

Commit to be Fit

March - April 2015

## *Hello from Healthy Directions...*

It already has been an amazing spring in the wellness area. I am extremely excited to report that in the first four months of the year employees are responding to the wellness initiatives sponsored by Healthy Directions and our wellness vendor Viverae.

Bio-metric screenings were offered at Corrections, the Sheriff's office, the Health Center, and the Civic Center during the month of March and April. All of them were well attended.

Healthy Directions also sponsored two Health Fairs – one on March 16th at the Health Center and the other April 8th at the Civic Center. Employees could enter the prize drawings by attending the Health Fair, getting bio-metric screenings, or by participating in the wellness activities offered during March and April. Prizes ranged from AFLAC Stress Ducks to water bottles to gift cards and fitness memberships to FitBits.

A big "Thank You" to all the vendors for their time, give-a-ways and donated prize items.

The MammoVan was also at the Health Center and the Civic Center during March and April. Appointments filled fast for the onsite mammography screening which is paid 100 percent for all United Healthcare insured employees and spouses.

Healthy Directions is planning to bring back the MammoVan in October during Breast Cancer Awareness month, so watch for details on dates, times and locations later this year.

I am also hearing from employees about logging on to the Viverae website so they can start earning points toward the 200-point wellness goal and earn the \$150 Visa Wellness Incentive Gift Card. More than 400 employees and/or spouses have completed the bio-metric screening and close to the same number have completed the on-line Member Assessment Survey (MHA).

The bio-metric screening and the MHA are each worth 50 points toward the 200 point calendar goal and required to earn the \$150 Visa Gift Card. There are close to 500 employees and spouses who have logged into the Viverae website.

Talk about excitement! There are 26 peer-to-peer challenges going on as well and nearly 250 employees who have completed the Tobacco Affidavit, all of which are worth POINTS toward the wellness goal.

It would be great to double the log-in numbers along with MHA completions as well as bio-metric screenings. So watch for details coming soon to your department bulletin board on the Membership Challenge and your chance to win a wellness incentive.

So until later get out and enjoy the weather! The flowers are blooming and the grass is finally green.

I hope you will "Commit to Be Fit!"

*Kathy Adair*



Special thanks to these vendors who participated in the health fair and donated prizes:

United Healthcare

Delta Dental

Minnesota Life

Viverae

AFLAC

VOYA

Edward Jones

Omaha-Douglas Credit Union

First Educators Credit Union

Alegent Health Clinic

Dr. Jason Wiese

Anytime Fitness

Healthy Directions



## Take a Break to Stretch

Flexibility is the measure of the ability of a joint to move through its full range of motion. Regular stretching exercises increase flexibility, which improves the ability of your joints to move through their full range of motion. Some common problems in people with poor flexibility are lower back pain, joint pain at the knees and elbows, and an increased risk of injury during exercise. Doing these stretching exercises a few times a week can help alleviate lower back and joint pain and decrease your risk of injury during daily activities.

Stretching can be a great break during your workday. Below are a few stretches to try:



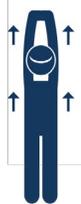
### Neck Stretches

Let your head tilt over so that your right ear nearly touches your right shoulder. Using your hand, press your head a little lower (gently). Hold for 10 seconds. Relax, and then repeat on the other side.



### Hamstring Stretch

Lay on the floor with one knee bent and that same foot flat on the floor. Grasp the bent knee and bring it toward the chest. Hold this for several seconds and repeat 3-5 times for each leg.



### Chest Stretch

Stand upright and reach behind your back with both arms. Clasp your hands together and straighten your elbows all the way. Raise the arms until a stretch is felt. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 3-5 times.



### Neck and Torso Twist

Facing forward, turn your head to the left and your torso to the right and hold a few seconds. Repeat 15 times, alternating sides.



### Chair Push and Pull:

Placing your hands on your desk, push away from the desk, slowly moving your chair back until your head is between your arms and you are looking at the floor. Then slowly pull yourself back in. Try not to use your legs. Repeat 15 times.

*Vivarae.com*

## Are Energy Drinks Bull?

Thanks to a large amount of sugar and caffeine, energy drinks might give you a temporary energy boost. But too much sugar from energy drinks can add

**extra pounds.**

And too much caffeine can cause adverse side effects, such as

**nervousness, stomach upset, irritability, increased heart rate and insomnia.**

There are better ways to boost your energy. For example, get enough sleep, exercise regularly and eat a healthy diet.

[www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org)



The National Safety Council reports that an estimated 1 in 4 crashes involve cell phones. **Your call or text can wait. It's just not worth it.**

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# Cooking Healthy on a Budget

Viverae.com

After housing, food is likely your biggest expense. By reducing waste (eating food before it goes bad), getting whole grains from bread and pasta rather than pricey cereals, buying cheaper vegetables like potatoes and carrots, and using less expensive meats (chicken as opposed to pork or veal) and other forms of protein, you can save money while improving your diet.

