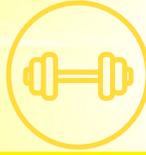




# Healthy Directions News

Worksite Wellness Newsletter for Douglas County Employees



## Hello from Wellness Headquarters,

Wow, do we ever have a lot going on already regarding wellness this year!

Healthy Directions and Viverae kicked off the first employer challenge for 2016. The "2-Minute Drill" where you award yourself one point and up to two points per day over a four-week period for doing basically 2-minute drills. Those drills include push-ups, sit-ups, walk sits or squats, walking the stairs and stretching.

Earn a total of 20 points between February 8th and March 12th and you will rack up 15 wellness points toward the 200 point annual goal. Signups ended February 15th.

Missed this challenge? Just wait. Two more employer challenges await you later this year!

We scheduled the MammoVan again for March 14th at the Health Center and April 6th for the Civic Center. Watch for the flyer coming soon with details on scheduling your appointment.

We will have the bio-metric screening nurses here in March and April and appointments are filling up fast. Don't worry if you can't schedule an appointment in March or April. We will bring them back in August and September.

But that's not all! We have set dates for the Annual Health Fair as well. The Health Center Health Fair will be March 14th and the Civic Center is scheduled for April 4th.

All our supportive vendors will be here to assist you with questions and, yes, they have donated great prizes for the employee drawing.

Visit one of the vendors and receive an entry for the prize drawings, plus get information on your health and wellness related questions. Watch for the flyer with specific details coming soon.

Whew.....we do have a lot going on and Healthy Directions would like you to participate. Your participation earns you points toward the 200 point wellness goal which earns you cash. We already have several employees who will earn their first \$100 Visa gift card by completing the bio-metric screening and Member Health Assessment Survey. You, too, can earn that first \$100 Visa gift card by completing your bio-metric screening and Member Health Assessment Survey. Gift cards will be distributed on a monthly basis once verification is made with Viverae.

**So get involved and Commit to be Fit!**

*Kathy Adair*

Stop saying I WISH and start saying I WILL.

## Setting exercise goals

Here are suggestions for what to do:

When you set goals for your exercise program, they can help you stay on track. But it's important to set goals that are realistic.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests how to set exercise targets:

- Talk to your doctor about exercise, and set up time on your calendar to work out.
- Establish long-term goals, including incremental increases to your exercise plan.
- Make your goals specific and measurable so you can gauge whether or not you're meeting them.
- Make your goals attainable and realistic.
- Make your goals relevant to living a healthier, longer life.
- Set realistic time limits for achieving your goals.

## Don't think of exercise as a chore

Engage in activities that you enjoy.

If you think of exercise as a chore that you have to do, it can be more difficult to stick with it. The Weight-Control Information Network offers these suggestions for making exercise fun:

- Figure out which fitness activities you enjoy most, and incorporate them into your exercise routine. Try to vary the routine so you don't become bored.
- Walk with a friend or family member. Sign up together for an exercise class.
- Build a community or backyard garden, and work in it regularly.
- Exercise in short spurts, such as three 10-minute walks.
- If you are concerned about exercising outdoors for safety reasons, join a local gym.

## Kick off your exercise program

### Start with doctor's approval and a plan.

So you want to get healthier and start exercising? Experts say you shouldn't just wing it. Get medical OK from your doctor, and devise a fitness plan for a healthier you. The American Council on Exercise recommends:

- Talk to your doctor about whether it's safe for you to exercise.
- Create a plan that includes activity that you enjoy. This means you're more likely to stick with it.
- Start out with short bursts of low-intensity exercise. Over time, make exercises longer and more vigorous. Track your progress over time.
- Perform strengthening and resistance training exercises to build muscle and boost metabolism.
- Schedule workouts at the beginning of each week to accommodate your other plans.
- Teach yourself not to think of exercise as "all or nothing." Any activity, even if you don't meet your goals, is better than being inactive.



## Avoid that afternoon slump



Eating between meals can keep your energy up and your weight down, if you choose snacks that combine carbohydrates with protein for a pick-me-up that lasts. Try these: carrots and hummus, apple slices and peanut butter, or cheese on whole wheat crackers. Because peanut butter, hummus, and cheese are high in fat, it's best to limit your daily servings of these.

