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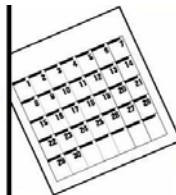
Wellness & Safety

Get In Shape For Summer

news 
Monthly Newsletter for the Employer

May 2010

2010 National Health Observances



*National Bike
Month*



*National Employee
Health & Fitness
Day*



*World No Tobacco
Day*



*National Allergy
Month*

Clean Air Month

National Employee Health & Fitness Day

May 19, 2010

What Are You Doing For Your Employees' Health And Fitness Needs?

Benefits for Employers:

- Enhanced employee productivity
- Improved health care costs management
- Decreased rates of illness and injuries
- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Develops employee leadership skills

Benefits for Employees:

- Lowers levels of stress
- Increased well-being, self-image and self-esteem and improved physical fitness
- Increased stamina
- Potential weight reduction

Benefits for the Community:

- Your community is more competitive in the global market place

National Employee Health & Fitness Day™ is the third (3rd) Wednesday in May each year. Administered annually by the National Association for Health & Fitness, NEHF is a national health observance, created to promote the benefits of physical activity for individuals through their work site health promotion activities. Founded in 1989 National Employee Health and Fitness Day has enlisted tens of thousands of participants from employers around the world.



Source: <http://www.physicalfitness.org/>





CLEAN AIR MONTH

Healthy Air at Work

Source: <http://www.lungusa.org/healthy-air/work/>

Employees should be safe while on the job; that includes protecting the health of their lungs. Dirty air in the workplace threatens workers' lives.

Healthy air quality is an important element of any safe work environment. Do you think there might be an air quality problem in your workplace?

Signs to Potential Problems

Do you think the air in your workplace may be unhealthy? Learn how management can ensure everyone breathes healthy air on the job.

Depending on the industry, workers may be at risk from exposure to tobacco smoke, carbon monoxide, allergens, bacteria, viruses, and chemicals that build up indoors. Workers may also be exposed to airborne contaminants on the job such as dusts, welding fumes, gases, solvent vapors and mists.

If you suspect your workplace has unhealthy air, take these three steps:

1. Let your supervisor and building management know there may be a problem. Follow the usual and proper steps to alert them, as you may need to document the steps you took later.
2. Tell your health care provider about your symptoms. Report the symptoms to your company's health or safety officer. The state or local health department may also need to be informed. Ask the health or safety officer if you should do that yourself.
3. Work with management as they investigate the problem. The process may take longer than anyone wants because the underlying problems may be difficult to identify.

4. Clean up water spills and report leaks immediately.
5. Be aware of the hazards and safe handling procedures for materials on the job. This information must be available to you and usually is provided in Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), employer instructions and container warning labels.
6. Let your supervisor or building maintenance staff know immediately if you suspect a problem with the air indoors.

Make sure that the air in your office can circulate freely. Keep air vents open. Do not put papers, furniture or equipment in front of or on top of vents. The building's heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems should be well designed, maintained and operated.

For more information, see the guides under **Trusted Links** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Investigating the Problem.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has guidelines for investigating workplace indoor air complaints. The guidelines include the following steps:

1. Employer & employee interviews. Questions are asked about health complaints and potential sources (such as heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems). Other questions explore recent changes (such as remodeling or operations changes) that may have caused problems. For employees, questions are asked about their health complaints and symptoms, as well as their medical and work histories.
2. Walk-around inspection. Inspecting the heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems is an important step, as many of indoor air problems involve those systems. The inspection looks for potential indoor problem sources, as well as outdoor sources that may be brought indoors via the ventilation system.
3. Collection of air samples. Sometimes—though not always—samples of the air in the workplace can help identify the problem. Sampling the air should not be the first or only step taken, however.

How can you prevent unhealthy air at work?

The best way to guard against harm is to prevent or minimize the sources of indoor air pollution. Employers are responsible for providing safe work conditions, including healthy air.

1. Make sure your work place is smoke free.
2. Store food properly. Dispose of garbage correctly and regularly.
3. Do not bring in products or chemicals that have strong odors or could give off harmful emissions.



WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

May 31, 2010

Source: <http://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/2009/en/index.html>

The Member States of the World Health Organization created World No Tobacco Day in 1987. The day is observed every year on May 31st. It draws global attention to the tobacco epidemic and to the preventable death and disease tobacco causes. It aims to reduce the 3.5 million yearly deaths from tobacco-related health problems. It is a unique opportunity to engage people, countries, organizations and other groups in the struggle against tobacco.

