Wellness is a journey

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Getting real: Ohio State saved my life

By Adam King
University Communications

My doctor semi-jokingly noted that most everyone is on a health honeymoon until they hit age 40, then it’s all downhill from there.

His omniscience was not lost on me when my new cardiologist told me I would have to have heart surgery — just a month after reaching 40. You hear words like congenital defect, mitral valve prolapse and ventricular regurgitation — hardly words in our everyday vernacular, but ones that, sadly, became all too familiar.

There was nothing I could have done to prevent it. And it was going to happen whether I wanted it to or not. If I elected to do nothing, I would have been dead within two years. It was a major, yet isolated, occurrence. But health emergencies like that still make you look at the big picture of how you’re treating your body and mind: What the heck am I doing to make sure they’re good for the long haul?

Working at Ohio State put me in a health system and opened up a toolbox of resources to help me with just such a journey, and I’ll always be grateful for that. The Ross Heart Hospital surgeons, nurses and patient care associates were amazing in how they took care of me pre- and post surgery (both of them — I had to have them back to back because of a complication). But it also was the aftercare that helped make a difference.

Now, I have always considered myself healthy. I’ve been clogging, a type of folk dance that uses taps, every week since I was 15 years old, and I currently direct and choreograph for a group of 50 dancers in Columbus. That tends to do a body good. But I never gave a second thought to what food I used for fuel, figuring I would burn off on the dance floor whatever negative qualities the food might have on me.

After my surgery, I became much more conscious of my intake in terms of salt, cholesterol, fat and caloric count, most notably when I shop for food or stop at a fast-food or fast-casual establishment. I finally understood that what I ate could in fact have a direct impact on how my body felt. It sounds simple, but you don’t know what you don’t know. If I had any advice, it is care about such things before something forces you to do so.

Now, I can’t preach perfection. There are times I see the extra-large piece of chocolate tower cake and say, “Yeah, I’m going to pretend I’m 20 and eat this entire thing in one sitting.” But overall, my diet has improved thanks to the Ohio State doctors and nutritionists who have coached me. Your Plan for Health has been a wonderful motivator too, reminding me to trade a bag of M&Ms for an apple, to walk 10,000 steps a day and to share in that effort with my co-workers (we had a winning Hit the Road with the Buckeyes team this year!) and to keep an eye on my health numbers such as cholesterol and blood pressure regularly.

I’ve never felt I’ve been able to achieve the same level of stamina as a dancer that I had before the heart surgeries. But focusing on my diet has helped, and the days I’m smart about what I eat are the ones I can go for four or five hours straight without collapsing in a heap at the end.

The attention Ohio State puts on being a healthier you isn’t merely self-serving in order to lower health care costs. There are people who work here who genuinely care, from a wellness perspective, that your life is a robust one. As a dancer, I’ll be honest: I’m an injury waiting to happen. But my physical therapist never says I’m silly for trying to do what I love, even as I pass the age where a high-level dancer should retire. She says we know you aren’t going to stop, so here’s what we can do to get you back out there.

It’s one of the main reasons I have loved working at Ohio State, and I know I’m better off for it.

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Visit go.osu.edu/primarycare for a list of locations and phone numbers.
Your primary care doctor can help you stay healthy and get the right treatment for any health concern.

SYMPTOMS/NEEDS
• Care for colds and flu
• Treatment of minor injuries
• Routine/annual physical exams and health screenings
• Immunizations
• Management of chronic diseases and conditions
• Referrals to specialized care

HOURS
Hours vary by location
Some day appointments often available for immediate needs

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SYMPTOMS/NEEDS
• Lab tests (pregnancy, strep or flu)
• Immunizations
• School/sports physicals
• Cold and flu
• Ear, sinus or bladder infection
• Bug bites or poison ivy
• Minor burns
• Sore throat

HOURS
Monday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.
(Lunch closure on weekdays: 1 – 2 p.m.)
Saturday: 9 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
(Lunch closure on weekends: 1 – 1:30 p.m.)
No appointment necessary, just walk in

AfterHoursCare
Martha Morehouse Medical Plaza
2050 Kenny Road
Phone: 614-685-3357
Gahanna
920 N. Hamilton Road
Phone: 614-685-8888

