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BecauseWeCare

Healthy Ideas For A Healthy Workplace



“Exercise needs to become a habit. I can’t get through my day without it. It’s even become a great activity my daughter and I do together.”

Physical (and Fiscal) Fitness

Clark Howard is full of advice. The host of the nationally syndicated “Clark Howard Show” helps consumers save money on just about everything, including health care and fitness.

He’s a big fan of tax-free Health Savings Accounts. Anyone whose insurance deductible is \$1,000 or more with maximum out-of-pocket expenses of \$5,000 is eligible. “If we’re responsible for paying, it gives patients some control over health care pricing,” he says.

For prescription drug purchases, Clark has these tips: Online purchases can often save you 20 to 30 percent; if you belong to a managed care program, consider a prescription covering 90 days instead of 30. You pay just one co-pay instead of three; if your prescription is less expensive in higher-dose tablets, cut the tablets to fit your dosage – and save up to 75 percent!

When it comes to fitness, Clark (an avid exerciser) says that unless working out is already part of your regular routine, don’t buy home fitness equipment because it rarely, if ever, gets used. If you must buy it, he recommends, “The best time to buy is in the spring when everyone who’s paid full price takes their unused equipment to a second-hand sports shop. Then you’re working out at a discount.”

Want fitness for free? Take a walk! When a broken hand interfered with his workouts, Clark discovered that a brisk, 30-minute walk every day helps prevent weight gain. To lose weight, just walk a little faster or a little longer. And what could be cheaper than walking?

If you’re considering a health club membership, this consumer guru says don’t sign a long-term contract, get all “sales promises” in writing, and talk to other club members to find out what they like and don’t like before you sign anything. *-Jeff Silver*

Boosting Your Benefits

Like most Americans, you probably worry about the rising cost of health care – and with good reason. In 2002, Americans spent more than \$1 trillion on health care, or a little more than \$5,000 per person. That far exceeds the amount spent on food, housing, automobiles, or national defense. With health care costs continuing to rise by double digits each year, many benefits managers are beginning to explore new options to control the costs. A new consumer-driven plan known as a medical savings account is offering many companies a promising solution.



Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs) are tax-deferred investment accounts, similar in many respects to an IRA, used in conjunction with a qualified high-deductible health plan (HDHP). It is a tax-advantaged arrangement that allows earnings and deductible contributions to grow tax-deferred. MSAs are primarily used to save for qualified medical expenses.

Medical expense accounts can help you take charge of your own medical costs by giving you greater choice in and control of your health care options. Talk to your benefits manager today to find out if your company offers MSAs and if they're the right option to help you boost your benefits.



*Ladies,
check
this out!*

This is to remind you that it's time to make some important appointments.

- It's time to schedule your yearly mammogram if you're 40 or older.
- It's time to remind your friends to get their mammograms.
- It's time to check out free or low-cost mammography. (Call 1-800-ACS-2345 to find out if you're eligible.)
- It's time to get out and get fit!



Click to remind yourself and your friends to get checked.

Clark's Healthy Tips

- If you're 50 or older, AARP offers discounts on mail-in prescription orders.
- Find out if generic brands are less expensive than brand-name prescriptions.
- Be wary of "free" health club memberships. They're often sales pitches in disguise.
- Before signing anything, check out the gym at peak times (usually just before and after work) to see how crowded it gets.
- If you change your mind about joining a health club, the law usually provides a three-day grace period to get out of the contract.
- For more of Clark's tips, visit clarkhoward.com.

Eat Healthy on a Budget

It's easy to keep more money in your pocket and to put great-tasting, healthy meals on your table. Here are some ideas to help you stretch your food budget and ensure good nutrition.

- Don't be a "name brand" snob. Much of the price of products offered in the supermarket comes from the cost of advertising and packaging. Choose store or generic brands instead.
- To save money, buy in bulk whenever possible.
- Skip pre-prepared meals. Fixing your own meals will also allow you to control portion size, season to taste, and cut down on the possibility of overeating and waste.
- Clip coupons from your Sunday or mid-week newspaper. Coupons are "free money" for the budget-conscious shopper.



Volunteering: Just What the Doctor Ordered?



Q: Could volunteering make you healthier? We all know helping others makes us feel good inside, but does it do something good for our bodies as well?

A: YES!

The most immediate health benefit of volunteering is physical activity: Helping others requires effort! Many volunteering opportunities involve physical activity, including disaster relief, Habitat for Humanity, food pantry and soup kitchen work, gardening, home chore help, hospital work, mentoring young people, and sports activities.

But what if your work and family schedule are so demanding they leave little time for getting out of the house? You can still reap the health benefits of volunteering by becoming a “virtual volunteer.” Virtual volunteering, also called cyber service, online mentoring, and teletutoring, allows you to help others online. Many agencies need virtual volunteers to help with technical assistance or direct contact projects. This is a great way for busy or homebound people to get involved in making a difference for others.



Click to get involved with the American Cancer Society in your community.

Healthy Fun for Less

Looking for an activity where you'll break a sweat but not break the bank? Here are a few suggestions.

- Sign up for a guided nature hike. Then lace up your hiking boots and get going.
- Take your dog for a walk – especially if you're both city dwellers who spend a lot of time indoors.
- Start a neighborhood softball or volleyball league. After a game, enjoy a healthy potluck dinner. Challenge everyone to bring a dish that includes fruits or vegetables.



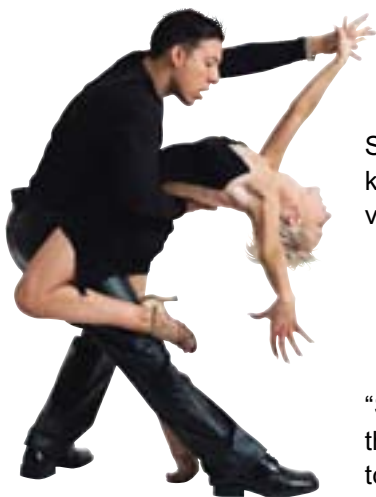
Click to count how many calories your favorite activity burns.

You don't need to part with hundreds of dollars to purchase exercise equipment when items you have around your house will do the trick just as well.

- Loading and unloading your dishwasher, washing machine, or dryer, and vacuuming your carpets will help stretch and strengthen your side and back muscles. Just put a little “attitude” into your motions.
- If your house has a flight of steps, occasionally walk up and down them for no reason at all.
- Strengthen your grip and wrists by using a rolled-up pair of socks as a “squeeze ball.”
- Almost every garage or basement has a length of rope laying around. Put it to use as a jump rope.
- Before you down that bottle of water or sports drink, use it as a hand weight during your power walk. A can of vegetables will serve the same purpose while you talk on the phone.

Double Duty for Household Items





Salsa...Not Just for Chips Anymore

Salsa has become the best-selling condiment in North America, surpassing even tomato ketchup. Salsa is typically low in fat, cholesterol, and calories and is a fun way to add vegetables and fruits to your diet.

Uses for salsa:

- A dip for vegetables such as zucchini, cucumbers, and carrot rounds
- A condiment for fish, chicken, or beef
- A topping for pasta or baked potatoes
- A flavor booster for scrambled eggs
- A base for cooked sauces

“Salsa” is the Spanish word for sauce. It is also used to describe the popular dance style that is a mixture of Latin and Afro-Caribbean influences. Salsa dancing provides a great way to burn calories and stay in shape.

Pineapple, Peach, and Jalapeño Salsa

Before you add more jalapeños, remember that the salsa will get hotter as it sits.

- 2 cups pineapple, finely chopped
- 2 cups peaches, finely chopped
- 4 pickled jalapeño slices, minced
- 2 scallions, finely chopped, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt

In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients together except for 1 tablespoon of scallions. Transfer to serving bowl, top with remaining scallions, and chill 1 hour. Serves 8.

Approximately 48 calories; 0 grams of fat per serving.



Click to learn about healthy entertaining for any occasion with *the American Cancer Society's Celebrate Cookbook*.

Eggplant Salsa

- 1 large (1-1/4 pounds) eggplant
- 1 large tomato, peeled and chopped
- 3 green onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 stalk celery, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup green bell pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons corn oil or safflower oil
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 400°. Prick eggplant in several places with fork and place onto a baking sheet. Bake until tender, turning eggplant several times. Allow eggplant to cool, then peel and chop finely. Gently mix eggplant, tomato, green onions, celery, green pepper, and garlic into a medium bowl. Toss to mix. Add oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or more to blend flavors. Makes 12 (1/4 cup) servings.

Approximately 24 calories; 2 grams of fat per serving.



Click to celebrate foods, friends, and healthy living with *the American Cancer Society's Healthy Eating Cookbook*.



In The Next Issue

- Loneliness at the Holidays
- Healthy Turkey Alternatives
- Avoiding Tobacco Temptation

Articles contributed by Allison Davis, Donna Gulotta, Kara Moore, David Noel, Jim Ryan, and Liz Taylor.

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.

For more information contained in this newsletter, to sign up for the newsletter, or to find out more about American Cancer Society programs, services, and upcoming events, please call 1.800.ACS.2345 or visit www.cancer.org.