



7 *Wellness Every Day*

Your Wellness Counts



Your Wellness Counts: *Deciding about Smoking* – May 2017

New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Rutgers UBHC Technical Assistance Center

Sponsored by New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

- **What's the Best Thing You've Noticed about Yourself?** (page 2)
- **What Health Indicators Are Important for You to Track?** (page 4)
- **Who Can Help You Maintain your Wellness?** (page 13)

Welcome to **Wellness Every Day**, the final module in **Your Wellness Counts**. This module offers you some ways for you to keep track of your progress and continue towards a more satisfying life. Building on your strengths and successes, some of the topics we'll address are listed above.

Since you're reading this last module, you've persisted through the usual ups and downs of making a lifestyle change. Congratulations! You can use what you've learned to maintain your successes through any challenges to come. **Wellness Every Day** will highlight ways you can continue your progress.

This module describes how you can measure your progress with promoting your own wellness by using different health indicators. As you will see, some of these are things that you can measure yourself. Your health care provider may help to measure other indicators. You can take charge of your wellness by knowing about and understanding these indicators.

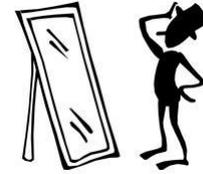
Here are some important things to remember as you go through this module to promote your **Wellness Every Day**:

- ✎ Wellness is self-defined. Pursuing wellness involves becoming aware of and making choices that can lead to a more satisfying lifestyle.
- ✎ Physical health is one part of overall wellness and can serve as the foundation for feeling well in other aspects of your life.
- ✎ People who have mental health conditions are at increased risk for various medical conditions, like Metabolic Syndrome, compared to the general population.
- ✎ Many of the factors that lead to Metabolic Syndrome can be addressed through lifestyle changes, so, *you can significantly reduce your risks.*

In directing and monitoring your progress, try to take things one day at a time. There are enough problems to deal with in just one day. Start with small steps. Even small successes are important. Pat yourself on the back once in a while!



What's the Best Thing You've Noticed about Yourself?



At this point, you've decided to address your overall wellness by eating better, moving more, and/or stopping smoking. You've devoted a good chunk of time working through all the challenges of living a healthier life. *Regardless of where you are now, you can take pride in your decision to make your wellness count.*

As you continue your wellness journey, your responses below can serve as "anchors" to help you stay firm through any *rough* challenges ahead.

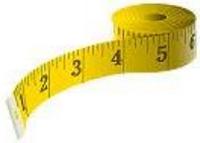


Since you started **Your Wellness Counts**, what's your proudest accomplishment? What specific skills have you learned?



What have others said or done to support your efforts to improve your health? How can they continue to support you in the future?





What Gets Measured Gets Done

You have worked very hard to develop healthy habits so you can achieve your Overall Wellness Goal. Some days have been successful, maybe some days have not. This back-and-forth is normal when you're trying to make any changes. The main thing is to "keep on keeping on."

As you worked through the modules in this tool, you may have used some of the tools provided to track your success with your short-term goals. Hopefully, these tools have helped you record and celebrate your progress.

For longer term progress, you can also use monitoring tools that keep track of specific health indicators. **Health indicators** are measurements that both you and your doctor can use to track your risk for Metabolic Syndrome and to treat or manage it, if needed. If you recall, we discussed Metabolic Syndrome in *Wellness Your Way*.

Important health indicators include your weight, blood pressure, and glucose levels. Keeping track of some of these health indicators will provide you with solid evidence to show how much you are progressing and what areas may need additional support.

Tracking your health indicators may also provide you with some extra motivation. It can help you be more accountable to yourself and your health professional. As the saying goes, "What gets measured gets done."

I really need that checking in and monitoring myself. I start doubting myself. Knowing my numbers helps me to keep doing what I'm doing.



What are your thoughts on tracking specific health indicators so you can continue to be your best self?



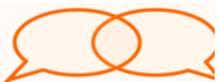
What Health Indicators are Important for You to Track?

In *Wellness Your Way*, we learned about the research showing that people living with mental illness are up to three times as likely as the general population to be diagnosed with Metabolic Syndrome. As you may remember, the US National Institutes of Health defines Metabolic Syndrome as “a group of risk factors that raises your risk for heart disease and other health problems, such as diabetes and stroke.”

