April Wellness eNews

Welcome to the April issue of Employee Wellness eNews! Read on to learn about—

Get Moving! Start Your Exercise Journey by Day 6:
• How much your wellness programs are changing their workforce's lifestyle.
• And the health-rewards of walking.

Wellness Champions

Meet Sandra Quinonez and Cristina Romero, bus operators from the Shady Grove North Depot, who are improving their coworkers' desire to move in order to be healthier. Sandi and Cristina worked together to create dance-aerobics classes at their depot as well as at other depot locations. Teaching fitness classes is a challenge in the Department of Transportation because of the cultural, age and diversity, but Sandi and Cristina keep it both high and low intensity exercise so all can join. Despite the challenges, they have built a successful fitness program.

Fitting in Exercise

Think you have no time to exercise? These strategies will help you get fit in just minutes a day.

Tips for walking:
• Change into exercise clothes before leaving work. You'll be ready for a short walk at any time.
• Break up your exercise. TV. Don't sit all the time; walk through during commercials.
• Stretch or jog in place instead.
• Only play your iPod or CD once, just a back and forth walk. If your kids love video games, think about swapping their console for the Nintendo Wii. The whole family will break a sweat using special controllers to compete at boxing, tennis, golf, and bowling.
• Exercise while you work. Relax your activity level and productivity with neck rolls or arm raises (push hands out to the side and then up toward the ceiling). Or do a few modified push-ups on the edge of your desk.

Next time you look for an excuse to skip exercise, remind yourself of the benefits. You'll be helping yourself feel good, look better, and live longer — who wouldn't want that?

Material adapted with permission from “9 Ways to Exercise...When You Don't Have the Time.”

Walk Your Way to Better Fitness

Most of us walk everywhere without even thinking about it. But did you know that walking also can improve the way you feel? By introducing a regular walking routine into your schedule, you may experience positive changes such as the following:

• Reduced blood cholesterol
• Lower blood pressure
• Increased cardiovascular endurance
• Calories burned and weight loss

Getting started
It is important to start each walk with a few easy stretches to loosen up the muscles. Walk five or ten minutes to warm up. Next, you should back your shoulders, and arms since these muscles may be used during your workout.

Walking doesn’t just help improve the way you look — it also can improve the way you feel. By introducing a regular walking routine into your schedule, you may experience positive changes such as the following:

Getting going
The Surgeon General, as well as The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and Center for Disease Control & Prevention recommend 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise per week for adults with no health concerns.

Fitting in Exercise

• Use your lunch break to walk 20 to 30 minutes. There is no need to walk all at once. Keep these helpful hints in mind when walking:
  - Walk short distances. Begin with a five-minute walk and gradually increase your distance.
  - Keep your shoulders down, back and relaxed.
  - Focus on good posture. Keep your shoulders down, back and relaxed.
  - Keep your head up and your eyes forward. Tighten your stomach a little.
  - Move your arms naturally and take deep breaths. If you have any chest pains or discomfort:
    - Slow your rate of walking. If you can talk conversely while walking:
      - You can safely continue walking. If you can’t:
        - Call your doctor. Backup your health and your eyes forward. Tighten your stomach a little.

Creating goals
Once you get into the habit of fitness walking, you may want to think about what you are trying to accomplish with your fitness walking. Set a goal for how much you want to walk each day. The best way to make sure you keep up your activity level is by setting a goal of walking a certain number of minutes each day. This can be a realistic goal, but will not be overly difficult to achieve. If you are unable to walk for thirty minutes at a time, you can divide your walking into two or more sessions throughout the day. If you are unable to walk for thirty minutes at a time, you can divide your walking into two or more sessions throughout the day.

Weight Loss: Walk at least five days per week for 45 to 60 minutes. Keep a break pace.

Learn More
www.uhctools.com/assets/1008478%20Tread%20Well,%20Feel%20Better.pdf

The employee wellness initiatives are coordinated by the Employee Wellness Program and the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). For more information on employee wellness, visit our website at www.uhctools.com or call 240-810-0909.

April 2011

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