

NDPERS Dakota Wellness Program

at Sanford Health Plan



**North Dakota
Public Employees
Retirement System**
Dakota Plan Health Benefits



Giving thanks

What can help you to fight a cold, be happy and increase your energy? The answer is gratitude! People who regularly practice grateful thinking are found to feel happier, have more energy, sleep better and have stronger immune systems. In addition to the physical and mental benefits, those who kept gratitude journals were also more likely to exercise regularly and persevere in life. Research concludes that these benefits are a direct result of the happiness that is generated by programming our brain to think positively.

Gratitude is as easy as taking time to notice and reflect upon the things around you. Being thankful can have immediate results, but regular practice leads to behavior changes that have lasting benefits.

Try some of these techniques:

- Cut a notecard in half and write "Thankful" on each piece. Keep one at work and one at home. Whenever you notice it, think about one thing you are thankful for.
- Write down three things for which you are grateful. What would life be like in the absence of these good things?
- Try to notice something unique every day.
- Record gratitude in a journal. Research shows there are more benefits to think about positives, rather than negatives.



NOVEMBER 2015

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Inside this issue...

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MONTHLY OBSERVANCES

American diabetes
Lung cancer awareness
Alzheimer's disease awareness
National stomach cancer awareness
A complete list of observances can be viewed at healthfinder.gov.

WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

Monthly Book Club: *Thanks!: How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier* by Robert Emmons
November Activity: Holiday Spending Worksheet and Record Acts of Gratitude
Webinar: Financial Fitness
App: Happify; happify.com

SANFORD
HEALTH PLAN

Give it a try

Quit challenge

Tobacco is the greatest single cause of preventable death in the US. Every November, the American Cancer Society challenges smokers to quit, if even for a day, on the third Thursday of the month to mark the Great American Smokeout.

1. Tell your friends and family that you plan to quit and your reasons for quitting.
2. Make an action plan about how you will quit. Include when, where, how and why you want to not use tobacco.
3. Plan and prepare for setbacks along your journey to better health. How are you going to deal with situations where you may have an urge to use tobacco?



CONTACT US AT

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QUICK LINKS:

sanfordhealthplan.com/ndpers/
dakotawellnessprogram

SETTING UP A MYSANFORDHEALTHPLAN ONLINE ACCOUNT

sanfordhealthplan.com/
memberlogin

Financial fitness

With the many parties, gifts and celebrations starting next month, it is a good time to sit down and think about your financial plan for holiday spending. Tucking away a few dollars each week can add up quickly to make your holiday season and the New Year less stressful and debt free.

- Stash away \$5-10 each week. Save it in an envelope or savings account.
- Give up one purchase each week, such as a gourmet coffee, lunch out or shopping trip, and use the money saved for your holiday budget.
- Prepare a holiday budget and plan how much you will spend on charity, gifts, food, supplies and activities.
- A present does not have to be something you purchased. Spending time with loved ones and friends can also be a great way to celebrate.

STOPPING GERMS IN THEIR TRACKS

Keeping your hands clean is the best way to stay well and to prevent the spreading of germs. While many of us do wash our hands regularly, a recent study found that only 78 percent of women and 50 percent of men use soap when washing their hands after using the restroom.



Always use soap. More germs are likely to be removed and you will scrub more vigorously.



Optimal cleansing includes **scrubbing for 20 seconds** or singing Happy Birthday twice.



Germs are transferred more easily when skin is wet so **don't forget to dry.**