

Employers Benefit from Wellness Programs for Their Employees

Companies are always looking for ways to improve the productivity of their workers. Why not start the new year with an organized Employee Wellness Program.

For over a decade, research has been showing the effectiveness of Employee Wellness Programs. For every dollar spent on a Wellness Program, the returns have been cost savings of between \$2.30 to \$10.10 in the areas of decreasing absenteeism, fewer sick days, reduced workers' comp claims, lowered health and insurances costs, and improvement to employees performance and productivity.

A healthy lifestyle affects every part of the day-to day work environment. Wellness Programs translate into fewer injuries, less human error, and a more harmonious workplace environment.

Before starting a Wellness Program it is important to remember that it must be voluntary. Not all employees are going to participate. It is a good idea to have your employees fill out a survey to see how interested they are.

When starting a program, you need to select someone to oversee and coordinate the effort. This person should be committed to a healthy lifestyle and be interested motivating other employees to participate in the program. Form a committee to determine the goals of the Wellness Program. They could include any number of the following:

- Improve general health and well-being
- Improve general nutrition
- Improve productivity of workers
- Decrease absenteeism
- Decrease work injuries
- Decrease stress



Once the goals are set, it is important to offer a variety of activities and programs to fit the needs of your employees. Some possibilities are:

- Lunch time group walking
- Regular activity nights—Basketball, Volleyball, etc.
- Yoga classes
- Speakers on different health and nutrient topics
- Smoking cessation program
- Provide a personal trainer to help devise a workout program for individuals
- Implement the Fitness Challenge, where the goals are to be the Most Improved



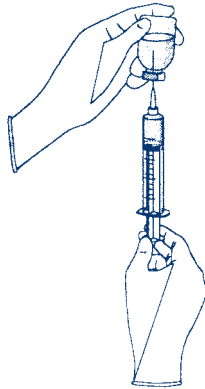
Once the Wellness Program is established be sure to emphasis the importance of the participants committing to the physical activity challenge. Thirty minutes of physical activity three times a week can help set them on the path to improved health. Benefits include better self-esteem, reduced stress, increased relaxation and slowing the aging process.

Reaching the thirty minutes of physical activity is easy. The thirty minutes does not have to be all at once. A block of 5 minutes can be counted toward the daily total. Keeping a log of their minutes each day can keep them on track to achieve their goal.

If you want to start a wellness program there are many resources available on the internet. (Sources: Natural Healthcare, Fitness Report)

HealthFirst Has Flu Vaccine Available

You may think it is too late to get a flu vaccination, but the Center for Disease Control is still recommending a flu vaccination as the best means of preventing the morbidity or mortality associated with influenza. Two of the drugs used for treatment or prophylaxis of the flu are not effective this year and the CDC has recommended that they not be used for the remainder of the 2005-2006 flu season.



Please contact your HealthFirst marketing representative at (562) 926-3440 or (562) 949-9328 if you would like arrange for onsite flu vaccinations.

You can also inform your employees if they want a flu vaccination they can come into either of our clinics from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The cost of the injection is \$12.00.

Changes in Company Information?

Contact: _____

Insurance Carrier: _____

Other: _____

State Fund Insurance to Form New MPN

State Fund Insurance has teamed up with Blue Cross of California to form a new MPN. HealthFirst Medical was previously contracted with State Fund and will be grandfathered into their new MPN. If your company is insured with State Fund, there will be no interruption in your employees' treatment at HealthFirst Medical. If you have any questions, contact your marketing representative.

Modified Duty Program Continues to Grow

If you have not taken the time to visit HealthFirst's In House Modified Duty Program, contact your marketing representative to schedule a tour.

Many companies have discovered the value of this program for their injured workers. If you cannot provide modified duty for an injured worker they can participate in our program and you will not have a lost time injury. This will save you money on your workers' compensation premiums. In the program, they will learn about their injury and how to prevent further injuries in the workplace. They will watch safety videos, read pamphlets on different injured body parts and answer questions. Most who participate are released to regular work within a week.



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