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The Wellness Exchange



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BUSINESS HEALTH SERVICES™

Solutions for a Healthier Workplace™

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Enjoying Your Leisure Time



From the moment the alarm rings in the morning, you're on the go. You make coffee, take a quick

shower, rouse the kids, fix breakfast, get dressed, dash to work, spend eight intense hours or more on the job, pick up your son after baseball practice, drop your daughters off at soccer, fix dinner, help your children with their homework, get them into bed, iron clothes, make lunches and then do some paperwork you wanted to finish before the meeting tomorrow.

Whew! You need a time out!

Why Do I Need Leisure?

Leisure is a necessity for your overall health and well-being. If you don't get enough of it, you can begin to feel grouchy, fatigued and depressed.



Studies indicate people who do not participate in regular leisure activities have

elevated stress levels, increased edginess, and hostility. If not addressed, these symptoms can lead to harmful amounts of norepinephrine and cortisol in the body which can damage the immune system and make your body more susceptible to heart disease. These harmful stressors can be reduced by incorporating leisure time into your schedule. Participating in activities that are pleasurable have shown to elevate dopamine and serotonin - helping you feel happier and more calm.

Making Time For Leisure

Most of us actually have more free time than we think - how we spend it is the problem. If you want to spend your time doing more enjoyable things, try these approaches:

Make your own fun. What is leisure for one person is work for another. Make a list of your strengths and weaknesses, as well as your likes and dislikes. Then make your leisure choice based on that list. Gardening, for example, is fun for some people, but for others it's work. Only you can decide what works best for you.

Be imperfect. Some people avoid doing certain types of leisure activities because they don't feel they can master them. It's important to recognize that you don't have to do everything well. It's really not a matter of how well you do something, but that you enjoy doing it.

Learn to shift gears. Create a space at the end of your day—even if it is only 10 to 15 minutes—to be alone with your thoughts so you can make the transition between work and home. Walking, reading the newspaper or listening to music are suggestions. For some people, it's just as simple as changing into relaxed clothing.

Learn to say 'NO'. If you find it hard to make time for yourself, learn to say no to others who make demands on your time. We often feel that we must say yes and end up resenting those who want our free time. By learning to say no, you can also learn to say yes...and mean it!



Leisure doesn't just happen. It takes effort and planning to work fun activities into your life. Find a reason to make room in your life for leisure. It might be as simple as telling yourself that you deserve down time, or that you want to live

longer, or perhaps you would like to have a better relationship with your spouse, kids, or friends. Whatever the reason, it has to be something that is more important to you than work. If not, you are less likely to stick with it.

Having trouble getting motivated, or don't know where to start? Try using these National April Observations for ideas. April is....

National Poetry Month

National Garden Week - April 9th - 15th

National Dance Week - April 21st-30th

National TV Turn Off Week - April 24th - 30th

Cancer Awareness and Prevention



While millions of Americans are winning the fight against cancer, there are still ways that we can prevent the disease. April is declared National Cancer Control Month, a time devoted to learning more about cancer prevention and early detection.



What You Can Do

Studies suggest that lifestyle choices and behaviors such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity increase ones risk of cancer. By eating a healthy, balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight (BMI less than 25), protecting your skin from excess sunlight exposure, and not using tobacco, you can decrease your risk for cancer.

Research shows 50-75% of all cancer deaths in the U.S. could be prevented by lifestyle changes and behavior modifications.

It is never too late to make positive lifestyle changes. Consider taking the following steps:

Don't Smoke! If you currently smoke - KICK the HABIT! Although this may be easier said than done, statistics show this is the single most important step you can take to reduce your risk of cancer as well as many other life-threatening diseases. About half of all Americans who smoke will die because of the habit. People who quit smoking, regardless of age, live longer than people who continue to smoke. The right combination of support, advice, and possibly medicine can help you quit for good, even if you've tried and failed in the past. Be aware of your options.

Eat Healthy. Certain dietary patterns are linked to increased cancer risk, while others have been credited with reducing risk.



- * Eat five or more servings of a variety of vegetables and fruits each day.
- * Choose whole grains instead of processed grains and sugars.
- * Limit consumption of red meats, especially processed meats and ones high in fat.
- * Limit saturated fats and added sugars.

Avoid Drinking Too Much Alcohol. Drinking more than 1 or two alcoholic beverages a day increases your risk of developing certain types of cancer, especially if you smoke.

Get Physical. Physically active adults have up to a 50% reduced risk of cancer than those who have little to no regular physical activity. Consider walking with colleagues after lunch, walking over to a coworkers desk rather than emailing, or starting an exercise group with coworkers and/or neighbors. Involve your children when possible, children need to remain active as well.

