

Wellness

FIRST MUTUAL
HEALTH

APRIL 2021

Maintaining a Healthy Digital Life

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Boosting the Immune System
COVID-19 Vaccine Q&As



It is reported that businesses have increasingly relied on technology in the past few decades, from email communication to storing large files on the cloud. There's no denying the increased efficiency generated by harnessing the power of the internet, but at the same time, that means employees are more likely to spend their time on computers and phones for the majority of the work day. One survey found that the average screen time of an office worker is 6.5 hours per day. Only about half the respondents admitted to taking breaks, and the other half claimed to experience eye soreness regularly. Combined with the statistics of mental health issues developed from prolonged use, it's a recipe for a constantly tired and stressed workforce.

When the COVID-19 lockdown was first announced last year in March 2020, what became inevitable was the use of technology in keeping us connected with family and friends as well as conducting business. This was unavoidable due to lockdown restrictions to minimise the spread of the Coronavirus. People turned to their smartphones, laptops and tablets to find the connection, support and peace of mind they would need to survive the crisis - thank goodness for digital technology! Having said that however, social media, which is part of the digital technology, has been described as more addictive than cigarettes or alcohol and there are consequences associated with increased digital dependency. What follows below is a discussion on digital wellness to bring to light health related issues brought about by excessive use of digital technology:

What is Digital Wellness?

Digital wellness refers to the state of one's

physical and mental health in the Digital Age. More specifically, digital wellness refers to preventative measures aimed at regulating and improving the healthy use of technology. Reducing one's activity on Facebook or monitoring time spent on a smartphone are just two examples of improving one's digital wellness.

Why is Digital Wellness Important?

As technology evolves and our time is increasingly spent online, society must learn to adapt and overcome the dangers of digital dependence. Many tech companies stake their business on attracting and engaging users. That means designing irresistible experiences online, from addictive video games to endless social media feeds.

And it's no surprise that these new lifestyles are leading to anxiety, addiction, and depression. Most recently, major tech firms are under pressure to include new "digital wellness" features in their services. iOS 12 now has features to help users manage their phone use. Android P now has app timers to cut off use past a certain time limit. The digital wellness revolution has begun, and users must stay cognisant of their prolonged computer or phone use. Fortunately, there are a few tools that can help you get started such as:

- Moment App, a simple screen time tracker that monitors your phone usage down to the specific app you're using.
- Flipd App, a productivity and learning tool that will actually motivate you to stay present and focused by locking you out of your phone after you set it to "Flipd Off".
- QualityTime App, like plenty of the other productivity apps on this list, allows you to monitor your smartphone and app usage with an in-depth analysis of unlocks, number of

clicks, and total time used options.

Digital Wellness During COVID-19

2020 posed new challenges for almost everyone around the world. As work-life was upended, digital wellness became more relevant than ever before. Over a few months, people began to explore the various benefits of meditation, home exercises, healthier diets, and "digital detoxes". Here are just a few reasons why:

- Increased Anxiety and mental Health Issues
A Kaizer Family Foundation (KFF) Tracking Poll in March 2020 found that after the lockdown restrictions were issued, 47% of people confined to working from home reported negative mental health effects related to COVID-19. Loneliness, isolation, and the new normal brought about by the Coronavirus can all be viewed as causes for the added stress. Without digital wellness practices in place, these issues can only be exacerbated.
- Sedentary Lifestyle
Non activity accustomed to working in front of a computer can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, cancer, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, lipid disorders, and mental health issues. Especially at-risk are children who cannot attend school due to closures. Consider limiting screen time to take frequent breaks to stretch, run, lift, and move to maintain your physical health.
- Mobile Apps (Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, and Android)
Every monitor and phone screen emits blue light, which can be harmful to your body's

internal clock especially at night. During the day, blue light can be useful because it emulates sunlight. But at night, it can impact our sleep and cause eye strain. On some devices you can adjust the colour temperature of your computer or phone to adapt to the time of day. It's something you simply have to experience yourself to notice the difference.

Below are some tips to maintain a healthy digital life:

Practice Self Awareness

- Track your digital activity automatically. Take stock of how you actually spend your time online, and how much of that time you consented to spend. See how long you spend on devices, then decide what "unhealthy" attachment looks like.
- Know how and when you get distracted. It takes about 23 minutes to refocus after emails, phone calls, work apps and colleagues break your focus.
- Be kind to your posture. Keep your workspace ergonomically friendly, do active work and get off your chair once in a while.

