



In Good Health

For the health & wellness
of our members

**Simplified Meal
Planning**

**Back to
School Prep**

**Fascia
Training and
Foam Rolling**



August 2025

Get PHP Fit!

Third Quarter Challenge: Walk the Florida Keys Challenge

Physical activity helps improve and maintain your overall health. Just 30 minutes a day can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, and reduce excess body fat. Let's get stepping!

Q3: July 1 - September 30

Here's the challenge

Walk along the Florida Keys by averaging 7,500 steps daily (106.6 miles total) before the end of the quarter and log them on the **Get PHP Fit! site**,

What can I win?

Fifteen individuals who complete this challenge will be randomly drawn to win a *\$50 Amazon gift card*.



Walking can help you:

- 1 Maintain a healthy weight
- 2 Prevent or manage various conditions
- 3 Benefit your overall mood
- 4 Improve your balance and coordination

PHP Members:

Sign in to your member account at phpni.com, click on **Wellness Tools > Get PHP Fit! > Quarterly Challenge** to join the step challenge.

Join Now!

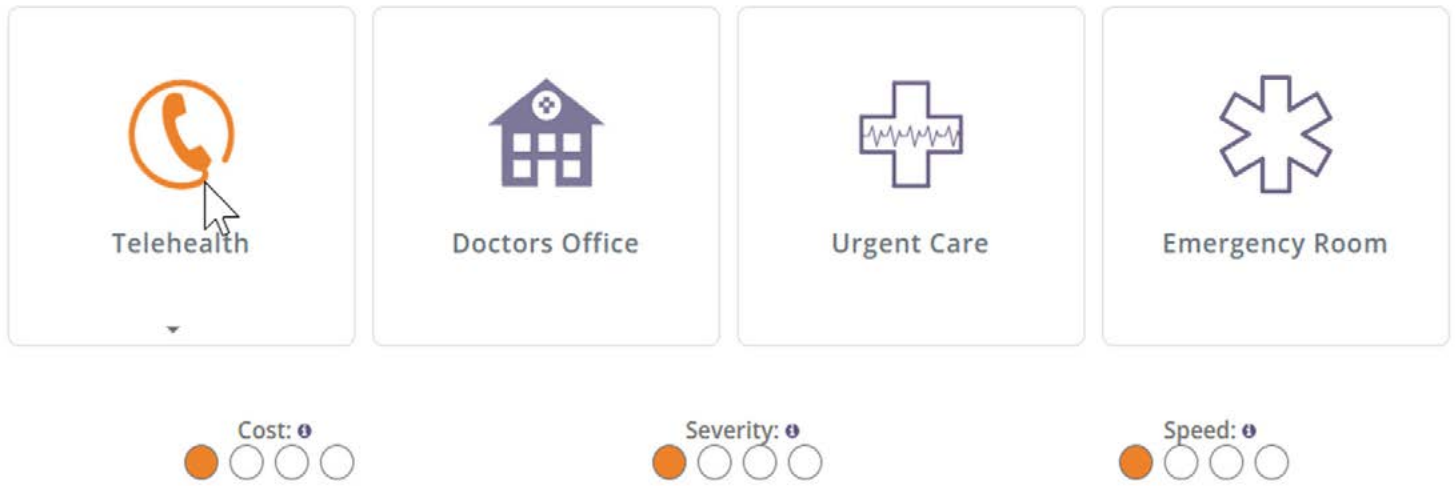
PHP's year-long challenge

In addition to our quarterly Get PHP Fit! challenge, you also have the opportunity to participate in our year-long challenge simply by visiting your primary care provider! Each quarter, enter the date of your visit on the **Get PHP Fit! site** and be entered for the chance to win a *\$50 Amazon Gift Card!*

Know Where to Go For Care

Always weigh your options and choose the appropriate level of care for whatever your situation.

