

# Healthy U @ Work

February 2018

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 **Franciscan**  
**WORKING** Well

## Disconnect and Reconnect

Smart phones, tablets, iPhones, computers, televisions - our world is a WIFI-filled climate of distraction. We quickly hear the latest news, check the weather, and touch base with family and friends, but we do this at the risk of our mental and emotional health. Recent research has found that checking our phone, Instagram, or Facebook account feeds the part of our brain that registers gratification. In fact, we often check our phones just to get the gratification response created by a like or text. Building strong relationships is harder with a screen as an obstacle to conversation and connection. Our self-esteem also takes a hit when we look at our friends' postings and believe that others live more interesting, more fulfilling lives than we do.

Now, no one is saying that we should toss all electronics and go back to rotary dial communication. However, setting limits for ourselves and our families on when, where, and how often we use our phones/tablets/electronics is a healthy decision. Set rules that limit the use of these devices when with family and friends, even building a phone tower in the middle of the

table when out to dinner! And unless absolutely necessary, leave the electronics out of the bedroom, and you will fall asleep more quickly and sleep better. Recognize that your desire to check the phone is a consequence of using it, and make a choice to fight the urge. Disconnecting from the distractions caused by phones, tablets, computers, and televisions will help you connect with yourself and those who are important to you!





## Heart Health

Did you know that someone has a heart attack every 40 seconds? Heart Disease is responsible for 25% of all deaths and the leading cause of death for men and women. Heart disease costs the United States almost \$200 billion dollars a year in healthcare costs, prescriptions, and lost workplace productivity.

Knowing your numbers will help you know your risk for heart disease. The following are key numbers for a reduced risk for heart disease:

- Total cholesterol of less than 200 mg/dL
- LDL less than 160 mg/dL
- HDL of 40 mg/dL or higher
- Blood Pressure less than 120/80
- A1C less than 6
- BMI less than 25
- Triglycerides less than 150 mg/dL
- Waist measurement of 35 inches or less for women and 40 inches or less for men

Keeping track of your blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, and waist measurement can help you monitor your risk for heart disease. See your doctor regularly to monitor any possible risk factors. If you believe you are having a heart related problem, make sure that your doctor checks you out completely and runs any necessary tests. Pay attention to the changes in your body, and take control of your health by taking preventive steps to protect your heart.

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## Produce of the Month

# Tangerines

It's said that the smell of citrus can help to wake you up when you're feeling tired and can help reduce stress. With an abundance of Vitamin C, fiber and water, tangerines are an immune system booster and a dietary champ!

**The Basics:** Oranges, tangerines and clementines all belong to the same citrus family. Oranges are the largest fruit, often with a thicker peel. Tangerines and clementines are smaller, sweeter and have a thinner peel than an orange. No matter which you choose, find fruit that doesn't have noticeable soft spots or mold. The fruit should be somewhat firm and heavy for its size. Do not store the fruit in a bag, since they get moldy easily. They may be stored either in the refrigerator or at room temperature and should last about two weeks. When ready to use, simply peel and gently pull the segments apart. Tangerines can be eaten as a snack or added to a savory or sweet recipe. Additionally, the zest is a flavorful addition to many recipes: on baked chicken, in muffins, in fresh cranberry sauce or on green beans, just to name a few. To zest a citrus fruit, use a microplane or grater to remove just the outer layer of the fruit, avoiding as much of the white pith as possible. Make sure to wash the fruit thoroughly or buy organic to avoid ingesting toxic pesticides.

**Try This:** Tangerines make a great addition to almost any salad or stir-fry. In fact, tangerines are a great addition to your favorite oriental recipe. For a healthy snack or dessert, mix tangerine slices with fresh blueberries and top with the tangerine zest and serve with a dollop of unsweetened or Greek yogurt.

**The Facts:** Tangerines and other citrus fruits are an excellent source of Vitamin C, fiber and folate. Tangerines are approximately 40-50 calories per fruit.

## Focus on Nutrition

There is a lot of advice out there about what and how much to eat. Should you eat Paleo, raw, Atkins, Vegan, or something else? For most of us, we try to find some way to eat better only to slip back into our usual eating habits. It's time to forget about dieting and focus on nutrition. Nutrition is about choosing food that is essential for health and healing. Nutrition is often discussed for pregnant women and children, but we all need good nutrition! We need vitamins and minerals from fruits and vegetables, quality protein, and healthy fats for optimum health.

