

HealthProCHOICES

A newsletter for participants in the Health Professionals' Services Program (HPSP)

January 2020



"Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile." - Connor Franta

Staffing Updates

After six years with HPSP, Monitoring Programs Director, Christopher Hamilton, PhD is returning to state service as a Behavioral Health Business Analyst in the State Court Administrator's Office of General Counsel. In this role, Christopher will provide leadership and direct policy in how Oregon's state courts interact with individuals with behavioral health conditions. HPSP will be in the VERY capable hands of the monitoring leadership team of Drs. McBeth and Gustafson, Jenn Leddin, LMSW, CADC II, and monitoring's Operations Manager Tina Mewhinney.

- Monitoring Policy Manager - Scott McBeth, PhD. Scott has been with HPSP for over five years as an Agreement Monitor and most recently working in enrollment.
- Monitoring Clinical Manager - Jenn Leddin, LMSW, CADC II. Jenn has been with HPSP for over a year with a wealth of clinical knowledge.
- Monitoring Operations Manager - Tina Mewhinney. Tina has been with HPSP for nine years. Tina is point for all monitoring operational aspects including toxicology.
- Senior Vice President Clinical Operations - Eric Gustafson, Psy.D. Eric has been with the company for 24 years and will support HPSP.
- Drs. Bahl and Autry remain in their Medical Director and Consulting Psychiatrist roles.



Scott McBeth, PhD



Jenn Leddin, LMSW, CADC II



Tina Mewhinney

Saturday Phone Coverage

With Christopher's departure, Saturday phone coverage will be provided by Tina Mewhinney with back-up by Jenn Leddin and Scott McBeth. Tina can be reached at (503) 802-9866.

HPSPMONITORING.com is Now Ready

In follow-up to our spring announcement and reminder last month, HPSPMONITORING.com is up and running. The website can be reached at: <https://www.hpspmonitoring.com> and the new generic email is: hpsp@ibhsolutions.com. Stop by and visit the new site!



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888.802.2843

Upcoming Testing Holidays

The following Oregon observed holidays are test exemptions days on which you do not need to check to see if you need to test:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Monday, January 20, 2020
- President's Day – Monday, February 17, 2020

Upcoming Events

IDAIA 2020

The next **International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous** will be August 5-9, 2020 in Spokane, Washington. For more information please visit www.idaa.org.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a depression that occurs during a particular season of the year. Most people with SAD are depressed during the fall and winter, when the days are shortest. Their depression disappears in the spring and summer. A less common type begins in late spring or early summer. Changes in the amount of daylight may be the cause of SAD.

Although many people say they get the "blues" in the winter, a person with SAD has much more difficulty coping during this season. Like other forms of depression, SAD interferes with daily life. Overcast days can make a person with SAD feel worse. People with SAD have mild to moderate depression.



SAD can affect anyone, although women are approximately 1.5 times more likely to develop SAD than are men. Those most affected are people in their late teens, 20s, and 30s, with the majority women in their 30s. Older adults are less likely to develop it. It is more common in northern latitudes and extreme southern latitudes. The depression is frequently moderate to major. SAD sufferers frequently have other family members with mental illness, such as depression.

Varying levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin are believed to play a role in SAD. The sleep hormone melatonin, which has been linked to depression, also may play a role. The body makes more melatonin in the dark, so the shorter, grayer days of winter boost levels of melatonin.

The symptoms of SAD can be confused with symptoms of other illnesses, including hypothyroidism and viral infections such as mononucleosis.

People with a mild case of SAD can ease symptoms by increasing the time they are exposed to daylight during the day. Spending time outdoors each day and getting regular outdoor exercise are two effective methods to combat SAD. For more severe cases, doctors may prescribe light therapy and possibly antidepressants. Light therapy involves exposure to very bright, full-spectrum fluorescent light for a certain amount of time each morning.

What to Do

During the fall and winter, try to get regular exercise and spend time outside each day. Rearrange the furniture in your home and workspace and open the blinds or curtains to take advantage of as much sunlight in the fall and winter as possible. Talk to your doctor if you have signs or symptoms of SAD significant enough to interfere with daily life. Your doctor can refer you to a mental health professional trained to treat patients with SAD.

