**Caring for Your Mind and Body**

We all know about the importance about taking care of our health—eating right, getting enough sleep, exercising. Healthy habits positively influence how a person feels and how their body functions.

But good health involves not only caring for our body, but also our mind.

The fact is our mental health is integral to our overall health. Far too many Americans fail to incorporate a principal component into their health choices. Yet overall health and wellness are not possible without it.

What is mental health? If you were to ask your office mate, spouse or neighbor, they may respond that it is a “state of mind,” “being content with life” or “feeling good about yourself.” Simply put, mental health is the ability to cope with daily life and the challenges it brings.

When a person has “good” mental health, they deal better with what comes their way. By contrast,

“poor” mental health—such as feeling overwhelmed by stress —can make even day-to-day life difficult.

Poor mental health can also significantly harm a person’s physical health. For instance, research shows that stress is closely linked to high blood pressure, heart disease and obesity. It also shows that people who feel depressed or chronically stressed may have a greater risk of physical illnesses.

The good news is there are many healthy choices and steps that individuals can adopt to promote and strengthen mental health—and overall health and well-being.

A healthy lifestyle can help to prevent the onset or worsening of depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions, as well as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other chronic health problems. It can also help people recover from these conditions.

This May is Mental Health Month, [AFFILIATE NAME] is raising awareness of the role mental health plays in our lives and providing tips and resources so anyone can take steps to promote good mental health.

These include building social support, eating with your mental health in mind, recognizing the signs of stress, and knowing when to reach out for help.

Just as Americans have learned there are things they can do to reduce their risk of heart disease and other illnesses, [AFFILIATE] wants to help people learn what they can do both to protect their mental health in tough times and also to improve their mental well-being throughout their lives.

We need to care for both our body and mind.