



News JUNE/JULY 2013

Happy Summer to All!

Yes summer is finally upon us and hopefully everyone is out doing their miles. By the time you read this newsletter, you will have only about twenty more days to get your "100 Miles in 100 Days" to earn the mystery participation gift. All logging forms must be in my office (Room 505 of the Civic Center) no later than July 12th to earn the prize. Please make sure you to put your name, department, and phone number on the form so we can find you to give you that mystery prize.

I have been hearing a lot of you are over the 100 miles already, so great job! Just because this challenge is ending, doesn't mean you need to stop doing your miles each day for the good of your health.

The Wellness Committee is already busy getting the next challenge off the ground which will focus around the 2013 Corporate Cup Run which is scheduled for September 15th. Watch for the flyer coming soon detailing the next challenge "Road to the Corporate Cup Run" and special incentives if you enroll for the run.

We also are planning the annual CCR T-shirt design contest for the artists out there, so get your creative mind working on the 2013 Healthy Directions Corporate Cup Run T-shirt design. You could win a \$50.00 Visa Gift Card if your design is chosen. Keep your eyes open for details and a flyer coming soon.

I also would like to send out a special thanks to all of you who continue to support our wellness challenges. It makes it worth our time to continue to offer new challenges with the support and willingness of the Douglas County employees who want better health and to be physically fit.

Have a fun and safe summer.

Kathy Adair, Healthy Directions Chairwoman

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

Commit to be Fit

June is Men's Health Month



Why Do Men Skip Health Tests?

Women live 5.1 years longer on average than men. Could the male tendency to avoid doctors have anything to do with it?

It's a fact that women are quicker to see a doctor when they develop symptoms. In contrast, men are more likely to ignore symptoms and hope they go away. Often, by the time a man sees a doctor, his symptoms may be severe and harder to manage or treat. Men are 24 percent less likely than women to have visited a doctor in the past year, according to recent U.S. government statistics. For an African American or Hispanic male, the odds of having seen a doctor are even lower. Ditto for ages 18 to 44.

Not seeing a doctor regularly means that you lose out on important health screenings or early diagnosis. You can feel fine, but still have conditions, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure, that need treatment. Men may also miss out on preventive care. They are a lot more likely than women to need hospital care for illnesses that could have been prevented (pneumonia, for example) or complications from diseases like diabetes or heart failure.

Is seeing a doctor like asking for directions?

The rap on men is that they don't ask for directions when lost. Perhaps they think they don't need a doctor's help either?

Men's attitudes about physicals may have come from their own fathers who avoided doctors. And some boys grew up with the message that expressing pain or

sickness was a sign of weakness. According to more than 1,000 men taking part in a 2007 survey commissioned by the American Academy of Family Physicians:

- Thirty-six percent said they see a doctor only when "extremely sick."
- Fifty-five percent did not have a routine physical in the last year.
- Almost one in five, age 55 or older, had not been screened for colon cancer.

Many men put health screenings and regular checkups low on their to-do lists.

In fact, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians, more than one in four men say they wait as

long as possible before seeing a doctor, even when they feel ill. In today's world, that's understandable — work, family and friends can keep you busy 24/7. But, if you invest some time in your good health now, it can pay off big in the long run. Like any investment, however, it takes some planning. These tips may help:

- Start by scheduling a checkup. During the visit, tell your doctor everything you know about your health history. This is also the time to bring up any health issues you're having — physical or emotional. Don't hold back, even if it's embarrassing. Doctors have heard it all.
- Be screened. Information is power, and health screenings can help you and your doctor get the facts about your health.
- Take your medicine. If your doctor has prescribed any medicines, be sure to take them as directed.
- Polish up your healthful habits. To a large extent, your health depends on your daily behaviors. Making healthful lifestyle choices can help cut your risks of many diseases.
- Pat yourself on the back. Taking charge of your health can help you lead a longer and healthier life — and that will benefit your loved ones as well as yourself.



Wellness Online/UnitedHealthcare

Commit to be Fit

Is Your Family Ready For An Emergency?



Planning ahead can help keep you safe if a flood, fire, flu pandemic, terrorist attack, or other emergency strikes.

Plan ahead. The Federal Emergency management Agency (FEMA) recommends these items to include in a basic emergency supply kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps

www.ready.gov

Got your cell phone handy? Take a moment right now to put “ICE” by the names of the people you’d want called in case of emergency. That’s what “ICE” stands for - “in case of emergency.” The point is to let rescue workers, police, or doctors check your cell phone and reach the people you would want contacted if you’re in an accident or other emergency.



