DOUGLAS COUNTY Healthy Directions

Your Worksite Wellness

News JANUARY 2012

Happy 2012 To Everyone!

"You've made it through the holidays," Healthy Directions Chairwoman Kathy Goodman said. "Now only Super Bowl Sunday stands in the way of getting fit, and we are here to help you get started."

With a new year underway, you know Healthy Directions has something planned to get you on track to a healthier and more active life style.

"I am pleased to say Healthy Directions is beginning its fourth year of offering wellness activities and programs to help our employees improve their health," Kathy said. "We want to see you join the list of individual employees who have successfully changed their life by losing weight, lowering blood pressure, and reducing or eliminating diabetes through Healthy Directions."

Raising the awareness of good health practices and providing help where possible have been two of the key tools Healthy Directions has used to improve the lives of our employees, Kathy said.

"The wellness committee is pleased that we have a Pilates class every Tuesday at noon in the Civic Center," Kathy said. "Beginning February 2nd we will offer a Yoga class at 7 a.m. every Thursday morning at the Civic Center."

Kathy pointed out that in addition to those classes, Healthy Directions is in the second year of offering a Sunday basketball league at the Youth Center. DCYC also provides a walking club and PX90 classes.

The Healthy Directions committee will not be satisfied until as many employees as possible are taking part in activities that will help them lead better healthier lives.

Weight Watchers continues to be a strong component of our wellness efforts, Kathy stressed, and at least 20 people will participate in the fifth season of that program. There have been three sessions of Lose and Win at the Douglas County Health Center and many other wellness challenges continue to be offered by that innovative staff.

"We plan to continue to offer walking clubs and challenges throughout the year and expand to other locations," Kathy said. "I am grateful for all the support from all the committee members along with the employees and staff."

"We promise to continue to work on adding more programs and classes to promote better health for all employees," Kathy said. "Your thoughts and ideas are appreciated so we can tailor our programs to the needs and desires of our Douglas County employees."

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 Healthy Directions committee. E-mail chairwoman Kathy Goodman at kathy.goodman@douglascounty-ne.gov, or drop her a note to Human Resources, Room 505, or call 402-444-6099.

radon

What you need to know.

The EPA estimates that about 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S. are radon-related. Exposure to radon, an odorless, tasteless and invisible gas produced by the decay of naturally occurring uranium in soil and water, is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. A proven carcinogen, Radon is a form of ionizing radiation. To date, lung cancer is the only known effect on human health caused by exposure to radon. Thus far, there is no evidence that children are at greater risk of lung cancer than are adults.

Radon is in the air everywhere, and can be found in outdoor air and in the indoor air of buildings of all kinds. EPA recommends homes be fixed if the radon level is 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter) or more. Because there is no known safe level of exposure to radon, EPA also recommends that Americans consider fixing their home for radon levels between 2 pCi/L and 4 pCi/L. The average radon concentration in the indoor air of America's homes is about 1.3 pCi/L. Based on research, the EPA recommends that Americans consider fixing their homes when the radon level is between 2 pCi/L and 4 pCi/L. The average concentration of radon in outdoor air is .4 pCi/L or 1/10th of EPA's 4 pCi/L action level.

The risk of lung cancer to smokers is significant due to the synergistic effects of radon and smoking. Among people who smoke and are exposed to radon, about 62 people in a 1,000 will die of lung-cancer. That compares to 7.3 people per 1,000 for nonsmokers.

The radon health risk is underscored by the fact that in 1988 Congress added Title III on Indoor Radon Abatement to the Toxic Substances Control Act. It codified and funded EPA's then fledgling radon program. Also that year, the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General issued a warning about radon, urging Americans to test their homes and to reduce the radon level when necessary .

Unfortunately, many Americans presume that because the action level is 4 pCi/L, a radon level of less than 4 pCi/L is "safe". This perception is altogether too common in the residential real estate market. In managing any risk, we should be concerned with the greatest risk.

For most Americans, their greatest exposure to radon is in their homes, especially in rooms that are below grade (e.g., basements), rooms that are in contact with the ground and those rooms immediately above them.

It's never too late to reduce your risk of lung cancer. Have your home tested for radon and fix the problem if you have one. If you are a smoker, consider quitting, and until you can quit, smoke outside. That way you can provide your family with a smoke-free home.