As you try to eat better, include the following recommendations for better nutrition:

- Eat a variety of vegetables. Vegetables provide essential vitamins and fiber to help you feel full and fuel your cells. Vegetables also include necessary protein and complex carbohydrates.
- Eat a variety of fruits. Fruits also provide vitamins, fiber, and carbohydrates. Fruit is nature's way of satisfying our sweet tooth.
- Healthy fats and oils are important for cellular health, hormone balance, and brain function. Choose nuts, avocado, olive oil, coconut oil, and grass-fed butter or ghee.
- Whole grains can add fiber and important vitamins and minerals to your diet. Quinoa and 100% organic rolled oats are good ones to include in your meal plan.
- For quality protein, choose chicken or turkey breast, pork loin, sirloin, or eggs. To vary your protein (or if you are a vegetarian), including beans, nuts, seeds and a variety of vegetables can provide all the protein your body needs.
- Reduce excess salt and sugar from your diet by reading your food labels and minimizing processed foods such as fast food, deli meats, boxed foods, candy, soda, and desserts.

When you focus on nutrition, your body will be nourished, cravings will be reduced, and you will have more energy. Give it a try and see how you feel!



## Heart Health *continued from page 2.*

Consider the following when trying to reduce your risk for heart disease.

- 1) Smokers should quit smoking. Smoking is one of the leading causes for heart disease, and quitting smoking will reduce the risk for cardiovascular disease and other serious conditions.
- 2) Losing weight is important as well. Recent research has shown that eating fruits and vegetables can reduce your risk of heart disease. Eating well and exercising to lose weight can lower cholesterol levels and blood pressure. For those who have type II diabetes, losing weight and exercising can help control the disease and improve symptoms to protect the heart. When we manage a healthy weight, our heart doesn't have to work as hard.
- 3) Stress is a known factor of heart disease. Reducing the negative effects of stress through exercise and meditation can help.

# The Dangers of Sitting

By LeeAnn Wilcox

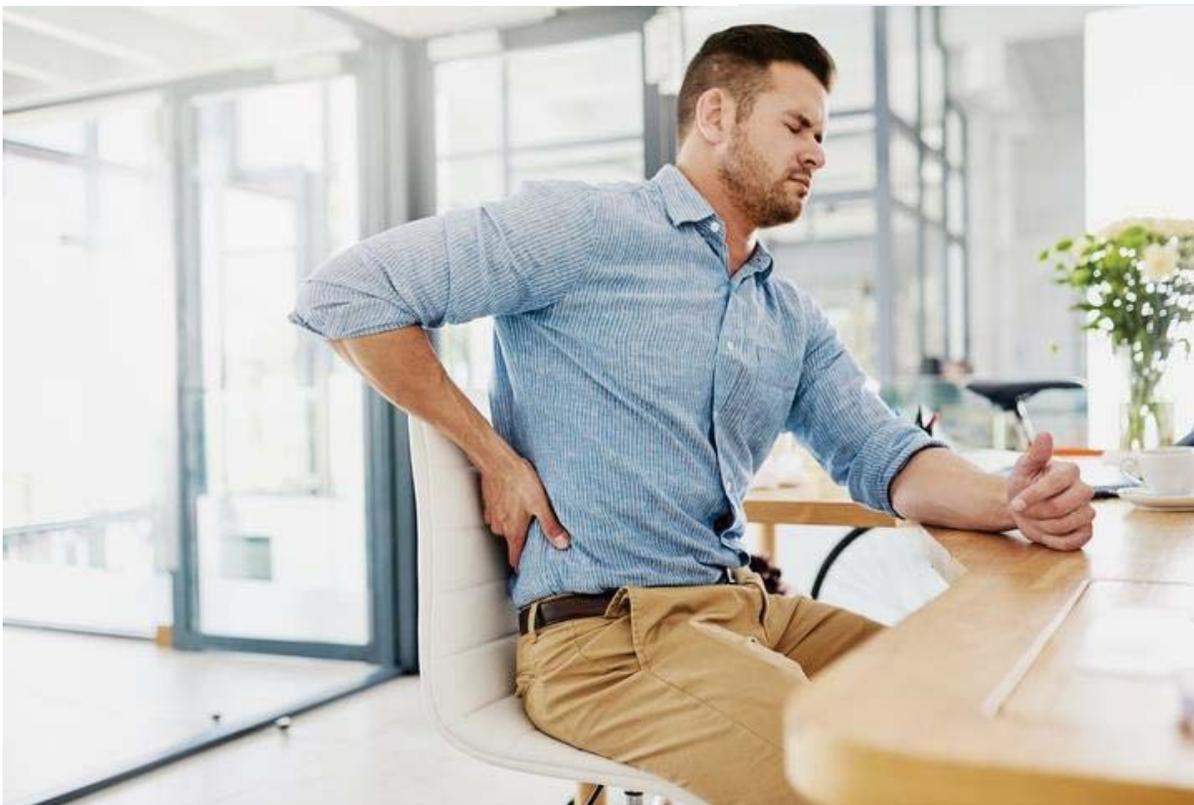
So many of us find ourselves sitting for extended periods of time. Whether at work, in the car, or on the couch after a long day, we sit a lot! But current research tells us that sitting for extended periods of time is bad for our health, and that is true even if you exercise regularly.

