



Wellness and Safety

news

April 2010

Monthly Newsletter for the Employer

2010 National Health Observances



April

Foot Health Awareness Month
"Look Out For Your Feet!"



National Cancer Control Month
"Don't Forget Your Screenings!"



National Autism Awareness Month
"Give Some Support!"



Sexual Assault Awareness Month
"Protect Yourself!"



World Tai Chi & Qijong Day
"Relax Yourself With Martial Arts"



Foot Health Awareness

Proper Shoes in the Workplace

Administrators! Looking for ways to reduce Workers' Comp claims? Foot safety is a big factor. Below is a great article about why you may consider treading carefully on overly lenient policies.

Our feet bear the brunt of many health and safety incidents and can be injured sufficiently to leave us unable to work for some time. We can place health and safety at risk because we do not wear the most suitable footwear for the activities we are performing.



What are some risks of wearing inappropriate shoes at work?

- Fractures and bruises from being struck by objects, kicking objects or being stood on by someone
- Crush injuries from falling objects being dropped onto our feet
- Penetration wounds from sharp objects being stood on or dropped onto your feet
- Burns from chemical spills and burns from hot liquids or solids
- Sprains, strains, bruises and fractures—can range from minor to serious
- Wearing inappropriate footwear such as shoes with slippery soles, poorly secured shoes (thongs or ill-fitting sandals), loose soles or laces, unstable heels or unsecured tongues

What can each staff member do to ensure they wear safe footwear in the workplace?

- Wear shoes that are appropriate for the activity you are doing
- Buy good shoes with a broad heel and good support

- Wear a sole that grips the surface you walk on, such as rubber or synthetic material with a raised pattern (leather soles are generally more slippery)
- See your doctor or podiatrist about any problems you have with your feet
- Never buy shoes that require 'breaking in'. Good shoes should fit comfortably and properly

In Addition:

- Appropriate foot protection shall be required for employees who are exposed to foot injuries from electrical hazards, hot, corrosive, poisonous substances, falling objects, crushing & penetrating actions, and wet locations
- Protective footwear for employees purchased after January 12, 1995 shall meet the requirements and specifications in the American National Standard for Personal Protection-Protective Footwear



Consider your comfort and safety when purchasing the shoes you will be wearing at work!

National Cancer Control Month

APRIL

CANCER
AWARENESS

Cancer Control
Month

April is National Cancer Control Month. Cancer control efforts encourage healthy lifestyles, promote cancer screening, increase access to quality cancer care, and improve quality of life for cancer survivors. As the HR Administrator, employee wellness and health can be driven from your department. Below are some great tips tying in April as National Cancer Month, with ways you can address your workforce.

Implement a Workplace Wellness Program

A wise company knows that its success is dependent upon its most valuable resource: its employees. Wellness programs are springing up throughout our country today. To maintain and improve the health of the work force and to lower medical costs and sick leave, employers across the country are implementing health and wellness programs. These programs are fast becoming a key differentiator that attracts new employees and retains key members. An effective wellness program can improve the health status of employees, reduce medical costs and create a culture of good health. Employee wellness can affect a company's performance and the bottom line. Employees who are preoccupied with symptoms and ailments are less likely to perform to their full potential. In an effort to help employees become healthier, some companies are offering a variety of programs aimed at getting employees to quit smoking, lose weight, eat healthier and manage healthy cholesterol and blood pressure levels, as well as screening tests and vaccine shots to prevent employees from developing a more costly chronic



condition. Eating a healthy diet may reduce your risk of developing cancer and other serious illnesses. A healthy diet includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk products, lean meats, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts and is also low in salt and added sugars. Increasing your activity; Physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of colon, breast, and other cancers. Increasing your physical activity may help reduce your risk of developing these cancers.

Sources of Help

Visit www.smokefree.gov or call NCI's Smoking Quitline at 1-877-44U-QUIT for assistance to support your needs as you become a nonsmoker.

Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov – this site was created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in partnership with the National Cancer Institute and others, you can calculate your personal fruit and vegetable needs, find healthy fruit and vegetable recipes, and learn new ideas for eating fruits and vegetables.

Visit www.cancer.gov/ncicancerbulletin - This *NCI Cancer Bulletin* article reports findings and recommendations about physical activity and cancer control. Small steps can make a difference. Researchers found that cancer survivors improved their quality of life by taking 30-minute walks three times a week.

Visit <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/physical-activity-ga> - This fact sheet answers questions about how physical activity is related to health and the relationship between physical activity and some cancers.



