


wellness GUIDE



YOUR NEW
FITNESS &
nutrition
ROUTINE

GETTING STARTED WITH
MINDFULNESS
& **meditation**

LEARN YOUR PERSONAL
wellness
SCORE

PHYSIO, CHIRO,
massage &
MORE INSIDE

2022 EDITION

SASKATCHEWAN
BLUE CROSS®



Wishing you **health & happiness** in 2022!

Ready for a refresh for your health and wellness? There's never a better time than now to start fresh and change up our routines, set new intentions and revitalize our goals.

While the opportunity for a new beginning is certainly exciting, it can also be somewhat overwhelming. Whenever you're looking to make a change, there's often an abundance of lists and articles shared online, and it can be exhausting to parse through these materials to figure out where to start. Never fear - the Saskatchewan Blue Cross Wellness Guide is here!

We created the Wellness Guide to centralize a variety of wellness resources all in one place. Our goal is to provide you with reputable and reliable information that can help you make informed decision about your wellbeing. We hope these resources will inspire you to prioritize wellness in your life through easy, every day tips, alongside information from experts about how different modalities can contribute to your health and wellbeing.

This issue is full of everything from meal ideas to podcast recommendations - and much more! Lets get started on your personal wellness journey, head to the next page and take the quiz to find out your personal wellness score!

*Your partner
in wellness,*

**SASKATCHEWAN
BLUE CROSS®**

LEARN YOUR *personal* wellness SCORE

Wondering how your knowledge of wellness stacks up? **Start with this quiz to get your personal wellness score!**

1. I take proactive measures to look after my health and well-being. If I have health concerns, I know what resources are available to me to address them.

- A.** Mostly me, my wellness toolkit is fully loaded! **B.** Sometimes me, but I want to do more. **C.** Not me - I don't know where to start.

2. I incorporate wellness into my daily routine by eating nutritious foods, engaging in physical activity, and taking time to check in with my mental and physical health.

- A.** I do all of the above! **B.** I do some of the above. **C.** I do one of the above, or none.

3. If you could describe your relationship with your overall health in one word or phrase, it would be:

- A.** Committed. Health is wealth, and I am invested in myself! **B.** Work-in-Progress. I care about my health, but sometimes struggle to follow through. **C.** Care-free! Out of sight, out of mind. If the check-engine light is off, I'm good!

4. What do you feel your biggest hurdle or struggle is when it comes to prioritizing your wellness in your life?

- A.** I need more hours in the day to utilize all my wellness knowledge! **B.** I need inspiration for easy things I can do every day to help me on my journey. **C.** I need help getting started to understand wellness & its benefits.

5. I know the benefits of utilizing services from paramedical professionals, like massage therapists and naturopaths. I regularly use these services to take care of my health.

- A.** I know all the benefits and see multiple practitioners regularly. **B.** I know some of the benefits of using these services, but don't utilize regularly. **C.** I don't know the benefits and don't utilize these services.

MOSTLY A: Wellness Warrior

You're an expert in wellness! Keep reading for more tips to add to your wellness toolbox - we might just have something new for you!

MOSTLY B: Wellness Welcoming

You're definitely familiar with wellness and you take a lot of steps to look after your health. Read on for more tips to enhance your knowledge!

MOSTLY C: Wellness Wary

You're interested in wellness, but you could use some help knowing where to start! In this guide, we'll break down the basics - read on to get started!

Do your **busy weeknights** have you swinging through the drive-through for supper solutions? Try some of these **simple recipes** to take the stress out of your meal planning!

simple & delicious **5 DAYS OF EASY SUPPERS**

everything bagel salmon



INGREDIENTS (2 Servings)

- 2 cups of baby potatoes
- 1 tbsp + 1 tsp of avocado oil
- 1 tbsp of oregano
- Salt and pepper
- 224 g salmon fillet
- 1 tsp of poppy seeds
- 1 tsp of sesame seeds
- 1/2 tsp of dried minced garlic
- 1/2 tsp of dried onion flakes
- 2 cups of green beans

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400F°/200C°.
2. Wash and slice the mini potatoes in half
3. In a large bowl, coat the mini potatoes with 1 tbsp of avocado oil, oregano, salt and pepper.
4. Spread the potatoes on a baking sheet with parchment paper and bake for 30 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the poppy seeds, sesame seeds, garlic, and onion.
6. Place the salmon on a baking sheet with parchment paper and coat with the “everything bagel” seasoning.
7. Coat the green beans with 1 tsp of avocado oil, salt and pepper and place them beside the salmon.
8. Once the potatoes are done, bake the salmon and green beans for 12 minutes.
9. Plate everything together & enjoy!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C.
2. Use a fork to create numerous holes in the sweet potatoes.
3. Place the sweet potatoes on a baking sheet with parchment paper and bake for 45 minutes.
4. Place a pot on the stove top on medium heat and add the coconut oil.
5. Once the oil has melted add the onions and ground beef, and cook through.
6. Once the beef is well cooked, add in the celery, carrot, zucchini and cook for another 5 minutes.
7. Next add in the diced tomatoes and chili seasoning.
8. Bring the chili to a boil and then lower to a simmer until the sweet potatoes are done.
9. Once the potatoes are done, split them in half and fill them with the chili.

