

Maintaining  
Personal Wellness  
through  
Traditional and  
Complementary  
Medicine

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# About this Personal Guidance Document

On April 8, 2020, the Philippine Society of Public Health Physicians (PSPHP) conducted a Zoom Discussion with Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan on "Maintaining Personal Wellness through Traditional and Complementary Medicine." We converted the presentation into a more reader-friendly document that is easier to download and use.

## How to Use this Document

This information is based on recent information and expert opinion on how certain modalities can help individuals while they are at home. The 4-part document discusses how we can adjust our lifestyle to optimize our immune system according to our body's circadian rhythm, how we can make the right meal choices for breakfast, how we can use Philippine medicinal plants to boost our immune system, and what local produce are best used for food as medicine.

This document is for general wellness to boost the immune system and is not meant to treat illness. For individuals who have illnesses and symptoms, you should consult your doctor.

## Acknowledgements

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# A day in the life of someone who is "personally well"

## Hour 1 to 8 - Primary hours (10pm to 6am)

Did you know that sleep is medicine? The hormone Melatonin is produced by the pineal gland of your brain only in darkness. Melatonin regulates the sleep cycle and circadian rhythm of humans and animals and it is a powerful antioxidant. Sleep is essential in these COVID times, we encourage you to not be too fixated on your gadgets. Make it a habit to be in bed by 10pm and be up at about at 6am.

Top tip:

- Sleep masks are effective in giving you total darkness while you enjoy the deep sleep that you so deserve. Give it a go if you haven't yet.
- Put your cellphones, tablets and laptops at least 3-6 feet (1-2 meters) away from you. Radios, TVs and any other devices that have radio frequency should be at least 3-6 feet (1-2 meters) away from you. These devices disturb your sleep.

## Hour 9 - Quiet Hour/Prayer Time (6am)

Upon waking, pray and do your quiet time. Ask the Lord, "God, what do you want me to do today?" Attending to your personal care and hygiene should also be done during this hour. Use this hour to make an internal audit of tasks that you need for the day.

## Hour 10 - Breakfast Hour (7am)

Start your blood flowing by doing some stretching and warm-up exercises. After doing your low impact and warm-up exercises, you are now ready to eat like a king or queen! Breakfast is literally "breaking the fast." Check out our recommended breakfast options in the last page.

### Hour 11 - Digital Hour (8am)

Resist the urge to check your cellphone immediately upon waking and do your best to stay away from digital addiction. Attending to texts and emails, checking Facebook and other social media sites and reading online news should be done two hours after waking up.

### Hour 12 - Hobby Hour/Talent Hour (9am)

Do you enjoy playing the piano, guitar or violin? Do you sing or dance? Use this hour to lift your spirit and to unleash your talent. Or are you into poetry writing or do you enjoy reading books? Do things that will stimulate your self-esteem.

### Hour 13 - Exercise Hour (10am)

Tune in to some Yoga, Pilates, Qi Gong or Tai Chi exercises for strength conditioning and muscle toning. It is recommended to do cardiovascular exercises in the late afternoon.

### Hour 14 - Finance and Outreach Hour (11am)

Don't let physical distance keep you from helping and serving others during these COVID days. Check your budget and see how you can help others. There are digital ways of lending a helping hand and reaching out to those who may be in dire situations or those who are finding these days mentally, emotionally and spiritually draining. Find creative ways of being someone's support system.

### Hour 15 to 16 - Lunch, Bonding Chores (12nn to 2pm)

Gather as a family and enjoy a meal together. Sharing stories, laughing together and even expressing your frustrations can create a stronger bond between members of the household. Use this time to get to know one another better. For those who have young children or teens, use this time to train and assign them chores that they can do.

## Hour 17 - Digital Hour (2pm)

Go back online to read and answer your emails, webinars, digital meetings, or online schools and tutorials.

### Top Tip:

Cellphones have a high radio frequency that can disrupt your circadian rhythm. We suggest using earphones while on call mode. Also, avoid putting your cellphones near any part of your body as these devices constantly emit radio frequency.

## Hour 18 - Inspirational Hour (3pm)

Relax and watch, read or listen to something inspirational.

## Hour 19 - Learn Something New Hour (4pm)

Invest your time in learning something new. Been wanting to try your hand in baking? Always been curious about origami or wanting to learn more about world history? Learn a new language. Take a break from your Work-From-Home schedule and appropriate some time to learn something totally different from your professional work. This hour can also be used for high impact cardiovascular exercises like brisk walking, biking (real or stationary) or sports like badminton and table tennis. At this hour, our muscles are warmer, our blood less viscous, circulation is flowing more efficiently, and our blood pressure lower.