Autism Awareness

Want to get involved with the autism community this April? Be sure you tell your staff about ways to show support this month by joining the Autism Society in wearing the ribbon, texting, and more!

In order to highlight the growing need for concern and awareness about autism, the Autism Society has been celebrating National Autism Awareness Month since the 1970s. The United States recognizes April as a special opportunity for everyone to educate the public about autism and issues within the autism community.

Put on the Puzzle! The Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon is the most recognized symbol of the autism community in the world. Autism prevalence is now one in every 110 children in America - that's 13 million families and growing who live with autism today. Show your support for people with autism by wearing the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon this month – as a pin on your shirt, a magnet on your car, a badge on your blog, or even your Facebook profile picture - and educate folks on the potential of people with autism!

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a range of complex neurodevelopment disorders, characterized by social impairments, communication difficulties, and restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior. Autistic disorder, sometimes called autism or classical ASD, is the most severe form of ASD, while other conditions along the spectrum include a milder form known as Asperger syndrome, the rare condition called Rett syndrome, and childhood disintegrative disorder and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (usually referred to as PDD-NOS). Individuals with autism symptoms vary significantly in character and severity.



For suggestions and resources, visit www.autism-society.org/ribbon.

World Tai Chi & QiJong Day

April 24, 2010

Sexual Assault
Awareness Month

Tai Chi: Promote & Discover the Many Possible Health Benefits

If you are looking for another way to reduce stress in your office, consider Tai Chi. Remember the last Saturday in April marks World Tai Chi Day!

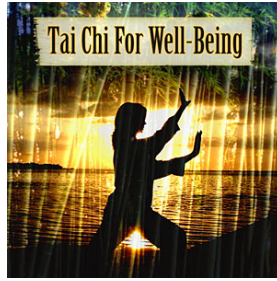


[By Mayo Clinic staff](#)

The ancient art of Tai Chi (TIE-chee) uses gentle flowing movements to reduce stress. Tai Chi is sometimes described as "meditation in motion" because it promotes serenity through gentle movements — connecting the mind and body. Originally developed in ancient China for self-defense, tai chi evolved into a graceful form of exercise that's now used for stress reduction and to help with a variety of other health conditions.

Understanding Tai Chi

Tai Chi, also called tai chi chuan, is a noncompetitive, self-paced system of gentle physical exercise and stretching. To do Tai Chi, you perform a series of postures or movements in a slow, graceful manner. Each posture flows into the next without pause, ensuring that your body is in constant motion.



Tai Chi Classes in the Workplace

Employers are investing in these programs for their employees. These companies are finding that after a few weeks of group fitness there is improvement in productivity and a decrease in absenteeism. Surprisingly, the timeless holistic fitness system of tai chi meets the modern criteria for keeping all employees healthy in mind, body, and spirit. At the same time it complies with the needs of the bottom line of a company. Tai chi can be inexpensively implemented. A program of tai chi is very simple to start in a work place. All that is needed is a qualified instructor and your employees. On a practical note, there is no need for expensive gymnasiums, equipment, showers, or uniforms. An employee can come dressed in work attire and flat shoes to class. Classes of forty-five minute or an hour refresh, relax, and re-energize people without the pain or strain of other kinds of exercise programs.

A tai chi class can be held in the morning before work, at lunchtime, or after the workday. These formal classes should be done at least one time a week for a minimum of twelve weeks. Daily group practice is encouraged; usually fifteen minutes is sufficient. The mini-breaks that most companies provide workers can be interspersed throughout the day and this time can be used for relaxing and re-energizing the worker. Today the enemy may be fatigue, stress, overwork or lack of understanding of 'self.' When incorporated into the workplace, most managers will see immediate improvement with the employees who are enrolled in tai chi classes.



The month of April has been designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). The goal of SAAM is to raise public awareness about sexual violence (focusing on sexual assault and rape) and to educate communities, individuals and your workforce on how to prevent sexual violence.

By working together and pooling our resources during the month of April, we can highlight sexual violence as a major public health issue and reinforce the need for prevention efforts.

- Workplace sexual assault includes increasingly aggressive harassment, exploitation, indecency, and attempted or completed rape. It can be perpetrated by a co-worker, a client or customer, a stalker, a stranger or by an intimate partner or family member as a spillover of domestic violence.
- Sometimes sexual assault in the workplace is less intrusive or visible, consisting of unwanted contact, groping or fondling. Sometimes it is violent and traumatic. Either way, it is a criminal act and harmful to the victim.
- Formal and informal structures of many organizations remain male-centered and emphasize sex boundaries in friend and work relations. This denies women of their voice and their ability to end inappropriate language and behavior. Such an environment is conducive to harassment and assault, even if it does not overtly encourage it.



