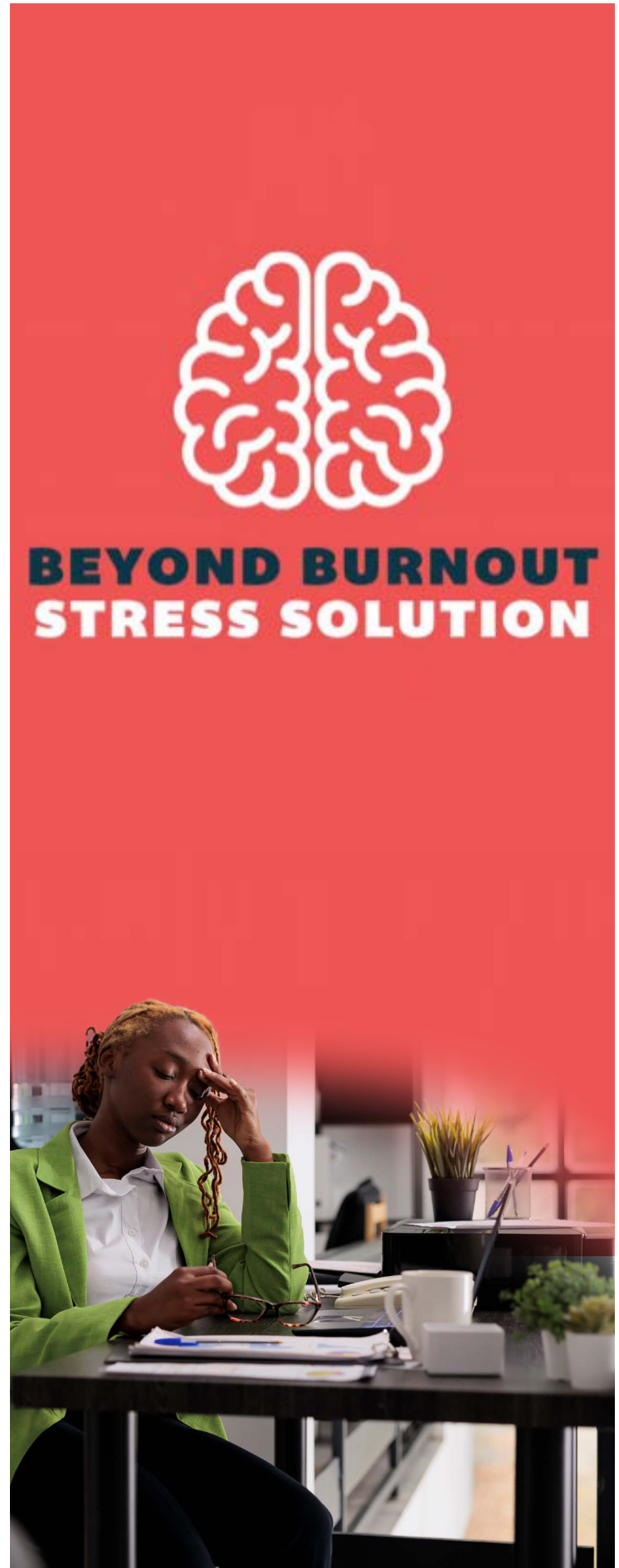
- Create motivation for change by understanding what stress truly costs us (stop saying that it's not so bad).
- Learn to flow with organizational and personal change.
- Implement techniques to avoid being depleted by toxic situations and overwhelming people.
- Prioritize and protect your self-care commitments.

Course details:

- Start date - February 20
- You must register for the four-week course at <https://www.overcomingucourses.com/OCPSSignUp/>.
- Eight 20-minute sessions that you can listen to on your own schedule.
- All OCPs employees can register for the course regardless of insurance coverage.

Participants who complete sessions will be entered to win weekly prize drawings and more!

Please email Support@OvercomingU.com with any questions.



It's Time to GET ACTIVE.