INGREDIENTS (2 Servings)

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 tsp of coconut oil
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 224 g of ground beef
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 zucchini, cubed
- 1 cup of diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsp chili seasoning

chili-stuffed sweet potatoes



5 DAYS OF EASY suppers

asian beef lettuce wraps



INGREDIENTS (2 Servings)

- 1 tbsp of sesame oil
- 340 g of ground beef
- 2 tbsp of Tamari sauce
- 1 head of iceberg lettuce
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 2 tbsp of sesame seeds
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place a pan on medium heat and add the sesame oil.
2. Cook the ground beef until well done.
3. Once the beef is done add in the Tamari sauce, salt and pepper.
4. Create taco shells with iceberg leaves, and add the beef.
5. Top with shredded carrots and sesame seeds.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400F°/200C°.
2. Bake the chicken breast for 25 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, bring 6 cups of water in a pot to boil.
4. Once the water is boiling add in the pasta.
5. Once the pasta is done, strain it and transfer it to a large bowl.
6. Add the pesto sauce and the cherry tomato halves.
7. Once the chick is done, either shred it with a fork or diced it and add it to the pasta.
8. Serve with fresh basil if desired.

INGREDIENTS (2 Servings)

- 240 g of chicken breast
- 112 g of brown rice pasta
- 1 cup of cherry tomatoes, halves
- 1/2 cup of pesto

chicken pesto pasta



stuffed bell peppers



INGREDIENTS (2 Servings)

- 2 bell peppers
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 224 g of ground beef
- 1 tsp of Italian seasoning
- 1 cup of diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup of dry rice
- 1/2 cup of mozzarella cheese
- 1 tsp of olive oil
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C.
2. Wash and cut the bell peppers in half and bake them for 15 minutes.
3. Place a pan on medium heat with olive oil.
4. Add the onions and ground beef and cook through.
5. Prepare the rice by adding 1/4 cup of dry rice and 1/2 cup of water to a pot, bring to a boil then cover and turn on the heat to very low for 12 minutes.
6. Once the beef is done, add in the Italian seasoning, diced tomatoes, and 1/4 cup of mozzarella cheese.
7. Once the rice is ready, add it to the ground beef mixture.
8. Remove the bell peppers from the oven, stuff them with the mixture, sprinkle the remaining cheese on top and bake for an additional 15 minutes.



what is **NATUROPATHIC** **medicine?**

Ever wondered exactly what Naturopathic Medicine is? Learn more with this brief introduction.

Naturopathic medicine is a type of alternative medicine that compromises and integrates multiple different modalities such as botanical medicine, nutrition, traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture, mental health and counseling, hydrotherapy and massage and more.

It combines these modalities with knowledge of human physiology, anatomy, and biochemistry to get to the root cause of health issues. Targeting the root cause is a main focus of naturopathic medicine and one aspect that sets it apart from allopathic or conventional medicine.

THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

First, Do No Harm (Primum non nocere): Naturopathic doctors aim to take the necessary steps possible to prevent harm by focusing on the least invasive and low risk options first.

The Healing Power of Nature (Vis medicatrix naturae): Naturopathic doctors aim to stimulate the body's own healing systems.

Identify and Treat the Causes (Tolle causam): Naturopathic doctors aim to identify the root cause and treat the root cause.

Doctor as Teacher (Docere): Naturopathic doctors aim to empower their patients with the knowledge to support their health, prevent further health complications, and thrive.

Treat the Whole Person (Tolle totum): Naturopathic doctors treat the whole person by looking at the bigger picture, recognizing the body is integrated whole with systems and processes, and looking at physical, mental, emotional, genetic, environmental and social factors.

Prevention (Praevenic): By using the principles stated above, naturopathic doctors focus on preventative care.

What does targeting the root cause mean? It means diving deep into the patient's health history, discussing or suggesting additional testing, and using the holistic or whole person perspective to determine what organ(s), system(s), and/or pathogen(s) are contributing to the patient's condition(s) or issue(s).

Appointments with naturopathic doctors allow for this extensive history taking and the opportunity to build a positive relationship with the patient, as they can range from 60-90 minutes long.

The treatment protocol or plan will also reflect a holistic perspective and take different aspects, such as lifestyle, nutrition, and supplements, into consideration.

How to find the right Naturopathic doctor for you

Although naturopathic doctors are trained with these different modalities, not all naturopathic doctors will use every single one of these modalities. Many naturopathic doctors niche down and focus on one or a few of these modalities in their practice.

The best way to find the right naturopathic doctor for you is to do a search using your search engine with the keywords or specific focus you're looking for along with the name of your city/town. Also search social media, especially Instagram, using hashtags on your specific health issues or location tags of your area or city. You can ask for a free short 15 or 30 minute consultation to determine if they'd be the perfect fit for you!

