



## ***Staying Healthy During Your Season***

*By: Erika Fleischer*

*Erika Fleischer attends Indiana University where she is majoring in journalism and is a 3rd year member of the In Motion Dance Company. When Erika is not dancing, she devotes much of her time to raising money and awareness for the Indiana University Dance Marathon to benefit Riley Hospital for Children.*

**What and when you eat is crucial.** You've heard it before, but eating right is vital to keeping your energy up. Consider eating well a priority. What you put into your body is what you get out of it, so eat those proteins, carbohydrates, and veggies and leave sweets to special occasions. Eating healthy is not the only thing to think about, though. Make sure to always eat before practice, whether this means bringing along an after school snack or waking up twenty minutes early to eat breakfast. If practices or competition days are long, bring a snack to munch on during water breaks. Eating more often will enable you to keep a high energy level so both you and your teammates can benefit from your presence.

**Sleep is your friend, although that's easier said than done.** Between dance, school, and other extra-curricular activities, sleep is often put on the back burner. When your season is filled with performances and competitions, make sure to spend a little extra snooze time than normal. It will keep you from getting sick, help you get through long days of school and dance easier, and give you that extra glow when you hit the performance floor!

**Hydration is key.** Drinking fluids is important before, during, and after practices and performances. It is likely that you are dehydrating from exercising before you even notice the effects. Your body's performance can be lessened by being even slightly dehydrated, so make sure to continue to hydrate on a regular basis with water and Gatorade!

**Take precautionary measures.** No one wants to get sick and miss out on a part of their season! Do simple things ahead of time, like getting a flu shot and taking daily vitamins. Your body will thank you and resist germs and you will be well on your way to a healthy and awesome season!

**Keep warm when it's cold out.** Be sure to bundle up when going outside; particularly when it comes to practice, layering is key. Make sure to start out with extra clothing on to protect yourself from getting injured until your muscles are warm. Also, be certain to dress warm when coming and going from practice. Stepping out into the cold after you've been sweating can be harmful to your immune system that you've been working so hard to protect, right?

Following these tips will ensure you stay healthy during your season, so put taking care of yourself first and you'll be well on your way to your best season yet!