### Choose a frozen fruit treat

For a quick and healthy sweet snack, wash seedless grapes, put them in a zip-top bag, and toss them in your freezer. Grapes contain resveratrol, an antioxidant that helps protect your heart, and they're even sweeter when frozen.

2015 HealthDay. (Viverae HealthY News)



## Make Veggies More Appealing

Many vegetables taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with raw broccoli, red and green peppers, celery sticks or cauliflower.

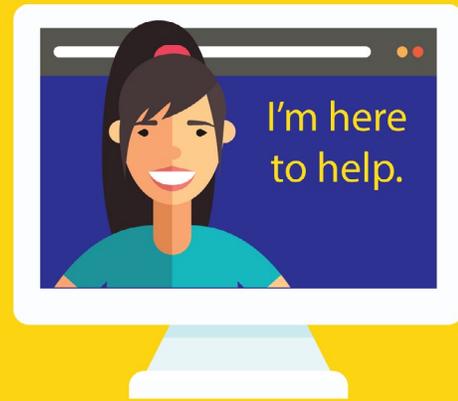
Add color to salads by adding baby carrots, shredded red cabbage, or spinach leaves. Include in-season vegetables for variety through the year.

Include beans or peas in flavorful mixed dishes, such as chili or minestrone soup.

Decorate plates or serving dishes with vegetable slices.

Keep a bowl of cut-up vegetables in a see-through container in the refrigerator. Carrot and celery sticks are traditional, but consider red or green pepper strips, broccoli florets, or cucumber slices.

See more at: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/vegetables-tips#sthash.v4k4e5yF.dpuf>



## Need a Health Coach? FREE Health Coaching is Available!

As a standard benefit of your company's health management program, your employer has provided you with access to a Health Coach to help you meet your goals and answer any questions you may have.

### About Viverae Health Coaches:

Health Coaches are certified individuals who specialize in areas such as nutrition, exercise and biology. You'll be assigned to one or more of these professionals, depending on your health goals. During coaching sessions, they can help you understand the results of your Biometric Screening and health score. Other topics of discussion may include goal setting, healthy eating, and managing stress.

### What is Health Coaching:

A coaching session is a two-way communication between you and your Health Coach, occurring through a secure message or over the telephone. You can make an unlimited number of contacts to your Health Coach by phone and secure message. In addition, your coach will reach out to you directly, providing encouragement and support during your health management program.

To learn more about free health coaching and how to contact a health coach, visit:  
<https://www.myviverae.com/ehms/vnext/member/healthCoachingII.seam>



**National Safety Council recommends the following tips to remove snow safely.**

### Shoveling Safely:

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it's lighter
- Push the snow rather than lifting it
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion

### Snow Blower Safety:

- If the blower jams, turn it off
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts
- Do not drink alcohol and use the snow blower
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space
- Refuel your snow blower when it is off, never when it is running

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

## Is it true that honey calms coughs better than cough medicine does?

Drinking tea or warm lemon water mixed with honey is a time-honored way to soothe a sore throat. But honey alone may be an effective cough suppressant, too.

In one study, children age 2 and older with upper respiratory tract infections were given up to 2 teaspoons (10 milliliters) of honey at bedtime. The honey seemed to reduce nighttime coughing and improve sleep.

In fact, in the study, honey appeared to be as effective as a common cough suppressant ingredient, dextromethorphan, in typical over-the-counter doses. Since honey is low-cost and widely available, it might be worth a try.

However, due to the risk of infant botulism, a rare but serious form of food poisoning, never give honey to a child younger than age 1.

And remember: Coughing isn't all bad. It helps clear mucus from your airway. If you or your child is otherwise healthy, there's usually no reason to suppress a cough.

*James M. Steckelberg, M.D., [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org)*



## 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?



[Info@MOTAC.org](mailto:Info@MOTAC.org)  
**(402) 546-1099**

### 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](http://Alegenteap.com). PLEASE NOTE: They have relocated to different building on the Creighton/Bergan Mercy Hospital Campus: 7710 Mercy Road, Building ONE, Suite #332.**

### 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; proofreading: Tina Curry; 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.