

Wellness Newsletter

Risk & Benefits Management

November 2009

Are you ready to quit smoking?

You know that you should quit using tobacco-whether you're smoking or using chewing tobacco or snuff-so why put it off? It's sapping your health, draining your wallet and leaving you behind in a world that is increasingly becoming tobacco free. So, set a date to quit your tobacco habit-and stick to it. Take charge of your habit and your health! **These tips can help in your effort to improve your health:**

- Go "cold turkey." A slow withdrawal is less successful.
- Make a "no-strings" commitment. More than 90 percent of people who quit successfully do it alone that is, they don't make a pact with a fellow-quitter. If you team up with a buddy, his or her failure might make it easier for you to fail, too.
- Reward yourself. Set goals-a day, a week, a month tobacco free-and do something nice for yourself when you meet each goal.
- Spread the word. Let everyone know that you're quitting. This will confirm your commitment and the encouragement from those around you will lift your spirits.
- Talk to your physician about aids for quitting. The nicotine patch has helped 20 percent of people who quit and nicotine gum has helped 25 percent. Nicotine lozenges, sprays and inhalers also are available. And, ask your doctor if prescription medications are right for you.
- Consider speaking with a counselor or joining a support group. A little moral support from someone who understands can really help when your willpower is weakening.

Accept the Great AmericanSmoke-out Challenge! Quitting smoking is not easy, but it can be done. To have the best chance of quitting successfully, you need to know what you're up against, what your options are, and where to go for help. For more information on resources please call 561-434-8044.

START! Fit Friendly Company

In October the Palm Beach County School District was recognized as a Gold Level Recipient of the American Heart Association's **Start! Fit-Friendly Companies** Recognition program. The **Start! Fit-Friendly Companies** Program is a catalyst for positive change in American business. Companies throughout the nation can be part of the **Start!** movement by demonstrating progressive leadership by making the health and wellness of their employees a priority. The School District was recognized as a Gold Level **Start!** Fit Friendly Company by the American Heart Association **Start!** Movement for fulfilling the following parameters:

- Offer employees physical activity support
- Increase healthy eating options at the worksite
- Promote a wellness culture
- Implement at least nine criteria as outlined by the AHA in the areas of physical activity, nutrition, and culture

We are extremely honored and very excited to be recognized by the American Heart Association's **Start!** Movement as a Gold Level **Start! Fit-Friendly Company**. Physical activity and employee wellness are very important priorities here at school district and we encourage all of our employees to be active in our ongoing programs. For more information about **START!** please visit:

<http://www.americanheart.org/>

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Wellness at Work:

- o Seasonal Flu Shots
- o Community Events

www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/wellness

"To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong."



Healthy Link:
SparkPeople

<http://www.sparkpeople.com/>
Log on to lose it!

Worth Reading:
Eat Healthy Feel Great!
A children's health book
by Dr. Sears

Are you at Risk for Pre-Diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes can develop at any age. Diabetes, while manageable, can put you at risk for a number of health conditions, including kidney disease, vision problems, heart disease and stroke. Researchers have found it almost always is preceded by a condition called pre-diabetes. In pre-diabetes, blood-glucose levels are higher than normal, but not quite high enough to warrant a diabetes diagnosis. The good news is, if pre-diabetes is detected early enough, you can take steps to prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes. **Who Gets Pre-Diabetes?** There are factors that may put some people at a greater risk for pre-diabetes. These include being age 45 or older, having a family history of diabetes, undesirable cholesterol levels or high blood pressure, or being overweight or inactive. Certain ethnic groups seem to have an increased risk as well. But, anyone can develop pre-diabetes. Your doctor can help assess your risk. **How Is It Diagnosed?** There are two different tests that doctors commonly use to diagnose pre-diabetes. Both generally require that you fast—or refrain from eating—for a period of time. Then, your doctor will check your glucose levels either before you eat or after you drink a sugary substance. **What Can You Do?** Being diagnosed with pre-diabetes gives you the opportunity to take action now to delay Type 2 diabetes. Many people can get great results through lifestyle changes. **If you've been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, your doctor may recommend the following:**

- **Exercise**—Staying active is a great way to turn back the clock on diabetes. Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity can make a difference. Work with your doctor to develop a healthy exercise program for you.
- **Weight Loss**—A five to 10 percent reduction in body weight may help prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes significantly. Your doctor can help you set a realistic weight loss goal—and provide tips for achieving and maintaining it.
- **Routine Monitoring**—Regular blood sugar screenings allow your doctor to monitor your diabetes risk. If the condition does develop, you'll have the advantage of early detection.