The EPA's Indoor Environments Division (IED) is responsible for conducting research and educating the public about indoor environmental issues, including health risks and the means by which human exposures can be reduced. IED educates the public about health risks associated with a variety of indoor environmental pollutants, including radon, secondhand smoke, indoor wood smoke, and other asthma triggers.

Radon testing kits can be purchased at home improvement stores such as Lowe's and Home Depot for an average cost of $10 - $15.

For more information on radon, log on to www.epa.gov and click on Radon under Popular Topics.

Need help quitting smoking?
Visit www.epa.gov/smokefree

Have you met Snack Girl?
www.snack-girl.com

Lisa Cain, Ph.D., is an avid snacker, foodie, published author, and mother of two. An evolutionary biologist by training, she has become obsessed with how food contributes to overall health. Her website offers healthy, affordable and sensible snacking ideas, easy-to-make recipes and hands on product testing. You can also sign up for daily tips sent to your e-mail!

I Screen, You Screen We All Screen!

(Or we should!)

Routine preventive care services to maintain your health and prevent disease are important to living a healthy life. Talk with your doctor about your specific health questions and concerns, and follow these guidelines suggested by United-healthcare, along with the advice of your doctor to help you stay healthy.

Preventive Care Guidelines: Adults over age18

Range of recommended ages

Years of Age	18	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70
Screenings											
Height and weight	At each preventive visit to assess normal development and general health.										
Obesity	At each preventive visit to assess risks of obesity.										
Vision screening	Frequency recommended by physician based on risk factors to assess vision.										
Dental screening	Periodically to assess dental condition and detect medically related dental problems.										
Blood pressure	Regular screening for adults at standard risk.										
Cardiovascular disease						Regular Screening beginning at age 45 for men and 55 for women. UPSSTF recommends the use of aspirin for men age 45 to 79 years. For those at high risk for heart disease, discuss aspirin and low risk alternatives with your physician.					
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening									Screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm in men 65-75 years old. For those at high risk for heart disease, discuss aspirin and low risk alternatives with your physician.		
Cholesterol (Lipid) test				Every 5 years, beginning at age 35 for men and 45 for women. For those at high risk for heart disease, consult with your physician.							
Diabetes screening		Regular screening of adults for type 2 diabetes in asymptomatic adults with sustained blood pressure (either treated or untreated) greater than 135/80 mm Hg.									
Prostate screening					Men 40 and older consult with your physician regarding screening benefits/risks.						
Colorectal screening							Routine Colorectal screening beginning at 50 years, high risk person should be screened at younger ages. Interval determined by method. Speak with your physician.				
Mammography					Screening Mammography for all adult women of standard risk every one to two years beginning at age 40 or as directed by your physician. Women at defined high risk should be screened earlier. Discuss with your physician. For those at high risk, consult with your physician regarding breast cancer prevention alternatives with low risk of adverse effects.						
Osteoporosis screening										Routine screening for women age 65 and older. Screening for post-menopausal women at defined high risk. Discuss with your physician.	
Cervical cancer screening (Pap Smear)***	Every two years beginning at age 21 or for females who are sexually active, after 3 normal screenings, every 3 years or at a frequency recommended by physician based on risk factors.										
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (gonorrhea, HIV and syphilis)	Routine screening for those sexually active at increased risk. Routine screening for Chlamydia for females under 25. Syphilis screening recommended for ALL pregnant women.										
Screening for rubella, iron deficiency, urinary tract infection, Hepatitis B, blood type and RH(D) incompatibility screening	For pregnant Women at first pre-natal visit without prior screening, proof of immunization or immunity or at increased risk.										