SYMPTOMS/NEEDS
• Non-life threatening cuts or burns
• Minor sprains or strains
• Cold and flu
• Stitches, splints or urgent X-rays

HOURS
Martha Morehouse Medical Plaza
Monday – Friday: 4 – 9:30 p.m.
Saturday – Sunday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Gahanna
Monday – Friday: 5 – 10:30 p.m.
Saturday – Sunday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
No appointment necessary, just walk in

Emergency Department
University Hospital
Phone: 614-293-8333
University Hospital East
Phone: 614-257-3414

SYMPTOMS/NEEDS
• Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
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During American Heart Month, Ohio State’s Chief Wellness Officer challenges you to join the Million Hearts® initiative and help prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017.

Now through February 29, you can join other universities from across the country and take the National Wellness Challenge, hosted by the National Consortium for Building Healthy Academic Communities. Participants will complete an online module that will empower them to improve their own cardiovascular health and educate others on how to live a heart healthy life.

1. Visit http://go.osu.edu/millionhearts
2. Select “Ohio State Million Hearts Challenge” from the course list
3. Log in if previous user or select “create new account”
4. New users will receive an email with an activation link. Once the link is clicked, enrollment is complete.

Prizes will be awarded to the college or unit with the highest participation. To be eligible, each college/unit must have a minimum of 20 faculty and staff.

Why is wellness important to you?
For me specifically, working in the Student Life Student Wellness Center, it’s important to me to practice what I preach. Having the opportunity to work every day with students who promote wellness on campus — the Wellness Ambassadors — I strive to model positive behaviors in all that I do. So in a way, focusing on my health and wellness is important for me as part of my profession.

More generally, I believe that a focus on wellness is important for everyone. There are going to be times in your life when things don’t go as planned, and a sense of health and wellness might be something that can push you back toward a sense of reality. Especially in those really high-stress moments, to be able to take a step back — do some yoga, call mom, meditate for a few minutes — is a great way to balance out that stress.

What is your wellness routine?
In the Student Life Student Wellness Center, we promote nine dimensions of wellness, which I find is great to use when setting up a routine. This year I set a specific goal to incorporate more yoga into my life as it helps me clear my mind and approach tasks with a new attitude. Yoga has really just have to sit and do nothing for a few minutes in order to be even more productive, and that’s OK. I’m very fortunate in my position because I get to work with a group of terrific student volunteers who all have great attitudes that are contagious. I try to connect with many of them through fitness classes that they teach, so not only do I get to do yoga every day, I get to engage with the Wellness Ambassadors more by doing a handful of fitness classes every week. This variety really keeps me going.

Exercise for me is only half the battle. I have a degree in nutrition, but my own nutrition has not always been the best. I try to keep up with balanced, nutritious meals and healthful snacks, especially during the week so I can allow myself some treats on the weekends. I’m now learning to accept that I can’t eat all the junk that I used to without feeling bad and now my body tends to crave those healthful vegetables at times when I used to crave pizza.

In the end, I just have to recognize that I can’t do it all. Sometimes as a wellness professional I feel like I have to practice and be well all the time, but continuing to develop healthful habits is what wellness is all about.

What’s your best advice to others?
That’s easy: Everyone’s wellness is different. You are on your own journey, so don’t compare yourself to others.
Ohio State President Dr. Michael V. Drake, an avid cyclist much of his life, pedals down the road during the Pelotonia 2015 cancer fundraiser in August. (photo by Kevin Fitzsimons)

Physical, mental inextricably tied together

President Drake has made both part of his lifelong regimen

By President Michael V. Drake

Cycling is a big part of our family and has been a lifelong love of mine. I started riding when I was 5 years old, when my brother bought me my first bike — and when I was 12, I joined my first biking club.

I try to ride as often as my schedule allows. Central Ohio is perfect for cycling and has many phenomenal trails. I have really enjoyed seeing the community on two wheels, especially during Pelotonia.

I have always had a dual focus of taking care of myself physically and mentally, a trait I saw exhibited throughout his long life by my father. He played football in college and always had a strong work and athletic ethic.

