

January is Mental Wellness Month

According to recent data, society faces a mental health crisis. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that one in four people globally will be affected by mental illness. In the U.S., around 46.6 million adults experience mental illness annually. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) adds that one in six youth aged 6–17 face a mental health disorder each year. As we transition from the festive season into the new year, Mental Wellness Month in January offers an opportunity to reflect and recalibrate. It's a time to emphasize mental health awareness and self-care.

Prioritizing mental well-being, cultivating healthy habits, and adopting effective coping strategies can foster resilience and overall happiness. Self-care refers to activities that promote overall well-being and enhance both physical and mental health. It helps to manage stress, lower illness risk, and boost energy.

Consider the following tips:

- Exercise regularly — even short walks help.
- Eat balanced meals and stay hydrated.
- Limit caffeine and alcohol.
- Make sleep a priority and reduce screen time before bed.
- Try relaxing activities like meditation or reading.
- Set goals and learn to say “no.”
- Practice gratitude daily.
- Challenge negative thoughts.
- Stay connected with supportive people.
- Actions can lead to big changes.

Mental wellness is a journey. Embrace it this January.

Resources: bit.ly/4q5xHPZ

January is National Fiber Focus Month

Most Americans do not get the recommended amount of fiber. Here are some interesting fiber facts:

- Soluble fiber dissolves in water and helps lower bad cholesterol.
- Sources of soluble fiber include fruit, beans, lentils, and oats.
- Insoluble fiber does not dissolve in water and helps with bowel movements.
- Sources of insoluble fiber include whole grains, vegetables, nuts, and seeds.
- Women under 50 should get 25 to 28 grams per day, while women 51 and older should get 22 to 25 grams daily.
- Men under 50 should get 31 to 38 grams per day, while men 51 and older should get 28 to 30 grams daily.

In the New Year, consider adding more fiber to your diet to support better health.



Understand Where Our Money Goes in 2026

Is there a habit that adds up?

- 1 soft drink a day at \$1.50 each adds up to \$547.50 a year.
- 1 candy bar or chips a day at \$1.25 each adds up to \$456.25 a year.
- 1 pack of cigarettes a day at \$7.50 adds up to \$2,737.50 a year.
- Dining out five days a week at \$8 per meal adds up to \$2,080 a year.
- 1 specialty coffee a day at \$4.50 each adds up to \$1,642.50 a year.
- 1 online movie subscription at \$9 per month adds up to \$108 a year.
- 1 game subscription at \$15 per month adds up to \$180 a year.

A big step in managing spending is to record the costs, which helps us understand where our money comes from and where it goes.

To learn more and access online worksheets, visit: extension.illinois.edu/finances/spending.

