

Your Worksite Wellness

News

APRIL 2012

Don't worry – you didn't miss it!

Your Douglas County Healthy Directions Wellness Program has something in the works and you'll be learning more real soon.

"We will have a spring-summer challenge," said Kathy Goodman, chairwoman of Healthy Directions. "I am anticipating it will start the first of May."

The Spring into Motion Walking Challenge will offer you a change to have your healthiest spring ever. It will be similar to past wellness events, with participants keeping track of physical activity, fruits and vegetables, water, and a safety record. Points will be assigned and prizes will be offered.

Spring into Motion is expected to continue until the 4th of July holiday, and you can find more information on the Healthy Directions website. You also should keep an eye on the Healthy Directions website for copies of the healthy recipe items and exercise tips that have been distributed during National County Government Month.

Other good things continue to happen with Douglas County's wellness program, Healthy Directions. Liah Frazier from the Public Defender's office continues to lead Pilates classes at noon on Tuesdays and yoga classes on Thursday mornings at 7 a.m. in the Harney Street Treasurer space. The Douglas County Health Center is having some great success with its 13 Week Wellness Challenge.

The 13 Week Wellness Challenge started with 16 members to a team, with the teams captained by Jennifer Beisheim, Pat Gehringer, and Marti Christensen. The teams are known as The Biggest Losers (Beisheim), County Chaos (Gehringer) and Waist Removal (Christensen).

The teams make presentations on four alternating topics: activity, diet, goal setting and weight loss. "Each week one of the teams presents on that topic," Jennifer said. "Weight loss is basically an open forum."

The teams score points on percentage of body weight lost, for example, 3 percent of body weight counts for three points. On the other weeks points are scored for success and participation in the various areas. A \$20 participation fee that all the participants paid is funding the weekly prizes to the winners.

Jennifer says it is working, as participants lost 318.8 pounds in the first eight weeks. Waist Management has combined for 56.4 pounds, County Chaos has dropped 114 pounds and the Biggest Losers are living up to their name with 148.4 pounds lost.

Another bonus is that people are talking about health issues. "People are really having fun with it," she said. "Some of our employees who didn't take part this time around are asking if we're doing to do it again."

Healthy Directions continues to bring benefits to Douglas County and its employees, and Kathy promises it will just keep getting better.

Phil Rooney



The Healthy Directions Wellness Newsletter is brought to you by the Douglas County Healthy Directions worksite wellness committee.

Contributing editor and photographer: Phil Rooney; layout and design: Connie Lehman; distribution: Kathy Goodman.

We'd like to hear from you!
Send questions/comments to the committee by e-mailing chairwoman Kathy Goodman at kathy.goodman@douglascounty-ne.gov, drop her a note to Human Resources, Room 505, or call her at 402-444-6099.

Commit to be Fit

10 Ways to Simplify Your Life and Dial Down Stress Levels

Stress may be inevitable. But how you deal with it is largely up to you. Here are some tools to help you manage the stress in your life.

It seems like everyone is stressed out these days - from your co-workers, to your friends, to the person standing next to you in line.

Stress, by itself, isn't necessarily bad. Low or even moderate amounts of stress can be good for us, provided we manage it in healthy ways. But poorly managed stress can take a toll. Heart disease, fatigue, and obesity are just a few of the potential consequences.

If stress is bothering you, consider the following 10 ways to regain control:

1. Recognize your symptoms. Your signs of stress may be different from someone else's. Some people get angry. Others have trouble concentrating or making decisions. Some feel worried or depressed. For some, stress leads to physical symptoms such as headache, back pain, upset stomach, or trouble sleeping.
2. Identify the sources. What situations trigger your stress? Among other things, your stress may be linked to your family, health, work, or personal relationships. Keep in mind that stress is often caused by a change in your life, negative or positive. Marriage, divorce, job loss, or a promotion may all increase stress.



3. Evaluate your coping strategies. Examine the ways in which you deal with situations that cause you stress. Responses like smoking, drinking alcohol, or eating too much may feel good in the short run, but they can cause long-term harm.

4. Learn to say 'no.' Sometimes the best way to deal with unnecessary stress is to avoid it. Know your limits, and refuse to take on more responsibilities than you can handle.

5. Plan ahead. Don't let your to-do list get out of control. Think about your day, and decide which tasks are the most important. Do those items first. Let other tasks drop to the bottom of - or even off - your list.

