

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: July 2, 2018

Content provided by: Alberta Health Services – contributed by Apple Magazine

Alberta Health Services (AHS) knows that wellness matters, and this year AHS has been asking our people and Albertans, ‘What’s your balance?’ Throughout the year of wellness and finding balance, AHS is highlighting four areas of wellness, including healthy eating, mental wellness, physical activity and sleep & fatigue.

Over the next couple months, AHS is bringing Physical Activity to the forefront, and this July is all about getting active.

Play soccer for health, wellness — and fun

Soccer has been dubbed “the world’s sport” for a reason. A recent survey by FIFA, soccer’s international governing body, found it’s a pastime shared by 265 million players around the globe. That’s about four per cent of the world’s population.

This summer many of them will watch the FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Cup in Russia. And they’ll take to streets, parking lots, empty spaces, backyards and beaches to play the game.

One of the great things about soccer is you don’t need to break the bank to play it. “Soccer is inexpensive if you want it to be. It could be as simple as two kids in a park with a ball, having fun, or better still, playing with their parents,” says John Clubb, the Alberta Soccer Association’s manager of Grassroots Development.

For children under six, it’s about gaining the fundamentals of physical literacy: running and kicking. From seven to nine, it’s about ball mastery: foot dribbling the ball while running and weaving through opponents. Most of all, it’s about fun!

Children focus on developing their own skills and that gives them a chance to explore parts of the game. “So let them be and encourage them to have fun with the ball,” Clubb says. “At 10 to 12 years old, they are old enough to be introduced to team play and passing the ball.”



Whatever your or your children's age and ability, playing some form of soccer can add to physical, social and emotional health and wellness.

Players can reduce the risk of injury by warming up before playing and by wearing protective equipment, such as shin guards.

Christina Loitz, a health promotion facilitator with Alberta Health Services, says soccer helps brain function, coordination, balance, gross motor skills and stress reduction.

"It can also help children build confidence, social skills, leadership, creativity, and a lifelong enjoyment of being physically active," she says.

Excerpted from the Summer 2018 issue of Apple magazine.

To find out more about 'What's your balance?' visit ahs.ca/whatsyourbalance. You can also join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag #AHSwhatsyourbalance