5 *craveable* snack swaps

Try these **simple swaps** for your everyday faves to keep you satisfied, and help you **stay on track!**



1

YOU'RE CRAVING: a candy bar
SWAP IT FOR: dark chocolate

It's packed with antioxidants, it might reduce your risk of heart disease, and it will definitely scratch your chocolate itch! Look for bars with 70%+ cocoa content to get the most benefits.

YOU'RE CRAVING: a bag of chips
SWAP IT FOR: veggies and dip

Crunchy, refreshing, and almost as easy to grab as a bag of chips. Prep a homemade dip and pre-cut your veggies ahead of time to make it even simpler to snag this snack when a craving strikes!



2

YOU'RE CRAVING: a sweet soda
SWAP IT FOR: kombucha

It's got the fizz you're looking for, but with way less sugar, and with the added benefits of probiotics and anti-oxidants! Try out a flavour like Lychee and Jasmine or Cherry Cola for a fun twist.



3

YOU'RE CRAVING: salty roasted nuts
SWAP IT FOR: crispy chickpeas

While nuts are a great source of healthy fat, they can be easy to overindulge in if you're not munching mindfully. Crispy chickpeas are easy to make at home, full of protein, and very similar to a handful of nuts!



4

YOU'RE CRAVING: gummy candy
SWAP IT FOR: dried fruit

This snack is full of fibre, and the combination of chewy texture and fruity flavour is sure to satiate your sweet tooth! Keep an eye out for added sugars to make sure you're still getting the health benefits of eating fruit.



5

work out AT HOME

in just 20 minutes!

This high-intensity interval training workout will help you build muscle, increase your endurance and burn fat efficiently. All workouts are **bodyweight-based**, which means you won't need any equipment to do them! All of these workouts can be done in the comfort of your home and are completed in a total of **just 20 minutes!**

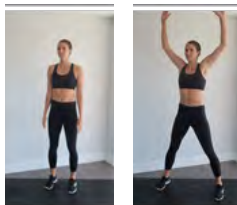
LET'S GO!

JUMPING JACKS



Stand with your feet together, knees slightly bent, and arms to the side. Jump while raising your arms and separating your legs to the sides. Land with your legs apart and arms overhead. Jump back to your original position. Repeat!

HIGH KNEES



Lift one knee high while swinging opposite arm up. Begin lifting the second leg and the opposite arm before planting the lead foot. Continue the movement on your opposite side, alternating quickly between sides.

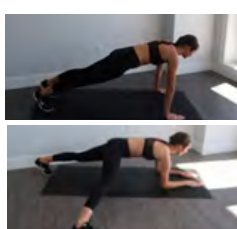
1 MINUTE BREAK

BODYWEIGHT SQUATS



Squat down by bending the hips back while allowing the knees to bend forward, keeping the back straight and knees pointed in the same direction as your feet. Descend until thighs are parallel to the floor. Extend your knees and hips until legs are straight.

PLANK PENDULUM



Begin in a low plank position (on forearms), then bring one foot out as far out to your side as possible, while keeping core tightened. Repeat, alternating sides.

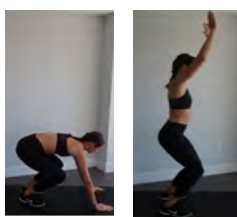
1 MINUTE BREAK

PUSH UPS



Begin in a high plank position (arms extended). Keeping your body straight, lower your body to the floor by bending your arms. Push your body back up until arms are extended.

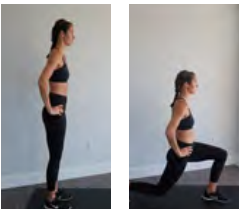
BURPEES



Bend over, placing hands on the floor, slightly wider than shoulder width. While holding upper body in place, kick legs back. Land on forefeet with body in high plank position. Keeping upper body in place, jump legs forward and return your feet to their original position, then stand with arms up.

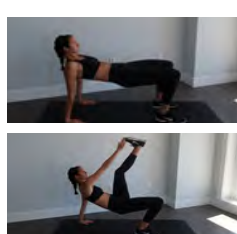
1 MINUTE BREAK

LUNGES



Lunge forward with the first leg. Land on your heel, then forefoot. Lower your body by flexing the knee and hip of your front leg until the knee of the back leg is almost in contact with the floor. Return to original standing position and repeat by alternating legs each time.

CROSS-BODY HEEL TOUCHES



Start by sitting on the floor and then lift your body up by extending your arms and legs. Keep everything tight and balanced while you reach up to touch your opposite foot. Slowly lower back into starting position and repeat on the opposite side.

WORKOUT COMPLETE!

GET TO KNOW A physiotherapist



Prairie View Physiotherapy

Sumita Hintz (MPT, CAFCI, CIDN) is a founding partner and physical therapist at Prairie View Physiotherapy.

What type of training does a Physiotherapist have?

