

Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources From Your Employee Assistance Program

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Deer Oaks EAP Chat
Sessions now have audio!

July 2011
Chat Topic:
Sleep and You

Every month, you will have the opportunity to chat on-line with a trained counselor. These live chats are held from 12:15-12:45 PM & 6:00-6:30 PM CST

Our Deer Oaks counselor now has the capability to conduct the live chat session in audio and all participants can respond via text.

Come Join Us!

July 2011
At A Glance

Alzheimer's Awareness Week
July 12th—16th

Visit
www.alzfdn.org
For more information

Eye Injury Prevention
Month
July 1st—31st

Visit
www.aao.org
for more information



Exercise and Heart Disease

The Facts

According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. There are many risk factors, including having an inactive lifestyle, that can increase your chances of developing heart disease. While there are factors such as genetics that are out of your control, there are steps you can take to prevent heart disease and/or lower your risk. One important step is incorporating regular exercise into your daily routine. Visit the link below for the American Heart Association. There are several interactive pages that help you to start and maintain a heart healthy exercise program and to monitor your progress.

www.heart.org

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Being overweight is a major risk factor for developing heart disease. People who are overweight tend to have higher levels of low-density lipoproteins in the blood. This is the kind of lipoprotein that's been linked to increased risk of heart disease. Aerobic exercise includes activities such as brisk walking, running, swimming and biking, and if done at a moderate pace, aerobic exercise burns calories. In order to lose weight, you need to burn off more calories than you consume. If you combine 40 to 45 minutes of aerobic exercise every day along with watching your caloric intake, you will lose weight and reduce your risk for heart disease. Losing even just 5 percent of your current weight can make enormous changes in the health of your heart.



Reduce Your Blood Pressure

Having high blood pressure means that your heart is working harder than it needs to. This extra stress on the heart puts you at a high risk for serious problems. Your heart is a muscle, and just like any muscle in your body, when it is exercised it gets stronger. A stronger heart can pump more blood with less effort. Some patients can lower their blood pressure without medication, or stop taking medication if they exercise regularly. It takes about 3 months of regular aerobic exercise done at the appropriate level to see changes in your blood pressure. See the link below for the Mayo Clinic for more information.

www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/HI00024

Lower Your Cholesterol Levels

Researchers from the University of Texas Cardiology Program believe that exercise helps to promote the activity of the enzymes that remove low-density lipoproteins (LDLs, or the "bad" cholesterol) from the blood and blood vessel walls. These enzymes transport the LDLs to the liver where they can be removed from the body. They also found that exercise increases the size of specific proteins that carry and transport cholesterol through the blood, giving it less of a chance to

Deer Oaks EAP Services, your Employee Assistance Program, is always available to you and your dependents. If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks at:

1 (866) 327-2400

eap@deeroaks.com

www.deeroaks.com

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Continued: Exercise and Heart Disease

build up in the body. The recommended amount of exercise to help lower cholesterol is at least 40 minutes of moderate exercise at least 5 days per week. See the link below for WebMD for more information.

www.webmd.com/cholesterol-management/features/exercise-to-lower-cholesterol

Open Your Arteries

Your arteries provide a passageway for the blood to flow through your body. Your arteries are elastic. As the blood is pumped through them, they expand; as the blood passes through, they relax. If you have a build up of plaque in your arteries, the passageway narrows, which means less blood and oxygen get through and your heart must pump faster and harder to deliver the same amount of blood as it did before the arteries narrowed. When you do aerobic exercise, you make your heart muscle pump harder to deliver the needed oxygen and blood to the body. As the increased volume of blood is pushed through the arteries, your arteries expand to create the needed room. With time and an appropriate level of exercise, the arteries will expand and widen permanently.

Increase the Number of Capillaries

Since aerobic exercise makes your heart pump harder to deliver the needed oxygen and blood, your body responds by creating more passageways. Capillaries carry the blood from the arteries and veins and deliver it throughout the body. Regular exercise actually increases the number of capillaries in the body. With more capillaries, your heart does not have to work as hard to pump the blood through the body.

http://www.ehow.com/how-does_4744183_exercising-prevent-heart-disease.html



EAP Spotlight



Work/Life Services

Deer Oaks EAP can assist you in getting tools, tips, and online articles for balancing work and family. These tools will help you to become better organized and to make the most out of your family time.



Matters of the Heart



Tea

Health Benefits:

Tea, whether hot, cold, or infused into foods, has the power to keep hearts healthy. Studies have shown that regular tea consumption has a long list of benefits. It helps prevent cancer and heart disease; it may reduce the risk of stroke, obesity, arthritis, and diabetes; and has antioxidants that protect the body from the effects of aging. It may also protect against tooth decay and osteoporosis.

Preparation:

We all know you can drink tea, but you also can cook with it. Infuse rice by cooking it in brewed Sencha or Jasmine tea instead of water. Marinate poultry and tofu in brewed teas. For a floral flavor, try Earl Grey. For smoky taste, use Lapsang Souchong. For currant-like sweetness, consider Rooibos. Grind oolong tea and white peppercorns together in a spice mill, then rub the ground mixture over meat, poultry, or fish before grilling or roasting.