We had a family in which academics and athletics were tied together, and the things you learned on the field or on the court, the lessons of leadership and character you learned, were really important to how your life moved forward.
Hairston gets rid of her ‘stinking thinking’

University’s wellness initiatives, self-motivation improve her mind and body

By Adam King
University Communications

“Teniqka Hairston calls it her ‘stinking thinking.’ It’s the mindset for which she hates herself for what she does because it contributes to her biggest health issue — weight gain.”

“Sometimes I can be my own worst enemy for the decisions I’ve made,” said Hairston, assistant to the university bursar at Ohio State. “I’m learning I don’t have to bash myself for the Snickers I ate at lunchtime. I can encourage myself, ‘Keep going, go workout and earn that Snickers, it’s OK.’ Your attitude determines your altitude.”

Until recently, Hairston never considered diet and exercise as a way of life.

“My physical activity was literally walking to get in and out of my car,” she said. “I was miserable, and my family was fed up with my mobility. She first joined Ohio State’s Weight Watchers at Work in 2009, and her days of being a couch potato were over. She learned to eat right and perhaps more importantly how drinking water was an essential addition, replacing the coffee and soda that were her standard.”

As a result of her weight loss, Hairston is no longer a borderline diabetic. And her biometric numbers available to work on it.”

She started with eight 8-ounce glasses of water, but it is truly important that you stay hydrated,” Hairston said. “I’ll be honest and tell you that has been hard for me, but I truly have seen the benefit in my weight loss and in my skin.”

Hairston returned to Weight Watchers at Work in 2015 because her weight loss had plateaued. With the help of friends in the program (her accountability partners, she calls them) and a new program called Beyond the Scale (which brings a holistic approach that doesn’t focus on the scale number), she is 100 pounds lighter than when she started.

Hairston also is an avid user of Your Plan for Health’s health coaching, which helps her stay honest during her physical journey and lends support for the personal side of her life.

“They assisted me in setting realistic goals and periodically check on my progress and also suggested alternative ideas for me,” she said. “They were able to help me find ‘me time’ in my very busy life.”

“I love the partnership that Ohio State provides to the university community. They don’t just point the finger at you. They show you concern and then show you the resources available to work on it.”

As a result of her weight loss, Hairston is no longer a borderline diabetic. And her biometric numbers available to work on it.”

“The Student Academic Services Building, where Hairston works, recently opened a ‘fit station’ where employees can schedule half-hour walks or participate in video workouts or use weights and balance balls. The health hub is just another sign to Hairston that Ohio State’s wellness culture continues to evolve for the better.”

With her health momentum picking up speed, Hairston has set some new goals for herself, including running her first 5K — “I think once I do that I can call myself a legitimate runner” — and learning how to properly lift weights: “I want to lift weights because girls that lift are bad ass!” she said with a laugh.

And Hairston had a bit of advice for others who are indecisive about improving their health.

“I say go for it. If not now, then when?” she said. “Your future is so much brighter when you take action to be a better you. And you are worth it.”
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Challenge: 90 mile swim (2.4 mile run) + 25 mile bike + 6.2 mile run

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Building wellness into the culture

Dean Trevor Brown listened to staff’s ideas and then led by example to transform the Glenn College.

Even before Trevor Brown became dean of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs, wellness was an important part of his every day, and he always wanted to include others. He had a standing invitation to all faculty, staff and students to participate in morning strength training and cardio sessions at the RPAC led by him and another faculty member in the college. He took the time to design custom workouts to challenge individuals at their unique fitness levels and motivate them to achieve their best results.

As dean, Brown is a huge supporter of decreasing sedentary work/inactivity and promotes standing workspaces and movement throughout the day in a variety of ways. He personally uses a standing desk and encourages others to utilize standing workspaces as often as possible. He issued a survey to all faculty and staff regarding their interest in personal standing desks and has requested suggestions on how best to purchase them for the entire college while being mindful of budgetary and public opinion issues for such a large financial investment.

In the meantime, Brown authorized the purchase of a large standing conference table and four tall rolling carts to be used as standing work spaces for any member of or visitor to the Glenn College. Additionally, faculty and staff can check out a network laptop so that they can continue to perform their regular work from these spaces while maintaining access to files, printers, etc.

