

Get FIT

& Center on Nutrition and Disability

Spring 2023 Newsletter

Get FIT, which was launched in 2008 by The Family Resource Network, aims to provide equitable opportunities for people with disabilities, chronic illness, families, and caregivers to lead a healthy lifestyle by increasing access to physical activity opportunities and nutrition education tools. The Center on Nutrition and Disability was launched in 2013 as a nutrition education source of the national Get FIT Movement.



CENTER ON
NUTRITION
& DISABILITY



familyresourcenetwork.org
nutritionanddisability.org
getfitnj.org



[getfit_cnd](https://www.instagram.com/getfit_cnd)



Scan here for more information!

Health Topic:

Mental Health

Exercise:

Circuit Training

Food:

Melons



MENTAL HEALTH

Your mental health state has a major influence on your life, and it is also influenced by many areas of your life. By definition, your mental health is your emotional, psychological and social well-being. In other words, your mental health is related to how you feel, think, and handle emotions. It is not uncommon for people to experience mental health struggles, and you should never feel ashamed or alone when you are dealing with mental health issues. There is a very long list of factors that can dictate your mental health status. Some of these factors include your diet, quality of sleep, level of fitness, stress, and relationships.

A **well-balanced diet** is known to have many benefits and when it comes to mental health, eating a balanced diet can aid in your ability to concentrate and make rational decisions. The gastrointestinal system, also known as your gut, has a direct connection to your brain and produces chemicals that are key in triggering the release of hormones that contribute to your mental health.

Sleeping is important for many reasons that contribute to your mental health. Poor sleeping habits will hinder a person's ability to concentrate, memorize and deal with stress. Studies have shown that people who are generally healthy experience increased levels of emotions such as anxiety and distress following a bad night's sleep. To create an environment where you can ensure quality sleep, be sure you are sleeping in a quiet, dark, and cool space.

Regular exercise is another way to improve your mental health. Exercise can treat depression symptoms and relieve tension. This is because exercise releases endorphins in your brain which are known as natural painkillers. Through this release of endorphins, your energy levels increase and tension in your muscles decreases.

If you struggle with your mental health, please reach out to a licensed counselor/professional.

Circuit Training

A creative way to exercise is by using circuit training. Circuit workouts include a combination of exercises at a set number of repetitions or amount of time. These exercises are usually designed to engage your entire body and keep your heart rate up. Circuit training does not require many types of equipment, if any, and it can be done at home, outside, or anywhere! This type of training welcomes creativity and all forms of exercise. Some exercises that are common in circuit training include jumping jacks, planks, pushups, running, squatting, and lunges. A great circuit targets every area of your body, aiming to improve your flexibility and muscular and cardiovascular endurance.

Below is an example of a circuit. Repeat from the top as many times as you can!

- 30 second plank
- 10 push ups
- 30 seconds of bicycle crunches
- 10 jump squats
- 30 seconds of jump rope
- 10 crunches



Always confirm with your physician before starting an exercise regimen.

MELONS

Melons are in season from early Summer to the Fall and come in variations. The ones we are most familiar with are Honeydew, Cantaloupe, and Watermelon. One commonality among all of these fruits is their **high-water content**, with cantaloupe and watermelon being over 50% water. This means that melons are a nutritious and hydrating snack.

Melons like other fruits and vegetables are all excellent sources of fiber which is key for digestion.

Cantaloupe is packed with:

- Beta-carotene, which is a powerful antioxidant that can also convert into Vitamin A. Vitamin A is an important nutrient for [vision, cell division, and immunity](#).
- Vitamin C, another powerful antioxidant that supports [healthy skin by producing collagen](#). Vitamin C is also important for your [immune health](#).
- Folate, Potassium, and Fiber.



Honeydew is packed with:

- Vitamin C
- Vitamin A, B6, Folate, Vitamin K, Potassium, Magnesium, and Fiber. Folate, Vitamin K, and Magnesium all play a pivotal role in [supporting your bone health](#).



Watermelon is packed with:

- Nutrients such as lycopene, citrulline, and cucurbitacin E. It is believed that lycopene and cucurbitacin E have [anti-cancer effects](#) by promoting the removal of damaged cells in the body and by also promoting cell division.
- Citrulline is an amino acid that is believed to [reduce muscle soreness](#) and expand blood vessels to [improve passage of blood](#) through your body.



Watermelon Popsicles

Recipe source:

<https://spoonuniversity.com/recipe/2-ingredient-watermelon-and-lime-ice-pops>



Cucumber Honeydew Salad

Recipe source:

<https://thriftyjinx.com/cucumber-honeydew-salad-recipe/>

Eat melon as a snack or enjoy in one of these recipes!

Watermelon Popsicles

Ingredients and Materials:

- 6 cups Limeade or Lemonade
- 1 cup blended Watermelon
- Popsicle Sticks
- Small Paper Cups, Ice Cube Trays or Popsicle Molds

Directions:

- Blend ingredients together and pour into popsicle molds, place in freezer for 15 minutes.
- Remove from the freezer and place popsicle sticks in the center, freeze until completely solid.
- Enjoy!

Cucumber Honeydew Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 Cucumber
- 1 Honeydew
- ½ Red Onion
- 2 tablespoons fresh Dill
- 2 tablespoons Lemon Juice
- ¼ cup Olive Oil
- 1 teaspoon Honey
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

- In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, olive oil, honey, and salt and pepper.
- In a separate bowl cut cucumber, honeydew, and red onion into small chunks. Add dill and dressing and toss together.
- Enjoy!

Always confirm with your physician before making any dietary changes.

COLLEGE CORNER

Learn more about our
current programs at
Rowan University and
Stockton University here!



During the Spring 2023
semester, Rowan had 121
undergraduate student
trainer volunteers who
exercised with 68
participating clients!



During the Spring 2023
semester, Stockton had
29 undergraduate
students and 7 graduate
students contributing to
Get FIT for college credit,
in addition to 22
participating clients!



Interested in becoming a member of the Get FIT Coalition, starting a
program at your institution, or learning more information?

Contact Health Promotion Coordinator Jenna Bottiglieri, MA
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