Courtesy of: www.hearthealthyonline.com

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Recharge for Family and Work *The Value of Brief Vacations for Busy Women*



Professional women frequently think, "Vacation—are you kidding? With all these work projects and responsibilities and laundry building up?" Yet, a vacation is probably just what is needed to enhance productivity and creativity at work, as well as better functioning in the family. If you are not sure you need a brief getaway, take this short quiz. Read these statements and count how many of them describe you.

Do I Need a Vacation?

1. I'm snapping more at my spouse or family.
2. I am not as productive at work.
3. I have been getting more colds, headaches or stomach upsets.
4. At night I feel as though I've "hit the wall" and just collapse into bed.
5. My husband and I are living friendly but separate lives.
6. The household looks as though a tornado hit it.

If three or more of these statements apply to you, then you would benefit from a brief vacation. Here are six tips about how a getaway can help.

Tips on the Benefits of Short Vacations

1. Knowing you are going away increases your effectiveness at work. You get more focused and say no to the less urgent things at work—like going out to lunch or running across town to that new wine store. The prospect of a vacation also sparks better

family functioning. Suddenly, mom realizes, for example, that she is doing too many of the family tasks. Preparing for the vacation heightens her awareness that she needs to delegate some of the family responsibilities to her spouse and children.

2. As work and family life get out of control, the stress hormone cortisol compromises health and effectiveness. Bodies need a break from being in overdrive for too long.

3. Brains need a vacation from stress hormones. When there is a work problem, over-concentrating on it blocks out good ideas. The brain repeats a person's problem-solving habits. Using the same techniques lessens the expression of new solutions. Remember when a "lightning bolt of an idea" hit you while driving, cooking or taking a shower? This phenomenon happens when the brain is freed up to activate other neurons that permit new thoughts. So, try lying on the beach, strolling through a quaint town or bird watching to allow the brain to relax its focus and invite in new plans.

4. Busy professional, married women sometimes short-change their spouses emotionally. Vacations provide time to renew passion and closeness. A refreshed marriage produces the calming hormones that counteract the negative side effects of too many stress hormones.

5. If you include your children on your vacation, you strengthen your relationships with them. When you and your children are having fun is one of the best times to introduce new family rules and responsibilities. During fun times because the brain's pleasure hormones dominate, they can blunt children's potential negative reactions to increased tasks and expectations.

6. Brief vacations prompt a family to build a vacation fund by becoming more frugal and wise about spending. For example, each member can ask: "Do we really need to buy potato chips, ice cream or the latest magazine?" At the end of every week, family members contribute their savings to the vacation fund. So go ahead, take some time to recharge. Everyone will benefit.

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Easing New Moms' Money Woes

New moms have a lot to worry about. One of the biggest concerns is the inevitable mountain of financial responsibility that comes along with that tiny bundle of joy.

According to statistics from the United States Department of Agriculture, the average middle-class family spends more than \$10,000 annually on expenses for one child. And as your child grows, so does that number. However, following these steps can help you avoid the baby budget blues.

Identify needs vs. wants

Make a list of the things you will need. Then, look at each item and determine if it's actually a "need" or if it could fall in the "want" category. Cut down your list until you are positive you have a list of only essential items to focus on.

Budget, budget, budget – and stick to it!

Take a realistic look at your family's current spending. With a new addition to the family comes a new budget that will need to be created. There will be a multitude of new expenses – from diapers and formula to hospital bills and doctor's visits – that will need to be taken into account.

Clip coupons

Many manufacturers offer coupons on things such as diapers, baby wipes, and formula. If you combine coupons with store discounts, you can end up with some really good deals. Taking a few minutes before you head out to the store can end up saving you a lot of money in the long run.



Save money by going secondhand

When it comes to necessities for your little one, your best resource may be another mom. Ask around to see if any of your friends are looking to get rid of baby products they may no longer have use for. If you know what you're looking for, it may also be helpful to check out auctions and re-sale websites, such as eBay and Craigslist.

Get advice from other moms

Many times, your best resource is someone who has been down the same path. So use this opportunity to capitalize on the experiences of your friends and family. You can also harness the power of the internet and check out parenting websites such as thebump.com and iVillage.com to read what moms are saying on the message boards. Read a variety of opinions and you can decide which advice will work for your situation.

Ultimately, your child will grow up before you know it, so following these steps can ensure that you enjoy every hectic minute rather than spend your time searching for spare change in the couch cushions.

by Tanisha Warner

About Money Management International

Money Management International (MMI) is a nonprofit, full-service credit-counseling agency, providing confidential financial guidance, financial education, counseling and debt management assistance to consumers since 1958. MMI helps consumers trim their expenses, develop a spending plan and repay debts. Counseling is available by appointment in branch offices and 24/7 by telephone and Internet. Services are available in English or Spanish. To learn more, call 800.432.7310 or visit www.MoneyManagement.org.