



The value of your health can't be overstated. In fact, your health is your greatest asset and your greatest responsibility. When people think about health, the general idea is diet and exercise. But often overlooked is how eliminating stress and getting enough sleep is a crucial component to better health. Sadly, what's even more overlooked is mental health. Studies show a direct correlation between [diet and nutrition](#) and mental health, but there is serious research on the correlations between exercise and mental health.

## Mental Health, Physical Exercise, And Sleep

Exercise has been shown to have profound impacts on mental health. In addition to strengthening skeletal-muscular, respiratory, and cardiovascular health, regular exercise provides the body with powerful neurochemicals. Long after your exercise concludes, your brain releases dopamine and other mood-enhancing neurochemicals. These chemicals elevate moods, relieve stress, and aid with sleep maintenance.

Sleep is undervalued as a critical component of general health. Think about it: when you have added work to be done or have some downtime from the family, an individual will perform coping mechanisms like watching TV or scrolling through their phone instead of getting enough sleep. In addition, sleep deprivation can impact the brain by limiting the amount of mood-boosting chemicals released throughout the day.

## Mental Health Versus Mental Illness

There are two terms constantly conflated and interchanged, mental health and mental illness. These conditions are not the same and need to be better understood. [Mental health](#) includes your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It defines how we think, feel, and act. Mental health is also significant in handling stress, interacting with others, and making safe and healthy choices.

Mental illness is a psychological condition that impacts the thinking and emotional states of being and acting, and it involves:

- Significant changes in emotion, thinking, and behavior
- Distress in work, social, or familial situations
- Over 50% of Americans will be diagnosed with a mental illness in their lifetime
- 20% of Americans will experience mental illness during a given year
- 1 in 25 live with serious mental illness

## Alternative Therapies For Healthy Living

Everyone deals with mental health at some stage in their lives. But, unfortunately, people often develop coping mechanisms that are not long-term strategies for healthy living and don't treat the underlying causes. That said, there are alternative options a person can make in developing coping mechanisms that can supplement a healthy lifestyle. Often, [after-care](#) can be the most important part of the process once you have defeated your demons on your own or with a therapist, counselor, or doctor.

## Eastern Disciplines

Yoga as a form of relaxation and exercise is one option. Developing a sense of being in the moment, focusing on your breathing, and achieving a peaceful state of mind are all key benefits of adopting a lifestyle that includes regular yoga. Eastern medicine emphasizes breathing and slow, controlled motions as a form of relaxation and exercise simultaneously. Some examples of low-impact exercise that also helps lower stress

# Prioritizing Mental And Physical Health Through Exercise And Alternative Therapies

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include tai chi, jiu jitsu, karate, and aikido.

## Meditation

Mediation is another consideration that focuses on controlling breathing to elevate moods and lower stress. While many forms of yoga include meditation, practicing meditation can be performed without any yoga activities.

## Alternative Lifestyle

An alternative to traditional medicine is medicinal marijuana. Cannabis can act as a relaxant and can be consumed in various ways, from smoking, and edibles, to even drinking a beverage made from cannabis. In Arizona, cannabis is legal for adults over 21 to consume and possess up to 1 gram. It's a regulated product that you can buy from government-regulated dispensaries.

Finding localized dispensaries that are certified and government-regulated isn't that difficult. You can conduct a Google search specific to your area, such as checking review sites with a search query like what is the [best dispensary in Prescott](#) or top-rated dispensaries in Tucson can yield you plenty of results. When searching for the best dispensary in your area, much like any other retail, you want to find a source that looks respectable and local.

Features to look for should include a well-trained and educated staff, a clean, well-light retail space, and variety of products for sale. The dispensary should also use a trusted point-of-sale system and payment processing. If you're looking for more examples, a Google search for dispensaries in Arizona can yield a ton of results like:

- Weedmaps
- [SWC Arizona](#)
- Leafly
- Curaleaf
- Arizona Organics

Finding a reputable dealer in your area is crucial to provide you with the services you need and making you feel comfortable about their products. Living a healthy lifestyle is balancing eating right, getting the proper amount of sleep, and finding ways to minimize stress, whether through exercise or alternative means.