

Connection Kit
February 2025

What's in the February Kit?

The theme this month is *Simple Swaps*. Many people don't know that their gut biome is responsible for 70-80% of immune system health. Not surprisingly, some foods help that biome, while others harm it.

Taking baby steps to improve gut health starts with making some simple swaps. By making small, intentional changes and taking note of their impact, it's easier to stay motivated because the benefits become obvious quickly! The Kit includes:

- These **Instructions**, with all the details and how-tos.
- A **Microsoft Word flyer** that you can customize to whatever level you desire. All colors, fonts and text can be modified. If you want to encourage team participation or an incentive, you can modify the flyer accordingly. If you want to keep this at an individual level, you can use the pre-made **PDF flyer** that is ready to go. Note that **this month's flyer has two sides**: instructions on the front and a tracking log on the back.
- An **article** entitled "How to Improve Your Gut Health Naturally." This provides excellent context, especially for your leadership team, around how the microbiome works and what people can do to keep it healthy.

How Can I Use It?

The materials are here for you to use in whatever way makes sense, either for individuals or groups. Here are some things to consider if you are using this as a tool for your organization.

- **Objective:** How would you like to orient the kit? Do you want to leverage it as part of a team support strategy? As a resource guide for individuals? As a corporate challenge to help employees improve health? There are many ways to structure this month's content, all of which can have value for your employees as well as their families.
- **Promotion:** there are many ways to get the word out to your employees. Here are a few suggestions.
 - Post on your intranet.
 - Introduce in a Town Hall or company meeting.
 - Post flyers on restroom doors.
 - Email to all employees.
 - Post a QR code linked to the flyer adjacent to your time clock, employee break room, etc.
 - Ask team leaders to lead a discussion around these strategies during team meetings.

Brought to you by the North Ottawa Wellness Foundation



- **Participation:** Determine how you want to encourage group participation and/or extend this out to families. For example:
 - Reinforce the idea with simple swaps in meetings, such as replacing sodas with flavored sparkling water, or offering fruit instead of bagels.
 - Stock kefir by your coffee pot and encourage employees to drink a cup every day.
 - If you have a cafeteria, ask the chef to feature gut-friendly foods and provide appropriate signage that encourages people to try it.
 - If you have vending machines, swap out 1-2 sweet or salty snacks for a bag of nuts or a nut and fruit trail mix.
 - Invite employees to share their *Simple Swap* hacks on a bulletin board or in team meetings. You could even conduct a poll to vote on the best ideas.
 - Host a *Simple Swaps* roundtable, at which employees can talk about strategies they are using at home to decrease their reliance on fast food or restaurant meals. Invite everyone share their family's favorite easy recipe so that everyone walks away with some new ideas!

Provide Feedback!

We would love to know how you're using the Kit. Tell us how you implemented it, what your employees thought about it, what you loved, or what we could do to make it better. Visit our website and complete the [feedback form](#) to share your thoughts.

Reminders: When and Where Are the Kits Available?

- **Early Bird Access:** Wellness Foundation newsletter subscribers will receive an email each month that contains the Connection Kit materials. We'll send them out approximately two weeks in advance of the targeted implementation month. Know someone who should be on the list? They can subscribe on our [website](#).
- **Anytime Access:** each kit will be uploaded to our [website](#) one week after it is emailed to subscribers. So you'll always have access to all the Connection Kits, even if you missed the email distribution or want to go back later and re-use something.

About North Ottawa Wellness Foundation

The North Ottawa Wellness Foundation is a council of community partners dedicated to facilitating sustainable wellness for our community.

Since 2017, we have worked together through our member organizations to improve health in the overall population. Our collaborative members have implemented many programming changes to help move the health needle in their own constituent groups. Over time, that work is having an impact. Learn more and find additional resources at northottawawellnessfoundation.org.

Brought to you by the North Ottawa Wellness Foundation