Employers concerned about their employees may be able to improve their health and help them be more productive by creating a smoke-free workplace. Many state and local governments now require workplaces to be smoke-free. Both smoking and non-smoking employees may be helped by such policies. Here is a model policy employers can use to help them move toward a smoke-free workplace.

Benefits of a smoke-free workplace

For the employees

- ✦ A smoke-free environment helps create a safer, healthier workplace.
- ✦ Workers who are bothered by smoke will not be exposed to it at work.
- ✦ Smokers who want to quit may have more of a reason to do so.

✦ **Smokers may appreciate a clear company policy about smoking at work. Managers are relieved when there is a clearly defined process for dealing with smoking in the workplace.**

For the employer

- ✦ A smoke-free environment helps create a safer, healthier workplace.
 - ✦ Direct health care costs to the company may be reduced.
 - ✦ A clear plan that is carefully put into action by the employer to lower employees' exposure to secondhand smoke shows the company cares.
 - ✦ Employees may be less likely to miss work due to smoking-related illnesses.
 - ✦ Maintenance costs go down when smoke, matches, and cigarette butts are taken out of work facilities.
 - ✦ Office equipment, carpets, and furniture last longer.
 - ✦ The risk of fires is lower.
- NOTE: It may be possible to get lower health, life, and disability insurance coverage as fewer employees smoke.



National Bike Month

April Showers Bring May Flowers— And Bike-To-Work Day

Friday May 21st, 2010

There are many ways to celebrate the bicycle and its impact during the month of May. You can organize a successful event, educate your staff and community, help build solid partnerships and team building and much more. Let's narrow down our focus to the third Friday of May—Bike-to-Work-Day. What can you do to participate—and to get others to join in?

—> Ask Around! Put together a message similar to this one and send it to your staff who could well be interested: "Hi everyone, I'm riding my bike to the office on Friday. If you'd like to join, let's come up with a plan. If your route will be different from mine, organize your own group and we can all meet for breakfast at the diner near the office. Who's in?"

—> Show The Way! Map out a few routes to the office from various directions and post them at work. If you get just one person to change his or her mind about riding in, you've done a great job.

—> Yeah, But... Inevitably, some employees will find a reason why they couldn't possibly commute by bike—out of shape, too far away, rain, no showers at work, need a better bike. Make sure to arm yourself with solutions, then remind them that it's just one day. For example, "I'm out of shape!" - Tell them that if getting into shape is important to them that this is a great starting point.

Since May is National Bike Month, The League of American Bicyclists is promoting **Bike-to-Work Week 2010 from May 17-21** and **Bike-to-Work Day on Friday, May 21**. Need some ideas? Use the League's step by step guide on how to get started promoting your event. Help us Count Cyclists In this May, and every month!

Source: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth>

Step By Step Guide
http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/pdf/national_bike_month_guide.pdf





National Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month

May is National Allergy Month!

Companies all over the world lose millions of dollars paying staff who take time off because of allergies and asthma attacks. If you are a personnel manager or a supervisor, you should initiate some action to make the workplace free from allergens and irritants as much as possible.

Here are some tips to reduce allergens and irritants in the workplace:

•**Ban clutter.** If your employees constantly deal with files, folders, and books, make sure to provide them with binders and holders. These materials otherwise gather dust, which can trigger an asthma or allergy attack.

•**Keep your workplace dust-free.** As previously mentioned, dust can trigger allergic reactions and asthma attacks. Advise your employees to regularly dust their tables and workstations using a damp cloth and a disinfectant like Lysol and Milton. Or, better yet, initiate a three-o'clock habit. Choose a time when your whole workforce can dust their

work area for about 5-10 minutes. Spending five to ten minutes a day wiping dust off is better than losing an employee to an asthma attack.

•**If your office is carpeted, have the cleaners vacuum every week.** Carpets, in general, are dust-gatherers and can be a breeding ground for molds. Having them vacuumed once a week will reduce the risk of molds growing in your workplace.

•**Impose a smoke-free workplace.** If you have employees who smoke, this will definitely cause some negative reactions. Yet, having a smoke-free workplace reduces the risk of allergens in the air. Besides, secondhand smoking kills.

•**Check the air quality and circulation regularly.** Your building administrator can do this. Since most offices are enclosed, the air quality and circulation are easily compromised. Your building manager can make adjustments to the air exchange system to ensure that you and your employees get enough air.