Most physical therapy programs in Canada are now a Master's Degree (just over 6 years in total post-secondary education time) but there are many practicing therapists who completed their training when it was a Bachelor's Degree (4 years of post-secondary education time). There are 3 main categories of education in the program: **Neurology**, which includes the treatment of conditions such as post-stroke, brain or spinal cord injuries, & neurological conditions such as Parkinson's & Multiple Sclerosis etc. The second is **cardiorespiratory**, which includes treatment for the lungs & heart in particular, for example, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), clearing secretions from the lungs with cough assistance & suctioning techniques. And thirdly, **musculoskeletal**, which includes the treatment of bone, muscle, joint & ligament/tendon disorders or injuries - this is what most people think of when they hear physical therapy.

When should you see a physiotherapist and what problems do they treat?

Most people wait far too long, suffering through pain, discomfort and loss of function in both work and home situations, before seeking help from a physical therapist.

Say, for example, you were out walking & rolled your ankle and thought, "Oh, it'll just go away in a few days," but then 2 weeks later it's still tender. Drop in at a physical therapist clinic and get it looked at. They can set you up for success by treating the area specifically, setting you up with appropriate exercises/stretchers and make sure that there is no underlying issue that will come back to haunt you.

Physical therapists treat many, many conditions that fall into the categories listed above. They can help with strength, flexibility, balance, high perfor-

mance athletics, recovery from work and vehicular accidents, gaining back function of injured areas, gaining back independence or maintaining independence in activities of daily living (eg. Seniors health) and also proactively, to reduce susceptibility to injury or loss of function. They also do work place ergonomic assessments, return to work planning and return to sport planning, including concussion management.

Something that people do not know as much is that physical therapists also treat vertigo and dizziness! They can also have other areas of specialty including pelvic floor health (treatment of urinary incontinence or post-partum issues) and acupuncture or dry needling.

What can I expect at an appointment?

At your first appointment, which is usually 1 hour, your therapist will get as much information from you as possible regarding the reason for your visit. They will ask you specific questions about where symptoms are, what they feel like, what aggravates and alleviates them, how it affects your home and work life, and how long you have been dealing with the issue. Other pertinent information includes a bit of a medical background to see if there are any underlying contributing factors, what your hobbies and work demands are and what your personal goals are for recovery.

After that, they will complete a thorough physical exam, including a screen of the whole area of the body that is having the problem and then looking specifically at the area of injury/issue in greater detail.

Once they have gathered all their information both verbally & physically, they will explain what they have found, what they think is going on & how best



to treat it. They will then set you up with some exercises or stretches to start completing at home and let you know if there are any positions or activities to avoid temporarily while the area is healing. You will likely be set up with another appointment to check in and continue to treat the area until the problem is resolved.

Typically, in follow up appointments there is a quick assessment to see where you are and if specific changes have occurred in the area being treated, but most of the appointment is spent in hands-on techniques that facilitate the healing process.

How does Physiotherapy contribute to wellbeing, overall health and preventive care?

Physical therapy is not just about treating injuries or problems (although that is a large part of what happens). Prevention of injuries and proactive intervention are a top priority.

Some examples of this can be seen with ergonomic assessments for work places, partnering with other groups and organizations for promotion of healthy lifestyle or education and working alongside sports teams for optimizing strength & control needed in specific disciplines. Some examples that our clinic has participated in include: workshop & exercise group for people living with Parkinson's disease, partnering with the Saskatchewan Health Region for education sessions regarding chronic pain, working with the local Special Olympics swim athletes for training and development of techniques, and providing coverage for community events such as Pedal in the Park spin class.

We also acknowledge that when returning to work after an incident, there is much more than just the physical side of recovery. A physical therapist helps

you navigate any fears or concerns that may be barriers to a successful return to the workforce, being your advocate in tricky situations.

How often should you see a Physiotherapist?

It really depends on a lot of things: Are you looking to be pointed in the right direction for a preventative measure? You probably only need 1 or 2 appointments for that. Do you have a chronic health concern that is benefited by regular exercise or stretches? You might consider joining a support exercise group. Were you in a bad motor vehicle accident or sustained an injury at work? Your appointments will likely need to be quite frequent & may span several months. Did you have a surgery? Again, your recovery will probably be a little lengthier. Do you have one injury/issue or multiple?

But don't worry, your physical therapist is there to guide you in the amount & frequency of sessions, so you don't have to try & figure it out on your own.

ABOUT PRAIRIE VIEW PHYSIOTHERAPY

Prairie View is a physiotherapy clinic that also offers exercise therapist & massage therapy services. We provide a variety of skills including acupuncture, dry needling, vestibular rehab, concussion management, orthotic casting, work hardening programs & take our services to the elderly in retirement/LTC facilities. We provide education talks to sports, recreational & support groups & are willing to supply physiotherapy & first aid coverage for sporting & recreational events.

LISTEN YOUR WAY TO wellness

Incorporating podcasts into your daily routine is an easy way to boost your wellness! Here's some of our favourites on a range of topics.

Safe for Work

Chock full of hilarious anecdotes and helpful career advice. With episodes about everything from calling in sick, to managing burnout, to asking for a raise, Safe For Work is a podcast about work that's lively and fun - just like work should be!

We Can Do Hard Things

On this podcast, host Glennon Doyle promises this: "Each week we will bring our hard to you and we will ask you to bring your hard to us and we will do what we were all meant to do down here: Help each other carry the hard so we can all live a little bit lighter and braver, more free and less alone."