Continued on next page

Years of Age	18	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70
Screenings											
Folic Acid – recommended dosage is 0.4 - 0.8mg daily	Recommended for adult women of childbearing age beginning at age 18 who are considering pregnancy.										
Tobacco/nicotine use	Routine Screening and counseling. Detection of potential health risks associated with tobacco/Nicotine use. Opportunity for tobacco cessation counseling.										
Alcohol/illicit drug abuse	Routine screening and counseling. Detection of potential health risks associated with Alcohol/Illicit drug abuse.										
Counseling	18	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70
Promote and support breast feeding and post-partum counseling	Women after childbirth.										
Nutrition, physical activity, sun exposure, depression and injury prevention	Periodic screening and counseling.										
Immunizations	18	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70
Human Papilloma virus vaccine	3 does may be administered to females age 9–26 with physician discretion.										
Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td/Tdap) vaccine	Every 10 years for adults who have completed the primary series and if the last vaccine was received 10 or more years ago, substitute for a single booster of Td.										
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine	Once for all with lack of immunity. Adults born before 1957 are generally considered to be immune to measles and mumps so would not require vaccination. Those born after 1957 may need a 2nd dose. Consult with your health care provider.										
Varicella (VZV) vaccine	Two doses for those susceptible with lack of immunity. Susceptibles: People 13 and older who have not received the vaccine and have not had chickenpox.										
Hepatitis B vaccine	Three doses for all persons at risk and pregnant women at first prenatal visit. Discuss with your physician.										
Hepatitis A vaccine	For all persons at risk. Discuss with your physician.										
Influenza vaccine	Annually. Speak with your physician to learn if you are in a priority group. Effective with the 2010-2011 flu season, immunization against seasonal and H1N1 flu will be done with a single vaccine.										
Meningococcal vaccine	One or more doses for Individuals at high risk.** Discuss with your physician.										
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide vaccine (PPV)										One or two doses for individuals at high risk for complications of infection.*** Discuss with your physician.	
Zoster									One dose between ages 60-75.		

Upper age limits should be individualized for each patient

* See **www.preventiveservices.ahrq.gov** for U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommendations on colorectal cancer screening and other clinical preventive services.

** High risk is defined as adults who have terminal complement deficiencies, had their spleen removed, their spleen does not function or they have medical, occupation, lifestyle or other indications such as college freshmen living in dormitory or other group living conditions.

*** For persons aged 65 and older, one time revaccination is recommended if they were vaccinated more than 5 years previously and were younger than age 65 years at the time of primary vaccination.

*** ACOG, "Cervical Cytology Screening" Obstetrics & Gynecology; Practice Bulletin #109; 12/09

UnitedHealthcare®

These guidelines are generally based on the recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) and of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They are provided for informational purposes only, and do not constitute medical advice. Individuals with symptoms or at high risk for disease may need additional services or more frequent interventions. Always consult your doctor before making any decisions about medical care. These guidelines do not necessarily reflect the vaccines, screenings or tests that will be covered by your benefit plan. Always refer to your plan documents for specific benefit coverage and limitations or call the toll-free member phone number on the back of your ID card. Insurance coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates. Administrative services provided by UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company, United HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates. Health Plan coverage provided by or through a UnitedHealthcare company.

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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.

The County Wellness Bicycling Corner

The most difficult time of the year to ride a bike, beyond a doubt, is the month of January. While we have been lucky given the weather pattern the past couple of months, the cold is there and the wind reminds us of what the wind-chill can do out on a bike. But you just can't hang it up in terms of staying in shape; you watch the weather forecasts to see when the temperature is in the upper 40s or into the 50s and the wind is not too strong and get out on that bike for at least a little while. This is the time of the year to maintain riding ability and keep the "lbs" from finding a permanent resting place on your body.

You also look at other ways to remain active and exercise those leg muscles, such as taking the stairs when possible, walking or running outside or walking in a shopping mall. Proper layering is the key to staying warm along with finding the right time and weather conditions to get out there.

This time of the year is goal-setting time - especially in biking. There are a number of bicycling events to plan for and put down on a calendar. Some of these are: The County's Presidents Day Holiday Bike Ride on Monday, Feb. 20 (weather permitting) - The Great American Pie Ride (Omaha Pedalers Bike Club will set the date); the Omaha Health Expo Bike Ride, April 15th, and as the weather warms up - a weekly Saturday morning "Get in Shape and Bike to Blair" ride. The BRAN (Bike Ride Across Nebraska) is scheduled for the week of June 3 through 9 and RAGBRAI (Bike Ride Across Iowa) is scheduled for July 23 through July 28. The Corporate Cycling Challenge is scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 19. There undoubtedly will be more as various organizations set up dates and times.

