



# Importance of Investing in Your Health

Talia Ignacy, Health Promoter  
West Carleton Family Health Team  
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# Learning Objectives

- ▶ Importance of caring for yourself, first
- ▶ Body Scan Meditation Activity
- ▶ Learning to Avoid burnout
  - ▶ Don't let your own health fail while caring for others
- ▶ Tips for Self Care
- ▶ Resources at WCFHT
- ▶ Community Resources
  
- ▶ Questions

# Importance of Caring for Yourself, First

## Challenges to our health:

- ▶ Increased stress
- ▶ Sleep deprivation
- ▶ Insufficient exercise
- ▶ Not taking the time to rest when ill
- ▶ Poor nutrition
- ▶ Postponing medical appointments

## Can lead to...

- ▶ Burnout
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Chronic illness
- ▶ Less energy
- ▶ Less time
- ▶ Can lead to an inability to care for those we love

# Body Scan Meditation Activity



# Learn to Recognize How Stress Affects You

- ▶ Some common physical signs of stress include:
  - ▶ Low energy
  - ▶ Upset stomach, including diarrhea, constipation or nausea
  - ▶ Aches, pains, tense muscles
  - ▶ Insomnia (troubles falling or staying asleep)
  - ▶ Headaches
  - ▶ Irritability
  - ▶ Impatience
- ▶ Identify how stress feels to you. What events or situations make you feel that way?
- ▶ You'll become prepared to avoid it and cope with it when it happens

# Get Enough Sleep

- ▶ Improve the quality and quantity of your sleep
- ▶ Adults typically need between seven and nine hours of sleep a night
- ▶ Practice good sleep hygiene:
  - ▶ Avoid using computers, TV and smartphones before bed
  - ▶ Go to bed and wake up at the same time, everyday (whenever possible)
  - ▶ Deep breathing and meditation can help to relieve stress

# Eat Well

- ▶ Time constraints and lack of energy- often times leads us to gravitate towards unhealthy meal choices ... fast food, pre-prepared foods
  - ▶ These foods tend to be packed with sugar, salt and preservatives and can make us feel sluggish

## Solutions?

- ▶ Meal Planning
- ▶ Having healthy items on hand (easy to prepare meal items, along with snacks such as nuts, dried fruits, cut up vegetables)
- ▶ WCFHT Dietitian can support clients with meal planning and healthy eating
- ▶ Also look for services held by community dietitians
- ▶ Certain grocery stores will put on workshops by a registered dietitian to help with meal planning

# The Healthy Pantry

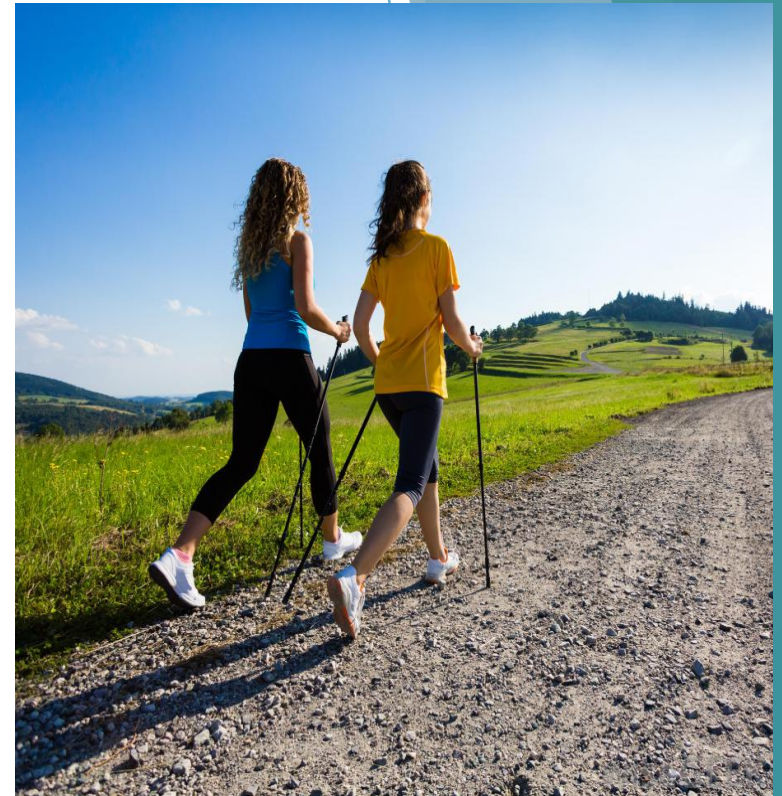
Build a healthy meal using pantry staples

