



ChallengeME MONTHLY MINUTE

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Monthly topic: **Know Your Numbers**

Participating in a health screening or getting your physical with your PCP provides an opportunity for you to know your numbers in key health areas, painting a picture of your overall health and helping to highlight possible at-risk areas needing improvement.

When reviewing your biometric numbers, it is important to look at the big picture and notice any trends or outliers in your results. Take time to understand what each test is measuring and how they may be interrelated. For example, an elevated heart rate combined with elevated blood pressure and total cholesterol is likely more significant than an elevated heart rate alone. Discuss any concerns or have a list of questions ready for your PCP.

Four types of numbers everyone should know—and why.

- Blood Pressure. Your healthy target: 120/80 mm Hg or less.
- Blood Cholesterol. Your healthy target: Total blood cholesterol lower than 200 mg/dL.
- Fasting Blood Glucose. Your healthy target: Up to 100 mg/dL. Body Mass Index. Your healthy target: 18.5 to 24.9.

Key markers of health can tell you and your doctor about your risk for many illnesses, including heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, and diabetes.



Be sure to visit the ChallengeME website:

- Sign up for Health Coaching:
Call: TTY: 800.697.0353
Online: guidanceresources.com
- Listen to the ChallengeME Podcasts
- Know YOUR Health Plan benefits- Benefits Booklet:
[Benefits Summary \(PDF\)](#) July 1, 2022

For more Wellness Information:

- <http://maine.gov/mdot/challengeme>



Here are some lifestyle changes you can start with if you'd like to improve your biometrics:

Diet: Eating a diet full of nutrient-dense foods, like vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, fiber, and protein. In fact, adults who eat a healthy diet not only live longer overall, but their risks of developing diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic illnesses is significantly reduced. Eating healthfully doesn't have to be boring! Try EatingWell.com, one great source.

Sleep: The Sleep Foundation reports that sleep deficiency can lead to a higher risk for obesity, heart problems, insulin management, and more, and recommends maintaining good sleep hygiene. Examples of good sleep hygiene can include a consistent sleep/wake schedule, a bedroom environment that is optimized for quality sleep, and incorporating healthy habits that support a good night's rest (healthy diet, exercise, etc.)

Stress Management: The key to having good overall health is not to allow stress to linger. When we're stressed, our body releases cortisol (the stress hormone) and adrenaline into the bloodstream, causing our blood pressure to rise, our muscles to tighten, and our glucose levels within our bloodstream to increase, making our heart beat faster. Remaining in this state can have a negative effect on our health.

There are many healthy ways to reduce daily stress. Using meditation apps, like Calm or Headspace, going for a walk, practicing breathwork, and developing positive self-talk habits are just a few of them.

Exercise: Regular exercise provides tremendous benefits to our bodies, our mental health, and our biometric numbers! Just adding 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise each day can help reduce stress, improve sleep, boost your mood, control weight, and metabolism, and provide you with more healthy energy.

ChallengeME
MaineDOT Healthy Workforce

Coming up October: Cancer Awareness

Comments, questions, ideas, or submissions?
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