

## BELIEVE IT ~ ACHIEVE IT WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

# January is National Blood Donor Month

January is the perfect time to honor the people who help others through the simple act of giving blood.

Since 1970, January has been known as National Blood Donor Month. It's a time when blood organizations like the American Red Cross pay tribute to the nearly 11 million people who give blood each year, and encourage others to start the New Year off right by coming to give the gift of life.



"Blood donors bring hope and promise to hospital patients who may need blood for their very life," said Diane E. Ward, CEO for the Southeastern Michigan Blood Services Region of the American Red Cross. "Donors are people like you who play a vital role in modern health care by helping ensure hospitals have blood for patients."

January is a challenging time for blood donation because cold and snowy weather and busy post-holiday schedules can make it difficult for blood donors to keep appointments. Regardless of the time of year, hospital patients nationwide need about 44,000 blood donations daily for cancer care, surgeries, and the treatment of serious diseases and trauma.

The Red Cross encourages donors to make and keep appointments, both for convenience and to reinforce the feeling of commitment. Community members can also contribute to the blood supply by organizing or volunteering at a blood drive, or by suggesting blood donation to their family and friends.

"If volunteering in your community is on your list of resolutions, you can meet it by simply giving blood or recruiting others to give, too," said Ward. "Donating blood is a great way to make a lifetime of difference in just a little more than an hour's worth of your time." [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org)

## Track Your Happiness :)

For thousands of years, people have been trying to understand the causes of happiness. What is it that makes people happy?

Yet it wasn't until very recently that science has turned its attention to this issue.

Track Your Happiness is a new scientific research project that aims to use modern technology to help answer this age-old question. Using this site in conjunction with your iPhone, you can systematically track your happiness and find out what factors – for you personally – are associated with greater happiness. Your responses, along with those from other users of [trackyourhappiness.org](http://trackyourhappiness.org), will also help us learn more about the causes and correlates of happiness.

[www.trackyourhappiness.org](http://www.trackyourhappiness.org)

### How does it work?

#### 1. Answer a few questions

First we'll ask you some questions for statistical purposes. This will take about 10 minutes.

#### 2. Track your happiness

Using your iPhone, you'll be notified by email or text message and asked to report how you are feeling and what you are doing. You decide when and how often you want to be notified.

#### 3. Your Happiness Report

This report will show how your happiness varies depending on what you are doing, who you are with, where you are, what time of day it is, and a variety of other factors.

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## 5 Tricks to Get More From Your Fitness Tracker

Who got a fitness tracker for the holidays or committed to and actually wearing it in 2016? The tips below will help you get the most from your wearable technology.

### 1. Assume at least a 10% margin of error for calories burned.

A recent Iowa State University study found that trackers' calorie-burn estimates were off by 10-15%, on average. Anyone who wants to lose weight would be wise to assume that trackers are overestimating their efforts, suggests Kristin Kirkpatrick, a registered dietitian at Cleveland Clinic. "You only need to consume an extra 500 calories a day to gain a pound a week," she warns, so it's smart to err on the side of caution.

### 2. Realize that calorie-burn estimates can be completely off. Enter them yourself.

Unless your tracker includes a built-in heart-rate monitor (like the Microsoft Band, Jawbone UP3 and Basis Peak), it will grossly underestimate how many calories you burn during many activities, including biking, weight training and yoga, because its built-in accelerometer can't as readily detect the movement. A 2013 study in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* found that trackers underestimate energy expenditure from cycling, for example, by up to 55%. "They don't work as well on resistance exercises," says the study's co-author Ray Browning of Colorado State University. Even bands with heart rate monitors are imperfect because they don't perfectly capture your radial pulse, especially during intense exercise when you are moving your wrist a lot.

### 3. The buddy system can be a double-edged sword.

Jawbone reports that its users who have at least 3 "teammates" with whom they share their activity data take 1,000 steps per day more than those who don't. Fitbit, meanwhile, claims that users with at least one friend on their system take 27% more steps. Fitbit friends can also take challenges such as the "Work Week Hustle"—which tracks your steps for a week and awards a virtual trophy to the winner. But Colorado State researcher Browning points out that the motivating effect from being part of a group only works when you're winning. As an alternative, consider setting short-term goals that build on *your own* baseline activity level instead. An increase of 20%, for example, is a good start.

### 4. It's still on you to follow through.

An activity tracker can be fun to play around with for a few months. But it's easy to get bored, take it off your wrist and never pick it up again. Ultimately, your motivation must come from within. "These devices get you thinking about [fitness], but in the end, it's your decision," says John Jakicic, Director of the Physical Activity and Weight Management Research Center at University of Pittsburgh.

### 5. It's not all about structured exercise.

Trackers may be the best way to quantify how much energy you spend on routine activities like putting around the house or taking out the garbage—movement that can be as, or more, important for overall health than formal exercise. "Getting up and moving the rest of the day is better for you than just exercising once a day and being sedentary the rest of the time," says University of Pittsburgh's Jakicic. Do enough of these activities, and you may be surprised to see how it all adds up—no marathon-running required. <http://time.com/3629361/activity-trackers-jawbone-fitbit/>



## 10 No Heat Lunches to Take to Work


<http://www.skinnymom.com/10-no-heat-lunches-to-take-to-work/#/1>



Don't let the temperature outside sentence you to a winter on the "dreadmill". Use this chart to find the proper gear to head out for some fresh winter air.

### Winter Workout Layering Guide

Temperature	Base Layer	Insulating Layer	Protective Layer	Accessories
> 50°F > 10°C	Short-Sleeved Shirt Shorts	None	None	None
40° to 50°F 4° to 10°C	Long-Sleeved Shirt Cropped or Full-Length Pants	Light Sweatshirt (optional)	None	None
30° to 40°F -1° to 4°C	Long-Sleeved Shirt Pants or Tights	Sweatshirt or Fleece	None	Light Gloves Ear Warmers
20° to 30°F -6° to -1°C	Long-Sleeved Shirt Tights (optional)	Fleece Pants	Lightweight Jacket	Hat Heavier Gloves
< 20°F < -6°C	Long-Sleeved Shirt Tights	Fleece Pants	Lightweight Jacket	Hat Two Pairs of Gloves Neck Gaiter

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## Coloring Isn't Just For Kids. It Can Actually Help Adults Combat Stress.

Coloring is an activity that we tend to associate with children. As we grow older, we put aside our crayons and colored pencils in favor of more respectable writing utensils like pens and highlighters. However, it turns out coloring can be beneficial for adults -- namely for its de-stressing power.

The practice generates wellness, quietness and also stimulates brain areas related to motor skills, the senses and creativity. In fact, publishers have lately been launching coloring books specifically for adults. The trend is alive and well in countries in Europe and North America.

"I recommend it as a relaxation technique," says psychologist Antoni Martínez. "We can use it to enter into a more creative, freer state," he assures. We can also use it to connect with how we feel, since depending on our mood we choose different colors or intensity. "I myself have practiced that. I recommend it in a quiet environment, even with chill music. Let the color and the lines flow." *This article originally appeared in HuffPost Spain. Translation by Isaura Camós Gibert.*

Find free coloring pages here: <http://www.muminthepadhouse.com/free-colouring-pages-for-adults/> Or at your favorite Pinterest spot!