

STEP INTO WELLNESS



Diocese of Palm Beach 2020 Healthiest Employers Award Honoree



Spotlight on Success—St. Ann School Slim Down Challenge

St. Ann School kicked off their “Biggest Loser” “Slim Down” weight loss challenge and had some good results! St. Ann Wellness Co-Captain Danielle Twist rallied the staff and kicked off the seven week challenge.

The Challenge was designed to measure total percentage of body weight lost and not pounds, because everyone has different body types and weight loss goals.

There were 12 total participants both faculty and staff with a \$25 buy in. The teams were divided equally based on weight and body type. The top winner (who was called the top loser) from each team would win 20% of the “pot”. Then the winning team split the remainder of the “pot” evenly.

Participants weighed in on Tuesday mornings together as a group to maintain accountability and to encourage each other along the way.

Many of the participants’ weight fluctuated and they had successful weeks and weeks during which they struggled. But they had their teams to lean on and encourage one another.

Additionally, they would share recipes in their group texts and different fun exercises they were doing at home. Some of them even challenged each other to activity goals on their fitness trackers.

The two teams came up with some awesome team names. One of the teams was called the “Die Lards” team and the other team was called the “Flab-U-Less” team.

Their total weight as a group was 2,162 pounds. At the end of the challenge, they had lost a total of 56.9 pounds which was 4.93% of their total body weight.

The “Die Lards” lost a total of 22.7 pounds - a 1.96% of weight loss and the “Flab-U-Less” lost a total of 34.2 pounds - a 3.40% of weight loss. The top “loser” from Die Lards lost 9.4 lbs., 7.8% of her total weight and the top loser from Fab-U-Less

lost 10.1 pounds, 6.54% of her total weight. (this doesn’t sound like a lot of weight, but they were encouraging a healthy weight loss of .5 to 2 pounds per week).

A couple of the team members had this to say,

“I enjoyed the Slim Down Challenge because it kept me accountable, not only to myself, but to my team. I didn’t want to let my team down by gaining weight. I never wanted to hold my team back from winning the prize money.”

“I loved being a part of a team and having support. I was part of Flab-U-Less and we would group text each other often with recipes and encouragement. I always knew they were there to help me make a better food choice when I was struggling on my own at home.”

Due to the success of their efforts, they are gearing up to do a second round and lose even more weight!

Advantages and benefits of doing a group weight loss challenge

1. Weight Loss. Okay, this one’s obvious, but who among us wouldn’t be happy to step on the scale six weeks from today and see that we’ve dropped a few pounds?

2. Accountability. Joining a challenge is a simple step you can take that swings you from intention into action!

3. It’s short term. Joining a challenge (especially a shorter one like 30 or 45 days) means that you’re only sacrificing for a pre-determined period of time. If you want to go back to your old ways (although you likely won’t WANT to – and then it’s no longer a sacrifice) at the end of the challenge, you can.

4. There’s Support. The other people make challenges social. And there’s hard science that supports the idea that if your fitness or weight loss program is social, you’ll be more successful in both the short term (for the challenge) AND the long term (lasting lifestyle change).



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Make Your Heart A Priority

Self-Care Sunday - Find a moment of serenity every Sunday.

Mindful Monday - Be mindful about your health and regularly monitor your blood pressure or blood sugar if needed.

Tasty Tuesday - Start small by peppering up your meals with a fresh herb or spice as a salt substitute. Get adventurous and prepare a simple, new, heart-healthy recipe.

Wellness Wednesday - Don’t waffle on your wellness. Move more, eat a fruit or vegetable you’ve never tried, make a plan to quit smoking or vaping, or learn the signs of a heart attack or stroke.

Treat Yourself Thursday - Treats can be healthy. Try making a dessert with fresh fruit and yogurt.

Follow Friday - Follow inspiring people and pages on social media, or text a friend to help you stick to your self-care goals.

Selfie Saturday - Inspire others to take care of their own hearts.

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics>

American Heart Month

It's February – American Heart Month – a time when the nation spotlights heart disease, the No. 1 killer of Americans.

President Lyndon B. Johnson, among the millions of people in the country who'd had heart attacks, issued the first proclamation in 1964. Since then, U.S. presidents have annually declared February American Heart Month.

Throughout the month, the American Heart Association's "Heart to Heart: Why Losing One Woman Is Too Many" campaign will raise awareness about how 1 in 3 women are diagnosed with heart disease annually.

