Proper sleep is essential, and a widely used scoring system for heart and brain health is being redefined to reflect that.

Since 2010, the American Heart Association has said seven modifiable components – maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, being physically active, eating a healthy diet and controlling blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar – were key to ideal cardiovascular health.

Those components, dubbed Life’s Simple 7, became a common way for doctors and patients to rate and discuss heart and brain health. It’s also been a key research tool, used in more than 2,500 scientific papers.

Sleep duration joins those seven original metrics in a revised scoring tool, now called Life’s Essential 8, which published last year as an AHA presidential advisory in the journal Circulation.

The update is about much more than adding sleep, said AHA president Dr. Donald Lloyd-Jones, who led the expert panel that wrote the advisory. The new score incorporates 12 years of research and enhances its evaluation of diet, exercise and more.

"We’re hoping that this will, in fact, be a moment of empowerment, a moment of optimism for people to think positively about their health," said Lloyd-Jones, a cardiologist, epidemiologist and chair of preventive medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. "And this is a good way for them to measure it today, monitor it over time and focus on ways to maintain and improve it."

Adults should average seven to nine hours of sleep a night, the advisory says. For children, the amount varies by age.

Lloyd-Jones, who led the creation of the original seven categories in 2010, said sleep’s importance was clear even then. But it was difficult to agree on how to score it, because sleep information wasn’t being collected in large national databases.

"Now it is," he said, and "the science has shown us how sleep is part and parcel of cardiovascular health."

The advisory notes that both too much and too little sleep are associated with heart disease and that poor sleep health is linked to poor psychological health, an important driver of heart disease.

"And of course, sleep affects all the other seven metrics here as well," Lloyd-Jones said.

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Health & Human Science News

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 2024
8   Extension Homemakers Executive Council, 2:00 PM, Comm. Center, 4-H Park
8   Extension Homemakers President’s Council, 3:00 PM, Comm. Center, 4-H Park
15  Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day—County Offices Closed
16-18 Fort Wayne Farm Show, Allen County Memorial Coliseum
30  A Matter of Balance Program starts (see page 5)

February 2024
1    Toddler Block Party, City Hall, 11am-12noon
15   Extension Annual Meeting
17   Random Acts of Kindness Day
19   President’s Day—County Offices Closed

March 2024
1    ServSafe Training in Allen County —see below for details
5    IEHA District Spring Meeting, Adams County
11   Extension Homemakers Executive Council, 2:00 PM, Comm. Center, 4-H Park
11   Extension Homemakers President’s Council, 3:00 PM, Comm. Center, 4-H Park
29   Good Friday—County Offices Closed
31   Easter

April 2024
18   Volunteer Community Support Day, 9:00-11:30 AM

ServSafe Training Offered

Purdue Cooperative Extension Service will be offering a Retail Food Certification class on March 1st. This is for food handlers who need to obtain a Retail Food Certificate. The class will take place 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. with the exam following at 4:00 pm. A photo ID with signature is required to take the exam.

The training will be held at the Allen County Extension Office, 4001 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN

Cost for this training is:
Training, Exam, and Manual—$165
Training and Exam—$115
Exam With Manual—$115
Exam Only—$65

Register at: https://cvent.me/VvZO0M. For more information, go to https://www.purdue.edu/servsafe, or contact the Purdue Education Store by phone, 765-494-6794, or email, edustore@purdue.edu
YOU CAN HELP PURDUE’S BROADBAND TEAM!

The federal government, in partnership with states, is deploying broadband funds through the Broadband Equity, Adoption, and Deployment program, also known as BEAD. Indiana is receiving close to $870 million starting mid to late 2024. A map put together by the Federal Communications Commission or FCC, the government entity that regulates telecommunications, will dictate where these funds go, so we need to make sure Indiana’s broadband map is as accurate as possible. See below how you can help!

**Speed Test**
Test your internet, or report a lack of internet at your location. This will help determine if internet is available, but also if it is a high quality, reliable connection.

