

NWHW

NATIONAL WOMENS HEALTH WEEK

MAY 8-14, 2022

womenshealth.gov/nwhw



Forward Focus: Achieving Healthier Futures Together

Prioritizing your health – both physical and mental – has never been more important. Over the past few years, many women have put off taking care of their general health and wellness needs. They have adjusted their daily routines, including the way they connect with family and friends. The combination has led to serious health problems for some women.

During **National Women's Health Week (NWHW)**, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' **Office on Women's Health (OWH)** encourages women and girls to reflect on their individual health needs and take steps to improve their overall health. Whether you continue your current activities or find news ones, now is a great time for all women and girls to focus on better health, especially those with [underlying health conditions](#), such as [hypertension](#), [diabetes](#), [obesity](#), [cardiovascular and respiratory conditions](#), and [women 65 years and older](#). National Women's Health Week is also a great time for family, friends, and the greater community to take actions to support women and help them achieve the best health possible.

How Can We Achieve Better Health During NWHW?

● Continue to Take Steps to Protect Yourself against COVID-19.

If you had COVID-19 in the past and recovered, there are also steps you can take to prevent [reinfection](#).

- » Get vaccinated and stay up to date with a COVID-19 booster shot. Find locations to receive the vaccine here: vaccinefinder.org
- » Learn about COVID-19 risk in your local [community](#). Check out the CDC's new [COVID-19 County Check widget](#) to learn the current levels and other prevention steps and guidelines specific to your area such as wearing a mask and social distancing.
- » There are conditions that continue to make you are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. Learn more about these conditions and what specific things you can do to prevent infection or reinfection
 - ▶ [Pregnant and Recently Pregnant People](#)
 - ▶ [People with Certain Medical Conditions](#)
 - ▶ [Older Adults](#)
 - ▶ [People who are immunocompromised \(or have a weakened immune system\)](#)

● Schedule your Annual Physical and other Health Appointments.

Talk to your doctor, nurse, nurse practitioner, and/or physician assistant about the following.

- » The [COVID-19 vaccine](#) and [any vaccines](#) that you may have missed during the pandemic.

- » Preventive care such as PAP smears, mammograms, bone density scans, stress tests, cholesterol screenings, blood pressure screenings, physical exams, and other health screenings that you may have missed during the pandemic. Not sure what they are? Click here:

- ▶ [Health Screenings for women ages 18 to 39](#)
- ▶ [Health Screenings for women ages 40 to 64](#)
- ▶ [Health Screenings for women ages 65 and older](#)

- » If you have missed any recommended check-ups or vaccinations during COVID-19. Learn more about the [vaccine schedule for adults](#).
- » If stress, anxiety, or depression is getting in the way of your daily activities.
- » If you are feeling sad, overwhelmed, or are unable to eat or sleep for longer than two weeks after the birth your baby. You may be experiencing [postpartum depression](#).

● Maintain a Healthy Weight

- » Maintaining a [healthy weight](#) can lower the risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and high blood pressure. It can also lower the risk of many different cancers.
- » [Healthy weight](#) is different for everyone, but it's important to know what a healthy weight is for you.
- » Talk to your doctor or nurse about your health goals and create a plan specific for you.

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● Get Moving and Stay Active

Being physically active is one of the most important actions you can take at any age to improve your health. Did you know? The HHS [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#) defines physical activity generally as any movement that enhances health. That means you activities such as gardening and cleaning can count as physical activity.

- » Create a weekly activity plan through [Move Your Way](#). The goal: Get your heart beating faster through 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise each week.
- » Break your activity into small sessions. Go for a 15 or 30 minute walk during your lunch break. In addition, daily exercise improves cardiovascular health, and Vitamin D provided by the sun to helps boost your immune system.
- » Incorporate [muscle-strengthening activity](#), including lifting weights or using resistance bands, will help prevent sarcopenia, or muscle loss due to aging and immobility.
- » [Find a routine to fit your needs](#) based on your age, stage of life, and abilities. If you are pregnant, there are [ways that you can exercise safely](#). Talk to your doctor before starting or changing your physical activity.

● Nourish from the Inside Out

Eat well-balanced meals and snacks.

- » [Heart-healthy eating](#) involves choosing certain foods, such as fruits and vegetables, while limiting others, such as saturated and trans fats and added sugars.
- » Explore tips at [nutrition.gov](#) for eating at home and in restaurants to ensure balanced, heart-healthy meals.
- » It's important to ensure you are getting enough vitamins in your diet. Not sure what that is? [Click here](#).

● Practice Self-Care for your Mental Health

- » Make a list of [small acts of self-care](#) that you can do daily.

- » Check in to see if [you need support or help dealing with daily life](#).
- » Stay connected with family and friends.
- » [Connect with your community](#)- or faith-based organizations.
- » Make time to unwind and focus on activities you enjoy. [Support caregivers in your life](#). If you are a caregiver, take time for you.
- » Pay attention to changes in your mood. [If you or anyone you know is experiencing changes in thinking, mood, behavior, and/or thoughts of self-harm](#), reach out for help:
- » **SAMHSA's National Helpline – 1-800-662-HELP (4357)**
- » SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

● Find Healthy Ways to Manage Stress

- » Build a toolbox full of healthy ways to cope with stress. Simple, everyday actions such as scheduling quiet time for [meditation](#), yoga, and reading can reduce stress.
- » Learn about the difference between stress and anxiety and how you can cope here: [nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/so-stressed-out-fact-sheet](#)

● Create Good Sleep Habits

- » About 1 in 3 adults do not regularly get the recommended amount of sleep they need to protect their health.
- » [Sleep deficiency](#) can lead to physical and mental health problems, including heart disease, depression, and injuries.
- » Follow a routine for going to sleep such as going to bed and waking up at the same time each day – even on weekends – to improve your sleep habits.
- » Try to get at least [7 hours of sleep](#).

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● Seek Help if You or Someone You Know is Experiencing Domestic Violence

- » Violence has long-term effects on health outcomes for women and their families, including emotional trauma, lasting physical challenges, and chronic health problems.
- » Recognize the [symptoms of abuse](#).
- » **Support a friend or family member** who may be in an abusive relationship. Get help and support.

National Domestic Violence Hotline is a 24/7 confidential service that supports victims and [survivors of domestic violence](#).

The hotline can be reached at:

By phone: 1-800-799-7233(SAFE)

By text: Text LOVEIS to 22522

Online chat: thehotline.org

● Incorporate Safe Behaviors into Your Daily Routine

- » Monitor alcohol intake and avoid illicit drugs, including drugs that are not prescribed to you.

- » Look out for your lungs. Quit smoking and vaping. Smoking weakens your lungs and puts you at a much higher risk of having serious health complications, especially if you have COVID-19.

● How can I participate in National Women's Health Week?

The Office on Women's Health invites you to:

- » Continue to take steps to protect yourself from COVID by social distancing, wearing masks, and getting your COVID vaccine.
- » Share what actions you are taking [for good health](#) such as getting active and managing stress.
- » Use our NWHW promotional tools and share on social media. Use **#NWHW** in any social media messages you share.
- » Organize virtual events or activities in your community.
- » Use our online tool for customized tips to improve your healthy eating and physical activity habits.
- » Share the tool with your friends and family to help them take the next step on their journeys to better health.

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