



Well Worth It

May 1, 2009
Volume 6 Issue 5

Wellness Council of West Virginia, P.O. Box 710, Institute, WV 25112
www.wcwg.org info@wcwg.org 304-766-2686

Swine Flu

Swine flu is dominating the media, but how do you discern accurate information? The Wellness Council website, www.wcwg.org, includes a free resource entitled “**Swine Influenza and You**” providing answers to frequently asked questions about the swine flu. The flier can be found by clicking on the “Resources” link on the homepage. For additional information, visit the Centers for Disease Control’s webpage dedicated to the swine flu at http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/?s_cid=swineFlu_outbreak_internal_001. These resources provide accurate and current information on this evolving health crisis.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Swine Flu
- 1 Mental Health Month
- 2 Healthy Breakfast
- 2 Start! Walking
- 2 Upcoming Events
- 3 Good Night’s Sleep
- 3 Muscle Cramps
- 3 Bipolar Disorder
- 4 You Should Know
- 4 Stretch Your Health Care Dollars

Mental Health Month

Good mental health has many benefits, including being able to cope with the struggles you face on a daily basis. The federal government is recognizing the importance of taking care of employee’s mental health. Beginning in 2010, federal legislation will provide parity between medical/surgical and mental health/addiction benefits in healthcare plans that offer mental health coverage to companies with 50 or more employees. To learn more about mental health insurance changes visit the resources provided by the Partnership for Workplace Mental Health at <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/mentalhealthparity.aspx>

“To be able to practice five things everywhere under heaven constitutes perfect virtue... gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness.” Confucius

Are You Eating A Healthy Breakfast?

A healthy breakfast may not be as difficult as you think. Breakfast jump-starts the body and helps give it the fuel it needs for the day. Adults who eat a healthy breakfast are more likely to eat better, have more energy for morning activities, and have less fat and lower cholesterol. Many adults feel as if they do not have the time to fix a healthy breakfast. However, by thinking outside the box, you can have a quick and healthy breakfast. The Mayo Clinic provides specific examples of quick, healthy breakfast options:

- Cooked oatmeal with almonds or dried cranberries
- Cold cereal with a side of fruit
- A whole-wheat pita stuffed with hard-boiled eggs
- Leftover vegetable pizza
- Vegetables, salsa and low-fat shredded cheese wrapped in a tortilla
- A smoothie blended from exotic fruits, some low-fat yogurt and a spoonful of wheat germ
- Whole-wheat crackers with low-fat cheese or peanut butter
- A microwave potato topped with broccoli and grated Parmesan cheese
- A whole-wheat sandwich with lean meat and low-fat cheese
- Multigrain pancakes with fruit and yogurt
- A whole-grain waffle with peanut butter



Upcoming Worksite Wellness Trainings

May 19, 2009 **Worksite Wellness 101 Parkersburg, WV** (Blennerhassett Hotel)

More information and registration forms are available on our website at www.wcwg.org under the "Trainings" section on the home page. Register today!

Start! Walk for a Better You!



Join a nationwide movement sponsored by the American Heart Association called **Start!** This resources provides personalized support networks, your own personal exercise tracker, nutrition news, stretching programs, and much, much more and can be found online at www.mystartonline.org. The **Start!** Program is appealing to Americans across the country because it encourages walking - a simple exercise with major health benefits. Walking is easy for people of all ages and athletic abilities and doesn't require expensive gym equipment. The website includes resources for a **Start! Workplace program** - making it easy to motivate your employees to get healthy. Are you ready to **Start!**

A Good Night's Sleep is Good for You

Are you getting enough sleep? Experts recommend that adults get 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. Sleep is good for the body and mind. The lack of regular sleep has been linked to increased risk for anxiety, depression, heart disease, falls, and weight gain. The National Sleep Foundation questionnaire at

http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.huIXKjM0IxF/b.2419107/k.C648/How_Sleepy_are_You.htm can help you and your doctor determine if you are getting enough shut-eye. You can easily improve the quality of your sleep by setting a regular bedtime, avoiding caffeine close to bedtime and exercising regularly. Sleep is important for your body and your mind.

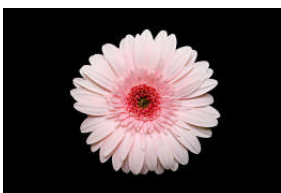


Bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder is a serious mental illness and is often known as manic – depressive illness. Adults who suffer from bipolar disorder experience dramatic mood swings – often going from an energetic “high” emotion (mania) to an irritable, sad, or hopeless feeling (depression) and then back again. Normal moods exist in between the peaks and valleys of the highs and lows.

Unexplained mood changes should be reported to your physician. Bipolar disorder is a hereditary disorder and symptoms become evident in late adolescence or early adulthood. Treatments are available for bipolar disorder and range from medication to therapy or a combination of both. Your relationships and work performance may suffer if extreme mood swings are left untreated.

National Institute of Mental Health



**“Let your food
be your
medicine and
your medicine
be your food.”**
Hippocrates



Preventing Muscle Cramps

Muscle cramps plague serious (and not so serious) athletes at some time or another. A muscle cramp is the sudden and involuntary contraction of one or more muscles. Muscle cramps can be easily prevented with a few simple measures. First avoid being dehydrated. Drinking fluids daily helps your muscles contract and relax. Second, stretch your muscles before and after any physical activity.

www.mayoclinic.com

You Should Know...

(From *Consumer Reports on Health*, Vol. 21 Number 5)

Energy Drinks

Energy drinks such as Full Throttle, Monster, or Red Bull are classified as dietary supplements by the Food and Drug Administration so the caffeine regulations for soft drinks do not apply to energy drinks. Most energy drinks contain up to 145 milligrams of caffeine for an 8 ounce serving! Too much caffeine can lead to anxiety, heart palpitations, and caffeine addiction.

Hay Fever Survival



Know what triggers your allergy symptoms and limit your exposure. Over the counter antihistamines such as *loratadine* or *cetirizine* are helpful and not as likely to cause drowsiness. Avoid the decongestant pseudoephedrine because of the side effects. Nonprescription eye drops are also available. Allergy shots are recommended if over the counter products provide little relief.

Everyday Exercise

It is recommended that everyone get 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise most days of the week. Do household chores or yard work count? Indoor housework tends to provide low-intensity exercise. However, performing these chores at a higher intensity can help. Outdoor projects can provide moderate-intensity workouts including raking leaves, splitting firewood and pushing a lawnmower. Wow! Yard work and exercise at the same time!

Stre-e-etch your Health Care Dollars

Mayo Clinic Health Letter May 2009

Many Americans turn to the emergency department for medical care - however - it is one of the most expensive options available. To stretch your health care dollars when conditions do not require emergent care try the following tips to reduce the cost of medical treatment:

- Call a 24 hour nurse line provided by your insurer
- Develop a plan of action with your doctor to seek care after hours
- Identify drop-in or urgent care centers in your area
- Take precautions - be safe when doing activities to prevent an emergency room visit in the first place.

Remember, if you experience severe shortness of breath, chest pain, sudden weakness of part of the body, uncontrolled bleeding or other sudden onset, severe symptoms - the emergency room is RIGHT for you.



Wellness Council of West Virginia

P.O. Box 710 * Institute, WV 25112

Phone: 304-766-2686

Fax: 304-766-2696

E-mail: info@wcvv.org