6. Create time to relax. It's not always easy, but it's important

to make time for yourself. Take vacations or other breaks. Make time to read a good book, listen to music, watch a comedy, or just have a warm cup of tea. Some people find deep breathing exercises helpful for relieving stress.

7. Exercise regularly. A brisk walk, a bike ride, and a trip to the gym are just some of the physical activities that can help prevent or reduce stress. Aim to get 2 hours and 30 minutes of exercise each week. Talk to your doctor before increasing your activity level.
8. Eat healthfully. Eating balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day will help you cope with stress by keeping you energized and focused. Also, cut back on caffeine. You'll feel more relaxed and will likely sleep better.
9. Talk to family and friends. Simply talking with supportive people can often bring stress relief, even if the stressful situation doesn't change. By the same token, limit the time you spend with people who only add to your stress.
10. Get help. If stress seems overwhelming, consider talking to a mental-health professional. He or she can offer healthy stress-busting techniques.

*By Rod Murphy, Contributing Writer
www.myoptumhealth/Unitedhealthcare.*

**Mammograms are paid 100%
by United Healthcare.**



**PLEASE BUCKLE UP
AND DON'T TEXT
WHILE DRIVING.**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all Douglas County employees. EAP's trained staff can help you with problems that affect your personal or professional life. Services are free to employees and family members, and records are kept confidential and are not included in the staff member's personnel file. Call 593-1711 for an appointment.

Commit to be Fit



The County Wellness Bicycling Corner

Hey Everyone,

If you haven't been out on your bike, IT'S TIME!

We have had some unbelievable weather for the season and it looks to be a great spring. That makes it a great time for you occasional riders, mid-range riders, long distance riders and even those who barely ride at all to get out there and enjoy. Biking is the perfect way to combine exercising, enjoying the great outdoors, and for sharing fun with old and new friends at the same time.

For those interested in doing some group bike rides or simply providing yourself with something to shoot for as a new or occasional rider, there are a number of bike rides you can target.

For the beginning cyclist there is the Bancroft Bayliss Loop. It's a community-forming bicycle ride and cultural exchange that engages artists and cyclists between Omaha's Bancroft Market and the west side/downtown areas of Council Bluffs. This ride is free and open to the public, and begins 9 a.m. Saturdays at the Bancroft Street Market, 2702 South 10th Street in Omaha. For more details, visit <http://bancroftbaylissloop.wordpress.com>

For more experienced riders:

May 12 • The Great American Pie Ride – Meets at Missouri Valley Park at 8:30 a.m. for rides of 22 to 67 miles (3-5 pie stops). This ride is fully supported, meaning help is available for people who may require assistance at some point during the ride. For more information visit <http://opbc.clubexpress.com>.

May 20 • The 13th Annual Oak Creek Valley Bike Ride which starts in Valparaiso, Neb. This ride offers a variety of routes that range from 24 - 70 miles. For more information, visit <http://www.sertoma.net>.

Saturday Rides to Blair: Join our group of County/City employees, friends, family and simply anyone who wants to join in and Bike to Blair. The ride takes place weather permitting, and we don't ride if there are strong winds or rain. Meet at the Cubby's/Cenex gas station at 48th and McKinley near the I-680 exit at 9 a.m. and bike to Ft. Calhoun, take a quick rest break and then go on to Blair. The full ride is 35 miles if you complete the roundtrip, but you

can turn around at Ft. Calhoun for a shorter ride. This trip gives you some work on hills, rolling hills, and flats to train for such rides as RAGBRAI, the Corporate Challenge and a number of other opportunities coming up this spring and summer. The Bike to Blair ride builds energy and stamina.

Impromptu bike rides: There are times when it's tough to do a lot of advance notice of doing a bike ride especially when the weather is just right, but watch for an email that is looking to see if anyone wants to do a bike ride that evening, the next evening or even on the weekend. For those times when you can make it, just show up at the location mentioned in the email. If it works for you great, if not, don't worry, just catch the next one. If you'd like to be included on the email list, please send an email to me at lee.lazure@douglascounty-ne.gov.

The great thing about bicycling is that you can have fun riding by yourself and a great time riding with a group of people.

More to come on all of this - let me know of any ideas you might have about rides or just wanting to get together on bicycling tips. We can set up a ride for the "easy riders" to get started in bicycling, or do small rides, or someone may be interested in doing some major rides.

