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The Wellness Exchange



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Solutions for a Healthier WorkplaceSM

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National Nutrition Month Step Up to Nutrition and Health



March is National Nutrition Month® - the perfect time to Step Up to Nutrition and Health. The American Dietetic Association promotes healthful eating this month. This is done by providing practical nutrition guidance and focusing on the importance of making informed food choices and developing patterns of sound physical activity.



Step up today by making healthier lifestyle choices! Improve your health and the health of your family and you will reap the benefits for years to come. Small steps equal big rewards.

Understanding The NEW Food Pyramid

In 2005, the USDA revised the food pyramid to be a more interactive tool in determining appropriate dietary guidelines. The new pyramid, located on the MyPyramid.gov web site, lets individuals key in their age, gender, and physical activity level so that they can get a more personalized recommendation on their daily calorie level.

Six bands of color sweep from the apex of MyPyramid to the base: **orange for grains**, **green for vegetables**, **red for fruits**, **yellow for oils/fats**, **blue for milk**, and **purple for meat and beans**. Each band starts out as the same size, but does not end that way at the base. The widths suggest how much food a person should choose from each group. Physical activity, represented by the stick figure on the steps, is a new component of the pyramid and shows the importance of physical activity as a part of a balanced diet.

Tips for Eating The Right Nutrients

Be sure to make smart choices from every food group. Give your body the balanced nutrition it needs by eating a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Just be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.

Whole grains are the entire edible part of any grain such as wheat, oats, barley, rice and corn. Try substituting a whole-grain product for a refined product – such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

Vegetables. Any vegetable or 100% vegetable juice counts as a member of the vegetable group. Try having a green salad with your dinner every night.

Fruits. Eating foods such as fruits that are low in calories per cup instead of some other higher-calorie food may be useful in helping to lower calorie intake. Try meat dishes that incorporate fruit, such as chicken with apricots or mango chutney.

Choose unsaturated fats. Fats including vegetable, sunflower, canola and peanut oils as well as nuts, avocados, and fatty fish do not raise blood cholesterol and can be heart protective.

Milk provides nutrients that are vital for health and maintenance of your body such as calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and protein. If you usually drink whole milk, consider gradually switching to fat-free milk to lower saturated fat and calories.

Meat and beans provide proteins that function as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood. Most meat and poultry choices should be lean or low-fat. Fish, nuts, and seeds contain healthy oils, so choose these foods frequently instead of meat or poultry.

Controlling Your Portions

Understanding the concept of standard serving sizes is essential to good nutrition. Most restaurant meals (and even the meals you prepare at home) are up to 3 to 4 times the size of a standard portion. Get to know what a serving really is and limit yourself to that portion.

A computer mouse = one serving (three ounces) of meat.

A small fist = one serving (one-half cup) of fruit, vegetables, pasta, or rice.

Your thumb = one serving (one ounce) of cheese



Physical Activity

It is important to find your balance between your food intake and physical activity. Regular activity is important for your overall health and fitness, plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being, and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

The food and physical activity choices made today - and everyday - affect your health and how you feel today and in the future. Eating right and being physically active are keys to a healthy lifestyle.

For more information, visit:

www.eatright.org
www.mypyramid.gov
www.usda.gov

Eating Disorders Awareness

National Eating Disorders Awareness Week is February 26th - March 4th



Eating Disorders Awareness Week is a national observance designed to bring awareness and increase prevention efforts for eating disorders. This observance directs attention to the serious consequences that eating disorders can have on a person's body and overall health. It also focuses on the emotional issues that can deprive people with eating disorders of a happy and productive life.

What is an eating disorder?

An eating disorder is an emotional and physical illness that is associated with an obsession with food, body weight, and/or body shape. Often, a person with an eating disorder diets, exercises, and/or eats excessively. These behaviors can have serious health consequences and can even be life threatening. The three most common types of eating disorders are anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating. Each type has its own characteristics and diagnosis.



Research has indicated that 81% of 10-year-olds are afraid of being fat.

How many people have an eating disorder?

According to statistics from the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), as many as 10 million girls and women and 1 million boys and men in the United States struggle with eating disorders, such as anorexia or bulimia. It is estimated that an additional 25 million individuals struggle with binge eating. Although eating disorders primarily affect people in their teens and twenties, studies have reported disorders in children as young as 6 and individuals as old as 76.

Each day Americans spend an average of \$109 million on dieting and diet related products.

What causes an eating disorder?

Although no one is certain about what causes eating disorders, experts suggest that a variety of factors may increase the risk. Eating disorders can arise from a variety of physical, emotional, social, and familial issues. The pressure that drives one toward an eating disorder can come from peers, parents, or from self-esteem problems of the affected person.



Eating disorders are also common in people who experience depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and other forms of anxiety disorders. Young people often develop eating disorders as they search for a way to cope with the physical and emotional changes involved in becoming a teen. They may be also influenced by media images of unrealistically thin people.

What can be done to help people with an eating disorder?

Someone with an eating disorder will tend to avoid seeking help on their own, so the involvement of friends and family is crucial. Consider trying the following:

1. **Learn** as much as you can about eating disorders.
2. **Be Honest.** Talk openly and honestly about your concerns with the person who is struggling.
3. **Be Caring,** but firm. Caring means helping them take responsibility for their actions and the consequences of those actions.
4. **Remain connected** with them and offer to assist them in getting help.

Remember: You cannot force someone to seek help, change their habits, or adjust their attitudes. You will make important progress in openly sharing your concerns, providing support, and knowing where to go for more information!

Business Health Services (BHS), your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), is available 24 hours a day ~7 days a week to offer support and guidance on dealing with eating disorders and treatment options.

Call us today at 1-800-765-3277!

What are the signs of an eating disorder?

The signs of an eating disorder may differ with each type of disorder and may vary from person to person. In general, those with an eating disorder will display excessive concern about their weight and/or body shape.

Anorexia Nervosa:

- obsession with food
- significantly reduced food intake
- unusual eating habits
- noticeable weight loss
- excessive exercising
- feeling overweight in spite of weight loss and increasing thinness

Bulimia Nervosa

- bingeing followed by feelings of fear, guilt, and depressed mood
- food disappears from fridge and cupboards
- frequently spends time in washrooms after meals to purge
- chronic sore throat
- vomiting or laxative abuse or excessive exercising

Compulsive Eating

- thinks about food and eats often, consuming large amounts of food when not physically hungry
- often feels out of control when eating
- eats as a reaction to stress, feelings, conflicts, and daily problems
- feels high after overeating, which may be followed by feelings of guilt