## Healthy Foods, Low Prices

If you skip the pre-packaged meals and fancy cuts of meat, you can find all sorts of nutritious foods that cost less than one dollar per serving. Eggs, tofu, or boneless, skinless chicken breasts (purchased frozen in a large bag) are all inexpensive sources of protein. Loaves of bread, oats, brown rice, and other grains almost never cost more than \$1 per serving. Milk and bulk cheeses can cover your dairy needs, and you'll have no shortage of fruits and vegetables to choose from. Chop and Mix Yourself Pre-cut fruits and vegetables and prepared salad mixes can be a time-saver, but you'll save money by buying whole fruits, vegetables, and heads of lettuce. You'll also use less packaging.

## Buy Local

It takes a lot of money and fuel to ship lamb from Australia or asparagus from Chile, and those costs are passed along to consumers. Whether you shop at a grocery store or, better yet, a farmer's market, you may find the best bargains from local producers. Local food is likely to be fresher, too.

## Plan Ahead

Impulse buys can really jack up your grocery bill. Make a list before you go to the grocery store and stick to it, unless you discover an unexpected bargain on something you will actually eat. Planning ahead can also mean fewer trips to the grocery store, and that can save you money.

## Eat In

If you're looking to trim your food budget, remember that cooking at home is almost always cheaper than eating out. When you eat at a restaurant, you're paying for the salaries of employees, rent for the building, and maybe some franchise fees in addition to the actual food. That restaurant meal may be tasty and convenient, but it's not going to be a bargain.



## Do you know where the first aid kits are located at work?

The American Red Cross recommends that everyone knows the location of their office first aid kits. Not sure? Ask your supervisor today.

## Perfect Roasted Broccoli

Minutes to Prepare: 5  
Minutes to Cook: 30  
Number of Servings: 4

### Ingredients

Broccoli, fresh, 4 cup,  
Olive Oil .4 tsp  
Chili powder, 1 tbsp  
Garlic, 4 tsp  
Salt, 1 tsp



Mix together the olive oil, chili powder, garlic and salt in a bowl. Add the broccoli and toss to coat. Place on a cookie sheet and roast for 20 - 30 minutes at 425 degrees. Broccoli should be browned and sizzling. It can be flipped halfway through cooking, but not necessary.

[www.sparkpeople.com](http://www.sparkpeople.com)



## Picnic Food Safely

Keep your food safe: from the refrigerator/freezer . . .all the way to the picnic table.

**Keep cold food cold.** Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at

40°F or below to prevent bacterial growth. Meat, poultry, and seafood may be packed while still frozen so that they stay colder longer.

**Organize cooler contents.** Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another. That way, as picnickers open and reopen the beverage cooler to replenish their drinks, the perishable foods won't be exposed to warm outdoor air temperatures.

**Keep coolers closed.** Once at the picnic site, limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer.

**Don't cross-contaminate.** Be sure to keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood securely wrapped. This keeps their juices from contaminating prepared/cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.

**Clean your produce.** Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water before packing them in the cooler - including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water. Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth towel or paper towel. Packaged fruits and vegetables that are labeled "ready-to-eat," "washed," or "triple washed" need not be washed.

### Quick Tips for Picnic Site Prep

**Food safety begins with proper hand cleaning — including outdoor settings.** Before you begin setting out your picnic feast, make sure hands and surfaces are clean.

**Outdoor Hand Cleaning:** If you don't have access to running water, simply use a water jug, some soap, and paper towels. Or, consider using moist disposable towelettes for cleaning your hands.

**Utensils and Serving Dishes:** Take care to keep all utensils and platters clean when preparing food.

[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

## Need help quitting smoking?

Visit [www.epa.gov/smokefree](http://www.epa.gov/smokefree)

### Stop Domestic Violence

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](mailto:aja.anderson@douglascounty-ne.gov).**

### 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 [Alegentep.com](http://Alegentep.com).**

**FYI: Mammograms are paid 100%**  
by United Healthcare

### 24-Hour Nurse from Unitedhealthcare

Connect with a registered nurse who'll take the time to understand what is going on with your health and provide personalized information just for you, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To talk with a nurse, call 888-332-8885, or visit [myuhc.com](http://myuhc.com)®.

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 or comments to the committee by e-mailing chairwoman Kathy Adair at [kathy.adair@douglascounty-ne.gov](mailto:kathy.adair@douglascounty-ne.gov), drop her a note to Human Resources, Room 505, or call her at 402-444-6099.

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