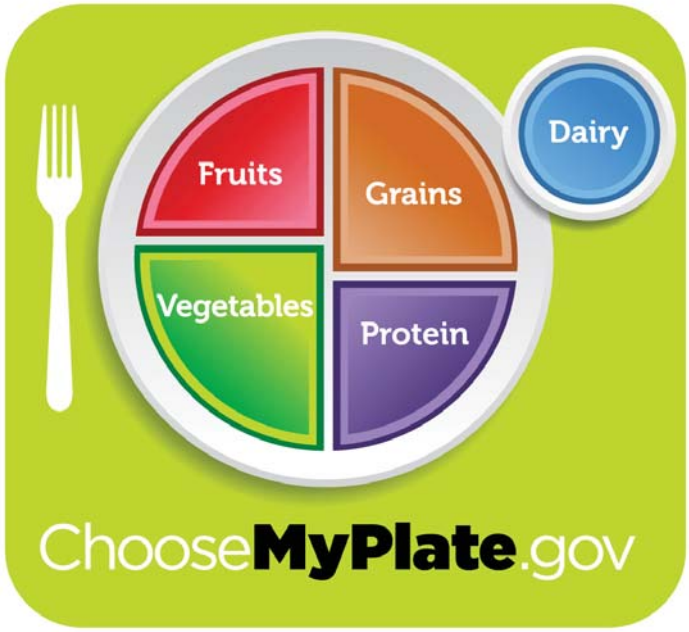
If you are a beginning bicyclist, set a goal to ride 7 to 10 miles, then increase to 12 to 15 miles. If you are an experienced rider, set a goal to ride 30-plus miles. Also look at setting a goal of riding 2-3 times a week to get your "seat time" in for the big rides in late spring and summer.

So look for the right opportunities to get out and ride. Set up your bike in the basement so you can check it out and clean it up so you are ready when the weather permits. Stop by the various bicycle shops and check out the accessories and gear that you might need, and take advantage of sales that they offer. This will help keep bicycling alive in your head, and you just might find that 40-plus degree day with minimum wind to challenge yourself and get back on the trail.

Don't let the weather hold you back, get out on that bike.

You Can Do It! Ride Safely!

Lee Lazure
Douglas County Human Resources - Civil Service
402/444-6123



As you work toward your 2012 fitness goals, www.ChooseMyPlate.gov is a great resource to visit for help and motivation! The site includes ways become more physically active, advice on weight management, food safety information, and a SuperTracker to help plan, analyze, and track your diet and physical activity.

Build a Healthier Plate:

Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories. Try some of these options:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to skim or 1% milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole.
- Vary your protein food choices.

Winter Fitness Opportunities

Walk This Way

Do you like to walk, but don't want to battle the winter elements? Consider walking inside! Here are two indoor walking routes that'll allow you to keep moving during the winter...no ear muffs required!

Civic Center and Courthouse employees: The First National Bank tower at 1601 Dodge Street has an underground tunnel perfect for an indoor winter stroll.

Midtown Campus and Health Center employees: Stretch the legs at the Health Center's first floor "main street".

Don't want to go it alone? Join Phil!

PHIL'S WINTER WALKING CLUB

Join the Health Department's Phil Rooney and his Winter Walking Club! Phil leads a group for a 30 minute walk inside the Douglas County Health Center. Call Phil at 402-444-6427 for more information.

Prefer To Walk Outside?

The DC Youth Center has a group that meets at 3:30 p.m. several times a week. Call Daniel Archie at 402-444-1892 for details!

Online Fitness Program:

www.sparkpeople.com

More than 11.5 million people have joined the SparkPeople movement! Visit their website to find out why a *Good Housekeeping* cover story about SparkPeople said, "Get Thin for Free! The online program that works!"

New! 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

PILATES AT LUNCH CLASS!

Every Tuesday at Noon
Old Harney Street
Treasurer's Office

Questions?
Call Kathy Goodman at 402-444-6099

WeightWatchers
Stop Dieting. Start Living.

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

Don't forget that Omaha has over 100 miles of trail system perfect for winter walking, snowshoeing, or cross country skiing. To learn more, visit www.OmahaTrails.com.

Commit to be Fit