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"An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly." – Unknown

Testing Holidays

You may find the listing of all 2020 testing holidays on the hpspmonitoring.com site on the Resources tab.

Inclement Weather

As we continue through the colder months of the season, please remember that if a collection site is closed due to inclement weather, you must inform HPSP of the closure as soon as possible. The closure will be verified by your agreement monitor. If the site is confirmed to be closed and the licensee has been in compliance with all requirements for nine consecutive months (or has been compliant thus far, if enrolled less than nine months), then the licensee may use one of the 21 toxicology exemptions allotted to each licensee per year.

Satisfaction Survey

Thank you for participating in the January 2020 HPSP Satisfaction Survey. Your feedback is very important to us. All input is reviewed by the HPSP Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and, where possible, the program is adjusted. Changes made from Satisfaction Survey input in the past include in-person meetings with agreement monitors, Saturday phone support, and lower-cost toxicology panels for unemployed HPSP participants. Results and answers to your questions will be shared in an upcoming newsletter. Input will also be reviewed by the HPSP Advisory Committee. Your next opportunity to participate is July 2020.

HPSP Outreach

The HPSP Team is scheduling informational sessions on HPSP. If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning more about HPSP, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. (503-802-9865; scott.mcbeth@ibhsolutions.com) for more information, or to schedule a meeting.

Guideline Reminders

HPSP is governed by thirty two guidelines and we believe that we all need reminders from time to time. We will begin including a guideline in each newsletter as a refresher. This month we will look at the Toxicology Testing Exemption guideline. This guideline can be found online at hpspmonitoring.com on the Guidelines tab.



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Toxicology Testing Exemptions - Guideline

1. A Licensee may request a travel exemption from toxicology testing if all of the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The request must be made at least two weeks prior to time requested. Testing requests not made within the two week timeframe may not be considered.
 - b. The licensee must give HPSP the dates requested, and the city, state, and zip code of where the licensee will be staying. HPSP may request a copy of the licensee's itinerary or proof of travel.
 - c. The request must be for travel in an area where calling the interactive voice response system is not possible and/or a collection site is not available within a 20 mile radius.
 - d. The licensee must have a minimum of 9 months in a monitoring program. If the licensee was in a residential treatment program 2 weeks prior to licensee's entrance to the monitoring program, the time spent in the treatment program will be included in the 9 month calculation. Other treatment modalities may be considered as part of the 9 month calculation if the treatment included random, observed toxicology testing.
 - e. The licensee must have a record of compliance with his/her monitoring agreement and addendums. A licensee must have a minimum of nine months in the HPSP program from the time of the closure of a non-excused report of substantial non-compliance to be eligible to request a testing exemption.
 - f. All treatment providers must approve the licensee's request, in addition to the licensee's agreement monitor. If the agreement monitor has questions if the request meets the requirements of the Guidelines, the agreement monitor may review the case at the Agreement Monitors meeting or consult with a manager.
 - g. The licensee will be required to have a toxicology test upon return from testing exemption.
2. A licensee is able to use up to 21 testing exemption days per year, except in the first year of the program. For the first year, the licensee may not request exemption days until the licensee has been in the program and compliant for nine months. For the remaining 3 months of the licensee's first year in the program, the licensee will be entitled to 10 exemption days. At the licensee's annual review date, which is the anniversary of the date of full enrollment, the licensee will be entitled to 21 exemption days. For licensees who have previously planned longer vacations during the last three months of their first year, the requests may be reviewed and approved at the agreement monitor meeting or staffed with a supervisor on a case by case basis.
3. If a testing exemption is not approved, then the standard vacation policy applies as follows:
 - a. The licensee may travel to a location where the licensee is able to call the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) or log on to the website on a daily basis.
 - b. The licensee must make a request for collection sites at least two weeks in advance of the proposed travel.
 - c. The licensee needs to give the monitoring program the dates of travel, and the city, state and zip code of where the licensee will be staying.
 - d. Licensee will need to take a paper Chain of Custody form to the collection site. No travel kit 45 is needed.
4. The IVR and website are accessible from 3:00am Pacific Time - 5:00pm Pacific Time. If the IVR system is contacted prior to 3:00am or after 5:00pm, the licensee will NOT hear their individualized testing message; rather a message will inform each licensee that they've contacted the IVR outside the hours of operation. The website provides the same messaging outside hours of operation.