Be More Intentional

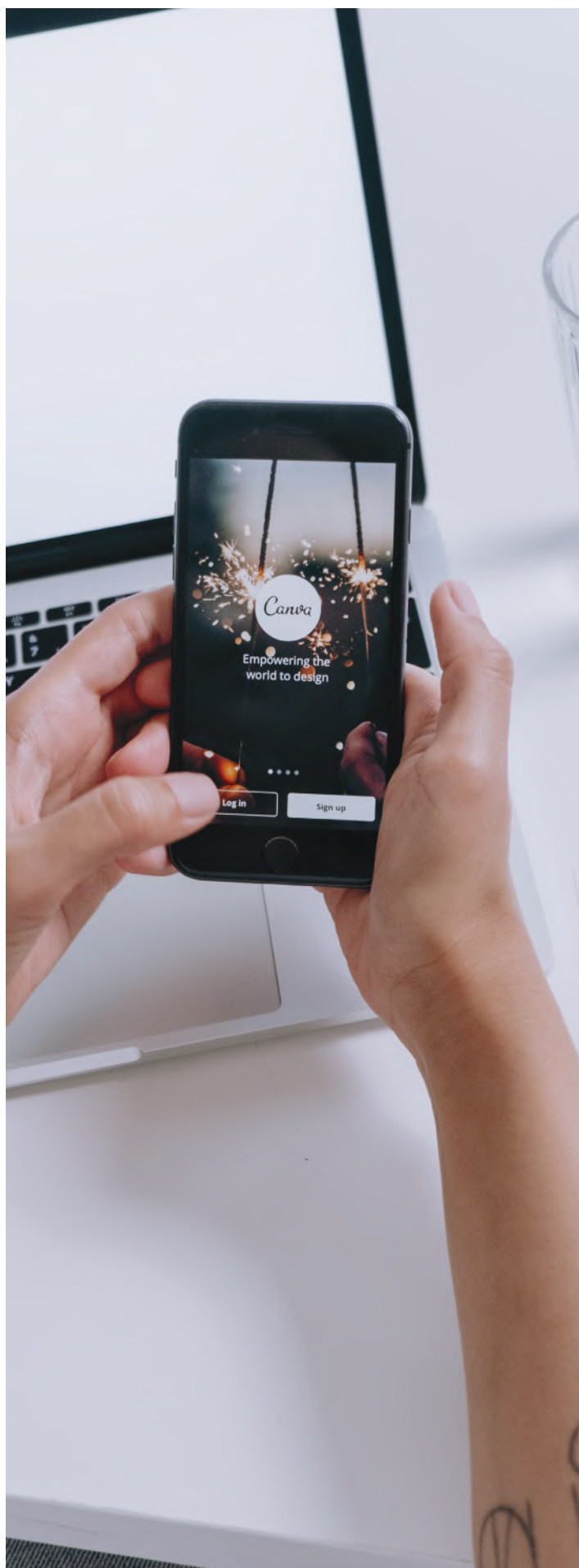
- Have a plan for each day. Know what you want to achieve to keep your digital activity accountable.
- Schedule frequent breaks. We need regular breaks to perform at our best scheduling them helps create boundaries between work and downtime.
- Do regular deep work. Focus on tasks that are genuinely important for extended periods without interruption. It is the most cognitively rewarding way to work going.
- Protect space for "offline" time. Look after your mental and physical health by disconnecting often.
- Try time blocking. This is a helpful way of scheduling your day and committing to one task at a time.

Be in Total Control

- Lay out rules for communication channels. Keep all contact meaningful and effective with a simple communications framework.
- Unsubscribe from email lists. Why are you still receiving boring sales updates from that conference you attended back in 2010?
- When you disconnect, disconnect fully. It is important to be fully present in your downtime and resist the urge to check email or answer slack messages.
- Decide when to let notifications in. Get familiar with how to set notifications preferences for all your apps – like "mute" or "snooze" and only turn them on when you are available to respond.
- Cull pointless apps. If they do not bring you value, stop using them.
- Choose digital tools carefully. Avoid cumbersome and invasive tools that constantly disrupt your focus. Prioritise apps that do one thing really well, instead of those that try and solve everything.

In summary, our increased digital dependency during or after the COVID-19 pandemic can benefit our wellbeing, rather than be a hazard to it!.