What Can You Do?

Employers should take responsibility for ensuring a safer workplace by providing sexual assault training for employees and management. Also, employers should investigate complaints, use threat assessment tools, have clear-cut and enforceable policies and codes of conduct, and take legal and disciplinary action if necessary. As employers, you can also provide resources and referrals for victims, help create workplace safety plans for at-risk employees, allow changes in work routines and job location and provide personal leave options.

Sexual assault in any setting is traumatic. A workplace experience may result in risks to the victim's privacy, career prospects and even livelihood. Employers need to work with employees, Employee Assistance Programs and law enforcement to create safer workplace environments.

SEMINAR UPDATE



HEALTH CARE TODAY:

Reform Update on Employee Benefit Plans & Workers' Compensation Cost Control



When: Tuesday, April 27, 2010

Time: 7:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Presented by

Where: DSI Office
22110 Clarendon St.
Suite 201
Woodland Hills, CA 91367



Cost: Complimentary for CEOs,
CFOs & HR Professionals

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You will learn how the Health Care Reform impacts employers and how to manage the rising costs of Employee Benefits and Workers' Compensation!



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DSI would like to thank Prudential for its sponsorship of this event



For more information or registration please call Ed Ligonde at (818) 676-0044, email him at ed@dsinsuranceservices.com or visit our website at www.dsinsuranceservices.com and click on "Seminars and Workshops"

Client Corner



Calling all HR Administrators! Looking for a great team-building event? Looking for a fun new spice for a Wellness Campaign? Or are you simply looking for a great cause to support? Consider putting together a Walking Team and joining the 3rd Annual Walk for Wishes presented by the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Greater Los Angeles.

Brighten children's lives, one step at a time.

Wish child
Genesis,
age 4



Improve your health and wellness as you
share the power of a wish®

Saturday, May 15 at Mattel in El Segundo

www.wishla.org/walk



Dreams Joy Hope Courage Life Strength Joy Courage Inspiration Life Hope Dreams Joy Strength
Life Courage Hope Dreams Joy Strength



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Wellness and Safety

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[April is Foot Health Awareness Month!](#)

Look Out For Your Feet

Why do people with diabetes have to take care of their feet more than those with no diabetes?

According to the American Diabetes Association by the time type 2 diabetes is diagnosed, 50% of patients already show early signs of foot complications. People with diabetes are 5 times more likely to develop "peripheral neuropathy" (nerve damage in extremities) than the general population. Checking feet daily and having a doctor examine the feet can help prevent serious complications.

Find yourself running to the post office? April 15th is tax day. If that day seems to sneak up on you, and you find yourself running to the post office and bounding up the post office steps only to stand in a long post office line, you are not alone. Hopefully you will not have to stand in one place for a long period of time because that could put you at risk for developing plantar fasciitis.

Plantar fasciitis occurs when there is increased stress on the arch, microscopic tears can occur within the plantar fascia, usually at its attachment on the heel. This results in inflammation and pain with standing and walking and sometimes at rest. It usually causes pain and stiffness on the bottom of your heel.

There are many other foot and ankle problems such as a bunion, which is an enlargement on the side of the foot near the base of the big toe. Bunions can be painful and aggravated when wearing tight shoes.

A **neuroma** is in the foot; a nerve that becomes irritated and swells up. If the nerve stays irritated, it can become thickened which makes the nerve larger and causes more irritation. Pain from a neuroma is usually felt on the ball of your foot.

Athlete's foot is a common skin condition that can affect everyone, not just athletes. It is caused by a fungus. It may cause redness, itchiness, tiny bumps filled with fluid or peeling skin. It is most commonly located between the toes or on the bottom of the feet.

Now you have made it your goal to get back in shape. Things were going well until you started to notice a pain in your foot. Like most people, you thought the pain would go away, but it has continued. Visit your nearest podiatrist; the specialty that diagnoses and treats injuries and deformities of the foot and ankle. That will help you solve your foot problem.



Source: *The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA)* <http://www.apma.org>



Don't Forget Your Screenings!

[April is Cancer Control Month!](#)

TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT CANCER SCREENINGS

Cancer screenings may help lower your risk of developing certain cancers or find cancer early, when it may be most treatable. You should talk with your healthcare professional about appropriate cancer screening tests.