The Douglas County Health Department Offers Tornado Safety Tips

As a Nebraska resident, you know tornadoes are among nature’s most violent storms. You also know they can strike at any time of the day, with little or no warning, and destroy an entire neighborhood in just a few minutes. Here are some ideas to help you protect yourself.

Know the danger signs. Tornadoes often happen during thunderstorms. You should look for dark, greenish skies; large hail; a large, dark, low-lying cloud; a visible, rotating funnel; or a loud roar. Get to know your local warning system and keep a battery-powered radio ready to go. If there’s a tornado watch, listen for weather updates and be prepared to shelter. If there’s a tornado warning, it means a tornado has been sighted or radar shows the strong possibility of a tornado. You should act immediately to find shelter.

Plan at home. Pick a safe room in your house that is most secure for your family and pets. It is best if that is underground or in the basement. If that’s not an option, you should pick an area with no windows. Put together an emergency stockpile kit and store it where you can easily find it in an emergency. Be sure to practice what you will do in an emergency.

Know where to go. If you’re in a car, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you see flying debris while you are driving, pull over and park. As a last resort, you can stay in your car with your seat belt on, lowering your head down below the windows and covering it with your hands and a blanket, if available. Another last resort option is to get out of your car, find a place that is noticeably lower than the level of the road and lie in it, covering your head with your hands.

Check out the tips for preparing a safe room from Ready.gov.

Tornado Facts

- Tornadoes may be nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel.
- Average tornado speed is 30 mph, but they can range from stationary to 70 mph.
- The average tornado moves from southwest to northeast, but they have been known to move in any direction.

Phil Rooney



The County Wellness Bicycling Corner

There are no excuses for not getting out on your bike or making a start at this great sport and exercise routine. The weather is right and all it takes is a little planning to make a change in your regular exercise program to try something new. If you don't have a bike in the basement or garage and want to get started, just stop by a bike store and ask the staff for their suggestions on a good beginner's bicycle. You will find some very helpful people who will assist you in getting a helmet and the other basic items to get you out on the trails.

If you have been riding a bit, consider doing a group ride with family members or co-workers at the County--- just ask around about people who like to ride. Doing the "Taco Ride" on Thursdays evenings down the Wabash Trace Trail to the Mineola Steak House - or on any evening of the week - will get you into the mood for being outdoors and enjoying the summer.

Bicycling in some ways is like walking or running --- you need to set aside some time to do it. Like everything else we do at work or at home, it is more likely to happen if you mentally plan for the activity. That's all it takes for bicycling.

Some great places to ride include the Keystone Trail, the Big Papio Trail, the Wabash Trace Nature Trail, the trail around Lake Zorinsky, and any of the routes within the City.

Here are some upcoming rides that offer a choice of various distances:

- The Owl Ride
- Saturday morning rides to Ft. Calhoun/Blair, NE, at 8:30 a.m. This is a medium to tough ride to help you get ready for longer distance rides. There usually are 3-4 County employees who ride.
- RAGBRAI --- starting in Council Bluffs on July 22 with a number of county co-workers who are doing a one, two or three-day ride. If you are interested, contact Lee Lazure at (402) 444-6123 to connect with others who are doing the ride.
- Corporate Cycling Challenge, Sunday, Aug. 18 at the Heartland of America Park with a choice of 10-, 25- and 42-mile rides.

Check out the Omaha Pedalers Bike Club or Bellevue Bicycling Club websites for more information on different rides and various distances.

You Can Do It!

Lee Lazure

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

And remember to always wear your helmet and hydrate frequently!



PLEASE BUCKLE UP
AND DON'T TEXT
WHILE DRIVING.



Learn how your neighborhood can start a community garden!

Visit
www.douglascountv-ne.gov/gardens/



For a list of Farmers Markets in Omaha, visit:
www.douglascountv-ne.gov/gardens/farmers-markets

Commit to be Fit



Leslie Huber – Yoga Instructor

You could call Leslie Huber, who leads the Wednesday class at the Douglas County Midtown Campus, a Yoga veteran.

“I discovered Yoga in 2004, at the gym, and loved the lengthening effects in my tight muscles,” she said. “It also gave me pain relief to the lumbar spine from the spinal manipulation that Yoga offers.”