This year, the federally designated event is even more important due to the impact of the coronavirus on the public's heart health, including potential harmful effects on the heart and vascular system, according to recent research.

Also, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have delayed or avoided going to hospitals for heart attacks and strokes – netting poorer outcomes and prompting the AHA to create "Don't Die of Doubt," a national awareness campaign that reminds people that hospitals are the safest place to go when you have symptoms.

And while in lockdown, more people have engaged in unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, such as eating poorly, drinking more alcohol and limiting physical activity, that can contribute to heart disease. Meanwhile, heart disease continues to be the greatest health threat to Americans and is still the leading cause of death worldwide, according to the AHA's Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics – 2021 Update.

The update, published in the association's flagship journal *Circulation*, reports that nearly 18.6 million people across the globe died of cardiovascular disease in 2019, the latest year for which worldwide statistics are calculated. That's a 17.1% increase over the past decade. And 523.2 million cases of cardiovascular disease were reported in 2019, a 26.6% increase over 2010.

During American Heart Month, the AHA and other organizations reinforce the importance of heart health, the need for more research and efforts to ensure that millions of people live longer and healthier.

In most cases, heart disease is preventable when people adopt a healthy lifestyle, which includes not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, controlling blood sugar and cholesterol, treating high blood pressure, getting at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week and getting regular checkups.

www.heart.org



February Happenings Calendar

Feb 1—28	American Heart Month
Feb 1—28	Nat'l. Children's Dental Health Month
Feb 1—28	AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month
Feb 1—28	Int'l. Prenatal Infection Prevention Month
Feb 3—9	Children's Mental Health Week
Feb 15	President's Day

Tomato Basil Soup

Ingredients: 3 14.5-ounce cans no-salt-added diced tomatoes, 2 cups fat-free milk, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, 1/8 teaspoon salt, 1 1/2 cups fresh basil leaves, coarsely chopped and 2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves, minced, divided, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, stir together the tomatoes, milk, garlic powder, pepper, and salt.
2. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 15 minutes. Stir in the 1 1/2 cups basil leaves. Cook for 5 minutes.
3. Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the baking soda (which will make the soup foam for a minute). Using a handheld immersion blender, carefully puree the mixture until smooth. Alternatively, carefully pour the mixture into a food processor or blender, venting the lid to allow steam to escape. Working in batches, puree the soup. Ladle into bowls. Sprinkle each with 1 teaspoon minced basil.

Quick Tips

Cooking Tip: Don't have fresh basil? Stir in 2 teaspoons dried basil when you add the garlic powder.

Keep it Healthy: Many canned tomatoes are packed with extra sodium, so be sure to look for the no-salt-added variety.

Tip: Stirring in a touch of baking soda once the soup is off the heat helps reduce the acidity from the tomatoes—a small step that makes a big impact on the soup's flavor.



Recipe courtesy of: <https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/tomato-basil-soup>

Have an idea, suggestion or comment? Contact your Wellness Coordinator, Carol Waring at cwaring@diocesepb.org or 561-775-9572. Have a benefits question? Contact your Benefits Assistant, Sandy Maulden at smaulden@diocesepb.org or 561-775-9574. Be sure to visit the wellness web page at www.diocesepb.org/wellness for helpful links and information.

Know Your Health and Wellness Benefits!

Pharmacy Benefit Provider



Effective January 1, 2021, The Diocese of Palm Beach has a new pharmacy partner!

Begin Using your new Elixir ID card for all prescription drug purchases as of January 1, 2021

Be sure to give your pharmacy your new Elixir card so they can change your record to the new provider. This will also apply to your covered dependents.

Beginning January 1, 2021, if your pharmacy uses the RxEDO card they will be told that you are not covered because your data no longer appears in the RxEDO system after 12/31/2020.

Only use your Elixir card and your Elixir eligibility information reflected on your Elixir ID card for you and your covered dependents for your prescription drug purchases.

If you would like to contact Elixir, they can be reached at 800-771-4648 or you may visit their website www.elixirsolutions.com

You may also call Sandy Maulden in the Benefits Office at 561-775-9574 or smauld-en@diocesepb.org or Ana Jarosz at 561-775-9525 or anaj@diocesepb.org about your benefits related questions.



Health and Nutrition Tips

It's easy to get confused when it comes to health and nutrition. Even qualified experts often seem to hold opposing opinions.

Yet, despite all the disagreements, a number of wellness tips are well supported by research. Here are health and nutrition tips that are actually based on good science.

