



LIFELINK

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Exercise, Nutrition and Sleep Key to Resilient Sailors

By David Greene

Section Leader, Navy Physical Readiness Program Office

Exercise, good nutrition and quality sleep are essential components to develop healthy and resilient Sailors. The Navy's Culture of Excellence is built around Sailors, and physical readiness is a vital component. At the Navy Physical Readiness Program, our mission is to instill a culture of fitness that assists Sailors in developing their ability to complete tasks that support the mission and operational readiness.

It can be tough for Sailors to balance physical fitness, optimal sleep and good nutrition with the demands of Navy life. Operational tempo and workload present unique but manageable challenges. We rely on leaders at all levels to set the example for physical readiness. When the Command's Triad and deckplate leaders support physical fitness and lead by example, it carries over to the whole team.

I was a Command Fitness Leader (CFL) earlier in my career. When I deployed, my Triad was very supportive of our fitness efforts, and that translated to better readiness. We had fitness challenges where people could earn rewards, like time off, for good performance. We had gyms available, and we would even run around the flight deck during non-flight operations. We made it happen, but it wouldn't have been easy without the support and example of our leadership. If you're looking for ideas on exercising with limited space or equipment, check out this [post](#) on the NavyNavStress blog.

There are many resources available to assist Sailors with their physical readiness. Our [website](#) is a good place to start. We have links to a variety of nutrition resources, information for CFLs, and a video library of Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) exercises.

On the [Navy Nutrition website](#), you can find resources on creating an environment that supports healthy food choices, as well as learn how to locate a Navy Registered Dietitian (RD.) The



U.S. Navy Courtesy Photo

[Navy Fitness, Sports and Deployed Forces Support website](#) also has information on the Navy Fitness Program and resources to take care of Sailors serving at sea or in remote areas. The Navy also recently announced [an initiative](#) to provide RDs to units throughout the fleet. This initiative makes RDs available on Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) status to provide education on performance nutrition, healthy eating habits, hydration and safe supplement use.

Sleep is the under-rated key to physical readiness, and it can sometimes seem like a low priority. However, the 2011 DoD Health Behaviors Survey showed that getting less than seven hours of sleep per night increased the risk for a myriad of psychological health issues, like depression, anxiety and suicide risk. Sleep is a critical factor for resilience and readiness. [Crew Endurance](#), developed by the Naval Postgraduate School offers practical tips, research and operational tools for promoting adequate rest.

A Culture of Excellence means always improving and always striving to be the best of the best. By prioritizing physical readiness at all leadership levels, we can build resilient Sailors who exemplify that culture.



Lifelink Spotlight

Navy Recruiter Saves Lives through Social Media



U.S. Navy Courtesy Photo

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Zachary S. Eshleman, Navy Recruiting Command

In a digital world filled with “internet trolls” and “keyboard warriors,” one Navy chief petty officer is striving to be a light in the darkness. Chief Navy Counselor Grant Khanbalinov has chosen to reach out and be a lifeline for people he has never met.

Khanbalinov currently works as the national social media trainer at Navy Recruiting Command, where he teaches recruiters how to best use social media. However, his savvy was put to the test when he was scanning Reddit recently. He spotted a post from a Sailor describing how he was going to die by suicide after his ship got underway. Khanbalinov said there was no time to waste. Judging by the wording, this person was going to die if no one stepped in. “My first thought was just ‘we need to find this guy,’ if it’s not too late already,” he said. But this wasn’t a simple task.

Reddit is anonymous, so solving the problem took creativity. Khanbalinov looked at all the posts this person had made, and deduced how long the Sailor had been in the Navy, their rank and the type of ship they were stationed on. Then he contacted Navy Personnel Command, and based on these and other factors, put together a list of possible ships. He contacted the Chiefs Mess on each ship, and within five hours of the initial post, the Sailor was located and received the care he needed.

The Navy has many resources for Sailors who struggle with mental health concerns, but if someone were to ask Khanbalinov, he would tell them that talking to people, whether online or face-to-face, is the most effective thing you can do to help.

“We are all in this together, and I try to remind people the important thing is that ‘you’re not alone,’” said Khanbalinov. “We take care of each other and that’s just what I’m doing.”