Sitting for extended periods of time is associated with

- increased risk of heart disease,
- increased risk of metabolic syndrome,
- increased risk of colon and breast cancer,
- poor circulation,
- weak abdominal and pelvic floor muscles,
- stiff neck,
- lower back and knee pain,
- osteoporosis,
- and reduced cognitive function.

Are you standing yet? If not, consider this. People who watch 3-4 hours of television a day have an increased mortality risk of 15%. No, it's not Netflix that's killing us; it's not moving! Sedentary behavior is a known risk factor for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and more. Moving often is key.

So, what to do? When you do have to sit, use good posture to reduce the pressure on your internal organs. Use a standing desk if possible. Set a timer on your computer or watch and move for 2 minutes for every 20 minutes that you sit. Find ways to increase walking in your day, either by using stairs, parking a little farther away from the entrance, or even having walking meetings. The key is to move and move often!



# Fall in Love with Yourself *and Feel Your Health Improve*

A message from your Healthy U @ Work Wellness Champion:

Pamela Johnson, BS, HHP-AADP, CFMP, RYT



If you are familiar with the concept of Be-Do-Have, you may already know that often we mix up the order of what we intend for ourselves. Often, we think we have to DO something like exercise or change our diets in order to HAVE better health to ultimately BE happy. This can set us up for failure.

Research shows that when we start BEing content and happy as we are in this moment, our brain chemistry changes. Why is that important? Our thoughts and emotions generate chemical and hormonal responses that activate the free pharmacy that resides within each of us.

When we take deep breaths, we alkalize the body with oxygen and begin a healing effect that ultimately releases serotonin and other chemicals that boost our mood and immune system.

The science of the breath is fascinating in that it reveals the power we have to regulate our autonomic nervous system. We can change our physical state and emotional state with a practice of breathing techniques and have mastery over our stress response and energy.

Acceptance of self is the gateway to truly honoring and loving ourselves. Fear and doubt often stop the flow of acceptance. Practicing gratitude is a way to turn off both of those negative energies and help shift back into positivity and the flow of acceptance. For example, when you are grateful for the body you have been given, for your ability to heal and change, it is difficult to dishonor that body by engaging in unhealthy habits.

This is just another way to align our actions with our intentions, by taking great care of our mindset. Acceptance does not mean we stop striving. In fact, acceptance gives us permission to improve and achieve.

A simple practice of taking 5 to 10 minutes in the morning to create a state of being through visualization or by creating an actual vision board that gives your mind a picture to process and look at it before you meditate or breathe can be extremely effective in setting up your day for success and calm.

We are better decision makers when we have an intention or know our priorities for the day. Even the simple act of breathing for 5 minutes allows us to take care of ourselves first before we are hijacked by the responsibilities of the day. There is calm in this because the routine or ritual is an act of love for ourselves. It is our time to check in, connect and create our day based on what is most important to us.