During meetings, Brown encourages participants to stand up and move around as they’d like and models this behavior by standing in many meetings. He authorized and supported the redesign of a dingy, dark and outdated kitchen into a new community kitchen open to all faculty, staff and students with a strong focus on wellness. onCampus spoke to Brown about his wellness motivations and how the changes are improving the health culture in Page Hall.

What convinced you to be health and wellness centric in your personal life?

My maternal grandmother suffered a heart attack when I was in high school and came to live with my family. We cut sodium out of our diets — we must have thrown away 20 cans of Campbell’s soup. We all learned the importance of exercise and a healthful diet. Fortunately my grandmother survived for another seven years.

Why was it important for you to translate those beliefs to your work life?

I feel better when I exercise and eat right. Not only am I more productive, but I also find that I have a positive attitude about what I’m doing when I feel healthy.

How do the Glenn College faculty, staff and students react to all the activities that are available to them?

Wellness is a team effort at the Glenn College — I just happen to be the dean. Our wellness efforts have been very bottom-up. All of the wellness activities — the basketball hoop on our first floor, our healthful potlucks for holiday and social events, Wednesday walks around the Oval, the nursing room in our building — were suggestions from faculty, staff and students. I’m the one reacting to the suggestions!

How did you determine what would be a fit for introducing health and wellness in the workplace?

A group of staff members led the charge and approached me about forming a wellness committee made up of faculty, staff and student representatives. The committee has been in place for two or three years with the central charge of proposing wellness efforts. My job is to determine which of the many good proposals that come forward make the most sense for the college. I look for things that I think will maximize wellness and appeal to as many people in Page Hall as possible.

Why is it important for you to lead by example rather than just provide the options for people?

One of my jobs is to convince folks in Page Hall of the value of wellness. I can share my own expe-
Depression: conversation starters

Depression can be hard to talk about. But if a friend or loved one is depressed, having a conversation about getting help can make a big difference. Use these tips to start talking.

Show you care.
- “Tell me how you are feeling. I’m here to support and listen to you.”
- “I’m worried about you. I think you may need to talk to a doctor about depression.”
- “Let me remind you of all the great things I love about you.”
- “I really like to spend time with you. Let’s take a walk or go to a movie together.”

Offer hope.
- “You aren’t alone. Many people suffer from depression, and it’s nothing to be ashamed of.”
- “Depression is an illness that can be treated. Getting help is the best thing you can do.”
- “Most people get better with treatment — even people who have severe depression.”
- “There are different ways to treat depression, including medicine and talk therapy. Getting active might also help you feel better.”

Offer to help.
- “Let me help you figure out what’s going on. You can start by making an appointment with your doctor — or I can help you find someone else to talk to, like a psychologist or social worker.”
- “Get help right away if you are having hopeless thoughts or are thinking about hurting yourself. Call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).”
- “You can call or text me any time if you need support or you just want to talk.”

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

Stay active with a disability: quick tips

Regular physical activity is good for everyone’s health, including people with disabilities. Getting active can help you:
- Strengthen your heart
- Build strong muscles and bones
- Improve coordination
- Relieve stress, improve your mood, and feel better about yourself

Before you start...
- Talk to your doctor about the types and amounts of physical activity that are right for you if you are taking medicine, be sure to find out how it will affect your physical activity.
- It’s also a good idea to talk to a trained exercise professional. Find a fitness center near you that is comfortable and accessible. Ask if they have experience working with people with similar disabilities.

Source: 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans
Easy ways to boost an aging brain

By Marie Economos
OSU Extension

There’s no denying that as we age, our brains age along with our bodies. We have a growing population of aging adults interested in learning strategies to help reduce memory loss. The good news is that you can improve your chances of maintaining a healthy brain if you choose some of the following brain boosting tips:

