Health and Wellness Guide for Students
What is **Wellness**?

Wellness is an active, lifelong process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life. Many factors can influence your health and well-being, in fact there are 7 different, interacting dimensions of health and wellness.

**The 7 dimensions are:**

- **Physical Wellness** – Taking care of your body
- **Emotional Wellness** – Taking care of your mind
- **Social and Cultural Wellness** – Taking care of your relationships and society
- **Career and Academic Wellness** – Taking care of your future goals
- **Spiritual Wellness** – Taking care of your values and beliefs
- **Financial Wellness** – Taking care of your finances
- **Environmental Wellness** – Taking care of what’s around you
Physical Wellness

- Being active safely and regularly
- Staying hydrated with 8 cups of water a day
- Using birth control and protecting against STIs
- Performing Breast Self-Exams and Testicular Self-Exams
- Sleeping 7-8 hours a night
- Managing stress effectively
- Avoiding drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Eating nutritious foods that help your body stay active and balanced

Strategies to enhance Physical Wellness:

Find time in a busy schedule to work out and be active

- Take the stairs, or go to the coffee shop across campus. These small changes add up!
- Sign up for a fitness class on campus that you can attend before or after class
- Schedule an activity with a friend so you can support each other in being active

Be clear about safer sex

- Communicate with your partner if you have questions or concerns
- Meet with a Health Care Provider on campus to talk one-on-one in a safe environment
- Look for resources online to help answer your questions – all questions are good questions!

Maintain healthy eating habits

- Compare your intake against Canada’s Food Guide to help you stay on track
- Eat a balanced breakfast daily to fuel your body and mind!
- Remember the 80–20 rule, following healthy eating guidelines 80% of the time but allow yourself a treat for the other 20%

On Campus Resources:

HCS Physiotherapy  http://students.sfu.ca/health/physiotherapy/index.html
SFU Recreation  http://www.sfu.ca/recreation/
HCS Health Clinic  http://students.sfu.ca/health/healthclinics/index.html
HCS Health Promotion  http://students.sfu.ca/health/healthpromotion/index.html
SFU Recreation at Surrey  http://www.surrey.sfu.ca/campus_services/recreation.html
Emotional Wellness

- Accepting yourself for who you are
- Valuing self-exploration and improvement
- Having a generally positive outlook
- Being able to ask for help
- Having personal boundaries and not over-extending yourself
- Recognizing and managing different stressors

Strategies to enhance Emotional Wellness:

**Learn how to manage a busy schedule**
- Focus on the present moment and what can be controlled, such as your breathing
- Practice five or ten minutes of mindfulness meditation each day
- Strive for balance by making time for things you enjoy and family & friends

**Keep your self-esteem high**
- Talk yourself up! Make a list in your mind or on paper of all your positive qualities and accomplishments
- Volunteer for something you care about and share your skills and knowledge with others
- Surround yourself with supportive and caring friends

**Learn how to deal with worries about exams, relationships, work or unexpected hurdles in your life**
- Increase your physical activity. Whether its running, yoga or tennis with a friend, being active will help you manage those stressful moments
- Remember that attitude is everything! Check your perspective and focus on positive thoughts
- Ask for help when you need it. There are many people and resources on campus that can help

On Campus Resources

HCS Counselling  [http://students.sfu.ca/health/counselling/index.html](http://students.sfu.ca/health/counselling/index.html)
HCS Health Promotion  [http://students.sfu.ca/health/healthpromotion/index.html](http://students.sfu.ca/health/healthpromotion/index.html)
SFU Recreation  [http://www.sfu.ca/recreation/](http://www.sfu.ca/recreation/)
Social & Cultural Wellness

- Developing and maintaining healthy relationships with family, friends and romantic partners
- Respecting cultural identities of other individuals
- Budgeting time to spend with loved ones
- Feeling confident and content whether in a romantic relationship or not
- Feeling confident and content spending time alone or with others
- Managing unhealthy relationships in an effective way

Strategies to enhance Social and Cultural Wellness:

**Be willing to meet new people and make new friends**

- Be assertive but friendly by smiling, introducing yourself and being open to meeting others in all kinds of places
- Sign up for courses or activities on campus which genuinely interest you
- Take up offers that come your way and look for new experiences. Unfamiliar situations can be an opportunity for personal growth and meeting new people

**Manage challenging relationships with friends, colleagues, romantic partners or family members**

- Be yourself and respect your own thoughts and feelings
- Practice communicating using “I” statements and being clear about your needs
- Try to resolve conflicts through compromise. Look at the other person’s perspective and respect their point of view

**Overcome culture shock either as a new student in Canada or a Canadian student going abroad**

- Do some research on your host country so you are well prepared
- Spend time with local citizens, they can help you learn the subtleties of your host country or language
- Be open-minded and stay active, look for opportunities to try new things

On Campus Resources

Student Development and Programming  [http://www.sfu.ca/studentlife/](http://www.sfu.ca/studentlife/)
International Mentorship Program  [http://www.sfu.ca/international/get_involved/](http://www.sfu.ca/international/get_involved/)
Women’s Centre  [http://www.sfu.ca/womenscentre/](http://www.sfu.ca/womenscentre/)
Out on Campus  [http://www.sfu.ca/out-on-campus/](http://www.sfu.ca/out-on-campus/)
Peer Programs  [http://students.sfu.ca/peerprograms/index.html](http://students.sfu.ca/peerprograms/index.html)
First Nations Student Centre  [http://students.sfu.ca/firstnations/](http://students.sfu.ca/firstnations/)
Careers & Academic Wellness