Tracking your indicators can help you prevent or manage Metabolic Syndrome while helping you decide which issues you may like to discuss further with your doctor or other health care professional. These conversations can help you to make informed choices related to changing health related behaviors. For example, if your blood pressure is getting too high, you may choose to work with your doctor to change your diet or increase activity. Some indicators that you may wish to track include:

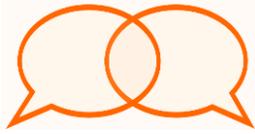
-  Body Mass Index (calculated using your weight and height)
-  Waist Circumference (calculated using a tape measure)
-  Blood Pressure (requires special equipment, but can be done at home)
-  Certain blood tests that can give you important information such as:
 - Fasting Glucose level and/or Hemoglobin A1c level
 - Total Cholesterol and Triglycerides levels
 - Low-Density Lipoprotein level
 - High-Density Lipoprotein level

To learn more about these indicators, you can ask your doctor, nurse, physician assistant or trusted healthcare professional. They can explain what they are and how they apply to you. **New Jersey’s Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services recommends monitoring all of these indicators, especially when taking antipsychotic medications.**



What are the main goals and concerns you have about your health that you can discuss with your doctor/ nurse?





Discussing Your Health Indicators Is Part of Shared Decision Making

When talking to health care providers about your health indicators, you may find that some of what they say is hard to understand. Remember, for you to share in the decisions about *your* health, it's important that professionals offer information in a way that is clear *to you*. By fully understanding your own situation, you can decide what steps to take to best address your concerns and those of your doctor or nurse.

Here are some ideas to help you share in the decisions about your health when talking with your doctor or nurse about your health indicators.

-  Think ahead about how you've been feeling overall. Write down things that may concern you, such as weight gain or shortness of breath.
-  If you do not feel comfortable enough to ask questions, consider bringing a friend or other support person to help you.
-  Bring your "My Health Indicators" chart, (see p. 7).
-  Be ready to discuss other important information such as your diet, your level of physical activity, or the number of cigarettes you smoke daily.
-  Tell your doctor or nurse about your Overall Wellness Goal. Explain how it relates to your treatments and health indicators. 
-  If your health indicators are in a "risk zone," ask about the options for how you can work to make them better.
-  Repeat any recommendations to make sure you heard information correctly. If you think that you won't be able to do what a health provider suggests, have an honest conversation about why it will be hard for you. Your plan might need smaller steps or different options.
-  Write down the next steps that you need to take. You may want to ask the health care professional to print them out or write them down for you.
-  Be sure to get prescriptions or orders for any needed blood tests. Find out if you have to "fast" before the test (not eat ahead of time). If you have to fast, ask to schedule your appointment for early in the morning. Check if you can take any morning medications before going to the lab.
-  Before you leave, make sure to schedule your next appointment.



How Do You Get Started in Gathering Your Current Health Information?

The first step in monitoring your health indicators is to obtain your **baseline** values (such as blood pressure, BMI information, or blood sugar levels). These initial measurements will help you to assess your progress over time. Once you have your baseline values, you can compare them to any future readings to see how well you are getting the results that you want.

For example, if your first measurement of waist circumference is 38 inches, that number is your baseline. When you measure your waist at some later date, you can compare the two numbers to see how you've progressed.

Some people may not keep track of all of these indicators. However, doing so can be very valuable to your efforts to prevent or manage Metabolic Syndrome. This is especially true if you take antipsychotic medications.

Additionally, by tracking your progress, you can decide whether to continue your current efforts or to make changes. So even if you don't get the results you desire right away, you have valuable feedback about how useful your efforts have been. Information is power.



Take a look at the "My Health Indicators" chart on the next page. Then, continue reading to learn how to use it to track your measures.

Your Wellness Counts includes a number of tools and resources to help eat better, move more, or stop smoking. This module also lists many web-based resources you can use to learn more. If you don't have access to the Internet at home, you can use computers at your local library or at the nearest wellness/self-help center (located in every county in New Jersey).*



Which of your health indicator numbers do you already know? How long ago were they measured? Which ones interest you most?



Resource: <http://www.state.nj.us> (search for "recovery and self-help centers")





Wellness Every Day: My Health Indicators

*Bring this page to your appointments and complete together with your health care professional.
You can make additional copies of this page to track your progress.*

Monitoring my health indicators can help me achieve my Overall Wellness Goal.
My Overall Wellness Goal is: 

Health Indicator <small>(www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org)</small>	Risk Criteria	Baseline Result	Date	Result	Date	Result	Date	Result	Date
Weight									
Body Mass Index	Overweight is 25 - 29.9 Obese is > 30								
Waist Circumference	Men ≥ 40 in. Women ≥ 35 in.								
Blood Pressure	≥ 140/90 mmHg								
Fasting Glucose or Hemoglobin	≥ 100 mg/dl Or > 6.0%								
Total Cholesterol	≥ 200								
Low-density lipoprotein (LDL)	≥ 100								
High density lipoprotein (HDL)	Men < 40 Women < 50								
Triglycerides (TG)	≥ 150								

Resource: <http://www.state.nj.us/> (search for "Metabolic Syndrome Tracking")





How You Can Use the “My Health Indicators” Chart

Start by looking down the left-hand side of the “My Health Indicators” chart. You will see a list of health indicators that play an important role in Metabolic Syndrome. To the right of each indicator, there is a column titled “Risk Criteria” which indicates the values for each Health Indicator that are considered to be of high risk. If your value is outside of these ranges, you have increased risk.