**Validate the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Map**
Help the FCC get an accurate map of Indiana’s internet speeds. This map will guide the use of broadband funds across our state.

**Indiana Connectivity Program**
This program aims to connect residents and businesses that lack access to broadband internet service with service providers and assist in the expense of extending broadband to those locations.

**Affordable Connectivity Program**
Many times internet is available, but folks do not subscribe because they may not be able to afford it. There is a program in place to help with that.

For more information, visit bit.ly/PUbroadbandinfo

It is the policy of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran. Purdue University is an Affirmative Action institution. This material may be available in alternative formats.
Cheryl Anderson, dean of the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science at the University of California San Diego, called Life's Essential 8 “a big deal” both for health care professionals and people who want to understand their cardiovascular health.

Anderson, who co-wrote the advisory, said the update is “a really good recognition of how science has changed, and our ability to adapt according to the changes.”

The revisions introduce a 100-point measure of heart health, which can be taken online at www.heart.org/lifes8.

The new score replaces a 14-point scale and tweaks several of the original categories.

On smoking, for example, the old measure considered only traditional cigarette use. The new score includes nicotine use and exposure from e-cigarettes, as well as the effects of secondhand exposure.

The new score also shifts from emphasizing total cholesterol in favor of measuring non-HDL cholesterol. It’s now calculated by subtracting “good” HDL cholesterol from total cholesterol, leaving just a measurement of the “bad” types of cholesterol. The new tool also expands how blood glucose can be evaluated.

The system allows for more precise evaluation of exercise levels, Lloyd-Jones said. And it looks at diet in a new way. “Before, we had five very clunky yes-or-no metrics to say whether someone had a healthy diet or not. And that wasn’t really appropriate for all different types of eating patterns and cultures.”

Anderson said the new diet component rates how closely someone follows a Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, or DASH, type of diet.

But although the measure broadens the foods evaluated, people shouldn’t focus on single items, Anderson said. “We want to think about the whole package. There is no one food or nutrient that will completely overhaul one’s cardiovascular health.”

Some key components of heart health, such as stress, are not part of the new score.

“Stress is real,” Lloyd-Jones said. “It’s an important part of all of our lives. But it’s hard to measure how we internalize that stress, and what the effect is on our health status.”

The advisory discusses the importance of both psychological health and the societal and environmental factors known as the social determinants of health, which include whether someone has access to healthy food, medical care or a safe place to exercise. But although Lloyd-Jones called them “foundational” for heart health, he said such factors couldn’t be boiled down into something that fit the scoring system.

The old scoring system sorted responses in its seven categories as either “poor,” “intermediate” or “ideal.” Fewer than 1% of people in the U.S. across all age groups reached the overall “ideal” level, primarily because of diet, the advisory says.

But for people who want to improve their heart health, the new approach makes progress easier to see. “The positive changes don’t have to be really big,” Anderson said. “They can be moderate. And you can still get credit for it within this new approach.”

Good heart health begins with talking with a doctor to know how you’re doing in all eight categories, Lloyd-Jones said. Improvement in any of them helps.

“If I have three or four things of the eight that are suboptimal that I could work on, do I need to tackle three or four at once? Absolutely not,” he said. “The data show us that picking and improving one thing will actually have a measurable impact on improving your health and improving your health outcomes.”

So people shouldn’t feel overwhelmed, he said. “It doesn’t really matter which one you pick. Pick the one that you’re going to succeed on. And that’s the way to move your cardiovascular health forward.”

Source: heart.org
Do You Have Concerns About Falling?

Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities. A MATTER OF BALANCE is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels.

This program emphasizes practical strategies to manage falls.