Your carrier may pay for these cancer-related wellness screenings:

For Women:

- Mammograms are optional until age 49. Recommended every year beginning at age 50.
- Clinical Breast Exams are recommended every 3 years for women age 19 to 39 and recommended every year beginning at age 40.
- Pap Smear & Chlamydia Testing is recommended every 3 years starting at age 18.
- Human Papillomavirus Vaccine is recommended at age 12 in a 3-dose series.

For Men:

- Prostate Cancer Screening is optional starting at age 30 to 45 and recommended every year beginning at age 45.

For Women & Men:

- Colorectal Cancer Screening is not recommended until age 50 and recommended every five years





TOP 10 SAFETY TIPS



1. Awareness: Your first line of defence. Most people think of kicks to the groin and blocking punches. Be aware of yourself, your surroundings, and your potential attacker's likely strategies. The criminal's primary strategy is to use the advantage of surprise. By being aware of your surroundings and by projecting a "force presence," many altercations which are commonplace on the street can be avoided.

2. Use your sixth sense. "Gut instinct." Whatever you call it, your intuition is a powerful subconscious insight into situations and people. All of us, especially women, have this gift, but very few of us pay attention to it. **Learn to trust this power and use it to your full advantage.**

3. Self-defense training. It is important to evaluate the goals and practical usefulness of a women's self-defense program before signing up. **Here are two tips:**

a) **Avoid martial arts studios** unless you specifically wish to train in the traditional martial arts techniques and are prepared for a long-term commitment. Many women's self-defense programs teach watered-down martial arts techniques that are complex and unrealistic under the stress of an actual attack;

b) **The self-defense program should include simulated assaults,** with a fully padded instructor in realistic rape and attack scenarios, to allow you to practice what you've learned.

4. Escape: Always your best option. What if the unthinkable happens? You are suddenly con-

fronted by a predator who demands that you go with him. It would seem prudent to obey, but **never leave the primary crime scene.** You are far more likely to be killed or injured if you go with the predator than if you run away (even if he promises not to hurt you). Run away, yell for help, throw a rock through a store or car window—do whatever you can to attract attention.

5. Your right to fight. Unfortunately, no matter how diligently we practice awareness and avoidance techniques, we may find ourselves in a physical altercation. **It is important to understand that you SHOULD defend yourself physically.** You have both the moral and legal right to do so. Aim for the eyes first and the groin second. Remember to use the element of surprise to your advantage—strike quickly, and mean business. You may only get one chance.

6. Pepper spray: Pros and cons. Pepper spray, like other self-defence aids, can be a useful tool. However, it is important to understand that there can be significant drawbacks to its use. For example, did you know that it doesn't work on everyone? Surprisingly, 15-20% of people will not be incapacitated even by a full-face spray. Also, if you're carrying it in your purse, you will only waste time and alert the attacker to your intentions while you fumble for it.

Never depend on any self-defense tool or weapon to stop an attacker. Trust your body and your wits, which you can always

depend on.

7. Home invasions:

A crime on the rise.

The primary way to

prevent a home

invasion is simply to

never, ever open your

door unless you either are certain you know

who's on the other side or can verify that

they have a legitimate reason for being

there. In the event that an intruder breaks

in while you're home, you should run to a

safe room in your house. Such room should

be equipped with a strong door, deadbolt

lock, phone, and a can of pepper spray.

8. Avoiding a car-jacking. Lock all doors and

keep windows up when driving. Most car-

jackings take place when vehicles are

stopped at intersections. The criminals ap-

proach at a 45-degree angle (in the blind

spot), and either pull you out of the driver's

seat or jump in the passenger's seat.

9. A travel tip. Violent crimes against

women happen in the best and worst hotels

around the world. Predators may play the

part of a hotel employee, push their way

through an open or unlocked door, or obtain

a pass key to the room.

10. Safety in cyberspace. The Internet can

also be full of danger if one isn't careful.

When communicating on-line, use a nick-

name and always keep personal information

such as home address and phone number

confidential. Instruct family members the

same.



...A Great Relaxation Idea

Why Give Tai Chi A Try?

Despite its long history, tai chi has been studied scientifically only in recent years. And although more research is needed, preliminary evidence suggests that tai chi may offer numerous benefits beyond stress reduction, including:

- Improving balance, flexibility and muscle strength
- Reducing falls in older adults
- Improving sleep quality
- Lowering blood pressure
- Improving cardiovascular fitness in older adult
- Relieving chronic pain
- Increasing energy, endurance and agility
- Improving overall feelings of well-being

Wondering how to get started in tai chi? Consider seeking guidance from a qualified tai chi instructor to gain the full benefits and learn proper techniques.

World Tai Chi Day
April 24, 2010