The purpose of **Get Active** is to encourage everyone, employees and students alike, to do some form of physical activity for at least 15 minutes.

Work locations in the district join in this lighthearted competition to see who has the greatest participation and most innovative event. Contact your worksite wellness representative to find out if your school is participating.



BRINGS PATIENT-CENTERED CARE TO YOU

When was the last time you went to the doctor and really felt like you got the care and attention that you deserved?

PeopleOne Health provides quality, convenient, affordable primary care without the hurdle and high costs that have become far too common in our healthcare system.

PeopleOne Health has rebuilt the healthcare model to put you and your needs back in focus. From routine check-ups to essential services like testing and imaging, PeopleOne Health is bringing access to the best-in-class care that you deserve.

This benefit is planned for summer 2024. Look for additional information in upcoming editions of the *Benefits Bulletin*.



February

Healthy Hero



***“There are no secrets to success.
It is the result of preparation,
hard work and learning
from failure.”***

– Colin Powell

A little over a year ago, College and Career Specialist from Colonial High School, Alyssa McNair, grabbed hold of her motivation to begin the climb toward happier and healthier living.

Raquel Contreras, District High School Counselor, took note of the changes McNair made in her lifestyle and nominated McNair, saying, “In the last year, Alyssa has made drastic changes to her lifestyle by cutting out fast food, quit drinking alcohol, being more conscious about the quality of food, maintaining a balanced diet to include protein, fruits and veggies, and whole grains. She has taken up various forms of exercise, such as walking/running around her neighborhood in the evenings, which has evolved into hiking trips in Georgia and Maine. Alyssa has taken up bouldering at the downtown bouldering gym – Blue Swan Boulders. These changes have given Alyssa clarity and peace of mind, invigorated her energy levels, and given her a sense of pride and accomplishment – not to mention she is down 30 pounds.”

Maintaining motivation can be difficult, but McNair has found a unique way to make sure exercise stays fun. She enjoys an activity called bouldering, which is rock climbing without the ropes and harnesses. Beyond climbing to great heights, she enjoys hiking and took a trip to Maine this past summer to visit Acadia National Park.

While her choice of exercise activities may seem daunting to some, her advice on living a healthier lifestyle is perfect for anyone, “Just start. Start slow. Move your body. Anything is something. You’ll feel good that you did it.”

We honor Alyssa McNair as February’s Healthy Hero. Her passion and commitment to a healthy lifestyle is inspiring to her colleagues at Colonial High School and throughout OCPS.

If you would like to nominate a co-worker as a Healthy Hero, please email wellness@ocps.net with the candidate’s name, work location and why they deserve the title.

Heart Healthy Living



A heart-healthy lifestyle is important for everyone, not just for people with existing health problems. It can help keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. If you already have health problems, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure, a healthy lifestyle can help you lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. The healthy habits below can have a tremendous impact on your health.



Move More, Sit Less

Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise each week. Try breaking the activity up throughout the week in as little as 10 minute increments.



Quit or Continue to Abstain from Smoking

Free resources such as 1-800-QUIT-NOW can help you and your loved ones take the next step toward quitting.



Make Healthy Food Choices

Be sure to include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and low-fat dairy products. Eat less salt, saturated fat and added sugar. Visit <https://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov/> for heart-healthy meal ideas.



Manage Medical Conditions

If you take medications for high blood pressure, high cholesterol or high blood sugar continue them as directed by your physician and stay up-to-date on recommended screenings.



Manage Stress

Developing a go to stress relief plan can help to keep blood pressure in desirable ranges and provide long-term heart health.

It may seem like a lot to take in, but just making one step toward a healthy lifestyle can have a positive impact on your heart health. Did you see an opportunity listed, but you're not sure where to start? Reach out to Health Coach Danielle by call/text at 407.304.8042 or EmployeeHealthCoach@ocps.net to set up a plan.

Benefits Bulletin is designed to keep OCPS employees and their families informed about available benefit programs. This information is not intended to replace professional health care. See your health care professional for information relevant to your medical history.

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