Source: [Digitalwellbeing.org/](https://digitalwellbeing.org/)
Healthy Regards



Download the app from your store today



A product of

FIRST MUTUAL

HEALTH

Go Beyond

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)



April is Autism Awareness Month, and April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day. World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) aims to put a spotlight on the hurdles that people with autism and others living with autism face every day. As a growing global health issue owing to its increasing exposure in the press and common knowledge, autism is an issue that is only gaining more understanding and WAAD activities are planned every year to further increase and develop world knowledge of children and adults who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD). It is against this background that we are sharing information related to autism in this newsletter edition.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) refers to a broad range of developmental challenges that affect lifelong social skills, repetitive behaviour, speech and non-verbal communication. Being autistic does not mean one has an illness or disease, it means that one's brain works differently from other people. Each person with ASD has a different set of strengths and challenges – the ways in which people with autism think, learn and solve problems can range from highly skilled to severely challenged. People with ASD often demonstrate restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped interests or patterns of behaviour. Some people with ASD may require significant support but others can live very independent lives. Several factors may influence the development of autism. Sensory sensitivities and medical issues such as gastrointestinal (GI) disorders, seizures or sleep disorders, as well as mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression and attention issues often accompany it.

Causes and risk factors of ASD

There are no known causes for ASD. The following environmental, biological and genetic factors contribute to a child more likely to have ASD:

- Children with siblings previously diagnosed with ASD.
- Most scientists agree that genes are one of the risk factors that can make a person more likely to develop ASD.
- Individuals with certain genetic or chromosomal conditions, such as fragile X syndrome or tuberous sclerosis, can have greater chance of having ASD.
- Prescription drugs such as valproic acid and thalidomide, taken during pregnancy, have been linked with a higher risk of ASD.
- Children born to older parents are at greater risk for having ASD.
- Low birth weight.
- Boys are about four times more likely to develop ASD than girls are.

Babies born before 26 weeks of gestation may have a greater risk of autism spectrum disorder.

Symptoms

ASD usually appears by the age of 2 or 3 though some development delays might appear even earlier and can be diagnosed as early as 18 months. People with ASD often have difficulties with emotional, social and communication skills. They might repeat certain behaviors and are not interested in changing their daily activities. People with ASD often have different ways of learning, paying attention or reaction to certain scenarios. Signs of ASD usually begin during early childhood and can last a lifetime. The following behaviours can be evidence that a person has ASD:

- Not looking at a person or objects when a person points them out.
- Trouble relating to others or not having an interest in other people.
- Avoiding eye contact and failure to read body language.
- Spending time alone as well as the inability to develop and maintain relationships.
- Failure to understand other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings.
- Avoiding physical touch and cuddle only when they want to.
- No smiling or social responsiveness
- Interested in people, but not know how to talk, play, or relate to them.
- Having difficulties with the back and forth of conversation
- Fixated interests or preoccupations.
- Excelling in certain subjects and areas.
- Appear unaware when people are talking to them but responds to sound around them.
- Unable to express their needs using typical words or motions.
- Lose skills they once had.
- Have trouble adapting to changes in their routine.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis for ASD can be difficult because there is no known medical test to diagnose the disorder. Doctors look at the child's behaviour, development and communication skills to make an ASD diagnosis. The evaluation will assess language abilities, cognitive level and age appropriate skills (eating, dressing and toilet use). An experienced professional is able to diagnose a child at age 2 though some children do not receive a diagnosis until they are much older and this delay may have an impact on the child because they might not receive the help and assistance they need.

Treatment

There is currently no treatment for ASD but there are therapies and other treatments can assist one feel better or alleviate their symptoms such as applied behaviour analysis, social skills training, occupational therapy, physical therapy, sensory integration therapy, and the use of assistive technology. There is no medication that can cure autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or all of its symptoms. However, some medications can help treat certain symptoms associated with ASD, especially certain behaviours. Healthcare providers often use medications to deal with a specific behaviour, such as to reduce self-injury or aggression. Minimising a symptom so that it is no longer a problem allows the person with autism to focus on other things, including learning and communication. Research shows that medication is most effective when used in combination with behavioural therapies

Early diagnosis can improve the child's development if they get the assistance that they need. The child can be sent to doctors who specialise in behavioural, psychological, educational, or skill-building interventions. The child can be assisted with talking, walking, social skills as well as speech therapy for those encountering language delays.

