



The Wellness Newsletter

THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE KNUST WELLNESS CENTRE

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EXPLORING SELF-CARE IN A GHANAIAN CONTEXT

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Self-care is the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote and maintain their own health, prevent disease, and to cope with illness – with or without the support of a health or care worker (WHO, 2024). Self-care indicates the activities, habits, and rituals individuals engage in to support their overall well-being. In Ghana, as in many parts of the world, self-care is often misunderstood as a luxury. However, it is a fundamental aspect of maintaining physical, mental, and emotional health. Unlike reactive health measures, self-care is a proactive approach that can prevent illnesses and enhance life quality.

Importance of Self-Care

Preventive health is more effective and cost-efficient than treating illnesses. In Ghana, where access to healthcare can be limited, self-care becomes even more crucial. It doesn't require expensive resources. For example, a farmer in Tamale can prioritize eating healthy, locally grown produce, while a staff in KNUST can practice mindfulness during breaks to manage stress. These simple, adaptable practices improve resilience and promote overall well-being.

Myths About Self-Care

Self-care is often confused with self-help or self-indulgence. Unlike self-help, which focuses on improvement through willpower, self-care emphasizes self-compassion and prioritizing health. Additionally, self-care isn't about indulgent luxuries like frequent spa visits or costly vacations. For instance, relaxing under a neem tree or preparing a family meal can be simple and authentic forms of self-care.

Reference

World Health Organization (2024). Self-care for health and well-being.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Saturday Health Walk and Aerobics is scheduled for every Saturday from 5:30am-7:30am at the KNUST Wellness Centre. The Saturday Walk and aerobics are open to all and it's free for all

2. Join us for an exciting game of pickleball every Friday at 4:00 PM at the KNUST Wellness Centre! We'd love to see you there!



THE NUTRITION CORNER

FRUITS & VEGETABLES ESSENTIAL BUILDING BLOCKS OF SUSTAINABLE HEALTHY EATING

In an era of fleeting diet trends and a barrage of nutrition and health advice, research consistently shows that people who eat adequate amounts of fruits and vegetables enjoy a wide range of health benefits. From boosting our immune systems and warding off chronic diseases, to supporting sustainable agriculture and reducing our environmental footprint, the benefits of a diet that is rich in fruit and vegetables are far-reaching. This article highlights the importance of fruits and vegetables, discusses why we generally do not eat enough and offers practical tips for incorporating more of these wholesome foods into our daily diets.

IMPORTANCE OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN SUSTAINABLE HEALTHY DIETS

Fruits and vegetables are vital for a healthy diet because they are rich in essential nutrients that contribute to better overall health. Low fruit and vegetable intake is among the five main risk factors for poor health, with over 2 million deaths attributable to low intake of fruits, and 1.5 million deaths and attributable to low intake of vegetables globally each year, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends consuming at least 400 g (approximately five portions) of fruit

and vegetables per day to help reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and ensure an adequate daily intake of dietary fiber. Eating fruits and vegetables is not only beneficial for health but also for the environment. This is because, cultivation of fruits and vegetables require fewer resources (such as water, land, and energy) to produce compared to animal products, making them more environmentally friendly. They also have a lower carbon footprint, meaning that their production generates fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Fruits and vegetables also contribute to biodiversity preservation as diverse crops promote healthier ecosystems and protect biodiversity.

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References

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World Health Organization. (2019). Sustainable healthy diets: Guiding principles. Food & Agriculture Organisation