



Well Worth It

June 1, 2009
Volume 6 Issue 6

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

Sun Safety

As summer approaches and Americans are spending more time enjoying the outdoor sun, it is important to be mindful of things you can do to be safe in the sun. Skin cancer affects more than 1 million Americans each year. 1 in 5 Americans will be diagnosed with skin cancer at sometime in their life. There is a misconception that indoor tanning is safer than outdoor sun. The truth is the ultraviolet rays from a tanning bed are 15 times stronger than that of the sun. People who use tanning beds have an increased risk of skin cancer.



The good news is that skin cancer is one of the easiest cancers to prevent. It is important to daily use a broad spectrum sunscreen that protects against UVA and UVB rays. The higher the UV (Ultraviolet) index - the greater the chance the skin can burn. The UV Index Scale rates the UV index from 1 (low) to 11 (extreme). The higher the index, the more easily skin can burn from the sun. To find the UV Index in your area, go to www.skisafetyalliance.com and click on UV Index. A little effort now goes a long way to prevent skin cancer in the future.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Sun Safety
- 1 Caperton Award Nominations
- 2 Dining at your Desk?
- 2 Sacrificing Health in a Weak Economy
- 3 Depression in Employees
- 3 Water
- 3 Obesity & Mental Health
- 4 Obsessive-compulsive Disorder
- 4 Flip Flop Safety



Caperton Award Nominations

The deadline to submit Caperton Award Nominations has been extended to **June 15th**! To access the nomination form, visit the Wellness Council website at www.wcgv.org and click on Caperton Award.

It is time for us to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever, the one who recognizes the challenge and does something about it. Vince Lombardi

Dining at your Desk?

Did you know that almost 70% of Americans eat lunch at their desk several times a week? Many American workers work through lunch, hoping to increase productivity. Real health risks are associated with *desk dining*. First, overeating is common because workers are focused on their work – not on eating. Second, workers who sit and eat through lunch lose a valuable opportunity to move around and get their blood pumping. Third, distracted workers leave their food out longer increasing the risk of food poisoning from harmful bacteria. Lastly, many desks are a breeding ground for dirt and germs – contaminating one’s hands and food. Following these tips to make your lunch time safe, healthy and your day productive



- Watch what you eat – eat a moderate meal and do not overeat.
- Bring a healthy lunch from home and use an insulated lunch bag with a freezer pack to keep your food cold. Do not leave food out on your desk for more than two hours.
- Get up and walk when you can throughout the day.
- Disinfect your desk with disinfecting wipes once a day.
- Use a placemat to create a barrier between the food and dirty desk.
- Invite a friend or coworker to dine with you – this interaction can also increase your work productivity.
- Make an effort to have lunch in an area other than your desk – this will make you more aware of what you are eating and allow you to return to your tasks with a refreshed mental perspective.

American Dietetic Association, WebMD

Is it Wise to Sacrifice Healthy Activities in a Weakening Economy?

The slumping economy is having a negative impact on healthy habits. A recent survey by the American Heart Association revealed that of those surveyed:

- 57 percent said the economy has affected their ability to take care of their health.
- 32 percent have made a change in the last six months to save money, such as delaying preventive care appointments, not taking medications or skipping the dentist.
- 25 percent of those with gym memberships have cancelled in the previous six months.
- 42 percent plan to make changes in the next six months that may impact their health, such as buying fewer fruits and vegetables

However, resources applied toward healthy habits now can actually SAVE resources in the future. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that physically active people save \$330 per year in direct medical expenditures. Employers can save \$ every \$1 they invest on health and wellness. It pays financially and health wise for Americans to continue to make their health a priority.



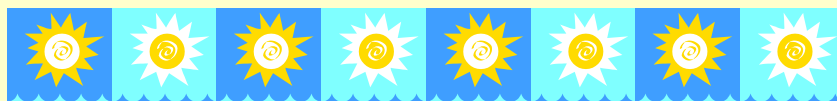
Water

Are you getting enough?

The human body is made up of over 60% water and every major system in the body is dependent on it. Lack of water leads to dehydration - but how do you know how much is enough?

Water needs vary from person to person. It is important to replace water lost through urine and perspiration. The Institute of Medicine recommends men drink 13 cups of fluids a day and women consume 9 cups of fluids daily. Food accounts for approximately 20 percent of fluid intake.

If you are exercising, pregnant, nursing, or living in a humid climate - your water intake should be adjusted to accommodate these factors. Depending on "feeling thirsty" is not an adequate way to determine if you are getting enough fluids each day.



Depression & Your Employees

How does depression affect employees? Depression among employees affects productivity, judgment, the ability to work with others, inability to concentrate or make decisions and increased absenteeism.

How can a supervisor help? Supervisors can become educated about depression resources including programs available through the company's health insurance plan. Record or document changes in work performance and discuss them with the employee. Do not try to diagnose the employee's health problems. If possible, offer flexible scheduling as the employee seeks treatment. Discussions with employees should always be kept confidential. Remember - depression can be successfully treated with the right combination of medications, therapies and treatment.

National Institute of Mental Health

Obesity & Mental Health

Recent research published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* suggests that one in four people who see a physician for obesity are also suffering from mental health problems.

Doctors can look at obesity as a symptom and include a mental health component of a comprehensive exercise, nutritional education and weight-loss plan. Many Americans with weight problems need to feel better and treat the mental health problems before they are able to lose weight.

Wellsourc

*"What is defeat? Nothing
but education; nothing
but the first step to
something better."*

Wendell Phillips 1811 - 1884

Obsessive-compulsive Disorder

Obsessive-compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a type of anxiety disorder characterized by repeated thoughts, images, impulses, or urges causing a person to perform associated rituals over and over. People with significant symptoms of OCD devote more than one hour a day to these rituals (for example an OCD patient with a fear of germs may wash their VERY frequently). Talk therapy and medications are available to treat OCD and bring the symptoms under control. If left untreated, OCD can lead to other mental health problems including depression, substance abuse and suicidal thoughts.

HeathLetter.MayoClinic.com Vol. 27 Number 5

Flip Flop Safety

With summer approaching and the temperature rising - many Americans are trading in their snow boots for flip flops. Podiatrists with the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) see many injuries due to flip flops that could be prevented. The APMA provides the following Do's and Don'ts for your foot safety this summer.

DO'S

- Do look for flip-flops that hold APMA's Seal of Acceptance, such as Sole Platinum Sandals. Evaluated by a committee of APMA podiatrists, these products are shown to allow for the most normal foot function and promote quality health.
- Do gently bend the flip-flop from end to end, ensuring it bends at the ball of the foot. Shoes of any kind should *never* fold in half.
- Do wear a sturdy pair of flip-flops when walking around a public pool, at the beach, in hotel rooms and in locker room areas. Walking barefoot can expose foot soles to plantar warts and athlete's foot.
- Do ensure that your foot doesn't hang off the edge of the flip-flop.



DON'TS

- Don't re-wear flip-flops year after year. Inspect older pairs for wear. If they show signs of severe wear, discard them.
- Don't ignore irritation between toes, where the toe thong fits. This can lead to blisters and possible infections.
- Don't wear flip-flops while walking long distances. Even the sturdiest flip-flops offer little in terms of shock absorption and arch support.
- Don't do yard work while wearing flip-flops. Always wear a shoe that fully protects feet when doing outside activities such as mowing the lawn or using a weed-eater.
- Don't play sports in flip-flops. This practice can lead to twisting of the foot or ankle, as well as sprains and breaks.

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