Source: Mayo Clinic



***DIAL
712#
TODAY!***

**A medical aid
plan that
has everyone
covered.**

ZWL100/PER MONTH



**ACCESS TO GENERAL PRACTITIONERS
AND MEDICATION FROM SELECTED PHARMACIES**



ACCESS TO ALL PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES



FREE ZW\$15000 FUNERAL COVER

Dial *712# to sign up today or call us on toll free: 08677007432

FIRST MUTUAL HEALTH

Tel: +263 (242) 886018 – 36, 886040 - 43
+263 (292) 880651-4

E-mail: info@firstmutualhealth.co.zw

Website: www.firstmutualhealth.co.zw

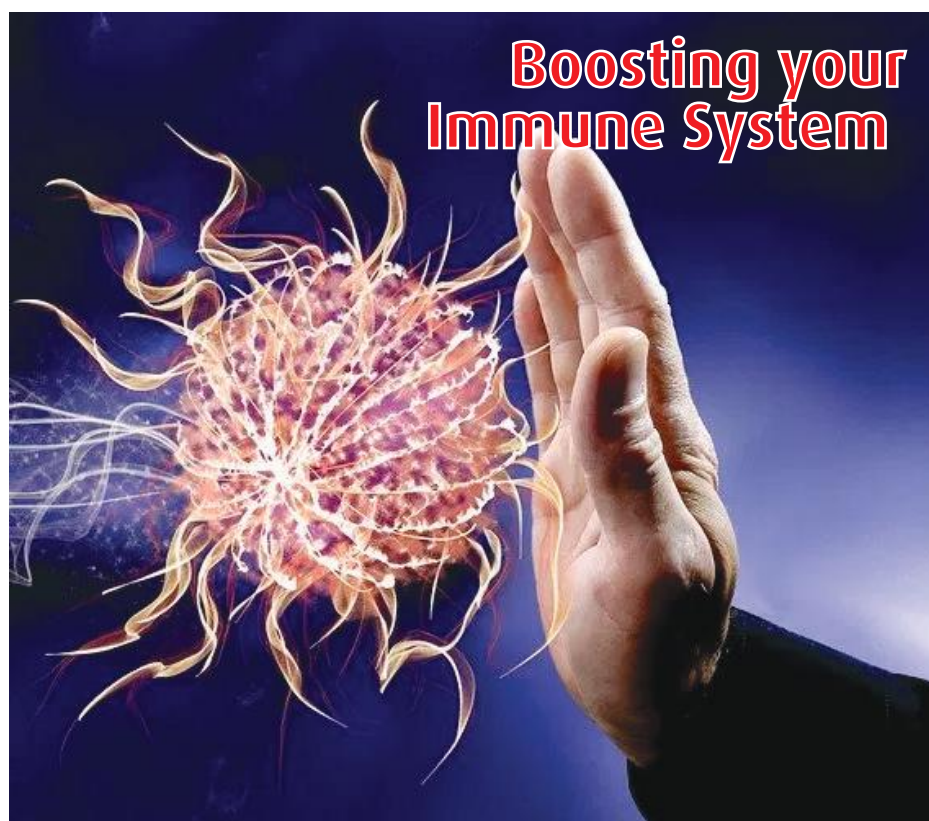
+263 778 917 309

A product of

FIRST MUTUAL

HEALTH

Go Beyond



Improve your Immune System

How can you improve your immune system? On the whole, your immune system does a remarkable job of defending you against disease-causing microorganisms, but sometimes it fails. A germ invades successfully and makes you sick. Is it possible to intervene in this process and boost your immune system? What if you improve your diet? Take certain vitamins or herbal preparations? Make other lifestyle changes in the hope of producing a near-perfect immune response?

What can you do to boost your immune system?

The idea of boosting your immunity is enticing, but the ability to do so has proved elusive for several reasons. The immune system is precisely that — a system, not a single entity. To function well, it requires balance and harmony. There is still much that researchers don't know about the intricacies and inter connectedness of the immune response. For now, there are no scientifically proven direct links between lifestyle and enhanced immune function.

This doesn't mean the effects of lifestyle on the immune system aren't intriguing and shouldn't be studied. Researchers are exploring the effects of diet, exercise, age, psychological stress, and other factors on the immune response, both in animals and in humans. In the meantime, general healthy-living strategies make sense since they likely help immune function and they come with other proven health benefits.

