



Digital detox for your “social” wellbeing

We're bombarded with digital stimuli receiving an average of one interruption every 8 – 10 minutes. It's increasingly difficult to disconnect from technology with smartphones always in easy reach.

25% (four hours a day) of the average Australian's waking time is spent either watching TV or using devices. We're also spending about six hours alone.

Digital overload can have a significant negative impact on your physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing. Although we are 'connected' through social media / devices, it's a poor substitute of genuine in-person interaction.



Digital overload can lead to:

Anxiety

The constant barrage of notifications and messages can create a sense of urgency. People who are highly engaged with their phones and social media are more likely to experience anxiety and stress.

Attention fatigue

Constantly switching between apps, tasks and devices can result in attention fatigue making it difficult to concentrate on tasks, reducing productivity and impacting memory. This can lead to a reduction of the brain's capacity to process information, limiting learning, understanding, deep thought processes, and decision-making.

Sleep disruption

Exposure to screens, especially before bedtime, can interfere with sleep quality. The blue light emitted from digital devices suppresses the production of melatonin which is the hormone responsible for regulating sleep.

Social comparison and low self-esteem

The curated and filtered versions of other's lives can trigger negative self-perception and feelings of not being “good enough”. People who spend more time on social media are more likely to report symptoms of depression and loneliness.

Physical health impacts

Musculoskeletal pain (neck, back, wrist and shoulders) is now a common side-effect of device usage, due to long durations of poor posture while sitting at computers and holding phones.





Steps for a digital detox

Completely removing technology from our lives is unrealistic. However, it's a good idea to be mindful of your technology use and establish healthy boundaries.

You can:

Schedule tech-free times

Set specific times each day to unplug from your devices. Make your attention available for friends and family – who knows the interesting conversations you might have!

Limit notifications

Turn off unnecessary notifications. Use the 'focus' time function to select notifications you receive alerts for and even which numbers for calls. Alerts can trigger anxiety and disrupt your focus.

Set digital boundaries for work

It's easy to feel like you need to be available 24/7. Set boundaries for responses to work-related messages to support work-life balance and reduce feelings of burnout.

"No screens before bed"

Establish a rule of no screens at least an hour before bedtime. Instead unwind with calming activities like reading, journaling, or mindfulness.

Screen free activities

Plan activities that don't require technology such as walking, cooking, reading or craft. This helps the brain relax and enables deeper social connection.

Monitor screen time

Use screen time tracker apps or features to monitor how much time you spend on devices. Set daily limits for specific apps and platforms that you find particularly distracting.

Games night snacks

Get your family or friends together for a game's night. Avoid processed, high fat and salty snacks with these delicious alternatives.

Choc berry bark - Serves 6 | Prep 5 mins | 1 hour freezing time

Ingredients

- ▶ ¾ cup Greek yoghurt
- ▶ 300 g blueberries
- ▶ 150g chocolate, melted

Method

- ▶ Line tray with baking paper. Make sure the tray will fit in your freezer! Spread yoghurt over the tray.
- ▶ Arrange berries on top of the yoghurt.
- ▶ Melt chocolate in the microwave on low, stirring every 40 secs to 1 minute. Once melted drizzle over the yoghurt.
- ▶ Place in the freezer for at least an hour. Break into pieces for a sweet treat.



Air fryer corn - Serves 4 | Cook 15 mins

Ingredients

- ▶ 420 g tinned corn, rinsed and drained
- ▶ 1 tsp paprika
- ▶ ½ tsp salt

Method

- ▶ Add corn to the air fryer and cover in salt and paprika to taste. Give it a good shake to make sure corn is well covered.
- ▶ Cook for 15-20 minutes at 180 degrees Celsius. Keep an eye on it as the corn can burn quickly!
- ▶ Remove and allow to cool slightly before serving.



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