Upcoming Events

2020 Caring for Trans and Non Binary Patients

You are invited to participate in the first of 2020's Continuing Professional Education courses offered by Cedar Hills Hospital and Outpatient Services - Culturally Competent Care for Trans and Non Binary Patients. Dale Johannes of Merck will present, followed by a consumer panel discussion. Snacks will be provided. We applied to NASW for CEUs.

When: Thursday, February 27, 2020 from 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM

Contact: Michael Sorensen, MPA, Cedar Hills Hospital, 971.228.8000x250, michael.sorensen@uhsinc.com

Register: [Click here to register.](#)

The ASAM 51st Annual Conference - Innovations in Addiction Medicine and Science

The ASAM Annual Conference is the nation's premier event providing the latest innovations and scientific developments in addiction medicine. The conference is 4/2/2020 - 4/5/2020 Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center Denver, CO.

New Save the Date 2020 Oregon Professional Recovery Network Conference

The 2020 Oregon Professionals Recovery Network (PRN) Conference will be Saturday, May 16th, 2020 in Salem. Details and additional information will be shared as soon as they are available.

Visit <http://www.pnforegon.org/> for more information.



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Upcoming Events (continued)

IDA A 2020

The next **International Doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous** will be August 5-9, 2020 in Spokane, Washington. For more information please visit www.idaa.org.

Relax: How to Let Go of Stress

You're familiar with the symptoms of stress -- a pounding heart, increased perspiration, tight neck and shoulder muscles, anxiety and fear. But you may not know how to prevent or relieve these symptoms. Taking the following actions can help you manage the negative effects of stress.

Exercise. A regular workout can release pent-up frustrations. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends getting 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise at least three or four times a week. Choose any aerobic activity you like, such as walking, jogging, bicycling, swimming, stair climbing or step aerobics.

If life is too hectic for such a commitment, you also can find relief through brief periods of exercise: If you work at a desk, get up and take a walk around the building for 15 minutes, or go up and down a few flights of stairs.

Don't Isolate Yourself. One of the best ways to fight stress is to discuss your problems with a close friend or relative. Talking to other people helps you realize you're not alone and can help you put a difficult situation in perspective.

Besides relieving the pressure of dealing with a problem by yourself, talking things out may lead you to a solution. If you can't find someone to talk to, or you have difficulty talking about what's bothering you, writing about the situation in a journal can be effective as well.

Live In The Present. Take a moment to think about the causes of your stress. Many of them may come from thinking about the past or worrying about the future. If you can plant yourself firmly in the present, you can leave many worries behind and focus more clearly on solutions to current problems.

Quiet Your Mind And Imagination. In times of stress, the mind makes things appear worse than they are by creating endless versions of impending disaster. Because the body can't tell the difference between fact and fantasy, it responds with heightened physical response and mental anxiety.

Pay Attention To Your Diet And Health Habits. A sensible diet of wholesome, healthful foods can help stabilize your moods. Consuming too much caffeine, sugar and alcohol or any nicotine or illegal drugs can increase your stress, making coping more difficult.

Make Time For Laughter And Fun. Surround yourself with positive people who like to laugh. Watch funny movies instead of the news in the evening. Engage in fun or silly activities. You'll find laughter really is one of the best remedies.

Immerse Yourself In A Favorite Activity Or Hobby. Participating in a pleasurable activity will give you a block of time when you're focusing on an interesting task instead of on your problems. Gardening, carpentry, fishing, sewing, working with clay, painting or playing cards may appeal to you.

Use A Variety Of Relaxation Techniques. Deep-breathing exercises, progressive relaxation, visualization, creative imagery, yoga, meditation or listening to relaxation tapes can help relieve stress. Relaxation techniques are skills that can be learned and practiced. If you don't know how to do any relaxation exercises, take a class, read a book or listen to a tape on the subject.

Balance Your Life. If work is causing you stress, immerse yourself in a favorite activity when you get home. But focus more on work if a family problem or relationship is the cause of your stress. Above all, take time for yourself, whether it's for a daily walk, a hot bath or a quiet night at home. Taking good care of yourself helps you let go of stress.

