

Have a health question? This newsletter is for you

New Doing Well newsletter from ASU to help readers better understand their health

By Scott Bordow, ASU News

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You sprain a knee while playing basketball. Your stomach hurts all the time. You keep getting bad headaches.

What's the first thing you do, besides making a doctor's appointment?

If you're like most people, you go online and try to figure out what's wrong with you. But the "rabbit hole" of medical information can be a dark and dangerous place, leading to self-diagnosis and fearful thoughts.

Arizona State University's [Media Enterprise](#) and [Learning Enterprise](#) are out to change that dynamic.

They've created a [weekly newsletter titled Doing Well](#) that is part of the larger [ASU Health](#) strategy to improve health outcomes. It features tools, stories and expertise to help readers understand and improve their health and well-being.

The free newsletter, which will be distributed on Substack every Tuesday and emailed directly to subscribers, will feature interviews with experts from inside and outside the university. Features include: curated learning resources and health-related news, medical myth-busters, health words of the week, and tips from health professionals and community members.

"We wanted to have an outlet where we could translate some of the research and work being done at ASU and a lot of the other health institutions that we work with, like the Mayo Clinic, in a way that was going to be digestible for the larger public," said [Mia Armstrong-Lopez](#), managing editor at ASU Media Enterprise. "And we wanted to create a space where people could be honest about

their relationships with their health and educate themselves more with the ultimate goal of being able to take steps to improve their health.”

It's a matter of improving health literacy, said [Genevieve Bautista Young](#), vice president and chief operating officer for ASU Health.

“Health literacy is just so complex in terms of how do you move the needle on health outcomes,” Bautista Young said. “There’s so many different things we can do related to patient care and delivering care, but really, to be honest, the most impactful would be to improve the health literacy of our communities and the people within our communities.”

[Natasha Burrell](#), the program manager for health literacy for ASU Learning Enterprise, said each newsletter will contain an interview with a health expert in a Q&A format, health-related stories, a learning asset that could be in the form of a video, and other features including an interactive element.

For example, subjects like C-sections, how communities can work together to prevent Type 2 diabetes, what to know before downloading a mental health app, and how to access national parks and recreation areas in order to improve individual health will be subjects in the first few issues of the newsletter, Burrell said.

The newsletter also will address health misinformation.

“We live in a day and age where anyone can create content on the internet and put it out there for people to see,” Burrell said. “While that’s great, there are skills that we have to have to be able to discern and evaluate the information that we’re given.

“Health, especially, is a very important topic that reaches every person and impacts every single person’s life. I just think with the rise of social media and health misinformation that’s out there, it’s important for us to try to empower people with reliable information and also the skills so they can evaluate their own health information when they encounter it outside of our project.”

ASU students are a key part of the newsletter. Two student health communication assistants — Kitana Ford and Mel Moore, both of whom are in Barrett, The Honors College — aid in the research and ideation of what topics should be included in each newsletter. Student health illustrator Sara Montes Delgadillo, an undergraduate student in the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, provides visual components. In addition, students from the Cronkite Agency, an arm of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, create social media posts to aid in marketing and public relations.

“That way, we can reach a diverse and large audience to really get a lot of different people engaged in reading our newsletter,” Burrell said.

Armstrong-Lopez said a Spanish-language version of Doing Well, in collaboration with community organizations, is scheduled to launch this summer on WhatsApp.

“If you look at access to health resources, that’s a population that tends to be underserved,” she said.

Armstrong-Lopez said the Spanish-language version will not simply be a word-for-word translation of the English version. Instead, health experts at ASU and within the community that speak Spanish and/or work with Spanish-speaking populations will be featured.

“What happens sometimes is that you just take whatever you have in English, translate it into Spanish and then you can check a box that you’ve served that population,” Armstrong-Lopez said. “We feel like that’s a one-way street.

“We want to create content that is originally in Spanish for those populations. It’s a recognition that not everyone consumes health information in the same way or the same language. And there are a lot of people who can deliver expertise in the language of the audience that we’re trying to reach.”

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image

DOING WELL



The free Doing Well newsletter will feature interviews with experts from inside and outside ASU, curate learning resources and health-related news, and walk readers through medical myth-busters, health words of the week, and tips from health professionals and community members. Illustration courtesy of ASU Learning Enterprise