Also, there appears to be a number of County employees who are planning to do RAGBRAI (July 22-28), and there may be space for more people to join us. (I'm not sure on this but let me know if you are interested).

**Biking season is officially here -
Just Get Out and Do It!**

Lee Lazure

Douglas County Human Resources
Civil Service
402/444-6123

Get to know the Omaha Metro Trail System

The trails are called Paths of Discovery and crisscross the Omaha/Council Bluffs metro area. Enjoy walking, jogging, biking, or skating. Pack a picnic for one of the many parks along the way. The system is accessible to people with disabilities and anyone just wanting to experience nature! **It's free** and with over 100 miles of trails, we bet there's one near you! To view a map or learn more, visit www.omahatrails.com. Find your Path of Discovery!

Commit to be Fit



Tim Tague – Success Story . . . A Day at a Time

You might say Tim Tague's story is a work in progress.

It is a story of changes that have taken place over the course of about six years. The final chapter is yet to be written.

It was about six years ago that "Chunky," as he called himself, was motivated to do something about the extra pounds he was carrying around when his wife, Dolores, a nurse who was then working at Midlands Community Hospital, started on Weight Watchers at work.

Probably not a bad idea, considering he weighed in at a little more than 400 pounds at the time. So Tim began to emulate what Dolores was doing at her job, where she had financial incentives to lose through the hospital's wellness program.

After a year he had lost about 100 pounds, but his knees which had plagued him for years began to again give him trouble and: "I put back on about 50 pounds."

Still, it was only the beginning, and Tim knew there was much more he needed to do to feel his best. As he moved forward, the weight would go, and then it would come back. Finally, in April 2010, those painful knees began to receive the attention that was long overdue.

During this process of renewal, Tim also became aware of a book, *Younger Next Year*, by Chris Crowley and Dr. Harry S. Lodge. The book provided him with seven rules for living, known as Harry's Rules:

- 1) Exercise six days a week for the rest of your life
- 2) Do serious aerobic exercise four days a week for the rest of your life
- 3) Do serious weight training two days a week for the rest of your life
- 4) Spend less than you make
- 5) Quit eating crap
- 6) Care
- 7) Connect and commit

Lodge was Crowley's doctor, and once asked his patient if he wanted to be younger next year. Now in his 70s, Crowley is functioning as though he were in his 50s. Tim also is feeling an impact from the book, and no longer uses his knees, that were injured playing sports, as an excuse for not improving his health.

"I'm almost done with a year," he said. "Between doing the things it says in the book and getting my knees fixed, I'm in a lot better shape than I was a year ago."

Younger Next Year comes in editions for men and women (a bit less salty language for the ladies) and comes with Tim's strong endorsement: "I would recommend it to everyone."

As a result of *Younger Next Year*, Tim has come to concentrate on his appetite, hunger and feeling full or satisfied when he eats. "That's what they talk about in the book," he said. "Mostly just about making better choices for yourself and being active."

He is now working on his weight as a health matter, not just to look better, and has come to accept that weight loss programs don't work, on a long-term basis, unless you change your behavior.

"I'm trying to get out of that cycle and get into a healthy way of living," Tim said. "I'm focusing on, not just numbers on a scale, but on a more holistic approach to health."

The first 100 pounds Tim lost was all done by dieting, but he knows there is more to being healthy than just losing weight, and little setbacks don't distract him from the bigger goal of a more healthy and active life. So, he didn't get upset when he gained back 15 pounds since his second knee surgery in November.

"I knew I would because my focus was on rehabbing my knee," Tim said.

He now tries to make physical activity a priority in his life and include it as a part of the routine. Many of the ideas are simple, such as parking farther from the store to add a little walking to the shopping trip, getting on the exercise bike when watching TV, and mowing the lawn rather than hiring a young person from the neighborhood.

Tim pointed out three concepts that really helped him: journaling his food intake and exercise; having someone to be accountable to regarding what you eat (in his case, his wife) and the importance of setting yourself up with attainable goals, both short and long term.

In *Younger Next Year*, Tim said, those goals are called a kedge, which is an old boating term for a small vessel that would pull larger boats through narrow parts of a river or canal. Tim used the lure of a fishing trip as his kedge.

That is quite a journey for the man who at first couldn't use the elliptical machine at the gym where he and his wife work out because his legs were so weak. He will tell you, that he does feel younger this year as a result of the commitment he made to himself, and urges others to make that commitment, including surgeries on ailing hips or knees.