Getting a Good Night's Rest

All of us have a sleepless night once in a while. But for some, getting a good night's sleep and feeling well-rested can be a continual struggle. If it usually takes you more than 20 minutes to fall asleep, if you wake in the middle of the night unable to get back to sleep or if you tend to feel drowsy during the day, you may be suffering from insomnia. Insomnia can last for one night or go on for months, and can be caused by a variety of factors, including:

- Stress
- Chronic pain
- Caffeine
- Smoking
- Medication side effects
- Allergies

Instead of tossing and turning, try these tips to get a good night's rest:

- Don't try to force sleep. If you can't fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up and try to relax by stretching, or reading a book—but avoid mysteries or thrillers that may keep you up.
- Your worries sometimes can keep you awake. If you just can't get something out of your mind, jot down your thoughts and possible solutions before bedtime.
- Try to wake up and go to sleep at the same time every day—even on weekends.
- Avoid napping during the day—this can lead to restlessness at night.
- Make your bed and bedroom as comfortable as possible. Clean sheets, a comfortable temperature and a well-ventilated room can help you sleep soundly.
- If a noisy neighbor or traffic is keeping you awake, create “white noise” with a fan to drown it out.
- Avoid caffeine in the late afternoon or evening—remember that some medications also contain caffeine.
- Don't use alcohol to try to get to sleep.
- Take a warm shower or bath before going to bed.
- Don't eat or smoke right before bedtime.
- Relaxation exercises such as stretching and deep breathing may help you sleep—but avoid vigorous exercise right before bed.

Getting a good night's sleep is important for your physical health and emotional well-being. Be sure to tell your doctor about repeated bouts of insomnia. He or she can discuss sleep techniques that may be helpful to you. *Source: UnitedHealthcare*

Find fun ways to get the water your body needs every day.

- Drink water out of a martini or other fun glass.
- Add lemon or lime for a twist
- Put cold water and ice in a decorated thermos.
- Drink water with a crazy straw.
- Freeze water in fun-shaped ice cube trays. Add ice from these to your glass of water or other beverages.
- Put lemon slices in water before freezing.



Healthy Holiday Eating

Have a Safe, Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving!



Do you know that the average Thanksgiving dinner has over 2000 calories? It can be a real challenge if you are watching your waistline. But you can still be healthy without having to deprive yourself.

Good food and the holiday season just seem to go together. Indulging in delicious meals with family and friends can cause even the most health-conscious people to forget smart eating habits. Remember—eating healthy doesn't have to mean missing out on holiday fun. You don't even have to give up your favorite foods. Careful planning and eating in moderation can help you enjoy your favorite dishes—guilt-free.

Foods high in fats and sugar can slow you down and cause you to gain unwanted pounds. Vegetables, fruits and whole grains boost your immune system and give you much-needed energy to juggle all the activities of the season. Keep these tips in mind when planning your holiday meals:

- Stock up on satisfying, healthy snacks for yourself and visitors. Try raw broccoli, peppers, cucumbers, celery and carrots; hummus and pita bread; or low-fat cheeses and crackers. Nibbling on these can take the edge off your hunger and help you resist sweet temptations.
- Make healthy substitutions for some less nutritious ingredients in your favorite dishes. Use fat-free sour cream or yogurt for dips; evaporated skim milk in sauces and soups; spices and herbs instead of salt; and whole-wheat flour instead of white flour.
- Bake stuffing outside the turkey to cut down on fat and calories, and avoid bacteria. If you must stuff your bird, do it just before you put it in the oven. Use onions and celery in the stuffing instead of sausage. Instead of butter or oils, use applesauce for added moisture.
- Cook with unsaturated fats such as light oils and soft margarine. Use vegetable cooking spray for stir-frying. Don't go into automatic—consider using less or eliminating these fats completely.
- Be realistic. Find a compromise between eliminating all the holiday goodies from your diet and indulging in an unlimited amount. Make that piece of pie a sliver. Grab two cookies instead of a handful. Save up your dessert calories for one favorite dish instead of snacking throughout the day.

