

Be the Brand



OCTOBER UPDATE — ALCOHOL & CAFFEINE

HOW DID YOU GO WITH SEPTEMBER'S STEP CHALLENGE?

The aim of September's challenge was to increase your steps and see how many days you could achieve at least 7,500 steps. Hopefully you've improved on your average step count and maybe had a little healthy competition in centre or with family and friends! What do you need to put in place to keep up your steps now the challenge is over?

OCTOBER CHALLENGE: HOW MANY DAYS CAN YOU GO ALCOHOL OR CAFFEINE FREE? (PICK ONE)

Attached is your goal setting and tracking sheet for October, which is also saved in Centre Public: L:\Be The Brand/2020 Wellness Program. Choose either alcohol or caffeine and set yourself a goal of how many days you can go without. What do you need to do to achieve this?

Use the calendar to record your goal and track your progress. Make sure you keep it somewhere visible to keep you motivated for the month.

TIPS TO REDUCE ALCOHOL

The thought of skipping alcohol may be easy for some and daunting for others but we've got some great tips to help you through the month so you can realise the benefits for yourself:

- Have a replacement behavior – if you use a glass of wine to wind down at the end of the day, have another activity ready to help you unwind such as a short meditation.
- Socialise with activities that don't involve drinking such as a brunch, walk in the park or mini golf.
- Find some go to mocktails recipes and have the ingredients ready in the house.
- If you get the urge to drink, acknowledge it. Breathe, remember your goals and as it passes, congratulate yourself for making a positive health decision.
- Don't have alcohol at home or in easy reach – the old out of mind, out of sight method can be a great help.
- Share your goals – let those closest to you know your plan, you could even ask them to join you so they too can see the benefits.

BENEFITS OF REDUCING ALCOHOL

- Better sleep
- Improved concentration
- More energy
- Helps with weight loss
- Saves money
- More time to do the things that bring you happiness
- Look younger – alcohol dehydrates you making your skin look dull and lifeless. By passing on the alcohol, your skin will look brighter.
- Reduce the risk of health conditions such as liver damage, stroke, cancer, heart disease.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFO

There are some great resources for those who want to reduce their alcohol intake or just want to better understand their relationship with alcohol:

<https://www.hellosundaymorning.org/>

<https://www.dryjuly.com/>

Caffeine

Whether it's a coffee to get us going in the morning or a comforting cup of tea in the afternoon, many of us can't go without our daily caffeine hit. But what are the effects and how do we know if we're having too much?

EFFECTS OF CAFFEINE

Caffeine is well absorbed by the body and the short-term effects are usually felt about 5-30 minutes after consumption. Caffeine is classed as a stimulant and increases the circulation of cortisol and adrenaline in the body and increases the activity of the nervous system and brain. This leads to increased breathing and heart rate, mental alertness and physical energy. In small doses it can make you feel refreshed and alert, but large doses can have some negative effects.

Some of the effects of excessive amounts of caffeine include:

- A rise in body temperature
- Dizziness and headaches
- After the initial energy burst, an even greater feeling of fatigue
- Heart palpitations
- Restlessness
- Anxiety and irritability
- Insomnia
- Stomach upset

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

How you react to caffeine is very individual and can depend on your body size, metabolism, whether or not you have it regularly and the dose you have at one time. There is research to suggest that 400mg per day or less is an acceptable level for the general population. To give you an idea of how much this is, here's the caffeine content of popular drinks:

- Instant coffee: 80-120mg per 250mL
- Espresso coffees such as espresso or latte: 150-240mg per 250mL
- Decaffeinated coffee: 2-6mg per 250mL
- Black tea: 65-105mg per 250mL
- Cola drinks: 40-50mg per 375mL
- Energy drinks: 80-160mg per 250mL



TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR CAFFEINE INTAKE

If you feel like you have an excessive caffeine intake and would like to cut down, try to do this gradually over time. This is because over time you may have become physically and psychologically dependant on caffeine and therefore, may experience withdrawal symptoms.

Withdrawal symptoms can include fatigue, crankiness, persistent headache, sweating, muscle pain and sometimes anxiety.

Cutting down gradually can reduce the likelihood of withdrawal symptoms as it gives your nervous system time to adapt to functioning without caffeine.

QUIT BUYING COFFEE AND SAVE

Your daily coffee run may not seem significant to your hip pocket, but if you add it all up over the year, you could potentially be saving thousands. Even if you bought just one coffee per working day, at an average of \$5 that's \$1300 over the year, add the weekends and it becomes \$1820. Imagine putting that money aside and having it at the end of the year to help out at Christmas!

WELLNESS ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR OCTOBER

Here's some ideas for activities you could do as a team or with family and friends:

- Get creative with mocktail recipe ideas and share them with your team.
- Hold your own Jenny October challenge – while this campaign no longer runs in an official capacity, why not hold your own and pick a charity to donate to.
- Share a morning tea and bring some caffeine free drink options such as different types of herbal tea.
- Give up your daily coffee run and donate the money you would have spent to a charity.

Whatever your October activities are, make sure they are COVID safe in line with your current local rules.