Healthy ways to strengthen your immune system

Your first line of defence is to choose a

healthy lifestyle. Following general good-health guidelines is the single best step you can take toward naturally keeping your immune system working properly. Every part of your body, including your immune system, functions better when protected from environmental assaults and bolstered by healthy-living strategies such as these:

- Don't smoke.
- Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables.
- Exercise regularly.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation.
- Get adequate sleep.
- Take steps to avoid infection, such as washing your hands frequently and cooking meats thoroughly.
- Try to minimise stress.
- Keep current with all recommended vaccines.
- Vaccines prime your immune system to fight off infections before they take hold in your body.

Increase immunity the healthy way

Many products on store shelves claim to boost or support immunity, but the concept of boosting immunity actually makes little sense scientifically. In fact, boosting the number of cells in your body — immune cells or others — is not necessarily a good thing. For example, athletes who engage in "blood doping" — pumping blood into their systems to boost their number of blood cells and enhance their performance — run the risk of strokes.

Attempting to boost the cells of your immune system is especially complicated because there are so many different kinds of cells in the immune system that respond to so many different microbes in so many ways. Which cells should you boost, and to what number? So far,

scientists do not know the answer. What is known is that the body is continually generating immune cells. Certainly, it produces many more lymphocytes than it can possibly use. The extra cells remove themselves through a natural process of cell death called apoptosis — some before they see any action, some after the battle is won. No one knows how many cells or what the best mix of cells the immune system needs to function at its optimum level.

Immune system and age

As we age, our immune response capability becomes reduced, which in turn contributes to more infections. While some people age healthily, the conclusion of many studies is that, compared with younger people, the elderly are more likely to contract infectious diseases and, even more importantly, more likely to die from them. Respiratory infections, including, influenza, the COVID-19 virus and particularly pneumonia are a leading cause of death in people over 65 worldwide. No one knows for sure why this happens, but some scientists observe that this increased risk correlates with a decrease in T cells (a type of white blood cells). Others are interested in whether the bone marrow becomes less efficient at producing the stem cells that give rise to the cells of the immune system.

A reduction in immune response to infections has been demonstrated by older people's response to vaccines. For example, studies of influenza vaccines have shown that for people over age 65, the vaccine is less effective compared to healthy children (over age 2). Despite the reduction in efficacy, vaccinations for illnesses such as influenza have significantly lowered the rates of sickness and death in older people when compared with no vaccination.

There appears to be a connection between nutrition and immunity in the elderly. A form of malnutrition that is surprisingly common even in affluent countries is known as "micronutrient malnutrition," in which a person is deficient in some essential vitamins and trace minerals that are obtained from or supplemented by diet, can happen in the elderly. Older people tend to eat less and often have less variety in their diets. One important question is whether dietary supplements may help older people maintain a healthier immune system. Older people should discuss this question with their doctor.

Exercise: Good or bad for immunity?

Regular exercise is one of the pillars of healthy living. It improves cardiovascular health, lowers blood pressure, helps control body weight, and protects against a variety of diseases, but does it help to boost your immune system naturally and keep it healthy? Just like a healthy diet, exercise can contribute to general good health and therefore to a healthy immune system.

