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WORKPLACE EYE WELLNESS

MAXIMIZE YOUR VISION BENEFITS

The COVID-19 pandemic shifted millions of Americans to remote work, leading to increased screen time and reports of digital eye strain symptoms. [Workplace Eye Wellness Awareness Month](#) in March highlights practices recommended by the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) to prevent digital eye strain including the following three tips:

1. **Know Your Coverage:** Begin by familiarizing yourself with the specifics of your vision plan. The vision benefit through the Franklin County Cooperative is administered through [Vision Service Plan \(VSP\)](#) and includes coverage for an annual eye exam and a benefit toward contacts or lenses - for eyeglass lenses every

12 months and frames every 24 months. The benefit program also offers extra discounts on contact lenses, eyeglasses, sunglasses, and laser vision correction. More information on your vision benefits can be found at bewell.franklincountyohio.gov.

2. **Schedule Regular Eye Exams:** Don't wait until you experience vision problems to visit the eye doctor. Annual eye exams are not only crucial for detecting refractive errors like nearsightedness or farsightedness but also for identifying early signs of eye diseases such as glaucoma or macular degeneration. By completing a routine vision exam, you are also able to earn a Well-Being Activity Incentive through the Wellness Your Way program. Register at fccThriveOn.com to track your progress.
3. **Protect Your Eyes:** Prevention is key when it comes to maintaining good eye health. Whether you spend long hours in front of digital screens or work in high-risk environments, take steps to protect your eyes. This could include following the 20-20-20 rule (taking a 20-second break every 20 minutes to look at something 20 feet away), using specialized computer glasses, or wearing protective eye wear in hazardous workplaces.

By following these steps, you can make the most of your vision benefits while safeguarding your eye health for years to come. Remember, proactive care today can lead to clearer vision and better eye health tomorrow.

[Learn More About Your Benefits](#)



FIVE WAYS TO FALL ASLEEP

REDUCING ANXIETY TO IMPROVE SLEEP WITH MEQ

The connection between sleep and health is real. It impacts every one of us and if you find yourself tossing and turning in the night more often than not, you may be at an [increased risk](#) for heart issues, decreased immune function, and other metabolic problems. Studies show that [insomnia affects approximately one-third](#) of the world's population, which means there are literally billions of people out there struggling to get the sleep they need. While there are many issues that can contribute to sleeplessness, an anxious mind is one of the most common challenges people suffering from insomnia face. To help you relax and prepare for sleep, here are five ways to calm your mind and ease your body into a state ready for rest:

Clear Your Mind: If you find yourself worrying more come nighttime or find your mind wandering off before bed, try writing down your thoughts or feelings. If journaling isn't your thing, use a consistent routine with a relaxing wind-down to help you get the sleep you need each night ([7-9 hours for most adults](#)). This could include meditation, reading, drinking non caffeinated tea, etc.

Press Pause: Dwelling on overactive thoughts is often unproductive. To break this cycle, it's important to interrupt and redirect such thoughts. Reflecting on how brief nightly worries are can offer perspective. Can you recall what kept you awake a week or a month ago? Probably not. This realization highlights the temporary nature of nighttime concerns and encourages individuals to pause such thoughts, helping a smoother transition into restorative sleep.

Scan Your Body: Your mind won't just shut off automatically. Give your mind something else to focus on to alleviate the racing thoughts. Try body scan meditation through MeQ ([accessed through your ThriveOn account](#)), a mindfulness meditation practice to help you feel more connected to your

physical and emotional self. Explore classic methods of relaxation – like deep breathing and positive visualization by utilizing [Self Care tools from AbleTo](#).

(Mentally) Rock Yourself to Sleep: Gentle motion has been shown to activate the same part of the brain that responds to the sensation of being rocked in the womb. This is why many parents find that rocking their baby in their arms helps them calm down and fall asleep. As an adult you can stimulate this same comfort by using visualization exercises through MeQ ([accessed through your ThriveOn account](#)). Any repetitive rhythm you can imagine creates a mental rocking effect that can help you fall asleep.

Try Again Tomorrow: If you don't sleep well, don't worry too much. You might feel tired, but you can still handle the day. Research at [Colorado College](#) found something interesting: students who believed they slept deeply, even if they didn't, did better on tests than those who thought they slept poorly. So, just believing you slept well can help you through the day and give you another chance tomorrow.

The [National Sleep Foundation](#) has resources and more sleep topics to help you navigate sleep challenges you may face. Taking small steps each day and night can lead to a big difference in your sleep and overall health. Be sure to register your [ThriveOn](#) account to utilize sleep resources such as MeQuilibrium and Self Care by AbleTo. Join MeQuilibrium for their March Calm-Cast titled "[Beat Sleep Procrastination](#)" on March 14th at 12pm and 9pm, or on March 15th at 7am. Tune in to learn more about restoring your sleep.