•**Invest in an air purifier.** This gadget can help keep the air in your workplace clean and smelling nice too.

•**Use mild air fresheners.** Strong air fresheners contain chemicals that can trigger an asthma or allergic attack. Ask your employees not to spray air fresheners in the work area. Similarly, a perfume that's too fragrant also contains chemicals that may not be good for the air quality in your office. Ask employees to apply perfume in restrooms, or at the very least, not near an air vent, or an air conditioner.

Remove dust-gatherers. You will be amazed to find out how many things in your workplace serve nothing but to gather dust. If you have plastic plants in your workplace, especially the big potted plants, have them removed. If you have rugs hanging on the wall as part your décor, take them down. Remove carpeting in areas that do not need carpeting, including pantries, small kitchens, and lobbies.

Source: <http://www.howtodothings.com/health-fitness/how-to-avoid-allergens-and-irritants-in-the-workplace>

Client Corner



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With agents on three continents and over two decades of reliable service, GSI combines expert knowledge of the history of the guitar, playing, and direct relationships with luthiers all over the world to offer you new, used, and vintage collectible guitars.



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Health & Wellness

May 2010



Health & Happiness

“Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away”

- Hilary Cooper

Source: McKinley Health Center
www.mckinley.uiuc.edu

Stress is NORMAL but we need to maintain “manageable” levels of stress.

Learn which stress reliever’s work for you and consistently do them.

Be flexible, patient, and open to change or at least be willing to compromise.

Keep learning - don’t allow yourself to get into a rut and not try something new.

A positive attitude can change everything; be optimistic.

Go for your goals and live your dreams.

Be realistic about your goals and expectations.

Be true to yourself and others.

Experience what is around you & become aware of events and the people you see each day.

Take a “personal timeout” when things seem to be overwhelming.

Deep breathing exercises can slow your pace and help you think clearly before you react.

Cherish your health - take care of your overall wellbeing.

It's That Allergy Time of the Year Again!

May is National Allergy Month

Source: <http://www.the-w.org/health/may.pdf>

When something’s in the air, you may sneeze and get a stuffy nose, and your eyes may become red and watery. It’s allergy season... ugh...!

More than 50 million Americans react to seasonal airborne particles such as ragweed or pollen—just about now, depending on where you live.

Inflammation in the nose is called rhinitis, and there are three kinds. **Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis** is triggered by particles in the air (allergens) such as tree, grass, and weed pollens. It occurs during spring and fall and lasts a few months each year.

If you sniffle and sneeze all year, you may have other types of allergies triggered by year-round exposure to irritants—such as strong odors from perfume or smoke. You may sneeze from pollution, mold, your dog or cat, or house dust.

You may also have sniffles from changes in temperature related to the weather, humidity, and air pressure. Your doctor can help you deter-

mine the cause and the cure. Prescription nasal sprays can effectively treat annoying allergy symptoms—no matter what the cause. Keep track of when you’re sneezing to identify the triggers and try to avoid them.



Eyes can also become very irritated. You blink an average of 15,000 times a day. Still, pollen can get in your eyes. For seasonal allergy sufferers, pollen can cause allergic conjunctivitis—that’s when your eyes get red and swollen. Experts at National Jewish Medical and Research center in Denver offer these techniques to get the red out:

Wash your hands. During high allergy season, pollen is everywhere.

You get it on your hands opening a car door, running your hands through your hair, or touching other outdoor surfaces. If you rub your eyes with those pollen-coated hands, they will only get more irritated. You can also **apply cold compresses** to find relief!!

Use saline rinses or artificial tears. They can soothe the eyes and prevent you from rubbing them. **Wearing sunglasses** can cut some of the irritants by one-half.

Close the windows and use the air conditioner. Remember it takes about 4-5 days to clear a house of outside irritants, once you’ve closed up the house and turned on the air.

Medications—talk with your doctor regarding what antihistamines and what over-the-counter meds to use. Use meds throughout the season for best effects, not once in awhile. Remember to use “before” you’re exposed.



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Chicken Linguine with Chunky Tomato Sauce

Serves 4-6

- 1 (16 oz.) pkg. dried linguine
- About 5 qts. of water

For the chicken:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 4 chicken breast fillets
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp granulated garlic
- kosher salt and pepper

For the sauce:

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 (28 oz) can dried tomatoes
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1/8 tsp crushed red pepper
- 1tbsp chopped fresh basil

1. Bring the 5 qts. of water to a boil. Cook pasta about 7-9 minutes. Strain and rinse with cold water to stop the cooking process (*Note:* It will be slightly undercooked and that is what you want because it will continue to cook in the sauce and you don't want it to get too mushy).

2. Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Season chicken breast on both sides with granulated garlic, dried oregano, salt and pepper. Cook until chicken is cooked through, about 5 minutes per side. Cover and set aside.

3. In the same pan that you cooked the chicken, reserve the pan drippings, cook garlic and shallots over medium heat until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add wine and cook for 5 minutes. Add diced tomatoes, crushed red pepper, salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil and continue to boil until sauce reduces by 1/3, about 10 minutes. During this, time slice your chicken, into bite size pieces.

4. Once the sauce has thickened, reduce heat to low, add linguine and chicken and toss to coat (*Note:* If the linguine sticks together in the strainer, rinse with water. Make sure all of the water is drained from the pasta before adding it to the sauce).

Let stand 5 minutes, toss with basil and serve.

It's National Bike Month...

Learn about the many health benefits of cycling!

Cycling is a great fun activity that can be enjoyed by both kids and adults alike. A fantastic workout, it not only enables you to derive pleasure, but also goes a long way in ensuring your overall fitness. The best part about this sporting activity is that, you would find cycling a delightful experience, without even realizing that it has done good to your body. Cycling proves to be one of the most effective exercises, to shed off those extra calories and get rid of flabby abs. Even a small amount of cycling can prove to be good enough to boost your metabolism level, thereby fastening your weight loss program. It helps to improve the overall balance and coordination. The benefits of cycling go beyond health issues.

Numerous studies have found that cycling provides a variety of health benefits. Some of the benefits address specific health concerns, and others result in more general or indirect health benefits. They include:

Clean air - Cycling is non-polluting and can help us breathe easier. Much of the pollutants and irritants in the air are the result of fossil fuel emissions and can cause serious health problems, including asthma, irritation of the lungs, bronchitis, pneumonia, decreased resistance to respiratory infections, and even early death. These health risks are accentuated in children. When people ride bikes instead of driving cars, everyone's health benefits.

Ease of incorporating it into your life - Cycling generally does not

involve a steep learning curve and a lot of expensive equipment (beyond a bike and a helmet, other cycling gear is optional). In most areas, you can cycle year-round, and build it into your daily routine by cycling to work and to do errands. Most people can continue cycling indefinitely. This means that you will be more likely to stick with cycling long-term, and lead a healthier life.

Exposure to sunlight - Vitamin D generated from 15 minutes of sunshine a day can help prevent prostate cancer, breast cancer, and osteoporosis. (*Note:* Too much sun, however, increases the risk of skin cancer.)



Improved cardiovascular fitness - Cycling strengthens the heart, which improves blood circulation and reduces blood fat levels and resting pulse. Riding as little as 30 minutes every other day meets the American Heart Association's recommendations for a healthy heart. Increased joint movement and less pounding - Cycling reduces the risk of arthritis (or inflammation of the joints) caused by worn out cartilage. Exercises like running put more stress on joints and break down cartilage, especially in the knees. Cycling is gentler on joints and can actually strengthen them because the cycling motion pro-

vides nourishment that builds up cartilage.

More active lifestyle - Cycling (and other exercise) combats the dangers of a sedentary lifestyle, which increases the risks of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and respiratory ailments. All of these diseases can be prevented - even reversed - with regular exercise. Further, regular exercise increases the heart's ability to pump blood even when you are sitting still.

Reduced back pain - Cycling (and other exercise) provides nourishment that discs in the spine need for development. The large muscles in the back develop and become stronger. And cycling strengthens the small muscles that support individual vertebrae.

Stress reduction - Moderate exercise, including cycling, reduces stress, which leads to lower cholesterol and blood pressure.

Stronger immune system - Moderate exercise causes a boost in the immune system by increasing the production of cells that attack bacteria. Going for an easy ride can even make you feel better when you have mild cold symptoms without fever.

Sweating - Cycling causes most people to sweat, which is good for you because you sweat out toxins and (ideally) replace lost liquids with clean water.

Weight loss and fitness - Exercise, like cycling, burns calories, raises the metabolic rate, and builds muscle tone, so you burn more calories while at rest. This can combat the well-documented effects of obesity, including increased risk of disease and early death.

Source: <http://www.essortment.com/hobbies/cycling>



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