If these techniques don't work, and your stress impairs your capacity to function at work or at home, speak with your primary care doctor or a mental health professional

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March 2020



Testing Holidays

There are not any testing holidays this month. The next testing holiday is Memorial Day (May 25, 2020.)

COVID-19 and HPSP

During this time of uncertainty, we will follow the CDC guidelines for Healthcare Providers:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/science/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf>

HPSP has been in communication with all participating licensing boards. At the time of this publication (March 18, 2020), all guidelines continue to be followed with very limited exceptions. See below for details:

Testing

- Testing is as usual. Exemption will be allowed on a very limited basis with medical verification; in those cases, alternative testing will be employed.
- If you are unable to test due to emergency issues at work, you will need to submit documentation from your employer explaining the emergency.
- If you have been quarantined by a medical provider, HPSP will need medical updates every four weeks. If you have been advised to self-quarantine but do not have medical documentation, please consult with your agreement monitor.
- If you are NOT working, you likely qualify for the unemployed toxicology schedule; this will alleviate some of the financial burden of toxicology. (*Ask your agreement monitor for more information).
- If your toxicology site is closed, please proceed to your secondary site. If you do not know where that is, log in to the portal at hpspmonitoring.com or ask your agreement monitor
- If you do not have a secondary site, please document the closure by taking a picture of the closed sign when you arrive. Submit the time-stamped photo to your agreement monitor. We will verify that you were unable to test by calling the site when they next open.
- Please make it a habit to call your testing site before you leave to test so that you can confirm their hours or make arrangements to go to your alternate testing site. You may also want to ask if there are protocols in place to allow for social distancing and/or if you can make an appointment to alleviate wait times.

Workplace

- If you are working and your Workplace Monitor is out sick, you need to call your agreement monitor immediately for further direction.

Please be safe and when in doubt about your monitoring, please call your Agreement Monitor.



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PRN Annual Conference

The 2020 Oregon Professionals Recovery Network (PRN) Conference has been cancelled due to COVID-19. They may reschedule for later in the year.

HPSP Outreach

The HPSP Team is scheduling informational sessions on HPSP. If the administrators of your health care workplace are interested in learning more about HPSP, please ask them to contact Scott McBeth, Ph.D. (503-802-9865; scott.mcbeth@ibhsolutions.com) for more information, or to schedule a meeting.

Over-the-Counter Allergy Relief

Seasonal allergies will soon be in full force. As a reminder, several over-the-counter medications may have sedating or stimulating effects, include centrally acting antihistamines, such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl), and hydroxyzine (Vistaril or Atarax). A complete list can be found at: <https://hpspmonitoring.com/HpspOregon/OrForms?fileType=Forms>.

Be sure to have your primary care physician submit a Medication Management Form if you are using any of these over-the-counter medications BEFORE you have a non-negative test. This is the same form that is filled out if you have any prescriptions with addictive potential and/or psychotropic medication. The Medication Management Form (MMF) and other useful forms are available at www.hpspmonitoring.com under the Resources tab.

Future Travel Plans?

Eventually, we will recover from this pandemic and travel will resume. Please remember that travel requests need to be made two weeks in advance in order to guarantee appropriate collection site allocation and chain of custody form distribution. The Guideline for Toxicology Testing Exemptions and all other HPSP Guidelines are available at www.hpspmonitoring.com.



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April 2020



Testing Holidays

There are not any testing holidays in the month of April. The next testing holiday is Memorial Day (May 25, 2020.)

COVID-19 and HPSP

During this time of uncertainty, we will follow the CDC guidelines for Healthcare Providers:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/science/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf>

Updates on COVID-19

Recently we sent an email notification which is best to be reiterated here in this month's newsletter.

Attention all Licensees:

We are aware of continuous changes in collection site hours and protocols as well as some temporary closures. Given the volume of changes and the speed with which things are changing, the only way for you to be fully informed is to personally call your assigned sites when you are required to test.

We strongly recommend that you:

1. Check to see if a test is required EARLY in the morning.
2. If a test is required, call your collection site(s) as early as they may be open to:
3. Verify that they are OPEN that day.
4. Confirm their hours
5. Ask about any special protocols (Do you need to make an appointment? Do they need to screen you before you come in?)
6. If NONE of your sites are open, it is your responsibility to call your agreement monitor to make alternate arrangements.