Source: medicalnewstoday.com



 WhatsApp 0778917309

FITNESS TRAINING

#LetsGetMoving

powered by

FIRST MUTUAL
HEALTH
Get Beyond

Wednesdays 17:30hrs

Saturdays 07:00hrs

Venue: Bulawayo Music Academy

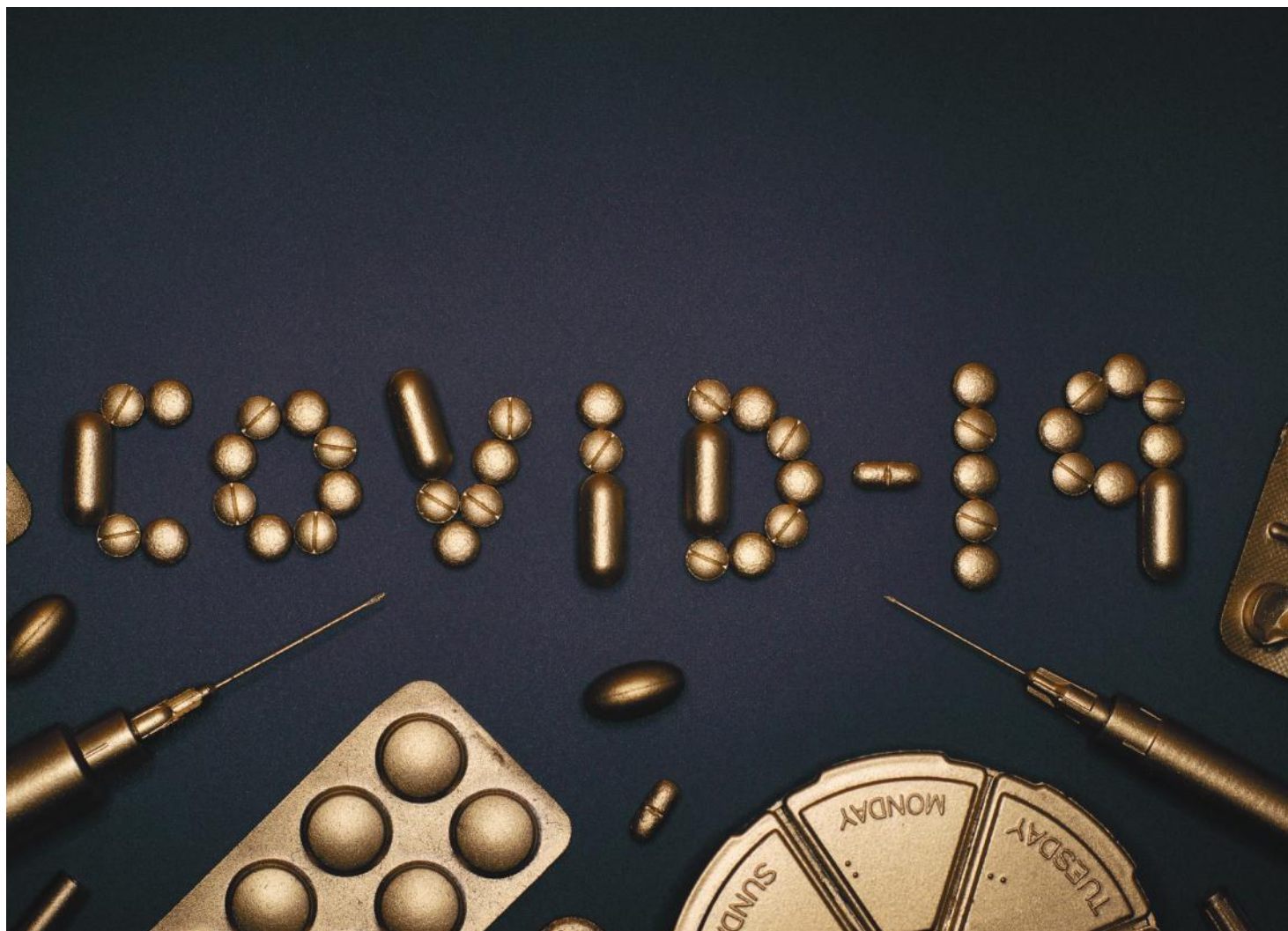
**It's always a good idea to
train! Join the 1stCARE
Fitness Class in Bulawayo!**



Follow us @firstmutualhealth



Follow us @FMH_Health



Can a person presently having COVID-19 (confirmed or suspected) infection be vaccinated? Person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection may increase the risk of spreading the same to others at vaccination site. For this reason, infected individuals should defer vaccination for 14 days after symptoms resolution.

Do you have any immunity after first COVID-19 vaccine?

People get some immunity after the first dose. During clinical trials for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, researchers reported that the first dose was about 50% effective at providing protection from COVID-19, but people are not fully protected until after the second dose.

What happens if you miss second COVID-19 shot?

If you miss your second vaccine dose, you can receive it up to six weeks after the first dose. Why must you wait an interval to get your second dose? The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends the doses be spaced apart based off of clinical trials.

Can I take vaccine if I had COVID-19 infection?

Even if you've had COVID-19, you should still get vaccinated. A COVID-19 vaccine may offer more reliable and sustained immunity than a previous infection. At the very least, it will add an extra layer of targeted protection. Here's how our immune response works after a natural infection versus a vaccine.

How long after my second COVID-19 vaccine am I immune?

It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second shot.

How long does it take to develop immunity after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

How long after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine shot does it take for it to

be effective? The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says it typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination.

Is it normal that I feel sick after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

Common side effects include pain, redness and swelling on the arm that receives the shot, according to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Typical side effects elsewhere in the body include tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and nausea.