The Daily Shine

Every weekday, tune in to the Daily Shine, a podcast-meets-meditation experience that helps you take a moment to breathe, and set intentions for your day. Start your mornings with this podcast to make self-care ultra easy!

Unlocking Us

Hosted by New York Times best selling author Brené Brown, this podcast centres around conversations that unlock the deeply human part of who we are, so that we can live, love, parent, and lead with more courage and heart.

Happiness Lab

You might think more money, or a lavish vacation would make you happy - but you could be wrong. This podcast combines the latest scientific research with surprising and inspiring stories that will forever alter the way you think about happiness.

Radio Headspace

Every weekday morning, take a few moments to step away from the internal chatter and external noise. Pause, breathe, and reflect on the day ahead with these bite-sized meditations that are the perfect length to listen to while you sip your morning coffee!





MENTAL HEALTH & self-care

BY THE TEAM AT
OAKS MENTAL HEALTH

Over the last year and a half, due to COVID-19, mental health has been at the center of many conversations. While not everyone may experience a mental illness, everyone does experience fluctuations with their mental health and well-being.

As conversations about mental health have become more common, so has the idea of self-care. Often reduced to an excuse to pamper ourselves, self-care is not just a buzz-word or trendy topic. It's the idea that we should be putting as much care, love, and attention into ourselves as we do for others.

Self-care is about prioritizing our needs in a proactive way.

The first step of self-care is self-awareness: what does it look like when you're not doing well? Each of us has our own set of warning signs that we can use to anticipate when we need to take a step back and make changes.

When our car is running low on fuel, the fuel light goes on. When we are running low on fuel, what changes or warning signs pop up?

This could be anything from difficulty sleeping, having less patience for our partner and kids, dreading going to work, and changes in habits such as skipping meals or drinking/smoking more than usual.

Once we notice a sign that we are running low on emotional, social, or cognitive fuel, we need to do to something that refuels us.

When we notice our car is running low on fuel, it doesn't help us get any further to ignore our car's fuel light.

Whether we like or not, we need to refuel to keep moving forward. Similarly, it doesn't help us to ignore warning signs that we need to emotionally, socially, or cognitively refuel.

How do we refuel? First, we need to create space, time, and energy to refuel or replenish. This, of course, is easier said than done.

It may look like delegating tasks to others, saying

“no” to a request, changing our expectations of ourselves, or taking a sick day.

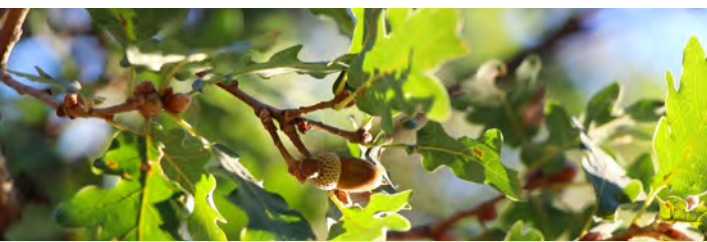
What do all of these things have in common? They lessen the load that we need to carry. Being able to put things down is crucial to effective self-care.

Once we have put down what we can, the final step is to refuel by prioritizing some of our own needs.

While refueling will look different for everyone, here are some examples that might work for you:

- Eating a nourishing meal
- Going for a walk with a friend
- Scheduling a day with no responsibilities
- Going to therapy
- Gardening
- Tidying up messy spaces
- Taking a bath
- Reading, painting, or drawing

Self-care is all about creating rituals and practices that are meaningful to you. Specific self-care practices will look different day to day and season to season - for example, you might not be able to garden in January. Check out our tips for practicing self-care anytime, anywhere, on the right!



ABOUT OAKS MENTAL HEALTH

Oaks Mental Health offers learning opportunities to help you better understand mental health and mental health conditions. Our education focuses on equipping you with practical approaches to support your struggling loved ones, friends, coworkers, peers, neighbours, and the like. Currently, we offer presentations, trainings, and webinars both publicly and privately to individuals and organizations across Canada.



5 QUICK TIPS FOR PRACTICING self-care

1 Pause, Breathe, Notice

Take a moment to pause and notice your thoughts, feelings, and sensations in your body. Just try and notice without judging or fixing. Take a few deep-belly breaths and focus on the rising and falling of your stomach. This helps us be more aware of what is going on for us day to day. So often we rush through our days without taking a few moments to breathe and pause and be in our bodies.

2 Embrace Your Limitations

Humans have limitations. We all only have a limited amount of social, emotional, cognitive, etc. energy. You are not a machine or a robot who can run endlessly and mindlessly. You need breaks and it is not a weakness to have needs or slow down. Challenge the following thoughts: “I shouldn’t need a break,” “I should be able to do this,” “I shouldn’t need help.”

3 Normalize Saying No

It is okay to say no to people. It is okay to not be able to be everything for everyone. Saying no doesn’t mean you don’t care about people or are letting people down. Sometimes we disappoint people when we say no, but that’s okay too. Just because people are disappointed does not automatically mean we have done something wrong.