For example, for the health indicator of waist circumference, increased risk occurs when this value is more than 40 inches for men or more than 35 inches for women.

Ask your health care provider about the meaning of each of your health indicator numbers.

FYI- For Your Information

The symbol $>$ means greater than.

The symbol $<$ means less than.

The symbol \geq means greater than or equal to.

Your health indicator measurements should be checked and monitored regularly so you can be as healthy as you can be. There are general guidelines for how often to have your health indicators checked (see next page), but your doctor or nurse call also help you decide what makes sense for your specific situation.

If you have unhealthy values in any of these areas (as indicated by the “Risk Criteria”), then you have an increased risk of having Metabolic Syndrome. If this applies to you, you may wish to talk with your doctor or nurse about your options to help bring these values into a healthier range.

For example, if you found out that you are considered overweight or obese, you and your doctor can discuss a wellness plan that helps you eat better and get more physical activity in a way that makes sense to you. And, if you smoke, your health care provider can help you make a plan for stopping smoking. You can also go back to Modules 4, 5, and 6 to learn more about making changes in these areas.



How Often Should Your Health Indicators be Checked?



When your values for each of the Health Indicators are within the low risk range, you can have these checked less frequently. It's a good idea to check more often if your numbers show that you have increased risk.

-  If your BMI is 25 or less, then you only need to have this checked every six months. This is checked by measuring your height and weight.
-  If you are a man and your waist circumference is 40 inches or less, or if you are a woman and your waist is 35 inches or less, you only need to be checked every six months. This is done with a tape measure.
-  If your blood pressure is below 140/90, then you only need this checked every six months. This is done using a blood pressure monitor and can be done at the doctor's office.
-  If your fasting blood sugar is 100 mg/ml or less (or your HgA1C is 6.5% or more), then you only need to have this blood test every six months.
-  If your lipid panel results are within normal range, then you only need to have this blood test every six months. Normal lipid levels are: Cholesterol less than 200, Triglycerides less than 150, LDL less than 100, HDL greater than 50 for men or 40 for women.

Note that if you start a new medication, such as a newer antipsychotic medication which can be associated with the increased risk of obesity or Metabolic Syndrome, then you need to have your health indicators checked both *before* you start the new medication and *after* being on it for several weeks. Make sure you speak to your health care provider about this issue. Please see **Wellness Your Way**, page 12, for additional information.

Over time, the "My Health Indicators" chart can help you stay aware of the important information that your health care provider is tracking. It will also help you talk with your doctor about how your diet, your physical activity, and your smoking patterns fit your overall wellness.



If any of your numbers suggest risk, what questions do you have about how often these values need to be checked?





Monitoring Your Health for Your Overall Wellness Goal



Your Wellness Counts is a toolkit designed to help you monitor and promote your health so you can best achieve your Overall Wellness Goal. You can keep track of your own health indicators like weight, blood pressure, and glucose levels as part of taking charge of your health and wellness. *If you feel uncomfortable with monitoring these indicators, it may help to keep in mind your Overall Wellness Goal.*



As a result of keeping track of your health indicators, what may be the best thing that can happen in your life in a year? For example, how can monitoring your health indicators help you get closer to your Overall Wellness Goal?



What do you dislike the most about tracking your health indicators? How can you address this? For example, if you think it would take you a long time to see any progress, how can you reward yourself for small victories?

God is first and foremost in my life. He gives me purpose and something to look forward to. He wants me fit.
I believe I need to do my part.



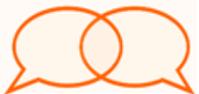
Regular Monitoring of Your Health Indicators Can Promote Wellness

In the *Your Wellness Counts* module, *Wellness Your Way*, you learned about psychiatric medications, especially antipsychotic medication. Specifically, you explored how medication fits in your life and how to consider the benefits and the risks of the medications you take. You may wish to keep these points in mind:

- ✎ If your medications help you stay healthy, we recommend that you include them in your plan. Being active in making decisions about your medications can be important to your success.
- ✎ If you're concerned about Metabolic Syndrome, you can help safeguard your health by making changes to the way you eat, move, and smoke/use tobacco.
- ✎ Discuss a recovery plan that goes at your pace, and works toward your Overall Wellness Goal.
- ✎ Once you create a goal and a plan, you can monitor your health using the same measurements that your doctor or nurse uses to help you prevent or manage Metabolic Syndrome.



