

## Army Wellness Centers (AWCs)

The Army Wellness Center Program helps Soldiers and retirees, their families, and Army civilians build and sustain good health. It empowers them to set their own health goals and achieve them. It addresses lifestyle change in areas that affect both short- and long-term health, engaging people in their "lifespace"—the places where they live, work, relax and rest.

### AWCs & Army units

- Improve unit readiness and support physical fitness standards by targeting the physical fitness and performance of Soldiers.
- Help avoid overtraining and related injuries—the right amount of time exercising yields optimal results.
- Reduce lost- and limited-duty time due to injury.

### AWCs & medical providers

- Provide a tool to address lifestyle behaviors holistically and over time.
- Programs are evidence-based and leverage technology to help clients succeed.
- Allow for medical provider direction and oversight of patient progress through AHLTA documentation.

### How the AWC Program works

The AWC Program is a U.S. Army Medical Command Program overseen by the Army Public Health Command.

AWCs are staffed by nurses and health educators who deliver primary prevention programs. (Primary prevention occurs before disease, injury or disability occurs.)

Referrals can be made to AWCs by medical providers or unit commanders.

Self-referrals are always welcome and can be made by contacting AWCs directly.

## A Spotlight on AWC Services

### Sleep Education

Sleep education services include general information about healthy sleep habits, impact of sleep on health and wellbeing, tools, tips and positive action steps to improve sleep. AWCs' two part Sleep Education class covers the basics of healthy sleep hygiene and walks clients through a self-assessment process to increase awareness of their own sleep habits. The class provides tools for sleep tracking and highlights the latest technology to assist with healthy sleep habits. Clients will craft healthy sleep goals and create a basic sleep plan to improve both quantity and quality of sleep.



### Exercise Testing and Exercise Prescription

Exercise Testing is an assessment of biometrics (height, weight, body mass index, blood pressure, heart rate) and the four components of health related physical fitness:

- Aerobic Fitness (VO2 Submax)
- Body Composition (Body Fat %)
- Muscular Fitness
- Flexibility



Health Educators use exercise test results as a planning tool for exercise prescription and motivation to assist clients in establishing and meeting reasonable physical activity, fitness and health goals.

### Weight Management and Metabolic Testing

Metabolism is the medical term for the rate at which the body burns calories. Weight management involves a delicate balance between calories burned and calories consumed. Metabolic testing results provide the exact number of calories required for weight loss, gain, or maintenance. The *Upping Your Metabolism* class will teach clients how to use their metabolic test results to reach their health goals.



### Body Composition Analysis

AWCs use various methods to determine body composition including the BOD POD®, ultrasound, bioelectrical impedance, or skinfold calipers. Body composition goes beyond the number seen on a scale and determines if weight comes from fat or fat free mass. Fat free mass includes everything the body is made of that is not fat, such as muscle and bone. There is a strong correlation between high body fat percentage and increased risk for diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Health Educators use exercise test results as a planning tool for exercise prescription and motivation to assist clients in establishing and meeting reasonable physical fitness and health goals.



### Stress Management Education and Biofeedback

Stress and strong emotions can cause or worsen health problems like heart disease, hypertension, headaches, stroke, depression, and sleep disorders. AWC services include biofeedback and education in stress relief techniques, and coping skills.



Biofeedback is a relaxation technique used to teach clients to control functions like heart rate to reduce stress and build resilience. AWCs use a state-of-the-art computerized stress relief system called emWave®. This non-invasive system helps clients learn how to control their heart rhythm pattern.

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