4 Allow Yourself to Feel What You Feel

If you’re sad, happy, mad, excited, anxious, in awe, etc. let yourself feel what you feel regardless of how much better or worse other peoples’ situations are. Your feelings are valid and giving ourselves our own validation can help us feel better.

5 Remember You’re Doing the Best You Can

Reality is, you are probably do the best you can right now. If you had a friend or a family member going through everything you were going through or carrying everything you were carrying, they would probably have the same difficulties you’re having. Guilt and shame can make our already heavy load heavier, so let’s leave it out of the picture for now.

MOTIVATION *for your* meditation

Have you been longing for a way to press pause in life and just breathe? Are you feeling overwhelmed or anxious and looking for something to help? Meditation might just be the answer you are looking for.

Meditation originates from the Eastern world, often being attributed to Buddhism. These practices have transformed and grown into an exercise that is beyond one specific religion. Meditation is a healthy practice for everyone. Children, teenagers, adults, and seniors all benefit from the stress reducing impact of meditation.

The beauty of meditation is that it can literally be done anywhere, and you experience the results immediately. When you experience meditation, your mind opens to creativity, your heart slows and brings your body into a healthier state, your nerves relax, and the tension you feel dissipates.

Emotional well-being and healing

Increase coping abilities

Improving anxiety and depression

Restful sleep

Decrease stress physically and mentally

Enhance self-awareness

Release physical pain

Increase calmness and inner peace



HOW TO GET STARTED

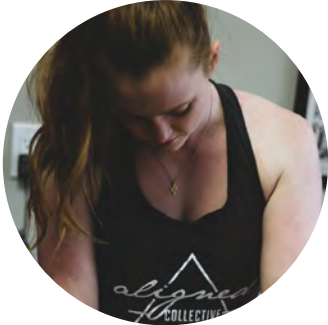
Meditation can be practiced at home, in your office or in your car on a break. You may choose to lay in the grass on a beautiful day or sit outside in a place of your choice. It can be done at any time of day - it's even a wonderful way to begin your day by releasing your worries and it can be an invitation to a deep sleep.

1 Begin with an open mind as there is no perfect way to meditate. Choose an environment where you will not be disturbed for a few short moments. You may wish to turn off any electronic devices and get comfortable wherever you find yourself.

2 Start your meditation time by slowing your breathing down and begin to feel your belly expand with your breath. Many people find it helpful to practice 'square' breathing. That is where you breathe in for four counts, hold for four counts and exhale for four counts.

3 You may choose to play meditative music, listen to a guide talk you through a visualization or simply be in the moment with your breath. Find a space and a practice that works for you. This is your time for rest and rejuvenation. Trust yourself to know what is best for you.

GET TO KNOW A massage therapist



Krista Brooker-Mills is a Registered Massage Therapist at Aligned Collective in Regina, SK.

What is a Registered Massage Therapist? What type of training do they have and why is it important?

Being a Registered Massage Therapist means that the therapist is a part of a regulating body, and more importantly meets the regulating body's requirements. This also generally means the therapist qualifies with insurance companies to be approved for use in benefits coverage packages. The requirements vary amongst regulating bodies but generally include an education standard, current CPR and standard first aid, Criminal record check, malpractice insurance and sometimes a competency exam. Because Massage Therapy is not yet regulated (though the process has been started), it is important to look for a Registered Massage Therapist when seeking treatment to ensure you have a qualified therapist working on your body.

What's the difference between relaxation massage and Massage Therapy?

Intention is the difference. Relaxation massage has a time and place, especially in our current climate. An RMT is qualified to provide relaxation massage, the conversation you have with your Massage Thera-

pist before your treatment is your opportunity to establish what you are looking for be it relaxation or rehabilitation. Massage Therapy to me has a goal in mind, there is something going on in the physical body that needs manipulating. It's important to note that relaxation massage is an area where unregulated practitioners can be found, clarifying that the Massage Therapist has a license number that accompanies their receipt a simple way to confirm you are booking with a Register Massage Therapist.

What should I know before getting a massage?

Every Massage Therapist is going to treat a little bit differently. Taking the time to find the right one for you is worth while, keeping an ultimate goal in mind is a great way to assess if your body and your therapist are working well together. Before your next massage I'd like to encourage readers to think about what is going on in the body. What does it feel like and when does it bother you the most, does the pain move? Giving your RMT as much information as you can helps them find the root of the problem and aim to eliminate it from your life. Listening to what your body has to say is key.



How does massage contribute to wellbeing, overall health and preventative care?

In my opinion, Massage Therapy is a tool above all else. Barring a few exceptions (and we love it when this happens) massage is not a magic cure. Massage Therapy can help alleviate pains brought on by daily life, it can assist the rehabilitation process from a major or minor injury, it can help maintain healthy tissues by catching minor issues before they became major injuries. Adding Massage Therapy as a tool in your healthy lifestyle toolkit can be incredibly helpful. I hate to burst this bubble for my clients but Massage Therapy is not a substitute for stretching and will not fully counter the effects of sitting in the same spot for 8 hours, not one thing can. When it comes down to it, at the base of every massage is blood flow. While Massage Therapy can do a lot of magnificent things, increased blood flow always happens. Blood flow allows nutrients to get to the tissues and cellular waste (that naturally occurs) to get out. So does moving your body, I would love all the people sitting at your desks reading this to take a deep breath and give your shoulders a nice roll. Movement is key!