• Start your day with a good night’s sleep.
• Eat breakfast. Studies have found that eating breakfast improves short-term memory and attention. Good choices include high-fiber whole grains, dairy, and fruits. Don’t overeat: High-calorie breakfasts appear to hinder concentration.
• Cinnamon helps boost activity in the brain by removing nervous tension and memory loss. Love the smell of cinnamon? You might want to invest in some cinnamon-scented candles to boost cognitive function and memory, and increase alertness and concentration.
• Eat two servings of fish weekly. Fish are rich in the omega-3 fatty acids that support brain health. Fish consumption has been linked to lower risk for dementia, stroke and mental decline.
• Eat some nuts and chocolate. Nuts and seeds are good sources of vitamin E, which has been linked in studies to a lessening of cognitive decline. Dark chocolate in particular has powerful antioxidant properties and contains natural stimulants like caffeine, which can enhance focus.
• Add avocados. Although avocados contain fat, it’s a good-for-you, monounsaturated fat that helps support healthy blood flow.
• Research indicates that the antioxidants in tomatoes and blueberries may help protect the brain from damage caused by free radicals. This in turn may reduce the effects of age-related conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease or dementia.
• Listen to music. Music promotes memory retention in older adults with dementia by helping the mind move. Relationships between nutrients and brain health strategies are continually being explored. Eating a well-rounded diet may give your brain the best chance of avoiding disease.

10 tips for eating out

Restaurants, convenience and grocery stores or fast-food places offer a variety of options when eating out. But larger portions can make it easy to eat or drink too many calories. Larger helpings also can increase your intake of saturated fat, sodium and added sugars. Think about ways to make more healthful choices when eating food away from home.

1. CONSIDER YOUR DRINK.
   Choose water, fat-free or low-fat milk, unsweetened tea and other drinks without added sugars to complement your meal.

2. SAVOR A SALAD.
   Start your meal with a salad packed with vegetables to help you feel satisfied sooner. Ask for dressing on the side and use a small amount of it.

3. SHARE A MAIN DISH.
   Divide a main entree among family and friends. Ask for small plates for everyone at the table.

4. SELECT FROM THE SIDES.
   Order a side dish or an appetizer-sized portion instead of a regular entree. They’re usually served on smaller plates and in smaller amounts.

5. PACK YOUR SNACK.
   Pack fruit, sliced vegetables, low-fat string cheese or unsalted nuts to eat during road trips or long commutes. No need to stop for other food when these snacks are ready to eat.

6. FILL YOUR PLATE WITH VEGETABLES AND FRUIT.
   Stir-fries, kabobs or vegetarian menu items usually have more vegetables. Select fruits as a side dish or dessert.

7. COMPARE THE CALORIES, FAT AND SODIUM.
   Many menus now include nutrition information. Look for items that are lower in calories, saturated fat and sodium. Check with your server if you don’t see them on the menu. For more information, check FDA.gov.

8. PASS ON THE BUFFET.
   Have an item from the menu and avoid the “all-you-can-eat” buffet. Steamed, grilled or broiled dishes have fewer calories than foods that are fried in oil or cooked in butter.

9. GET YOUR WHOLE GRAINS.
   Request 100 percent whole-wheat breads, rolls and pasta when choosing sandwiches, burgers or main dishes.

10. QUIT THE “CLEAN YOUR PLATE CLUB.”
    Decide to save some for another meal. Take leftovers home in a container and chill in the refrigerator right away.

Source: ChooseMyPlate.gov
The Employee Emergency Fund may be able to help.
The Employee Emergency Fund is limited to a once per lifetime award. Funds granted to you are paid through OSU Payroll and subject to federal, state and local taxes. The Employee Emergency Fund (EEF) is made possible by the support of OSU/OSUMC faculty and staff, the efforts of the Ohio State EAP and the Employee Emergency Fund Committee.

To be eligible, you must:
• be an active university staff or faculty member;
• have a temporary financial hardship because of an emergency situation;
• must be at least a 50% or greater full time equivalent;
• at least 12 months of continuous regular employment at the time of application; and
• have considered other possible resources which were not available or are not sufficient to meet the need.

A temporary financial hardship is one caused by a defined, time-limited, specific event such as a natural disaster, a fire, or a death of a family member.

If you wish to donate funds to help your fellow employees who are in crisis, you can do so by choosing fund 312955 at the OSU Campus Campaign: www.osu.edu/giving.

Call the Ohio State EAP office at 1-800-678-6265 (or 1-614-292-4700, press #2) to obtain an application.
For more information about the Employee Emergency Fund, visit https://osuhealthplan.com/.