

Wellness Articles

Attached are weekly health and wellness articles provided by Alberta Health Services. As a way to help all Albertans live a healthy life, we welcome and encourage weekly newspapers, community newsletters and other publications to reproduce this information free of charge. Credit to Alberta Health Services or the identified content provider would be appreciated.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

Proposed publication date: February, 20 2017

Content provided by: Alberta Health Services – Addiction and Mental Health

Mind body connection

Your mind and body are powerful allies. How you think can affect how you feel, and how you feel can affect your thinking.

An example of this mind-body connection is how your body responds to stress. Constant worry and stress over jobs, finances, or other problems can cause tense muscles, pain, headaches, and stomach problems. It may also lead to high blood pressure or other serious problems.

On the other hand, constant pain or a health problem like heart disease can affect your emotions. You might become depressed, anxious, and stressed, which could affect how well you treat, manage, or cope with your illness.

But your mind can have a positive effect on your health, too. Having a positive outlook on life might help you better handle pain or stress and stay healthier than someone who is less hopeful.

How do your thoughts and feelings affect your health?

Your brain produces substances that can improve your health. These substances include endorphins, which are natural painkillers, and gamma globulin, which strengthens your immune system.

Research shows that what your brain produces depends in part on your thoughts, feelings, and expectations. If you're sick, but you have hope and a positive attitude and you believe that you'll get better, your brain is likely to produce chemicals that will boost your body's healing power. Negative thoughts and emotions can keep your brain from producing some of the chemicals that help your body heal. This doesn't mean you should blame yourself for getting sick or feeling down about a health problem. Some illnesses are beyond your control. However, your thoughts and state of mind are resources you can use to get better.

For more information on mind body connection, or tips on reducing stress, visit: My Health Alberta at www.myhealth.alberta.ca