***Remember, it is your responsibility to test if you are scheduled. We know that this is a difficult time and we are here to support you.**

Social Distancing Accommodation

In light of the current circumstances in regard to COVID-19 and the need for social distancing, on a temporary basis HPSP will allow participants to sign into the collection site to be tested and then return to their car (and remain parked there) until they are called in to be tested.

After signing in at the collection site, please show this to the front desk so that they are aware of our request. By allowing this change, we are asking collection sites to assist us in our efforts to keep our participants, as well as the collection site team members and other patrons, SAFE.



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If you or the collection site have any questions, we can be reached at 888.802.2843.

HPSP has been in communication with all participating licensing boards. At the time of this publication (April 17th, 2020), all guidelines continue to be followed with very limited exceptions. See below for details:

Testing

- Testing is as usual. Exemption will be allowed on a very limited basis with medical verification; in those cases, alternative testing will be employed.
- If you are unable to test due to emergency issues at work, you will need to submit documentation from your employer explaining the emergency.
- **If you have been quarantined by a medical provider, HPSP will need medical updates every four weeks. If you have been advised to self-quarantine but do not have medical documentation, please consult with your agreement monitor.**
- If you are NOT working, you likely qualify for the unemployed toxicology schedule; this will alleviate some of the financial burden of toxicology. (*Ask your agreement monitor for more information).
- **If your toxicology site is closed, please proceed to your secondary sites.** If you do not know where that is, log in to the portal at www.hpspmonitoring.com or ask your agreement monitor.
- If you do not have a secondary site, please document the closure by taking a picture of the closed sign when you arrive. Submit the time-stamped photo to your agreement monitor. We will verify that you were unable to test by calling the site when they next open.

****If the site was open that day and you showed up after they closed that will be considered as a missed test.**

- **Please make it a habit to call your testing site before you leave to test so that you can confirm their hours or decide to go to your alternate testing site.** You may also want to ask if there are protocols in place to allow for social distancing and/or if you can make an appointment to alleviate wait times.

****You are responsible for testing even if your site is closed which means that you need to understand where your secondary sites are.**

****You need to contact HPSP as soon as possible if your site(s) is closed in order to get a link to your secondary site(s).**

Workplace

- If you are working and your Workplace Monitor is out sick, you need to call your agreement monitor immediately for further direction.

Workouts for One: Staying Fit in Extraordinary Times

The Coronavirus pandemic has closed gyms and shut down pools, community centers and other places where we're used to getting our exercise in. But staying fit and healthy is still important. What's the best way to get a workout when your gym and Zumba® class are off-limits? There are lots of healthy ways to exert yourself under "stay at home" or "shelter in place" orders, even if you don't have a dusty exercise bike in the basement.

For many of us, replacing the motivation of working out in groups is the most challenging aspect of the closures. There are several ways to keep yourself accountable when your goal is to stay fit. You can pair up with a friend virtually or join one of the many "30 Day Challenges" you can find online. There are challenges for everything from yoga to push-ups, designed to increase your fitness and instill a habit over the course of a month.

1. **Take a Class (At Home).** Any exercise class that you take is probably available in some form on the Internet. Zumba founder "Beto" Perez has a 54-minute high energy workout on Vimeo, for example. There are plenty of yoga and tai chi videos as well, which may be particularly calming in stressful times.

2. **Update the Jumping Jack.** If you're just starting out, try the chair sit: Sit on a chair with your arms across your chest, push from your feet to a standing position without using your arms. Repeat for 30 seconds. Rest 2 minutes and repeat. If you are fitter, jumping jacks and push-ups may seem a bit old-fashioned, but they work! Bored with those? The exercise website ExRx.net has a number of variations.



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3. **Head Outside.** Remember that the stay at home regulations in most places allow solitary hiking, jogging and walking your dog (make sure to stay up on the local guidance for your city). This is the simplest way to get a solid cardio workout, and the sunlight and fresh air will help your mood, too.