Plan of the Week Notes

Below are sample Plan of the Week notes aligning with topics covered by the *Every Sailor, Every Day* campaign during the month of November

1. November is Warrior Care Month, and a time to celebrate the strength and resilience of our wounded, ill, and injured service members, as well as their families and caregivers; raise awareness of the warrior care resources and programs available today; and inspire year-round discourse regarding today’s warrior care priorities. For more information, see the Military Health System (MHS) website at <https://go.usa.gov/xVeey>.
2. Navy Family eLearning is now available, and contains the Navy Family eHandbook, the Navy Spouse eLibrary, New Spouse Orientation, Live Well Resiliency Webinars and more. For access go to learning.zeiders.com and create an account. If you would just like to access the Navy Family eHandbook, simply click on the Family Login button.
3. Sailors balance demanding jobs where mission readiness is key. For Sailors who choose to drink, being able to set personal drinking limits based on risks of drinking too much is an important way to maintain mission readiness. Own Your Limits is a Department of Defense (DoD) educational campaign that helps Service members learn how to drink responsibly, if they choose to drink alcohol. Resources for Service members and for professionals who educate, support or work with Service members are available at <https://www.ownyourlimits.org/>.
4. Quitting smoking isn’t easy. It takes time. And a plan. You don’t have to stop smoking in one day. The Great American Smokeout on Nov. 21 can be your day to start a journey toward a smoke-free life. Join thousands of people across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life and reducing your cancer risk. The American Cancer Society (ACS) has the resources and support you need to quit at <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout.html>.
5. The holidays can be a time of joy and also a time of stress. Emotions tend to run higher during the holidays, and family gatherings can turn from a time of thanksgiving to a time of anxiety. Check out these tips from the NavyNavStress blog to keep arguments from spoiling your holiday meals. <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2016/12/20/dont-let-arguments-spoil-your-holiday-meal/>

News and Resources

Finding Comfort and Joy in Family Tradition
[NavyNavStress](#)

Firearms and Suicide
[American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

Suicide Prediction Models in the Military Health System
[Psychological Health Center of Excellence](#)

Warrior Care Month: Show of Strength
[Health.mil](#)

Public Messages on Preventing Suicide
[SAMHSA](#)

How Digital Innovation Can Boost Suicide Prevention Efforts
[Psychological Health Center of Excellence](#)

Keep Money Troubles from Becoming Relationship Troubles
[Human Performance Resources by Champ](#)

Treatment Options for Sleep Conditions
[Real Warriors](#)

Group Workouts Boost Team Camaraderie
[Human Performance Resources by Champ](#)

Current and Upcoming Events

SPC Training Webinars

November 7, 6PM CDT
December 5, 10AM CDT
January 9, 2020, 8AM CDT
[Register here](#)

Military Family Appreciation Month
November

Great American Smoke Out
Nov. 21

Survivors of Suicide Loss Day
Nov. 23

The Great American Smokeout is Nov. 21: Take the First Step to a Healthier Future

By Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence (N170D)

November 21 is this year's **Great American Smokeout**, when at least half American smokers will try to quit. Habits are hard to break, and quitting smoking is a process. E-cigarettes are often marketed as smoking cessation tools, but they are not recommended and have not been shown to increase success. With high levels of nicotine and other

chemicals, using them to quit only adds a new addiction and quitting challenge. Research indicates that success with quitting is most likely if you take the following steps:

- 1. Prepare mentally beforehand.** Nicotine is an addictive chemical, and quitting smoking is likely to cause uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms. Fortunately, they come on quickly and begin to subside within just a few days. Keep in mind that only about 30 percent of people who try to quit remain smoke-free for two days, so if you can get to day three, you will be well on your way to success.
- 2. Get support from friends, family and professionals.** Prepare yourself and those around you for mood swings, irritability, trouble concentrating and sleepiness. Ask friends and family to be patient and encouraging during this time. Counseling helps, too. Treat yourself when you overcome that initial withdrawal phase!
- 3. Adopt new habits and skills to cope without cigarettes.** Think about when you smoke: When you wake up? After eating? When stressed? While drinking coffee or alcohol? Before your quit date, try not smoking during these triggering situations. Experiment with new coping skills like chewing gum or sucking on a mint instead. Finding something to do with your hands, like holding a stress ball, fidget cube or rubber band can also help distract you.
- 4. Take medication or use nicotine replacement therapy to help ease withdrawal symptoms.** There are many medications that can reduce your urge to smoke, including Chantix and the antidepressant bupropion. Other options include nicotine replacement therapies like gums, nasal spray, patches, lozenges and a prescription inhaler, used similarly to a cigarette.
- 5. Prepare for setbacks.** If you have a cigarette, don't give up and let it turn into a relapse. Use this slip as a learning opportunity; review the situation and plan to deal with temptation differently when it happens in the future. Remember: Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health and the health of those around you. It's worth the effort, and you can do it!

Benefits of Quitting

Quitting smoking decreases risk of cancers, heart attacks, emphysema, stroke and health harms to family. It increases lifespan by more than a decade, decreases premature aging and pregnancy risks and can save you at least \$1,500 annually. Nearly 70 percent of smokers want to quit, but it could take multiple tries before successfully quitting. Following the steps outlined above can help with quitting for good. For more smoking cessation information and tips, visit [You Can Quit 2](#) or [smokefree.gov](#).

