



Share the Wellness Tip

May 31, 2013

Power up for Healthy Living Help

When it comes to a healthy lifestyle, technology gets a bad rap. It's true that spending too many hours glued to a computer or TV screen can lead to weight gain. But used wisely, technology can power up your motivation to make positive changes.

Here's how:

- Portable media players can almost double as personal trainers. Your playlist of high-energy tunes is just the start. There are also free, downloadable programs that talk you through a workout, step by step.
- The National Institutes of Health offers interactive health tutorials where you can learn about disease management, surgeries, prevention and wellness.
- Smartphone apps are available to help with a variety of health challenges. One notable example: The VA's National Center for PTSD has created a free app called PTSD Coach, which helps you learn about and manage the symptoms that often occur after a trauma.
- Text messages can help you stay on track with healthy changes. In one large study, smokers trying to quit were more likely to succeed when they received automated texts of motivational messages.
- Online support groups let you connect with others, anywhere, anytime. Web discussion boards and email lists are great for sharing emotional support. But don't rely on them for medical information. Talk to your doctor when you need medical advice.

As great as technology can be, you still need some down time. The artificial light from TV and computer screens may cause us to miss out on deep, restorative sleep. Try turning off your TV and computer at least one hour before you go to sleep. And put your cellphone away from where you are sleeping.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas has online and mobile technologies to help you find the information and resources you need. To learn more visit our website bcbstx.com.

Sources: [Medlineplus](#); [The New York Times, Sept. 10, 2012](#)

