



Vitality

## Setting an Intention Can Help You Achieve Better Health

**Often, health and well-being are the result of small, daily personal decisions rather than a larger promise made to yourself or your healthcare provider. A good way to begin this journey is to set an intention to help you succeed.**

Taking good care of yourself or “self-care” is important to your physical, emotional and mental well-being. If you struggle to stay on track, it may help to re-frame your strategy and focus on a few simple things you can do each day.

### Getting started

Setting an intention is not the same as setting a goal or a resolution. It’s all about being present in the moment or connecting with a purpose and asking yourself questions related to a goal such as, “how do I want to feel?” or “why is this important in my life?”. By focusing on how you want to feel, you can decide what actions you need to take to reach that outcome. Here are a few steps you can take to set an intention:

- Think of your most important health goal.
- Close your eyes and picture yourself achieving that goal.
- Ask yourself how it feels and try to pinpoint that feeling with one word.

That one word now becomes your mantra. Write it down and post it in a place where you’ll see it each day.

### Turning your intention into action

Let’s say you want to take better care of your body (your outcome goal) because you want to feel stronger and be there for your family (your intention). You want to be empowered (your mantra). It may be helpful to write down a list of process goals to help you achieve that outcome goal:

- Schedule an appointment for a check-up with my doctor
- Get my cholesterol and blood sugar tested
- Snack on a piece of fruit rather than potato chips
- Take a walk every day at lunch
- Keep a glass of water at my desk

Be sure to check in with yourself daily. If your intention or mantra is no longer resonating, then it might be time to make a change. There’s no need to wait. You can start on the path to feeling how you want to feel today.

Sources: The Cleveland Clinic, The Center for Health and Wellbeing, The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



# Shed Your Pandemic Pounds with Mini Habits

**Spring is here and it's time for a fresh start. Mini habits are an easy way to kick start your weight loss plan and create sustainable behavior changes.**

If you have noticed a few extra pandemic pounds, you are not alone. A study from the American Psychological Association found that 61% of adults reported weight gain since the start of the pandemic. Stress, lack of exercise, increased snacking and alcohol use are all contributing factors.

Instead of making a drastic overhaul of your lifestyle, you can make slow and gradual changes through mini habits. According to Stephen Guise, author of the book *Mini Habits for Weight Loss*, our brains are slow to change. Consistent action over time can lead to long-term success. An effective strategy is to create a plan that allows you to succeed not only in ideal circumstances, but also under the worst conditions. That's where mini habits come in to play.

## What is a mini habit?

A mini habit is a small behavior that you can do every single day. Your mini habits are intentionally simple, so you can do them even on your worst day. On days when you have more energy or motivation, you can do "bonus reps," which exceed your daily mini habits. Bonus reps are always optional.

## Why are mini habits effective?

Many diet plans set high targets and make you feel defeated if you are unable to meet them on any given day. That sort of approach makes it harder to stick with

your plan. Mini habits adapt to your daily needs and motivation levels. Some days you'll do more and some days less, but as long as you complete your mini habit each day, you will feel a sense of progress. Eventually you'll create healthy habits that can last a lifetime.

## Get started with these mini habits today

To get you started, here are some examples of mini habits to try. Choose up to three mini habits to practice each day.

### Food Mini Habits

- Eat one extra serving of fruit or vegetables
- Swap out one unhealthy snack for a healthy one
- Swap out one sugary beverage (like juice or soda pop) for a glass of water
- Prepare one healthy meal at home

### Fitness Mini Habits

- Do five push-ups or sit-ups
- Do ten jumping jacks
- Jog in place for one minute
- Dance for one song

You can even combine your mini habits with other activities. For example, commit to doing your mini habit before watching TV or during a commercial break.

For more healthy living tips and resources, log in to My Health Plan at [MedMutual.com/Member](https://www.MedMutual.com/Member) and select Wellness Portal from the Healthy Living tab.

Sources: *Mini Habits for Weight Loss* by Stephen Guise, The American Psychological Association



# Answers to Your Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine

**To fight the pandemic, we need to use every tool in our toolbox. Getting vaccinated is an important part of protecting you and your community.**

## What is the COVID-19 vaccine?

While the COVID-19 vaccines are new, the science behind them has been studied for decades. These vaccines do not contain the COVID-19 virus. Instead, they help your body develop an immunity to the virus. Once vaccinated, if you do get exposed to COVID-19, your immune system already has the virus-fighting tools it needs to protect you from infection.

## Does it matter which manufacturer's vaccine I receive?

Any of the authorized vaccines meet the strict safety standards of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). You'll receive a card that lists which manufacturer's vaccine you received. If you receive a vaccine that requires two doses, like the Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, your provider will work with you to set up a second appointment.

## What should I expect after I receive the vaccine?

One of the most common symptoms is pain and swelling in your arm, which is caused by the shot, not the vaccine. Other possible side effects include mild

fatigue, headache, chills and fever. While inconvenient, these symptoms indicate that the vaccine is doing its job in your body. They are temporary and not harmful.

## Where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

You can get the COVID-19 vaccine by making an appointment at any of the pharmacies, walk-in clinics, doctor's offices and medical facilities that are administering it. Many states are also hosting community vaccination sites. To find a location near you and to schedule an appointment, visit [GetTheShot.Coronavirus.Ohio.gov](https://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov) if you live in Ohio, or use the national vaccine finder at [VaccineFinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org).

## How is it Covered?

The COVID-19 vaccine is covered by your health plan at no additional cost. You can get the vaccine from in-network or out-of-network providers during the national public health emergency declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. After the national public health emergency ends, you will be able to get the vaccine from in-network providers with no member cost sharing, similar to the flu vaccine.

For more information, please visit [MedMutual.com/CovidVaccine](https://medmutual.com/covidvaccine) or call Medical Mutual customer care at the number listed on your ID card.

Sources: Ohio Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Cleveland Clinic





## A Look Inside

- Setting an Intention Can Help You Achieve Better Health
- Shed Your Pandemic Pounds with Mini Habits
- Answers to Your Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine

### Practice Self-care Through our Spring Mutual Challenge

Your Medical Mutual wellness program includes a variety of challenges to help you meet your health goals. Twice a year, we sponsor Mutual Challenges that allow you to improve your health and give back to the community. The spring challenge is called Be Kind to Your Mind. This challenge encourages you to find time for yourself, complete favorite hobbies, and relax in ways that suit your unique personality. To learn more or register for the Mutual Challenge, log in to My Health Plan at [MedMutual.com/Member](https://www.MedMutual.com/Member) and select Wellness Portal from the Healthy Living tab.



The material provided, including websites and links, is for your information only. It does not take the place of your doctor's advice, diagnosis or treatment. You should make decisions about your care with your doctor. What is covered by your plan will be based on your specific benefit plan. Providers quoted may not be in all Medical Mutual provider networks. Be sure to verify the provider is in your plan network if you want to schedule an appointment.

© 2021 Medical Mutual of Ohio  
C2725-CMT R4.21

2060 East Ninth Street  
Cleveland, OH 44115-1355

MEDICAL MUTUAL®



Presort Std  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Medical Mutual  
Permit No. 995