If falling asleep is a chronic issue for you, reach out to your primary care doctor or one of our dedicated Health Engagement Nurses. Your [UnitedHealthcare Health Engagement Nurses](#) are available to help you and your family with many healthcare situations such as finding a primary care physician, support and education for disease prevention and management, and helping you achieve your personal health goals.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BREAST HEALTH

ANNUAL MAMMOGRAMS AND CONVENIENT SCREENING OPPORTUNITIES

Annual mammograms are crucial for the early detection of [breast cancer](#), as many cases are discovered through these screenings before

[symptoms](#) even appear. Detecting breast cancer in its early stages significantly increases the chances of successful treatment and better outcomes for patients. By identifying abnormalities such as tumors or calcifications early on, healthcare providers can intervene promptly, potentially preventing the cancer from spreading or becoming more difficult to treat.

Regular mammograms are recommended for women aged 40 and above, as well as those identified as being at high risk for breast cancer. High-risk individuals may include those with a family history of the disease, certain genetic mutations, or other predisposing factors. However, it's important to note that breast cancer can affect individuals of all ages and risk levels, so regular screenings are valuable for everyone.

For your convenience, ThriveOn and the Franklin County Cooperative are sponsoring mammography screenings offered by The James Mobile Mammography Unit. Individuals meeting the eligible criteria can complete a mammogram at the following:

- Government Tower (corner of Mound St & High St) on May 15 from 9am – 4pm
- JFS Northland (1721 Northland Park Ave) on May 22 from 9am-4pm.

Eligibility criteria: *Not pregnant, not nursing, asymptomatic or it's been five years or more since a breast cancer diagnosis. You must be 35 years of age or older. Women between ages 35-39 must have a written prescription from their doctor.*

Even if you don't currently meet the criteria for regular screenings, it's crucial to take proactive steps. Remember to check your body regularly for any changes. By staying aware of your body's signals, you can catch potential issues early on. Don't wait for eligibility criteria to change; start looking after yourself today with [simple self-checks](#).

In addition to the health benefits, completing a mammogram also offers financial incentives. Employees and enrolled spouses/domestic partners can earn a \$50 Well-Being Activity incentive through ThriveOn's Wellness Your Way program. Please call the Mobile Mammography Department to schedule an appointment at **614-293-4455** or head to [cancer.osu.edu](#) to schedule through MyChart. Please call at least two weeks in advance to schedule.

WIN BIG AND CELEBRATE WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

COLUMBUS FURY GIVEAWAY

Women's History Month has its roots in the early feminist movements of the 20th century. Initially celebrated as a week in the United States in the late 1970s, it expanded to a month-long observance in 1987. The month honors the countless contributions women have made throughout history, acknowledging their achievements in various fields, including science, politics, arts, and social activism. The initiative aims to raise awareness about women's often overlooked roles, promote gender equality, and inspire future generations. Over the years, Women's History Month has gained global recognition, forming a deeper understanding of women's impact on societies worldwide.

Women's History Month holds great significance as it provides a space to celebrate and recognize the priceless contributions of women throughout history. It serves as a crucial reminder of the struggles women faced and continue to overcome in their pursuit of equality. It helps raise awareness about the achievements, resilience, and accomplishments of women across diverse fields, inspiring future generations. Moreover, it encourages societal reflection on the need for gender equality, promoting inclusivity and dismantling stereotypes. By spotlighting women's stories and accomplishments, Women's History Month contributes to shaping a more equitable world, serving an appreciation for the importance of women's roles in our shared history.

To engage with Women's History Month, participate in local events, attend talks or workshops highlighting women's contributions, and amplify women's voices on social media. Share stories of inspiring women, educate yourself on women's history, and support women-led initiatives and businesses. Empower and uplift women in your community to support inclusivity and equality. Check out this [list of events](#) in central Ohio this month!

As part of our commitment to empowering women, ThriveOn is hosting a special giveaway! Simply complete the quiz below by Friday, March 29 for a chance to win a 4-pack of tickets to see Columbus' very own professional women's volleyball team—the Columbus Fury. Let's celebrate women's achievements together - join us!

[Enter To Win!](#)

ATTEND AN UPCOMING WEBINAR

Join us every month for a series of engaging educational webinars brought to you by Franklin County Cooperative and ThriveOn, featuring a diverse range of topics including nutrition, financial support, health-related discussions, and much more from our trusted vendors.



SWACO **Recycle Right at Home: Sustainable Spring-Cleaning Tips**

Wednesday, March 20 at 12pm

With spring just around the corner, refresh your home without harming the environment! Join us to learn SWACO's eco-friendly spring-cleaning tips to help you clear out and refresh your home without relying on the landfill.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

Recycle Right at Home

Wednesday, March 27 at 12pm

We understand the confusion that recycling can bring. Fear not! We're here to provide you with the answers you need to feel confident when recycling.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

EAP Group Sessions **Get the Best of Stress**

Wednesday, March 27 from 1-2pm

In this training, participants will learn stress basics and coping strategies for the workplace, including stress hardiness for healthy management. Attendees will also gain tools to reduce stress levels and enhance understanding of personal and organizational stress factors.

[LEARN MORE >](#)

BMI **Home Buying Hosted by BMI Federal Credit Union**

Thursday, March 28 at 12pm

Learn how to prepare for purchasing a home and understand the responsibilities that come with home ownership. A mortgage specialist will share tips on how to improve the process, from the dream to closing.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Phone: 614-525-3948

Email: ThriveOn@franklincountyohio.gov

ThriveOn
Your Health and Wellness Program