That made Leslie curious to learn more about her anatomy and how it relates to what she terms “the intelligence of Yoga.”

While pursuing her new passion, she discovered One Tree Yoga, and in 2010 she became certified to teach the discipline. She encourages you to try it as well, and not be fooled by any exotic image or what you may think.

“Everyone can experience Yoga . . . it’s an Equal Opportunity Adventure,” she said.

A competitive swimmer and fast-pitch softball player “many years ago,” Leslie also was a bit of a fitness enthusiast, participating in stair stepping, spin cycling, and more. Still, she told us Yoga has brought her some surprising health benefits.

“One of my favorite benefits,” she explained, “Has been improved balance through body awareness, which meant falling and getting back up a lot.”

While Leslie is happy to share her enthusiasm for Yoga with her co-workers, she points out that there have been many Yoga teachers who have shared and continue to share their love of Yoga with her.

She has earned a combined 500 hours of Yoga Teacher Training Certification from three amazing Yoga teacher practitioners who continue to be the core of her practice: Theresa Murphy, Senior Teacher at Prajna Yoga; Tias Little, founder of Prajna Yoga; and Libba Harmon, founder of Big Moon Yoga.



“They all truly live the Yoga lifestyle and are inspirational in every realm,” Leslie said. “Place these three in a nutshell, and there is about 50 years, maybe more, of Yoga and Meditation experience from around the world.”

Leslie continues to study and teach at One Tree Yoga: “They have an amazing Yoga community.”

Her gratitude to those teachers, and her love for the benefits of her own Yoga practice, led to her willingness to help her co-workers.

“It’s a natural desire to pay the Yoga health benefits forward, to the Douglas County Employee Community,” she agreed.

Here is some advice to anyone thinking about attending a Yoga class.

1. Try not to eat two hours before class.
2. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate every day.
3. Smile and be Playful
4. Keep breathing and arriving at the mat (Yoga lingo for keep attending class and practice).

“A Yoga mat is your practice real estate - own it,” she emphasized. “And by the way, you do not need to be flexible in order to attend and enjoy a Yoga class.”

Many of those attending the new class in the old Goodwill building already are seeing benefits.

“A lot of people are pleased to be sleeping better, and are totally surprised when they balance in headstand for the first time,” Leslie proudly stated.

In fact, that’s what she calls her favorite Yoga posture: Salamba Sirsasana, which translated means “supported headstand.”

Why?

“I love to view the world upside down with lots of variation.”

So, if you have been considering Yoga, this just might be the time to accept Leslie’s invitation.

“Enjoy exploring the benefits of Yoga,” she says. “It’s Your Personal Health Journey

“Namaste.”

Phil Rooney

[See next page for more information on free yoga classes for Douglas County Employees](#)

Tennis Players!

The Wellness Committee is considering organizing a competitive tennis tournament and/or league for Douglas County employees. However, before it can happen, we need to determine whether enough employees would participate in a tournament and/or league. If you are interested, please notify Larry Miller, 402-444-6780, and let him know in which of the events you would participate - tournament, league, or both. If there is enough interest, we'll begin organizing the event(s).

Relax at work? YES!
Enjoy the relaxing, healing
power of

Yoga



Civic Center: Every Monday at noon

Every Thursday, 7:00 - 7:45 A.M.

Held in the Treasurer space on the Harney Level

Midtown Campus: Every Wednesday at 5:00 P.M.

Held in the first floor breakroom

All classes are taught by a trained yoga instructor

It's easy to get started!

E-mail Kathy at kathy.adair@douglascounty-ne.gov to say you'd like to join the class then just show up for any or all the classes!

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

FREE!

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

FYI: Mammograms are paid 100%
by United Healthcare.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, please contact the YWCA of Omaha's 24-hour hotline at **402-345-7273** or YWCA Omaha office at **402-345-6555**.

Rent Smoke-free!

Would you like to learn more about **Smoke-free multi-unit housing?**

Contact: **Aja Anderson, BS, Douglas County Health Dept.** at aja.anderson@douglascounty-ne.gov.

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 Adair
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

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

is available to all Douglas County employees through Alegent-Creighton Health. EAP's trained staff can help with problems that affect your personal or professional life. Services are provided to employees in a confidential manner and there is no charge to the employee for up to five counseling sessions. Call 402-398-5566 or 1-888-847-4975 or visit Alegenteap.com.

Commit to be Fit