## Hour 20 - Digital Hour (5pm)

As this is usually when work ends, get to know your colleagues a little bit better by checking on them, their friends and families. It's okay to deviate from the technical questions and work consultations.

You may also check in with your family members and friends for some digital bonding. More than ever, we are all craving human connection so go ahead and reach out to one another.

### Hour 21 to 22 - Dinner, Bonding, Chores (6pm to 8pm)

Before the day ends, gather as a family to celebrate life and health. Your favorite food may be hard to come by and inaccessible these days nevertheless, be grateful for the blessing of having something to eat and being able to eat. Pray as a family to God and be thankful for all of the blessings.

### Hour 23 - Review the Day (8pm to 9pm)

Use this time for introspection and list down what you are thanking God for. Look and think positive. If you are feeling emotionally low try to list down and recall the happiest moments of your life.

### Hour 24 - Prepare to Sleep (9pm)

Do some reading before going to bed. We recommend reading the book of Psalms in the Bible (read and meditate on Psalm 4, Psalm 23, Psalm 91, Psalm 144). Turn off lights and digital devices by 10pm.

## What is a good breakfast?

Breakfast is the best meal of the day and it should dictate the pace of our lives. Choose ingredients that are commercially available and easy to procure. Prepare a breakfast meal that is high in protein, fats and complex carbohydrates and enhanced by fresh fruits and raw vegetables.

High protein: baked beans, sautéed mung beans (monggo), humus, sweat peas, legumes, organic eggs, organic chicken, fish (sardines, canned tuna, mackerel), sea water fish and deep sea fish.

High fat: nuts like cashew, pili, local peanuts. Virgin coconut oil, virgin olive oil

Complex carbohydrates: brown rice, whole wheat bread, boiled camote, boiled cassava, adlai

Morning drinks: fresh fruit, vegetable juice or smoothies. Black coffee, dark chocolate and herbal drinks (ginger or turmeric tea). Mineral and alkaline water (note: unless you are a car battery, please avoid drinking distilled water).

## Recommended Philippine medicinal plants for COVID-19

Sinta or Serpentine (*Andrographis paniculata*): the Sinta plant improves our immune system and protects our liver and kidney. According to clinical research Sinta is effective in treating diarrhea, fever, pain and upper respiratory tract infections. Recommended dose: 30mg/kg of body weight to be taken thrice a day.

Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*): widely available in the Philippines, the coconut is beneficial to the immune system as it has anti-viral and anti-fungal properties. Its active ingredients of lauric acid or monolaurin and medium chain fatty acid (MCFA) destroy the membrane that envelopes viruses and other microbes.

Laguna (*Vitex negundo*): has been a part of the DOH Recommended 10 Best Medicinal Plants (Sampung Halaman Gamot). It has been recommended for cough, colds and asthma. Recently, it has been found to have anti-viral properties and is currently undergoing clinical trials for COVID-19.

# Food as medicine

Our local produce is rich in vitamins and minerals and what's best is that these are affordable and can be easily procured.

## Vegetables

In terms of nutritional value, these are the best vegetables in the world! These are all high in vitamin C, antioxidants, iron, calcium, folic acid, magnesium, zinc, phosphorus and beta carotene: Talbos (shoots) of kamote, kolitis or amaranth, kangkong, malunggay, saluyot, dahol ng sili.

## Spices

These are all powerful antioxidants with anti-viral properties: Ginger, onions, garlic, turmeric, black pepper

## Fruits

These are all rich sources of vitamin C: Guava, kamachile, cashew fruit, anonas, papaya, mangoes, sineguelas, suha, calamansi, dayap.

## Healthy Snacks

Nuts, camote chips, fresh fruits, rolled oats. Celery, carrot, cucumber, singkamas (turnips) sticks.

**Maintaining your personal wellness entails discipline  
to do what is best for your overall well-being  
and delighting in doing so.**

-Jaime Galvez Tan, MD MPH  
Former DOH Secretary of Health

## What the society is

The Philippine Society of Public Health Physicians (PSPHP) is inclusive of physicians that are dedicated to guide a community, local government, agency, health organization, medical office or program in pursuit of group, community or societal health goals. In the spirit of camaraderie and professional support, it encourages entry and strives to uplift the practice of all public health physicians towards credibility and quality. The Society also forms a strong link with clinical and individual-based medical specialties to the interest of populations and communities based on evidence, sustainability and the Philippine context.

### Our Core Values

Excellence, Bayanihan, Responsive Service,  
Respect, Accountability, Humility

# Opus, Virtus, Scientia