- ▶ Choose a grain/starch
- ▶ Add a protein rich food
- ▶ No fresh veggies? Try adding canned/jarred or frozen vegetables
- ▶ Some additional staples to add taste
- ▶ Add some fruit to your meal or have for dessert



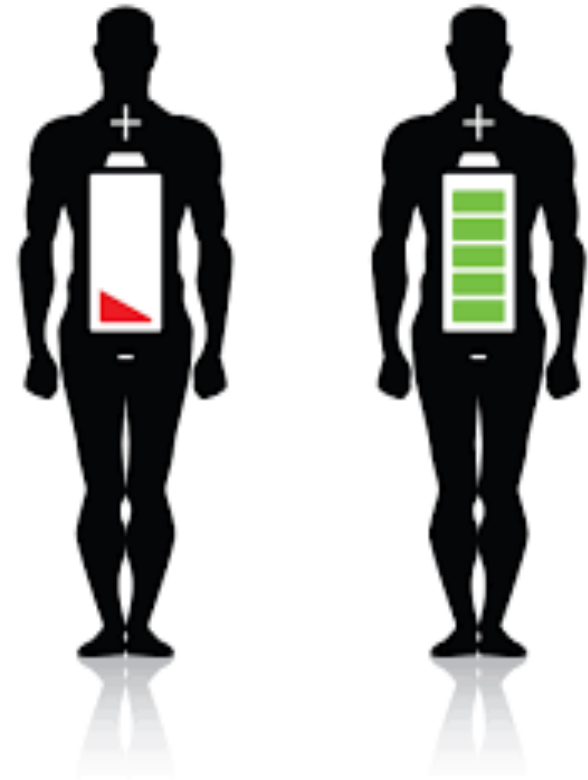
# Exercise Regularly

- ▶ Anything that makes you move and increases your heart rate
- ▶ Even just 10 minutes at a time can see improvements in sleep, energy, reduced stress, decreased risk of chronic disease/illness, improves overall health
- ▶ Aim to obtain 150 minutes of moderate/vigorous activity per week
- ▶ Eg. Taking stairs instead of elevator, walking or biking instead of driving, joining a class, dance to your favourite music
- ▶ Find something you enjoy!



# Recharge Yourself

- ▶ It can be challenging to find time for yourself, but necessary to avoid burnout
- ▶ Learn to make time for yourself without feeling like you're neglecting others
  - ▶ Start small
- ▶ What did you like to do before becoming a caregiver?
  - ▶ Time away with friends? Start with a lunch together once/month



# Don't ignore your own emotions

- ▶ Burnout and fatigue can be common amongst caregivers
- ▶ Get support before burnout sets in
- ▶ WCFHT has a team of mental health counsellors that are here to support patients
- ▶ There is also counselling available in the community - Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre
- ▶ Ask for help - friends, family and other groups can help provide assistance to allow you to have some time for yourself

# Community Resources

## In-Person Support Groups/Counselling

- ▶ **Oasis in Kanata:** Community outreach program and support groups for caregivers of people with mental illness
- ▶ **Cancer Coaching:** Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation
- ▶ **Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre:** general caregiver support groups, and groups for caregivers of people with dementia-related disorders
- ▶ **The Royal Ottawa:** Information and support groups for family and friends of people who have mental illness
- ▶ **Caregiver Support Groups** in Carp and Fitzroy Harbour
- ▶ **Respite Care** - call 613-310-2222

# Community Resources

## Online Support

- ▶ **Caregiver Exchange:** Articles, tips and popular resources
- ▶ **Tend Academy:** For caregivers in high-stress, trauma-exposed workplaces (police, correctional staff, doctors etc).
- ▶ **Here to Help:** Family toolkit for caregivers of people with mental health and substance use disorders
- ▶ **Hopewell:** For family and friends affected by an eating disorder
- ▶ **Alzheimer Society of Canada**
- ▶ **Ottawa Public Health:** Caregiver Guide/Mental Health Caregiver Guide

Find these resources and more at [www.wcfht.ca](http://www.wcfht.ca)

- Health Resources
- Caregiver Support



Thank you!

“Take care of your body.  
It’s the only place you  
have to live.”

Jim Rohn, author and motivational speaker