1. Don't drink sugar calories. Sugary drinks are among the most fattening items you can put into your body. This is because your brain doesn't measure calories from liquid sugar the same way it does for solid food. Therefore, when you drink soda, you end up eating more total calories. Sugary drinks are strongly associated with obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and many other health problems .

2. Eat nuts. Despite being high in fat, nuts are incredibly nutritious and healthy. They're loaded with magnesium, vitamin E, fiber, and various other nutrients. Studies demonstrate that nuts can help you lose weight and may help fight type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

3. Avoid processed junk food (eat real food instead). Processed junk food is incredibly unhealthy. These foods have been engineered to trigger your pleasure centers, so they trick your brain into overeating — even promoting food addiction in some people. They're usually low in fiber, protein, and micronutrients but high in unhealthy ingredients like added sugar and refined grains. Thus, they provide mostly empty calories.

4. Don't fear coffee. Coffee is very healthy. It's high in antioxidants, and studies have linked coffee intake to longevity and a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, and numerous other illnesses. Limit sugar and cream.

5. Eat fatty fish. Fish is a great source of high-quality protein and healthy fat. This is particularly true of fatty fish, such as salmon, which is loaded with omega-3 fatty acids and various other nutrients.

6. Get enough sleep. The importance of getting enough quality sleep cannot be overstated. Poor sleep can drive insulin resistance, disrupt your appetite hormones, and reduce your physical and mental performance. What's more, poor sleep is one of the strongest individual risk factors for weight gain and obesity. One study linked insufficient sleep to an 89% and 55% increased risk of obesity in children and adults, respectively.

7. Take care of your gut health with probiotics and fiber. The bacteria in your gut, collectively called the gut microbiota, are incredibly important for overall health. A disruption in gut bacteria is linked to some of the world's most serious chronic diseases, including obesity. Good ways to improve gut health include eating probiotic foods like yogurt and sauerkraut, taking probiotic supplements, and eating plenty of fiber. Notably, fiber functions as fuel for your gut bacteria.

8. Drink some water, especially before meals. Drinking enough water can have numerous benefits. Surprisingly, it can boost the number of calories you burn. The optimal time to drink it is before

meals. One study showed that downing 2.1 cups (500 ml) of water 30 minutes before each meal increased weight loss by 44%.

9. Don't overcook or burn your meat. Meat can be a nutritious and healthy part of your diet. It's very high in protein and contains various important nutrients. However, problems occur when meat is overcooked or burnt. This can lead to the formation of harmful compounds that raise your risk of cancer.

10. Avoid bright lights before sleep. When you're exposed to bright lights in the evening, it may disrupt your production of the sleep hormone melatonin. One strategy is to use a pair of amber-tinted glasses that block blue light from entering your eyes in the evening. This allows melatonin to be produced as if it were completely dark, helping you sleep better.

11. Take vitamin D3 if you don't get much sun exposure. Sunlight is a great source of vitamin D. Yet, most people don't get enough sun exposure. In fact, about 41.6% of the U.S. population is deficient in this critical vitamin. If you're unable to get adequate sun exposure, vitamin D supplements are a good alternative. Their benefits include improved bone health, increased strength, reduced symptoms of depression, and a lower risk of cancer.

12. Eat vegetables and fruits. Vegetables and fruits are loaded with prebiotic fiber, vitamins, minerals, and many antioxidants, some of which have potent biological effects.

13. Make sure to eat enough protein. Eating enough protein is vital for optimal health. What's more, this nutrient is particularly important for weight loss. High protein intake can boost metabolism significantly while making you feel full enough to automatically eat fewer calories.

14. Do some cardio. Doing aerobic exercise, also called cardio, is one of the best things you can do for your mental and physical health. It's particularly effective at reducing belly fat, the harmful type of fat that builds up around your organs. Reduced belly fat should lead to major improvements in metabolic health.

15. Don't smoke or do drugs, and only drink in moderation.

16. Use extra virgin olive oil. Extra virgin olive oil is one of the healthiest vegetable oils. It's loaded with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and powerful antioxidants that can fight inflammation.

17. Minimize your sugar intake. Added sugar is one of the worst ingredients in the modern diet, as large amounts can harm your metabolic health. High sugar intake is linked to numerous ailments, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and many forms of cancer.

The bottom line: A few simple steps can go a long way toward improving your diet and wellness. Still, if you're trying to live a healthier life, don't just focus on the foods you eat. Exercise, sleep, and social relationships are also important.

With the tips above, it's easy to get your body feeling great every day.

Source: [Healthline.com/nutrition](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition)