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BecauseWeCare

Healthy Ideas For A Healthy Workplace



Sit! Stay! Roll Over! Lower Your Blood Pressure!

We all know that “dog is man’s best friend,” but you might not realize how much good Fido (or your cat or your horse, for that matter) is doing for you. Numerous studies have shown that petting or talking to animals decreases blood pressure. Even relaxing by “meditating” on fish in a tank produces the same results.

James L. Lynch, PhD, director of the Life Care Clinic in Baltimore, MD, says, “In a world where face-to-face human contact is often very stressful, pets provide an outlet for communication and connection that isn’t stressful.”

So, besides the fact that they entertain us and keep us company, here are healthier reasons to put up with those early morning walks and emptying the cat litter:

- Pet owners get more exercise and have lower blood pressure.
- Pets help people cope with all kinds of stress: work, illness, grief, etc.
- Having a pet can enhance kids’ self-esteem.
- Pets can help reduce loneliness and isolation and even make it easier to meet new people.
- Seniors with dogs make fewer doctor visits and take less medication than non-owners.
- Survival rates after coronary artery disease and heart attack are better for pet owners than non-owners.

Karen Allen, PhD, a faculty member at SUNY Buffalo’s School of Public Health, did research that showed married couples who talk to their dogs (not just to each other) experience greater satisfaction in their lives and marriages, as well as improved physical and mental health. One participant in that study, which showed women’s blood pressure levels were lower when they were with their dogs, said,

“On a good day, my husband is like the dog is everyday.”

Just what husbands wanted: another goal to add to the list! *-Jeff Silver*

“In a world where face-to-face human contact is often very stressful, **pets provide an outlet** for communication and connection that isn’t stressful.”



Keeping Kids Active Throughout the Summer

When summer rolls around, most kids are ready for a vacation. Make sure that physical activity remains a part of their summertime routine.

Some kids want to spend many hours in front of the television set during the summer. Kids who watch more TV aren't as fit as kids who don't watch much or any TV, so it's a good idea to set a daily limit. The same goes for video and computer games. While some games do stimulate the brain, it's equally important that each day kids get healthy doses of physical activity, too.

Set the example and be active together. Show children how to get physical activity into their routine. Take them on errands within walking distance. When you do drive to do an errand, choose a parking spot that is far away. The longer daylight hours of summer mean more opportunities for you to get outside together as a family for walks through your neighborhood or games in your backyard.

Enroll kids in active summer courses. Local recreation centers and colleges generally offer classes for a variety of skill levels. There are usually plenty of options – from

traditional summer sports like tennis, baseball, or softball, to modern dance lessons or martial arts. It's even better if you can do it together!



CLICK HERE to sign up for the American Cancer Society Relay For Life.® This fun-filled event raises money for the fight against cancer and is a great way to keep kids active!

Check This Out!



Most dads are tough to shop for when Father's Day rolls around. They all seem to have enough shirts and dozens of golf balls. And don't even think about buying him another tie!

What many dads don't have is the motivation to go in for their yearly medical checkup. Men should have a checkup once every five years until they turn 40. After that, depending on their health, men should be checked every one to three years.

Now is the time to start talking to your father or husband – or any man you care about – about scheduling his yearly visit!



CLICK HERE for complete cancer screening guidelines for men.

Pilates Primer

If you follow the Hollywood celebrities' secrets of staying in shape, you've undoubtedly heard about the benefits of Pilates, an exercise system focused on improving flexibility and strength for the total body through a series of slow-moving, low-impact movements.

From Julia Roberts to Martha Stewart to entire sports teams – Pilates has rocketed in popularity, and everyone is eager to reap the benefits, some of which include:

- greater strength and muscle tone
- more efficient respiratory, lymphatic, and circulatory systems
- better posture
- improved flexibility
- less incidence of back pain
- increased joint mobility
- lower stress level
- improved sense of well-being

And since Pilates can be done by anyone at any level of fitness, it's a great way to begin an exercise program, or you can incorporate it into your existing routine!