4. **Stairways to Heaven.** Stair climbing is a time-tested way to get your heart rate up. Inhabitants of high-rises have plenty of stairs to climb. House-dwellers may feel silly going up and down the same flight of stairs, but a pair of headphones and a good playlist can transport you. If you are a newbie, take it very slow. Start with 2 minutes of stair climbing and increase from there.

5. **Get Into Your Chores.** Now's a great time to do those energy-intensive chores around the house that you've been putting off. Scraping down flaking paint, or scrubbing or sanding anything, are tremendous upper body workouts. Scrub the tub. Get the grease off the walls and ceiling around your stove. It's unlikely that you'll run out of useful things to do.

6. **Dance Party.** Put on your favorite music and have a dance party with your family. Young kids are remarkably ready to jump around with their parents. Some will be comfortable Facetiming a friend and dancing their faces off. Even if you're by yourself, go ahead and cut a rug.

Whatever you do, remember to do something. One of the most important things you can do for your health is to stand up, and move for 5 minutes of every hour you spend sitting in front of your computer.

Finally, be sure to hydrate and wash your hands before and after your workout. Although it's always good to check with your doctor before beginning any new exercise program, that might not be possible at this time, so be mindful of your own fitness abilities and take it slowly.



Source: Miriam Wolf

PRN Annual Conference



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Reminders



Guideline for Over-the-Counter Allergy Relief: <https://hpspmonitoring.com/HpspOregon/OrForms?fileType=Forms>.
Medication Management Forms: www.hpspmonitoring.com



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Stress Signals: When Your Body Says Help

In moderate doses, stress challenges you to do your best so you keep learning and growing. But too much stress has a negative effect on your work, mood and physical well-being. "When stress becomes chronic, it turns into distress. It creates a hostile environment in your body," says Susan B. Johnson, Ed.D., with the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas.

"Every time you face a task or problem that requires special effort," Dr. Johnson says, "your body secretes hormones such as adrenaline. These hormones prompt your body to make other chemicals that send extra power to muscles and help you focus your mind and senses. After your response is over, these chemicals are washed away safely in your blood." When stress continues over time, the level of the chemicals goes up and remains elevated with continued stress.

Your body says "help". Stress-related symptoms vary from person to person. If you have a health problem or even a family predisposition to a certain disease, that's where the stress-related symptoms are likely to occur. Here are common ways your body tells you it's under too much stress:

Chronic colds and flu. If you get a cold every Christmas or before a major presentation at work, added stress could be the reason. With a weakened immune system, your body is more susceptible to cold and flu viruses. Build your immune system by getting lots of rest, drinking plenty of fluids and eating vitamin-rich foods.

Insomnia. If you go to bed with a problem on your mind, your body gives you another shot of adrenaline every time you think about it. Before going to bed, settle down by taking a walk, drinking warm milk or taking a hot bath. Then think about something pleasant as you drift off.

Headaches and sore muscles. The stress reaction—also known as "flight or fight"—puts your body in a state of red alert, with your muscles tensed to fight back. Constant tension makes them rigid and sore. Tight neck and shoulder muscles make your head throb. To relieve the symptoms, stretch every couple of hours or do light exercises. Avoid caffeine if it makes you tense.

Stomach problems. Stress prompts secretions of stomach acid that can cause heartburn, stomach cramps or other digestive miseries. Treat the symptoms with an over-the-counter antacid and avoid stomach irritants such as coffee, cigarettes, alcohol, hot peppers and mints. Soothe yourself with deep-breathing exercises and physical activities you enjoy – like bicycling or gardening.

Stress-proof yourself. "Physical symptoms of stress often become worse if the stress continues to build," Dr. Johnson says. "Chronic stress also can lead to more serious conditions such as heart disease, depression, alcoholism and cancer."

You may be keeping your body in a state of chronic stress if you often feel uptight or hostile. Learn how to deal with stress constructively and you can use it to meet life's challenges. Some things that may help with stress are: exercise, entertainment and companionship offer brief respites from stress; efforts should be made to reduce obvious and modifiable sources of stress; recognize that some sources of stress are not modifiable and need to be worked around.

Source: The StayWell Company LLC, ©2020

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June/July 2020



"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."
-Audre Lorde

Great News: We are Switching to a New MRO Service!