Protect Your Skin. As the season changes and the weather warms up, it is important to remember to protect your and your family's skin from the sun's harmful UV rays. Remember to wear protective clothing, seek shade, and apply sunscreen often.



An estimated 1.4 million new cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2006. This is in addition to the more than 1 million skin cancer cases expected to be diagnosed this year.

For more information on cancer and cancer prevention, visit these websites:

www.cancer.org
www.cancer.gov
www.acor.org

Did You Know?

Cancer is currently the second leading cause of death in the United States, just behind heart disease, and accounts for one out of every 4 deaths.

1 in every 2 men and 1 in every 3 women will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime.

Tobacco use is responsible for nearly one in five deaths in the United States and is associated with an increased risk of at least 15 types of cancers.



Cigarettes kill more Americans than alcohol, car accidents, suicide, AIDS, homicide, and illegal drugs combined.

Each year, about 3,000 nonsmoking adults die of lung cancer as a result of breathing secondhand smoke.

Smoking accounts for at least 30% of all cancer deaths and 87% of lung cancer deaths.

Obesity is estimated to cause 14 percent of cancer deaths in men and 20 percent of cancer deaths in women.

More than 564,000 people are expected to die this year from cancer. That's more than 1,500 people each day!



Breast Cancer Awareness

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com



October is breast cancer awareness month, but the value of increased understanding of breast cancer issues is important all year. Breast cancer awareness has become increasingly visible in the past decade: pink ribbons, walks, runs and media blitzes have increased awareness and research dollars. Early detection through screening mammography, clinical breast examinations, and self-examinations is critical for women aged 20 years or older.

The Facts

Breast cancer is the most common cancer for women worldwide. According to statistics, every 2 minutes a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer. 1 in 7 women in the U.S. will likely develop breast cancer in their lifetime and more than 200,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year. When breast cancer is found early, the five-year survival rate is 96%. This is good news! Over 2 million breast cancer survivors are alive in America today.

What is Breast Cancer

Breast cancer occurs when cells in the breast begin to grow out of control and invade nearby tissues or spread throughout the body. Large collections of this out-of-control tissue are called tumors. The tumors that can spread throughout the body or invade nearby tissues are considered cancer and are called malignant tumors. Cancerous tumors in the breast usually grow very slowly; by the time one is large enough to be felt as a lump, it may have been growing for as many as ten years. However, some tumors are not cancerous because they cannot spread or threaten someone's life. These are called benign tumors. Eight out of ten breast lumps are not cancerous. If you find a lump, don't panic - call your doctor for an appointment.

Detecting Breast Cancer

An Early Breast Cancer Detection Plan should include:

- Clinical breast examinations every three years from ages 20-39, then every year thereafter, depending on previous findings.
- Monthly breast self-examinations beginning at age 20. 70% of all breast cancers are found by self-exams.
- Baseline mammogram by the age of 40. Mammogram every one to two years for women 40-49, then annual exams are recommended.
- A personal calendar to record your self-exams, mammograms, and doctor appointments.
- A low-fat diet, regular exercise, and no smoking or drinking.



Remember, if you find a lump, don't panic - call your doctor for an appointment

Lung Cancer Awareness

Although lung cancer is largely a preventable disease, it is still the leading cause of cancer death in both men and women. In this year alone, an estimated 164,000 Americans - 89,500 men and 74,600 women - will be diagnosed with the disease.

What is Lung Cancer?

Cancers that begin in the lungs are divided into two major types, depending on how the cancer cells look under a microscope. **Nonsmall cell lung cancer** is most common, and generally grows and spreads more slowly. **Small cell lung cancer**, sometimes called "oat cell cancer," is less common, but grows more quickly and is more likely to spread to other organs in the body.

What's Increasing Your Risk?

- **Cigarettes** - Carcinogens (harmful substances in cigarettes) cause lung cancer
- **Cigars and pipes** - users of these types of tobacco have a higher risk of lung cancer than nonsmokers
- **Environmental tobacco smoke** - known as "second-hand smoke;" chances of developing lung cancer are increased when exposed to high levels
- **Radon** - an invisible and odorless gas that comes from soil and rocks; can cause lung damage and lead to cancer
- **Asbestos** - Group of minerals that occur naturally as fibers, that lodge in the lungs when inhaled
- **Lung diseases** - Certain diseases like tuberculosis increase a person's chance of developing lung cancer



Encouraging behavior modification is a significant first step to ultimately reducing the number of lung cancer deaths each year. Studies have confirmed that 85 to 95 percent of lung cancers are tobacco related. Therefore, the primary way for people to reduce their risk of developing lung cancer is to quit smoking. For more information and support, call Business Health Services (BHS), your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 800-765-3277. We are here to help!