Get a Summer *Burn* That's Not Hazardous to Your Health



With the cold days of winter behind us, there's no excuse for "hibernating" indoors. Take advantage of the longer, brighter days to recharge your body and mind in the beauty of the great outdoors. (Just be sure to pack plenty of sunscreen!) Give some of these activities a try on your next outdoor adventure:

Hiking

Journeying through the great outdoors can be a hugely enjoyable and motivating summer activity. *Calories burned per hour: approximately 500*

Cycling

As you pedal, you'll be strengthening your legs, calves, and thighs and



that's a great payoff on top of the cardio benefits. *Calories burned per hour: approximately 300 to 800*

Swimming

A great way to cool off and work off some of those cookout overindulgences, swimming is one of the few outdoor activities that actually feels good when the temperature hits triple digits. *Calories burned per hour: approximately 350 to 700*



CLICK HERE for information about how to protect your skin from the sun's harmful rays when you take your workout outdoors.

What You Should Know about Grab 'n' Go

Most parents rushing to get their kids off to school have said, "Any breakfast is better than no breakfast." The early morning time crunch has made "grab 'n' go" breakfast items popular, but parents can still make wise decisions about what to give their children to eat in the morning.

There are lots of quick breakfast solutions out there, but they do not all have the same nutritional content. What's a smarter choice, a breakfast burrito or a banana? The average breakfast burrito has 212 calories and 6.9 grams of fat. One banana typically has 145 calories and only 0.4 grams of fat. In addition, bananas are loaded with potassium.

Many kids like to start the day with toaster pastries or muffins. A blueberry pastry can have as many as 197 calories and 5 grams of fat, while the average muffin has 318 calories and as many as 11.9 grams of fat. A breakfast bar, on the other hand, typically has only about 140 calories and 3 grams of fat.

Parents should remember that a banana or apple is just as easy to "grab 'n' go" as a fast food breakfast sandwich, which has a whopping 438 calories and 26 grams of fat. Even single-serving hot oatmeal cups – which require hot water – are easy, healthy ways to start the morning. So, the next time you're in a rush, grab a *healthy* choice and go!

Keep Germs at Bay: Practice Picnic Safety Today!

Few things are as enjoyable as getting together with friends and family members for a summer picnic at your favorite park, lake, or beach. But your outing can turn unpleasant in a hurry if you don't take precautions to avoid foodborne illnesses.

- The rinds of melons can carry bacteria, so wash them thoroughly before slicing.
- Using the same utensil to cut raw meat, pickles, and onions can result in cross-contamination and sickness, so carry several utensils.
- Pack two ice chests: one containing sodas and other beverages that will be opened frequently, and the other containing the food for the picnic that must remain cold.
- Grilled meat must be cooked thoroughly to avoid bacteria. A hamburger should never be pink in the middle.
- To avoid bacteria growth, never let cold foods sit out for more than one hour.
- Carry your favorite brand of hand wipes to clean hands before preparing food and before eating.



Pucker Up!

Limes Are a Great Way to Squeeze More Nutrition into Your Meals

Although they may not be what you would choose for an afternoon snack, limes pack a powerful punch in both flavor and nutrition. The tart, green citrus fruit that dates back to the 13th century contains unique flavonoid compounds that have antioxidant and anticancer properties. Researchers believe flavonoids may protect the body from cancer by disarming chemicals that damage a cell's DNA.

In addition, limes are an excellent source of one of the most important antioxidants in nature, vitamin C. Vitamin C travels through the body neutralizing any free radicals (chemicals in the body that damage cells) both inside and outside cells.



Key Lime YOGURT PIE

- 1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 2 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 1/2 cup frozen apple juice concentrate, thawed
- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/3 cup fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons lime zest
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups low-fat plain yogurt
- Fresh lime slices for garnish

Combine crumbs and margarine in a small bowl and mix well. Press crumb mixture over bottom and side of a pie plate and freeze.

Pour apple juice into a sauce pan, sprinkle with gelatin, and let stand several minutes, or until gelatin is softened.

Add sugar and cook over low heat until gelatin and sugar dissolve, stirring constantly.

Pour gelatin mixture into a mixer bowl. Add lime juice, zest, and vanilla.

Chill until mixture resembles raw egg whites, then beat until fluffy. Add yogurt, continuing to beat until fluffy.

Pour yogurt mixture into prepared crust and chill until firm. Garnish with lime slices.

Serves 8.

Approximate per serving: 152 calories, 5 grams of fat



CLICK HERE to order *Celebrate! Healthy Entertaining for Any Occasion.*

In The Next Issue

- Coaching for Life
- Teens and Tanning
- Meditation Hideaways

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All content for BecauseWeCare is provided by the American Cancer Society.

Meeting the growing consumer and employee demands for increased health services on the job, the American Cancer Society Workplace Services program provides corporate tools and resources to initiate or enhance existing employee health and wellness services.

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