We have heard your concerns and we are making the switch to MRO Express. MRO Express is an experienced, efficient, MRO service with a strong track-record. We are sure you will be pleased with their services!

You will or may have already received an EchoSign document to sign by our newest team member, Kathy Prewitt. Medtox will be sending you new paper chain of custody forms in the coming weeks. You can continue to use your current forms in the meantime. (Note: If you have not already signed and returned a Medtox direct mail consent form you will receive one to complete so that Medtox can send you the chain of custody forms.) Your assistance will allow us to make the change to MRO Express and we are confident that you will be pleased with your experiences with them.

If you have questions, please reach out to your Agreement Monitor.

Travel Plans

Traveling this summer? Please remember that we require two weeks' notice of travel plans so we can identify testing sites. Remember that we need zip codes and dates of travel. Also, please remember to carry your paper chain of custody forms with you on your travels. Get your requests in early if you have already made your summer plans.

After-hours Phone

IBH Monitoring is pleased to once again offer an after-hours line in case of collection site emergencies. Please note this new phone number: 503.802.9818. During business hours, you should continue to use (888.802.2843).

Friendly Reminder

Please remember to check to see if a test is scheduled every day, Monday through Saturday, between the hours of 03:00 and 17:00. We have three easy options that you can utilize:

1. Phone: 1-888-802-2851
2. Website: <https://www.hpspmonitoring.com/>
3. iPhone and Android App: RBH Daily

Our tip sheet provides some helpful hints and tips about the check-in process:

<https://www.rbhmonitoring.com/Content/Oregon/Tips/Daily%20IVR%20Check%20Tip%20Sheet.pdf>



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One More Caveat to Testing

We highly suggest that you call your testing site early in the day to verify the hours of operations every day you are required to test. Especially in today's climate, many testing sites' hours of operation are changing. Verifying the hours will help to ensure that you do not miss a test and consequently be reported to your respective board for Non-Compliance.

Our Lives in the COVID-19 Age

Our lives have changed due to COVID-19. Some of these changes are small and others are significant. You might be unexpectedly working from home, homeschooling your kids, caring for an elder, or experiencing other major life changes. Then there are little changes like how you grocery shop, exercise and spend your free time. This may have left you feeling uneasy, overwhelmed, anxious, stressed or just plain tired.

"Performing a daily de-stress routine can effectively counteract stress and anxiety, so that the results of stress don't build up and cause problems," says Gerald W. Vest, professor emeritus of sociology at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. Mr. Vest offers the following suggestions for staying calm when your in-box is filling up, your children are screaming or your car's breaking down.

Stress Rx

The following de-stressing exercises can be done at home or the office:

- **Belly Breathing.** For immediate stress relief, Mr. Vest recommends placing your left hand over your heart, your right hand on your belly and breathing deeply. "Just notice your breathing," he advises. "By observing the rise and fall of your breath, you'll naturally begin to relax. At home, or at work if you have privacy, you can also do this technique lying down. Do it for several minutes any time you feel anxious or stressed.
- **Arm Yourself.** Pull up your right shirt sleeve and massage your right shoulder with your left hand. Then feather down your arm with gentle soothing motions. Repeat on the other arm. "The nervous system is connected to all the cells of the body. By soothing the skin of your shoulders and arm, you'll immediately start to relax," says Mr. Vest. And whenever you're using touch, continue to focus on your breathing.
- **Hand Care.** To discharge tension that can accumulate in the hands, knead your left palm with your right hand. Repeat on the other hand. Also, spread your fingers and use the thumb and forefinger of your opposite hand to lightly press each joint and work out the tension between your fingers. Switch hands. Then make circles in your palm with your opposite hand. Switch hands.
- **Saving Face.** Massaging the face also reduces cumulative tension. For quick stress relief before a meeting or important presentation, Mr. Vest recommends lightly massaging your temples, smoothing your eyebrows and massaging your cheekbones and jaw. Also, spend a few seconds pinching and stretching your ear lobes, a typically tense area.
- **Progressive Breath Relaxation.** Use your breath to relax your muscles. "Starting with your feet, visualize each muscle and imagine that your breath is going to the muscle and relaxing it," says Mr. Vest. "Working your way up, spend a few seconds on each part of the body, going through it consciously."



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