



W.A.H.L. News

Wellness Advocates for Healthy Living

April-May 2017



Brought to you by the Saint Vincent College Wellness Center

Benefits of Pet Therapy

Pet therapy builds on the pre-existing human-animal bond. Interacting with a friendly pet can help many physical and mental issues. It can help reduce blood pressure and improve overall cardiovascular health. It can also release endorphins that produce a calming effect. This can help alleviate pain, reduce stress, and improve your overall psychological state.

Upcoming Therapy Dog visits...

April 3, 12, 20, 26

May 1, 3, 8, 9

Manage your Hay Fever **EARLY**

Get a jump on your seasonal allergic rhinitis symptoms (sneezing, runny nose, itchy eyes and throat.) Visit pollen.aaaai.org from your iPhone, iPad, android, or blackberry and download their pollen count app. It gives you specific info about the pollen level of various trees, weeds, grasses, and mold in your area. Then you'll be able limit your outside exposure on those days.

Start taking your allergy medicine *before* your symptoms develop. For those of you with spring allergies, start them in early March. For fall allergies, start mid-August. The medication can block the release of histamine and other chemicals so your symptoms don't develop or, at least, are less severe.



Improve Your Sleep

- Make sleep a priority. Keep a consistent sleep schedule—even on the weekends.
- Try the podcast, *Sleep With Me* by Drew Ackerman (iTunes or sleepwithmepodcast.com [free].) It's a series of uninteresting bedtime stories to bore you to sleep.
- Create a relaxing sleep routine—read a book, listen to relaxing music, say your prayers.
- Fluff your pillow and have fresh clean sheets. Wash your bedding every other week. Create a sanctuary for sleeping.
- Tuck your electronic devices away early or darken your screens. The blue light from glowing screens may decrease melatonin production.
- Exercise early—at least 2 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine. Stay hydrated with water instead of coffee, tea or soda in the afternoon. Don't eat large amounts of food before bed.
- Disengage from social media/internet searching an hour before bedtime.
- Limit your naps to under 1 hour. Short naps can be restorative without disrupting your sleep.
- Ease up on the alcohol. It may help you *FALL* asleep, but your quality of sleep will be more fragmented (you may have more dreams or wake up more.)
- Use earplugs or a white noise machine to help insulate you from dorm noise.

Enjoy a Free Chair Massage

Carey Student Center

Thursday, April 20th

11:30am — 1:30pm

Boost Your Brainpower

The brain is energy-hungry and uses one fifth of all the blood pumped by your heart - so food and drink are very important to keep it working properly. There are some foods that seem to be particularly good for our brains. Eat them as part of a balanced diet, with regular meals. Always eat breakfast, as this will help your concentration and mental performance throughout the day.

- **Complex carbohydrates**—whole grain bread, pasta, rice
- **Essential fatty acids**—avocados, walnuts, salmon, eggs, poultry, leafy green vegetables, flax seeds, olive oil
- **Amino acids**—milk, oats, yogurt
- **Hydration**—water, milk, fruit juices, green tea

Be Safe in the Sun



Sunlight contains two types of ultraviolet (UV) light that can harm your skin. UV-B, which causes sunburn, and UV-A rays that causes aging of the skin. Both types can cause skin cancer. What you need for the best protection against aging – and skin cancer — is a **broad spectrum sunscreen**, which is designed to protect you from both types of ultraviolet rays. Choose a waterproof product with an SPF between 30 and 50. Apply a generous amount of sunscreen a half hour before you go outdoors. Don't forget to put sunscreen on your face, ears, hands, neck, arms and lips. If you don't have much hair on the top of your head, apply sunscreen to that area or wear a hat. Reapply the sunscreen every two hours — and immediately after swimming or if you are sweating heavily. And be sure to use sunscreen even when it's overcast because UV rays can pass through clouds!

Concerned about **sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or harassment?**

For confidential support, advocacy, or to discuss reporting options: Contact the Wellness Center at ext.2115 or 724-805-2115.

For your immediate safety or to report a crime:

Contact Public Safety at ext.2911 or 724-805-2911

www.stvincent.edu/WeWillListen