**YOU WILL LEARN TO:**
- View falls as controllable
- Set goals for increasing activity
- Make changes to reduce fall risks at home
- Exercise to increase strength and balance

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND?**
- Anyone concerned about falls
- Anyone interested in improving balance, flexibility and strength
- Anyone who has fallen in the past
- Anyone who has restricted activities because of falling concerns

**LOCATION:**
Wells County Council on Aging
225 Water Street
Bluffton, IN 46714

**PROGRAM DATES & TIMES:**
Classes are held every Tuesday for 8 weeks from 1:30—3:30 PM. Dates for the upcoming program:
January 30
February 6, 13, 20, 27
March 5, 12, 19

**REGISTRATION INFO:**
- Classes are FREE
- Class size is limited, so please register by January 23, 2024
- Register by calling (260) 824-6412
DEHYDRATING 101
Ever wonder about dehydrating foods? Whether you’re thinking about getting a dehydrator or have one but need guidance, this class is for you! Make sure to sign up for both sessions of this 2 part workshop.

Both Workshops are FREE!

Session 1 of 2
April 15, 2024, 2:00 PM
Washington Park Pavilion, Bluffton
Call 824-6069 to register

Objectives
• Basic methods and techniques for dehydration
• Choosing healthy foods to dehydrate
• Learn to safely preserve food through dehydration
• Hands-on demonstration of the process

Session 2 of 2
April 22, 2024, 2:00 PM
Washington Park Pavilion, Bluffton
Call 824-6069 to register

Objectives
• Learn effective storage methods for long-term preservation.
• Explore how dehydrated foods enhance a healthy diet
• Sample healthy dehydrated snacks

COOKING WITH AN AIR FRYER
May 6, 2024, 2:00 PM
Washington Park Pavilion, Bluffton
Considering whether an air fryer would be beneficial for your kitchen or do you already have an air fryer, but aren’t sure how to use it? Join us for this class on air fryer basics!

Objectives
• Basics of Air Frying and different air fryer models
• Cooking/Food Safety Tips
• Air Fryer Safety Tips
• Recipes
• Demonstration and Samples

Call 824-6069 to register
Workshop is Free!

Wells County 4-H Backpack Program Update
We are so thankful for our Wells County community who has rallied behind the Feeding Tomorrow’s Future Today—Weekend Backpack Program.

Because of your generosity, nearly 3,400 food bags have been sponsored. Will you be a part of helping us meet our goal of 4,900 food bags being sponsored?

For ways to contribute, and to help us fulfill our 4-H pledge of “using our hands for larger service in our community,” please visit our website: extension.purdue.edu/wells
WELLS COUNTY

Soil & Water Conservation District’s 68th Annual Meeting

Purdue Extension Service’s Annual Meeting

Rock Creek Conservancy District’s 57th Annual Meeting

Please Join Us!

Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024 @ 6 P.M.
Wells County Community Center
1240 4-H Park Road, Bluffton, IN 46714

Annual Business Meetings and Award Presentations
Dinner will be provided by Corner Depot

To receive a complimentary ticket, please reserve by Feb. 9th

Featuring Dr. Fred Whitford — Farming in Wells County in the Old Days
Fred Whitford, Professor of Clinical Engagement, Purdue University, will share an entertaining and informative program on the early history of agriculture in Wells County. Please join us in recognizing the contributions of thousands of individuals who have contributed their talents to the betterment of agriculture in rural Indiana.

Contact the SWCD or Purdue Extension Office for more information or to reserve tickets.
EMAIL: lynne.huffman@in.nacdnnet.net | PHONE: 824-1930 ext. 3
EMAIL: mcorle1@purdue.edu | PHONE: 824-6412
Wells Co. 4-H Enrollment

Join Now!

Youth in grades 3-12 (grades K-2 for Mini 4-H) are encouraged to join Wells County 4-H now through January 15th.

To enroll go to V2.4HOnline.com

This bi-monthly publication is an educational service of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service—Wells County. Additional copies are available from the Wells County office located at 1240 4-H Park Road, Bluffton, IN within the Wells Co. 4-H Park.

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