Check out this interactive tool at phpni.com/save:



When to use:

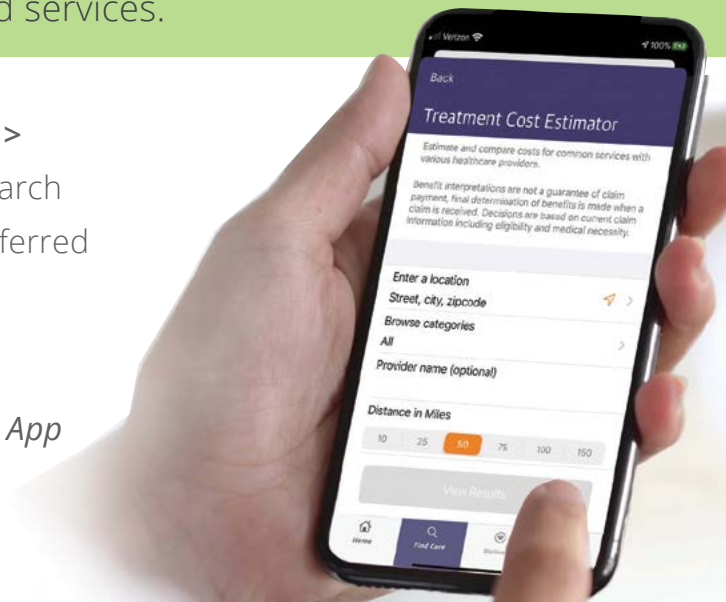
Cold, cough, flu, allergies, pink eye, sore throat, respiratory issues, sinus problems, and skin problems.

Treatment Cost Estimator: Know before you go

This tool provides you with an estimate of both total costs and out-of-pocket expenses for common medical treatments and services.

Log in to your member account and select **My PHP > Treatment Cost Estimator**. From there you can search using location, distance, service desired, and/or preferred doctor/facility.

This feature is also available through the **PHP Go!** mobile app. To download, go to your phone's *Apple App Store* or *Google Play* and search '**PHP Go!**'



Simplified Meal Planning

Meal planning strategies should involve time management, healthy eating decisions, budget-friendly choices, and keeping the process low stress.

Why Meal Planning Matters

- Avoiding take-out and processed foods: Without a plan, you may resort to take-out or processed meals, which are often high in fat, sodium, and calories, and more expensive than home-cooked meals. Meal planning helps you to provide consistently healthier meals.
- Cost efficiency: Those who plan weekly menus tend to spend less on take-out and impulsive purchases of processed foods.

Steps to Create a Meal Plan

- Understand your family's schedule but be prepared to be flexible when plans change.
- Create a Positive Action Plan by making a shopping list, checking your pantry,

refrigerator and freezer for usable food before creating your menu.

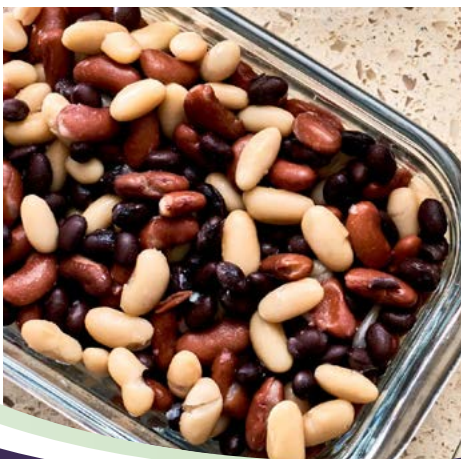
- Involve the family in menu creation. Ask them to help select one new recipe to try each month. Have them help you choose a list of healthy snacks or on-the-go foods that will make them happy.
- Use trusted, healthy recipe sources and check reviews. Find recipes with a variety of cooking methods: slow-cooker, sheet pan, one-pot meals, stir-fries, casseroles, soups, etc. so that you're prepared for any type of schedule.
- Be kind to yourself and others in your family who do the cooking. Keep weekday meals simple and quick.

Tips for Success

Find enjoyment in the process if you can. On stressful days, find a way to unwind while preparing a meal. Listen to music, enlist your family's help, breathe deeply and be mindful of the steps that you take to prepare the meal.

Prepare for those days when your schedule is disrupted. Have frozen meals prepared ahead or lower your expectations for the perfectly executed recipe. Make sure that you have simple stand-by recipes to fall back on.

Meal planning can become a manageable part of your routine.