How often should you get a massage?

Admittedly I am a huge advocate for listening to your body to tell you when it needs some TLC, the time frame seems to be 4-8 weeks for the average person. Every person keeps a different timeline, and with a little practice seems to find their own sweet spot. A good indication that its time for a massage is when life's day to day aches don't go away by morning or when the aches and pains last longer than the activity that brings on the pain. If you are new to massage or working on something specific, it may take a few consecutive treatments to get to this point.



ABOUT ALIGNED COLLECTIVE MASSAGE THERAPY

Aligned Collective is an assessment-based Massage clinic based out of Regina. Aligned takes a personal approach to manual health care. It is our collective goal to help clients find long lasting resolution and understanding through Massage Therapy.

Find out what's covered

Access your plan anytime, from anywhere with your Group member portal and mobile app. Submit your claims online, check your coverage, find your policy information, update your banking and contact information and so much more.

Visit sk.bluecross.ca/portal.





the many **BENEFITS OF** **volunteering**

Looking for a new experience? Try volunteering for a new organization! Many non-profit organizations rely on volunteers to help accomplish their work, especially now as the pandemic landscape has reduced donations to organizations. When you volunteer for a non-profit, you reduce their operating costs and increase their bottom line which means you are often helping the most vulnerable in our community.

By volunteering, you are providing a service for free, which helps to reduce money spent in staffing costs. That helps the organizations you support contribute more of their operating budget toward the programs and services that serve their clients.

There are a number of benefits to volunteering.

Here are just a few:

- **Gain Job experience.** Fresh out of university with no work experience, what better way to gain some skills for your resume than to volunteer your time? It is also not uncommon for an organization to hire their volunteers after a period of time.
- **Increased health benefits.** The health benefits to volunteering are numerous from decreasing the risk of depression, lowering your blood pressure, keeping you mentally and physically active, reducing stress levels, and you will live longer.
- **Gain new experiences.** Non-profits serve a wide variety of clients and do many interesting projects. Many volunteers describe growing as a person when they choose to volunteer.
- **Achieve a stronger sense of connection and purpose.** When you volunteer you become a part of community with common goals. For some, it leads to a career in serving the community they live in.

Don't know where to volunteer, or what types of volunteer work there is? There are many types of volunteer positions you could fill, such as working at a fundraising event, administration work or you can even raise puppies-in-training on their way to become guide dogs.

If you aren't sure where to start your volunteer journey, check out our partner One Small Step SK. Their website will direct you to available volunteering opportunities in your area. You'll be surprised how many organizations are in need of your help!

Whatever your reason for volunteering, your efforts will help you grow as a person and connect to a community with a purpose - and even better, your contribution will help an organization do more for your community.




the basics of **ergonomics** **AT HOME**

How to prevent your at-home work set-up from ruining your day

Whatever your circumstances for working at home, everyone needs the proper ergonomic work setup to prevent shoulder, back, and arm injuries. Better yet, you don't need a fancy private office to achieve this.

No matter the area in your home, you can set up a comfortable and effective workspace with just a few steps. We've broken it down to 3 essential components of your workstation and how you can set it up to promote productivity while preventing injuries.

These small adjustments to your at-home workstation can have a large impact on your overall health and well-being!



Monitor/ laptop should be an arms length away from your face.

If you own a laptop, consider purchasing a laptop stand to adjust the height of your screen.

Back should be upright and shoulders relaxed (an ergonomic chair can help with this).

Tilt backrest at a 135-degree angle.

Armrests should be at the same height as your desk.

Feet should be flat on the floor with knees at a 90-degree angle. If needed, you can improvise - place a stack of books under your feet, so your feet lay flat.

The screen should be at an upright and tilted angle of about 30 degrees. The highest point of your screen should be at eye-level.

Your keyboard should be far enough away from you that your elbows lie on the side of your body. Not essential (but recommended):
Keyboards should be at a negative tilt

An ergonomic mouse can prevent nerve pain in forearm and hands.

Your forearm and elbow should make a 90-degree angle when your arms are relaxed on the desk.

There should be enough space underneath your desk to cross your legs.

CHAIR SET-UP

A comfortable and ergonomic chair designed to support proper posture helps prevent any back and shoulder pain. This is especially the case if you're on your chair for hours on end. With an ergonomic chair, you can slide it under any kitchen or living room table if you don't have an office desk.

MONITOR/COMPUTER SET-UP

The positioning of your monitor/laptop is also important to prevent neck and shoulder pain. How you position it determines how much pressure and strain you place on those areas.

DESK SET-UP

If you don't have much space like a private room or an office, you can purchase a standing desk. These desks are not only height adjustable, but you can place them in any corner of any room. Standing desks offer several health benefits such as preventing chronic back pain and lowering blood sugar levels. Alternatively if you want to stick with the existing desks in your home, here's the optimal desk positioning to avoid injuries.