Every now and then, use the “Wellness Motivation Self-Assessment” (**on page 12**) to help you keep track of what matters to you and *what you will do* to improve your health and your overall wellness.



Talk with someone on your recovery team about how to integrate *monitoring of your health indicators* into any of these existing recovery and wellness plan(s):

- Wellness Recovery Action Plan – How can it be included in your Wellness Toolbox or Daily Maintenance Plan?
- Illness Management and Recovery - How does it help you achieve your identified Recovery Goal?
- Recovery/Treatment/Service Plan – How can it be a measurable objective in any one of your current recovery areas?





Wellness Motivation Self-Assessment

For each of the health behaviors below, circle the best number or response that applies to you.

Health Behavior	How <u>important</u> is this to you now?	How <u>confident</u> are you that you can do this now?	Next step?
Eating Better	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not important Most important	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not confident Most confident	Yes No
Moving More	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not important Most important	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not confident Most confident	Yes No
Deciding about Smoking	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not important Most important	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not confident Most confident	Yes No



Your motivation to address different health areas can change frequently. What type of health behaviors are you most ready to address now? What are your most important reasons? What qualities, skills and resources do you currently have that can help you succeed?





Who Can Help You Maintain and Monitor Your Wellness?



It can be helpful to have the support of people that they see every day when you are trying to make changes. For you, a support person could be a family member who will take a walk with you, a friend who will help you shop for healthier foods, or a partner who agrees not to smoke around you.

People on your recovery team can help too, including your doctors, nurses, and counselors. All of these people want to support you in your efforts to improve and maintain your health. More and more people who work in behavioral health (mental health and substance use) are learning about how important it is for people to take control of their overall wellness.

Your overall wellness includes continuing to learn about and practice shared decision making. It also means making healthier choices about your nutrition, physical activity, and smoking. Reminding yourself of your Overall Wellness Goal can help you stay motivated and take the steps to be healthy and well.

As you boldly move forward, ***remember you have support. You're not alone.***



YOU

Think of the most important people who have supported you throughout **Your Wellness Counts** – your recovery team of peers, family, friends, and your professional supporters. What do you want to tell them about the best way to continue to support you in improving your overall wellness?



The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.
– Abraham Lincoln



How to Integrate Wellness Strategies with Current Treatment

1. Identify your *top three wellness strategies* that you have identified when working through Your Wellness Counts.

2. Think about how your current treatment might help you as you try to be well. Consider what might get in the way.

3. What is the most important thing to discuss with your health care providers and recovery team as you move forward?

4. Now that you have finished Your Wellness Counts, what are your next steps in getting and staying well?



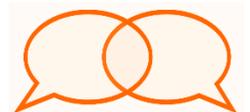


Congratulations!

If you're reading this sentence, you've achieved quite a lot since starting **Your Wellness Counts**.

You probably have accomplished these steps:

- Defined wellness and how to build on wellness strategies.
- Identified your most meaningful Overall Wellness Goal.
- Just learned how you can share decision making about your treatment so you can be your best self.
- Gained knowledge and taken steps to improve your physical health by:
 - Eating Better
 - Moving More and/or
 - Deciding about Smoking
- Planned how to track your health indicators to show progress in preventing or managing Metabolic Syndrome.
- Most of all, you realized that you are the **#1** person responsible! You are the one who can make choices so you can improve your physical health and overall wellness to achieve your life goals.



Wellness means overall quality of life.
Your wellness counts.
So, *count on yourself* to improve yours!



Your Wellness Counts...
As you continue to improve your physical and overall wellness,
what meaningful life goals can you achieve?

Remember, you can always go back to any of the modules!

Before ending, use this space for any notes or reflections you have about Your Wellness Counts.



(your name)

has successfully completed



and is thankful for the support of...

(key people who support you)

and is proud to have achieved...

(your proudest accomplishment related to **Your Wellness Counts**)

(date)

Wellness Every Day – Resources and References



- Listed in order of topics mentioned in this module
- Reference or resource with asterisk*= mentioned previously on page

For information on your local recovery and self-help center:

1. *http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home/hotlines/Recovery_and_Self_Help_Ctrs.pdf

A sample sheet to track your health indicators:

2. *http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/forms/Miscellaneous/Metabolic_Synd_Track_Form.pdf

New Jersey

- The Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey Wellness Institute: <http://www.cspnj.org> (click on “services” and also on “resources”)
- Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/initiatives/wellness/>

National

- Center on Integrated Health Care and Self-directed Recovery: <http://www.center4healthandsdc.org/integrated-health--mental-health.html>
- Million Hearts Initiative: <http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/index.html>
- National Association for Mental Illness: <http://www.naminj.org/programs/hearts-minds/>
- Wellness Initiative of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: <http://www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative>