A close-up photograph of a person's leg in a black athletic sock and a black sneaker with a white sole. The leg is resting on a red and white foam roller. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a gym or outdoor setting.

Fascia Training and Foam Rolling

Fascia training refers to exercise and movement that targets the body's fascia, a connective tissue that surrounds muscles, bones, and organs. Fascia plays a crucial role in providing support and stability to the body, as well as facilitating movement. A good description is to think of the fascia as the white fibers that you find beneath the rind of an orange. It's the stuff that helps to give the body its shape! The Fascia can shorten and stiffen, especially with repetitive movement. It can also become tight and painful from inactivity.

Fascia training often involves specific exercises, stretches, and techniques aimed at improving the health and function of the fascia. These may include movements that focus on dynamic stretching (movements done at a slow pace intended to stretch your body), myofascial release (such as foam rolling or using massage balls), and exercises that focus on body awareness and control. Bouncing movements such as skipping, hopping, and burpees also help to increase the elasticity in your fascia. The type of training used for the Fascia can also help to move lymphatic fluids and reduce swelling in your body.

Fitness practices such as yoga, Pilates, strength training and rehabilitation exercise programs often integrate Fascia training into their activities. This training is meant to help increase flexibility, reduce muscle tension, improve mobility and prevent injuries. Research on fascia and its response to training is still emerging, but regardless of what a trainer may believe about fascia training in general, many fitness professionals believe that incorporating fascia-focused techniques into fitness routines can lead to better overall movement quality and physical health.

Here's a basic guide on how to foam roll effectively:

Foam rollers come in various densities and sizes. Beginners may prefer softer foam rollers, while more

advanced users may opt for firmer ones for deeper tissue massage. Start with a medium-density roller if you're unsure.

Identify the specific muscle groups you want to target. Common areas include the calves, quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes, back, and shoulders. It's generally a good idea to warm up your muscles before foam rolling.

- Position yourself on the floor with the foam roller beneath the targeted muscle group.
- Use your body weight to apply pressure onto the foam roller.
- Slowly roll back and forth along the length of the muscle, from one end to the other.
- Focus on any tight or tender spots ("trigger points") and spend extra time rolling over these areas.
- You can adjust the pressure by shifting your body weight or by using your hands and legs to support yourself.
- Roll each muscle group for about 1-2 minutes. While foam rolling, remember to breathe deeply and try to relax as much as possible. Tension can hinder the effectiveness of the technique. Avoid rolling over joints, bones, or areas with acute injuries or inflammation. If you experience sharp pain, stop immediately.

Foam rolling can be done as part of your warm-up routine, cool-down, or even as a standalone session. Aim to incorporate it into your regular exercise routine a few times per week for best results. Remember, consistency is key with foam rolling. It may feel uncomfortable at first, especially if you have tight muscles, but over time it can help improve your overall mobility and reduce muscle stiffness and soreness.

What is Your BMR?

Metabolism is the body's way of breaking down nutrients like carbs, fats, and proteins for energy, to be stored for future use, or to help build essential compounds that are used by the body. Imbalances in nutrition slow down metabolism, leading to extra body fat and weight gain.

Your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) is the energy used by the body at rest. It depends on factors like gender, height, weight, and age. Genetics influence metabolism, but a healthy lifestyle can modify their impact.

For Males: $BMR = 10 \times \text{weight (kg)} + 6.25 \times \text{height (cm)} - 5 \times \text{age (years)} + 5$

For Females: $BMR = 10 \times \text{weight (kg)} + 6.25 \times \text{height (cm)} - 5 \times \text{age (years)} - 161$

Note: 1 inch = 2.54 cm; 1 pound = .453592 kg

Low-calorie diets can reduce BMR by 20%. A nutritious diet with healthy fats and low in added sugars prevents inflammation, regulating hormones and maintaining a healthy BMR.

Physical activity, especially resistance training, increases BMR. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity daily. Age-related muscle loss affects BMR, but exercise helps.

Sleep deprivation lowers BMR and disrupts hormones, affecting hunger and satiety. Adults need 7-8 hours of sleep for a healthy metabolic rate.

Stress releases hormones that temporarily boost metabolism but can lead to overeating. Longterm stress may disrupt hormones and cause BMR.