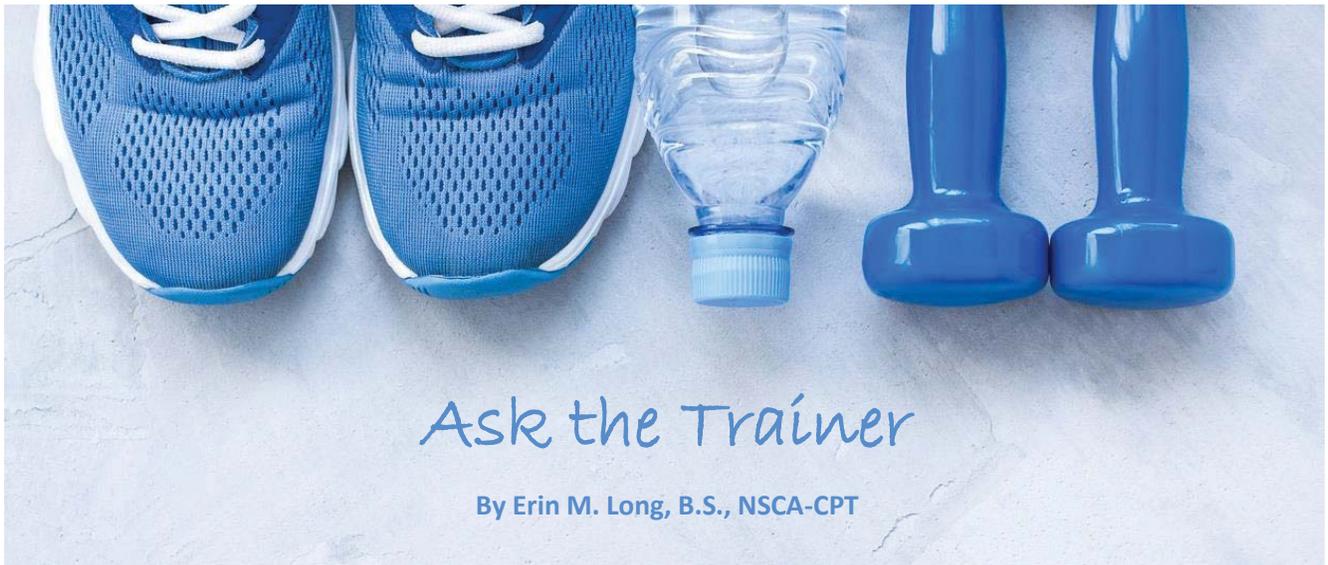
Your mantra is:

- BE - Visualize and live as though you are already the person you intend to be.
- DO - Take actions consistent with the person you intend to be.
- HAVE - Have is the natural result when your actions follow your vision...

"Be happy with what you have while working for what you want"

--Hellen Keller





**Q:** I just had my yearly physical and the doctor said I need to lose about 40 pounds. I know I need to eat better and I think I can do that, but when it comes to exercise I only like cardio. Is doing cardio enough for me to lose weight and body fat or do I need to incorporate strength as well? I do not enjoy strength training like I do cardio so any feedback would be appreciated.

-Megan T

**A:** Hey Megan. What a great question. I'm so happy to hear that you are embarking on a new weight loss journey and have reached out to me. You're already ahead of the game by knowing you need to start eating better. Sometimes individuals think they can just workout and the weight will fall off. What they don't understand is that you cannot out train a poor diet, so good for you for starting to make those changes! Now, to answer your question about just doing cardio for weight loss...

I never recommend someone limit themselves to one form of exercise. It is ideal to move your body in a variety of ways and allow a day of rest to help your muscles and joints recover. I definitely encourage my clients to do at least 2 days of strength training along with some cardio and stretching/mobility. Cardio is great and will help you lose weight but strength training can help enhance your weight loss efforts and offers many other benefits. Strength training allows your body to burn more fat, helps boost your metabolism, helps tone and tighten problem areas along with helping your heart and body function better. I highly recommend including strength training in your weight loss journey. Since you do not enjoy it, consider trying out a strength class that incorporates a little cardio as well. You do not have to do hours of strength training to get results like some people say, try just adding 20-30 minute strength workouts and go from there.

I hope this helps answer your question. I wish you the best of luck in your upcoming journey!

Dedicated to your success,

Erin M Long

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