Tim also offers a final thought on how his experience has changed him, and how you might go about successfully improving your health.

Just ask yourself, as he now does: "How do you measure success?"

Photos: Tim Tague, Phil Rooney; Story by Phil Rooney



Farmers Market Shopping Tips

Spring is here and farmers markets are starting to bloom! Here are a few tips for making the most of your visit to a farmers market:

Know your seasons - learn what grows in your area when and talk to local farmers to see what will be available at the Market in weeks to come

Go early or go late - to ensure the best selection of produce go to the Market early, however, if looking for the best deal, go late.

Bring a big bag and small change - some growers will have plastic bags available for your purchased items and some will not - to ensure that your items make it home with you it would be best to bring your own bag. Vendors will make change, although your shopping experience will be easier and faster if you have exact or close to exact change.

Buy in volume - the best deals at the Farmers Market is when you buy in bulk.

Food Safety Tips for Fresh Produce

Take your fresh produce home as soon as possible. Food will decline in quality and perishable food items can pose safety problems if left sitting in your car.

Some produce can be ripened on the counter and then stored in the refrigerator. Examples include: tomatoes, onions, nectarines, peaches, pears and plums.

Wash produce thoroughly before you use it, not when you bring it home.

For a list of farmers markets in the metro Omaha area, log on to: <http://www.douglascounty-ne.gov/gardens/>

Start each Thursday morning with the toning, relaxing power of

Yoga

FREE!

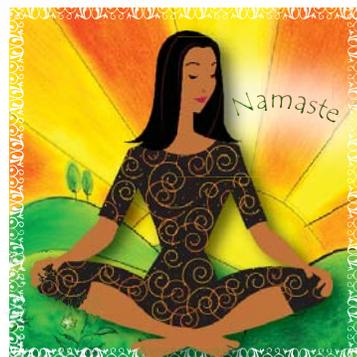
Every Thursday starting February 2nd
Yoga Instructor • 7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.

Held in the Treasurer space on the Harney Level of the Civic Center

Three easy ways to sign up!

- Call Kathy Goodman at 402-444-6099
- E-mail Kathy at kathy.goodman@douglascounty-ne.gov
- Sign up before one of the regularly scheduled sessions!

Please wear workout clothes and bring a yoga mat/rug or towel.



Rejuvenate and de-stress in the middle of the day!



Join us for the FREE **Every Tuesday at Noon**
PILATES AT LUNCH CLASS!
Old Harney Street
Treasurer's Office
Questions?
Call Kathy Goodman
at 402-444-6099



Considering Weight Watchers?

Contact Gail Knapp at gknapp@ci.omaha.ne.us
or call Gail at (402)444-5190

DC YOUTH CENTER: P90X CLASSES

Are you up to the challenge?
Call Daniel Archie at 402-444-1892

QUIT SMOKING TODAY
WE CAN HELP

www.smokefree.gov

Commit to be Fit



APRIL IS STD AWARENESS MONTH

We all know we need to use sunscreen to protect ourselves from skin cancer, but does sunscreen expire? Is sunscreen from last year still good?

Sunscreens are designed to remain stable and at original strength for up to three years. This means that you can use leftover sunscreen from one year to the next.

Some sunscreens include an expiration date, or an indication of when the sunscreen is no longer effective. Discard sunscreen that's past the expiration date, is more than three years old or has been exposed to high temperatures.

Keep in mind, however, that if you use sunscreen generously and frequently, a bottle of sunscreen shouldn't last from one year to the next. Generally, a liberal application is 1 ounce (30 milliliters) - the amount in a shot glass - to cover all exposed parts of the body. If you have a 4-ounce (118-milliliter) bottle, you'll use about one-fourth of it during one application.

To maximize protection, use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more. Apply sunscreen generously 20 to 30 minutes before going outdoors and reapply about every two hours - or more often if you're swimming or sweating. Be sure to rub the sunscreen in well.

Lawrence E. Gibson, M.D., www.mayoclinic.com

BIG LOUD REMINDER! TANNING BEDS ARE DANGEROUS!



The FDA wants consumers to know that UV radiation in tanning devices poses serious health risks. A recent report by the International Agency for Research on Cancer concludes that tanning devices are more dangerous than previously thought. Exposure to UV radiation, whether from the sun or indoor tanning beds, can cause: Skin cancer! Skin burns! Premature skin aging! And Eye damage!