Adopting a healthy lifestyle empowers us to control these factors and support our well-being.



Back to School Prep

Preparing your child to return to school after summer break can be a smooth and positive experience with some planning. Here are some practical strategies to ease the transition:

Reestablish Routines Early: Children may fall into irregular sleep habits over the summer, begin adjusting bedtime and wake-up times a couple of weeks before school starts in 15 minute increments. Aligning mealtimes and daily activities (You might even introduce educational games or reading sessions.) with the upcoming school schedule helps children adapt more comfortably to the new routine.

Organize and Prepare Together: Involve your child in organizing school supplies, selecting outfits, and setting up a dedicated homework space. Children will develop a sense of ownership and excitement about the new school year when they are involved in the process. If possible, visit the school with your child before the first day. Familiarizing them with the classroom, playground, and route/transportation to school will help alleviate anxiety.

Encourage Open Communication: Discuss your child's feelings about returning to school. Address any anxieties and highlight aspects they can look forward to, such as seeing friends or engaging in favorite subjects.

Promote Social Connections: Arrange playdates or virtual meetups with classmates to rekindle friendships. Social interactions can boost your child's confidence and enthusiasm for returning to school.

Practice Mindfulness and Stress-Relief Techniques: Teach your child simple mindfulness exercises, such as deep breathing or visualization, to manage stress. These techniques can be valuable tools for coping with school-related anxieties.

Celebrate the Transition: Mark the end of summer and the beginning of the school year with a special family activity or treat. Celebrating this transition can create positive associations with the new school year. By implementing these strategies, you can support your child in making a confident and enthusiastic return to school.



Beat Brain Fog with What You Eat (Or Don't Eat)

Your nutrition choices can be one cause of brain fog - confusion, forgetfulness, and a lack of focus and mental clarity.

When your diet includes:

- High Sugar Intake: Consuming large amounts of sugar can cause spikes and crashes in blood sugar levels, leading to energy fluctuations and mental fatigue.
- Processed Foods: Foods high in refined carbohydrates, unhealthy fats, and additives can lead to chronic inflammation and affect brain function.
- Alcohol Consumption: Alcohol can disrupt neurotransmitter balance, leading to cognitive impairment and brain fog.
- Caffeine: Too much caffeine may cause disruptions to sleep and cause energy crashes similar to those connected with sugar consumption. This can lead to brain fog.

When your diet lacks:

- Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Omega-3s, found in fish, flaxseeds, and walnuts, are crucial for brain health. A deficiency can impair cognitive function and contribute to brain fog.

- Dehydration: Not drinking enough water can lead to dehydration, which negatively impacts cognitive function and concentration.
- Fruits and Vegetables: Because fruits and vegetables contain healthy nutrients that can boost your brain power, a lack of them in your diet may mean that you're missing out. It may also mean that instead of eating these healthier food options, you're eating over-processed foods. Opt for veggies with a healthy dip such as hummus or eat fruit with one ounce of cheese or a handful of nuts.

Improving diet by incorporating whole, nutrient-dense foods, staying hydrated, and addressing any specific food sensitivities or intolerances can help reduce brain fog and improve cognitive function. Keep in mind that some people may have other issues that contribute to brain fog and should consult a medical professional if brain fog becomes a recurring problem.



Resources to Help you Save at **phpni.com**

We've created a one-stop resource to assist you in using your benefits.

Check it out at **phpni.com/save**:



Smart shopping tool box: Online tools to help you price medications and compare locations.



Pharmacy: Tips and tools to help save you money on prescriptions.



Know your network: Use in-network providers to avoid high out-of-network services cost.



Using care: Easy online resources to use before receiving services.

It's easy to price shop your prescriptions at **phpni.com**!

Use the **'Price a Medication'** tool in your member account before you head to the pharmacy. It's easy, here's how:

1 Log in on your member portal and select **'Price a Medication'** from the **Pharmacy** menu.

2 Enter the medicine name you want to price, member information, and zip code, then click **'Get Prices'**.

3 Now you have the pricing information to compare costs at various locations, and 1-month vs. 3-month supplies.