Can I take painkiller after COVID-19 vaccine?

Can I take painkillers before or after a COVID-19 vaccine? Don't take them before a shot to try to prevent symptoms, but if your doctor agrees, it's OK to use them afterward if needed. The concern about painkillers is that they might curb the very immune system response that a vaccine aims to spur.

Do I have to wear a mask after vaccination?

Do you still need to wear masks when in public spaces if you are fully vaccinated? The CDC is continuing to recommend that fully vaccinated people continue to wear well-fitted masks, avoid large gatherings, and physically distance themselves from others when out in public.

Source: Centres for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

CITY OF HARARE

VACCINATION SITES UPDATE - 30/03/2021

District	Facility	Vaccination team	Vaccine Received	Data collection tools			ZRP Present
				Register	Tally	Summary	
SEC	Parirenyatwa Hosp.	yes					yes
	Hatfield Sat	3	No	yes	yes	yes	no
	Braeside FHS	3	no	yes	yes	yes	No
Southern	Mbare Poly	3	received	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Sunningdale Sat	3	received	no	yes	yes	no
	Waterfalls Sat	3	no	no	yes	yes	no
	Tariro Sat	3	no	no	no	no	no
S Western	Highfield FHS	3	received	no	no	no	No
	Western Triangle	3	received	no	no	no	No
	Rutsanana Poly	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Glen Norah FHS	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Southerton Sat	3	received	no	no	no	No
	Sally Mugabe Hosp	2 teams	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
West South West	Glen View FHS	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Glen View Sat	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Budiriro FHS	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Budiriro Sat	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Mufakose FHS	3	received	yes	yes	yes	Yes
Western	Kambuzuma FHS	3	no	no	no	no	No
	Kuwadzana FHS	3	received	no	no	no	No
	Kuwadzana Sat,	3	received	no	no	no	No
	Warren Park FHS	3	received	no	no	no	No
North Western	Rujeko FHS	3	no	no	no	no	no
	Mabelreign Sat	3	received	no	no	no	Yes
	Marlborough Sat	3	received	yes	yes	yes	No
	Belvedere Sat	3	received	yes	no	no	No
	Avondale Sat	3	received	no	no	no	no
	Wilkins Hosp	7 teams	received	yes	yes	yes	yes
Northern	Hatcliffe FHS	3	received	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Mt Pleasant Sat	3	received	yes	yes	yes	no
	Borrowdale Clinic	1	received	no	no	no	no
	Highlands FHS	2	received	no	no	no	no
Eastern	Tafara FHS	2	no	no	no	no	no
	Mabvuku Sat	3	received	yes	yes	yes	no
	Greendale FHS	1	no	no	no	no	no
	Eastlea FHS	3	received	no	no	no	no

FIRST MUTUAL

HEALTH

Go Beyond

To help minimise possible exposure to COVID-19 we encourage you to make use of our digital channels for queries and payments as listed below:

Ecocash Biller Code 32807

Telecash Biller Code 100012

Banks Transfers Details;

Bank: STANDARD CHARTERED
Account name: FIRST MUTUAL HEALTH COMPANY
Branch: AFRICA UNITY SQUARE
Account Number: 0100206784000

Bank: FIRST CAPITAL BANK
Account name: FIRST MUTUAL HEALTH COMPANY
Branch: FCDA CENTRE (2157)
Account Number: 1031434 Queries and Authorisations

Our contact centre will be available 7 days a week from 8am to 7pm. The contact center numbers are: 08677007432 and 0242 251 440

Claims Quotations

Claims quotations for authorisation may be emailed to: claims1@firstmutualhealth.co.zw
Every effort will be made to respond to the emails within an hour.

Contribution Payments

The proof of payment should be emailed to debtors@firstmutualhealth.co.zw

General Enquiries

Enquiries may also be sent to info@firstmutualhealth.co.zw



We can **STOP** the Corona Virus



 WhatsApp 0778917309



FITNESS TRAINING

#LetsGetMoving

powered by

FIRST MUTUAL
HEALTH
Go Beyond

Tuesdays 17:30hrs
Thursdays 17:30hrs
Saturdays 06:00hrs
Venue: Old Hararians Sports
Club, Milton Park

It's always a good idea to
train! Join the 1stCARE
Fitness Class in Harare!

 Follow us @firstmutualhealth

 Follow us @FMH_Health