Whether you and your family are sitting down to a beautiful table, or your busy schedule has you eating on the run, don't forget that how you eat can be as important as what you eat.

- Don't starve yourself before the big meal. This can lead to overeating.
- Don't rush. Eating slowly and enjoying your meal allows for easier digestion.
- Take a walk with family or friends after the meal. Don't head right for the sofa! *Source:UHC*

Stay Healthy –Annual Eye Exam

See for yourself the benefits of preventive eye care.

When was your last eye exam? If you're like most Americans, it may have been a while since you visited the eye doctor. Even if you don't use corrective eyewear, you could be missing out on important information about your health.

Comprehensive eye exams complement your wellness routine by giving the doctor an unobstructed view of blood vessels in the eye. This allows the doctor to see the early signs of serious health conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure, as well as the onset of eye diseases such as glaucoma and macular degeneration. In turn, early diagnosis of these diseases contributes to more successful treatment.

Plus, your EyeMed vision plan saves you money on eye exams and eyewear, if you need it. We make it easy for you to take care of your eyes and your whole body.

Do it for yourself. Schedule an eye exam and get the whole story about your health. Visit www.eyemedvisioncare.com to locate a provider, or to learn more about the impact of vision care on your health. Eye care...it's important!



Getting your eyes checked is one of the best ways to help them stay healthy.



Contact Us

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Annual Employee Benefits Enrollment!

November 2- November 20
www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/risk

If you have any questions please call Risk & Benefits Management at 561-434-8580.

UnitedHealthcare-Health Discounts

Would you like to look better, feel better and save money? Our health discount program helps you and your family save 10 percent to 50 percent on many health and wellness purchases not included in your standard health benefit plan. Save on these wellness resources to help you live a healthier life:

- Weight Management Programs
- Nutrition Counseling
- Fitness Clubs from the nationwide GlobalFit Network
- Fitness equipment and apparel
- Natural products and foods
- Stress reduction and relaxation resources
- Smoking cessation programs

Link to the health discount program from www.myuhc.com. Click on the Health & Wellness tab. Then, scroll down and click on Exclusive Health Discounts. To search for a provider or program, select a category (such as Alternative Care). Be sure to print the discount confirmation or when making an appointment identify yourself as a UnitedHealth Allies discount program member. If you need more information please call the customer care number on your member ID card.

UnitedHealthcare



Healthy Recipe- Pumpkin Flan

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup(s) unpacked brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/8 tsp table salt
- 16 oz canned pumpkin
- 1 cup(s) fat-free evaporated milk
- 1/4 cup(s) orange juice
- 3/4 cup(s) fat-free egg substitute
- 8 tbsp lite whipped topping
- 1/2 medium orange(s), cut into 8 thin wedges

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- Stir together sugar, cinnamon, cloves, cayenne and salt in a large bowl. Whisk in pumpkin, milk, orange juice and egg substitute; divide among eight 6-ounce custard cups.
- Set custard cups in a high-rimmed roasting pan and pour boiling water around them to a depth of 1 inch. Bake until firm around edges and slightly puffed, about 45 minutes. Remove cups from water (careful not to burn yourself), cool completely, cover and refrigerate. Before serving, top each cup with a tablespoon of whipped topping and an orange wedge.



Source: Weight Watchers

Wellness Champions

Thanks to all Wellness

Champions for making a difference!

Want to get involved and be a wellness champion?

Please contact me!

Wellness Champions receive recognition, and incentives for participation!

Thanks for your support!

Corporate Care Works-Handling the Economic Crisis

I feel completely overwhelmed by my debts and don't know where to begin. What should I do?

Take a deep breath and realize that for the most part, your creditors want to help you. Whether you're behind on your bills or are afraid of getting behind, call your creditors. Let them know what's going on -- job loss, divorce, medical problem or other troubles -- and ask for help. Suggest possible solutions such as a temporary reduction of your payments, skipping a few payments and tacking them on at the end of a loan, skipping a few payments and paying them off over a few months, dropping late fees and other charges or even rewriting a loan. If you need help negotiating with your creditors, consider contacting a non-profit debt counseling organization, such as Myvesta.org (formerly Debt Counselors of America) or a local Consumer Credit Counseling Service office.

For additional resources and assistance in developing a personal plan please contact our Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-327-975.