- Having a well developed sense of self and goals to work towards
- Meeting academic and career goals in a healthy way
- Challenging yourself to new life experiences
- Having friends and peers who share similar goals and support one another in achieving those goals

Strategies to enhance Career and Academic Wellness:

Manage anxiety before exams
- Schedule your study time in advance rather than cramming the night before
- Be physically and mentally balanced prior to exams by eating nutritious foods, getting enough sleep and being active
- Work hard before the exam but plan to reward yourself after by meeting up with friends, going for a walk or taking a relaxing bath

Try to maintain work-life balance
- Make sleep a priority
- Make time for friends, family and participate in activities you enjoy
- Eat healthier foods and be active each day. Taking time to look after your physical self will improve all other dimensions of your personal well-being

Find a sense of direction and motivation for life after university
- Create a list of goals for yourself which are positive, meaningful, realistic and specific
- Reflect on your passions in life. What ideas excite and motivate you? Pursue your passion, while being flexible and open to change
- Do your research! Use the internet, Career Services on campus and networking with new people to help chart your course

On Campus Resources
Career Services http://www.sfu.ca/career/
Co-op Education http://www.sfu.ca/coop/
Financial Services http://www.sfu.ca/finance/
Student Learning Commons http://learningcommons.sfu.ca/
Academic Advising http://students.sfu.ca/advising/academic/
Human Resources Student Temporary Pool http://www.sfu.ca/hr/temp-services-index.html
Spiritual Wellness

- Having an overall sense of peace and well-being
- Developing strategies to manage stress and anxiety
- Understanding your own values, ethics and beliefs and respecting the values, ethics and beliefs of other people
- Understanding that spirituality is a personal experience

Strategies to enhance Spiritual Wellness:

Manage stress and anxiety through mindfulness

- Focus on the present moment and your physical and mental experience in that moment
- Be aware of your breathing and concentrate on the breath itself as it moves in and out
- Look for opportunities to practice mindfulness throughout the day, like waiting for the bus or during TV commercials

Reflect on your own values and beliefs, and learn how you can be spiritually aware

- Participate in activities that connect the mind and body such as yoga and Tai Chi
- Follow your creative impulses and act on them. For example you can write a journal, paint or draw, write poetry, listen to or create music
- Give back by volunteering, connecting with new people, gardening or looking after a pet

Respect the beliefs and values of others

- Know your own beliefs and values first by reflecting on yourself
- Ask questions in a respectful and open-minded way
- Practice compassion if you meet others whose values differ from your own

On Campus Resources

Interfaith Centre  http://students.sfu.ca/interfaith/
Yoga and Tai Chi Fitness classes  http://www.sfu.ca/recreation/programs/health/index.html
Human Rights Office  http://www.sfu.ca/hro/
First Nations Student Centre  http://students.sfu.ca/firstnations/
Environmental Wellness

- Being aware of the impact of your own decisions on the environment and on others
- Working with the community to make improvements
- Taking personal responsibility for your actions
- Being aware of risks in various settings, i.e., going out at night, drinking at bars or clubs, traveling to new places

Strategies to enhance Environmental Wellness:

Be cautious about your personal security when drinking and out with friends
- Be aware of who is around you and leave with the same people you came with
- Buy your own drinks and keep your drink in hand at all times
- Keep condoms and other contraception with you when you go out

Live an eco-friendly lifestyle on a daily basis
- Use your U-Pass and leave your car at home when you can
- Participate in a community garden project
- Print less, try reading online or sharing reading materials with classmates

Eat locally produced food
- Ask campus food suppliers to offer local food selections
- Look for farmer’s markets around the Lower Mainland
- Bring B.C. beers and wines to parties as an alternative to imported products

On Campus Resources
Campus Security  http://www.sfu.ca/security/
Sustainable SFU  http://www.sfu.ca/~sustain/
UniverCity  http://www.univercity.ca/
Financial Wellness

• Living within your current means
• Developing long term and short term financial goals
• Budgeting effectively to reduce stress associated with debt

Strategies to enhance Financial Wellness:

Avoid student debt while attending university
• Use your debit card rather than a credit card for making purchases
• Take the time to seek out free money in the form of bursaries or awards. These can be external to the university so do the research on and off campus
• Set a limit for yourself for entertainment each week and budget for one night out instead of two or three

Eat nutritiously on a budget
• Take your lunch, snacks and drinks with you to school or work
• Shop the four food groups:
  Grains – Buy day old high fiber breads, they can always be kept frozen
  Vegetables & Fruit – Local, seasonal veggies & fruit are usually cheaper, but canned and frozen are a nutritious alternative
  Milk & Alternatives – Buy yogurt in large containers rather than individual portions
  Meat & Alternatives – Tofu, beans and lentils are fabulous sources of protein and cost a fraction of the price of some meat!

On Campus Resources
Financial Services  http://www.sfu.ca/finance/
Bursary and Scholarship Information
http://students.sfu.ca/financialaid/index.html