GET TO KNOW A chiropractor



Dr. Kayla Lucas is a Chiropractor at Thrive Family Chiropractic and Wellness.

What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic is a holistic health care profession that focuses on the neuromusculoskeletal system. It considers the person as a whole and respects that body's natural healing process. Chiropractors look to the spine for misalignments called vertebral subluxations that can be causative in health problems. Many people are aware that Chiropractors can help alleviate symptoms of back or neck pain as well as headaches/migraines and other injuries. However, Chiropractic works solely on the nervous system by adjusting joints of the spine and this can improve health in other ways. Many patients report improved sleep, energy, digestive function, a greater resistance to immune challenges all while under Chiropractic care. It is a whole-body approach to wellness.

Is Chiropractic safe?

Yes! Chiropractic is a safe treatment option for the prevention, assessment, diagnosis, and management of musculoskeletal conditions and associated neurological system.

Are there different types of Chiropractic care?

Yes! Chiropractic was developed in 1895 and since its inception, there have been multiple forms of

treatments and adjusting methods utilized. The most common ways Chiropractors adjust the spine and joints of the body is called Manual/Diversified. This type of Chiropractor primarily uses their hands to detect and correct vertebral subluxations. Other forms of treatment include Instrument Assisted adjustments and this utilizes different tools to adjust the spine and surrounding joints. Each method is different and unique and the primary goal is to get the patient in a better state of health.

Chiropractors also see people from all ages and stages. Chiropractic is not just for the adult population but infants, children, teenagers, the elderly and everyone in between are encouraged to seek Chiropractic care.

How does Chiropractic treatment contribute to overall health and preventative care?

Essentially Chiropractic care improves the communication from your brain to your body. When your spine has vertebral subluxations in it, this causes blockages in nerve cells and the body will not be able to function the way it's designed to. Chiropractic care clears these blockages and this optimizes the function of your nervous system. It allows the body to heal itself without medication or surgery.

ABOUT THRIVE FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC & WELLNESS

At Thrive, we embrace the uniqueness of each individual person that brings life into our practice. Being unapologetically family friendly, we have created an environment that is designed to support and uplift you and your loved ones. We offer natural, holistic services that are designed to shift and enhance your health including Chiropractic care, Massage Therapy and Acupuncture. We have an outstanding team of individuals who are here to serve you with the best care possible, so that you can thrive in all aspects of your life.

How often should you see a Chiropractor?

This is completely dependent on your current health status and health goals. My recommendation for people is to see a Chiropractor as long as it is serving you. If your primary goal is pain relief, then you may see your Chiropractor a few times per week to reduce your pain and improve your mobility. If you are seeking wellness care and want to take a preventative approach to your health then Chiropractic becomes a part of your lifestyle routine. The first step is to check in with your Chiropractor about what your goals are in order to make a customized care plan to fit your needs.



**rain,
snow,
or shine.**



**Your health plan
keeps you covered
through all life's changes.**



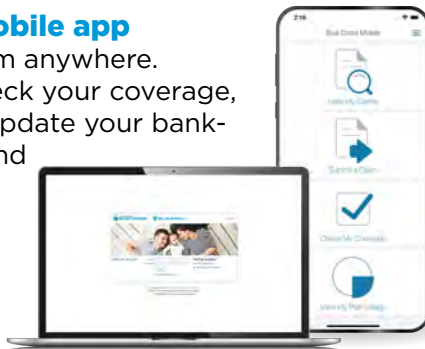


Your plan, at your fingertips

With member-driven solutions designed for today's busy world, your group benefits plan includes these tools to make managing your plan easy. Visit sk.bluecross.ca/portal to get started.

Group member portal & mobile app

Access your plan anytime, from anywhere. Submit your claims online, check your coverage, find your policy information, update your banking and contact information and so much more!



A number of the most common claims submitted through the mobile app offer real-time adjudication, which means you could be reimbursed within just 24 hours!

Mobile ID card

You can access your ID card through the mobile app, so you're never without it. You can also use the app to share your ID card with family members through email or text message!

Find a health professional nearby

Using GPS-style navigation, you can find approved health professionals nearby, whether you're close to home or travelling. You can even use the look-up tool to find a provider that offers direct billing to reduce your out-of-pocket expenses.

Direct deposit

Sign up for direct deposit to make claim reimbursements fast and easy. Enter your account details under 'My Account' within your member portal and app.

Need assistance?

We're just a phone call away from helping you with the answers to any questions you have. You can get in touch with us at 1-800-USEBLUE® or sk.bluecross.ca/contact-us.

Build your knowledge

Visit our website at sk.bluecross.ca/build-your-knowledge to access a wealth of resources designed to build your understanding of insurance and take care of your health and wellness.

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Members have access to free, reliable and relatable mental health information through Stronger Minds by MindBeacon. Strengthen your mental health with access to videos, quick reads and resilience-building activities. Visit mindbeacon.com/strongerminds.

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