In March, 2004, chlamydia and gonorrhea were declared to be at epidemic levels in Douglas County. In 2011, greater than 4,000 cases of easily preventable sexually transmitted infections were reported among the community's youth and young adult populations.

Chlamydia is the leading STD infection in the county, with more than 600 reported infections per 100,000 residents. In 2010, the rate of infection for chlamydia in Douglas County was 73% higher than the Nebraska rate and 28% higher than the national average.

While they can be treated with antibiotics, the infected individuals may be left with permanent health and medical consequences. Pregnant women who are infected may give birth to infants who acquire the infection, suffer from blindness or even die. Young women who are infected also risk becoming unable to get pregnant naturally.

Over two-thirds of Douglas County's reported chlamydia infections are in 15-to 24-year-olds.

Minorities in Douglas County have been disproportionately impacted. Non-Hispanic blacks make up 12.3 percent of the area's population, but make up 45 percent of the county's chlamydia infections.

Gonorrhea is Douglas County's second major reported STD infection. The number of gonorrhea infections dropped after the epidemic was declared in 2004, and again in 2010 but increased in 2011. In 2010, Douglas County gonorrhea infection rates were more than double the Nebraska rate and one-and-one-half times the national rate. Similar to chlamydia infections, two-thirds of the gonorrhea infections were in people under 25 years of age.

Like chlamydia, gonorrhea more heavily impacts minorities. Over 66 percent of the reported cases occurred among the area's black population.

You can do something about STDs. If you are sexually active, get tested.

**LIST OF LOW COST CLINICS
ON NEXT PAGE!**



Source: Douglas County Health Department

HEALTH CENTERS *and* CLINICS

LOW COST STD TESTING

Douglas County Health Center

1111 South 41st Street

- Same-day Appointments for Clinician Visit
- Express Visits for Chlamydia & Gonorrhea Screening
- Same-day Results for HIV Testing
- Services for persons 12 years of age or older
- No Residency Requirements
- Only \$15 For Testing and Treatment (if needed)

Call 402-444-7112
for STD Clinic appointments
Call 402-444-7750
for STD information/questions

Benson Community Health Center

5420 NW Radial Highway

Fee: There is a \$15 fee per visit, no one is turned away for inability to pay.

Closed Tuesday and Thursday

Call for hours and appointment 402-558-9242

Charles Drew Health Center

2915 Grant Street

Sliding fee scale

\$15 for Chlamydia/Gonorrhea testing

Free HIV testing 402-437-1208 x2263

Appt/Walk-ins

Call for hours and appointment 402-451-3553

Council Bluffs STD Clinic

25 South 15th Street, Suite 1

Council Bluffs, IA

Call for hours and appointment 712-323-0096

HIM/HER Screening Clinic

5050 Ames Avenue

Free screening for: HIV, Diabetes, Prostate, Cholesterol, Hypertension, pap (women)

Call for hours and appointment 402-559-3813

Magis Clinic

Sienna/Francis House

Baright Center

1111 N. 17th Street

Medical care for the Homeless and Medically uninsured

1st and 3rd Mondays, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Saturdays 2:00 - 6:00 PM

Call for appointment 888-218-4692

Nebraska AIDS Project

250 S. 77th Street, Suite A

Free HIV testing

\$10 co-pay for STD testing

Appointment Wednesday and Thursday 1:30 - 4:00 PM

Walk-ins Wednesday and Thursday 5:00 - 8:00 PM

Call for hours and appointment 402-552-9260

New Life Center

143 S. 38 St

Free screening for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea

Call for hours 402-399-0299, 402-689-1992

Omaha Healthy Start

2201 North 30th Street

Free for all women receiving a pregnancy test

No appointment necessary

Call for hours 402-455-2229

One World Community Health Center

4920 South 30th Street, Suite 103

Sliding fee scale

Call for appointment 402-734-4110

Methodist Renaissance Health Clinic

3612 Cuming Street (2nd floor)

\$25 Co-pay

Call for appointment 402-354-3198

Planned Parenthood (2 locations)

3105 N. 93rd Street, Omaha, NE 68134

1604 2nd Ave., Council Bluffs, IA 51501

Sliding fee scale

Call 1-877-881-plan (7526)

Respect Clinic

5050 Ames Street

Testing, education, and treatment (medicine) for

Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HIV, Syphilis, and Trichomonas for \$15.00

Monday 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Appt/Walk-ins welcomed! 402-595-2280

Commit to be Fit