



2015

Coordinator's Bulletin

March Health Observances and Holidays

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 24: American Diabetes
Alert Day

March 2-9: National Sleep
Awareness Week

March 16-22: National Poison
Prevention Week

National Nutrition Month

Brain Injury Awareness Month

National MS Education and
Awareness Month

Beat Your Cravings: 8 Simple Ways

Don't let a sweet tooth or carb craving prevent you from reaching your goals. Keep cravings in check with these practical methods. The foods you crave are likely to be high in sugar, fats and carbohydrates such as pizza, chocolate, cake, chips and ice cream. Cravings can derail your efforts at weight control and may lead to binge eating, but you can learn how to manage them and stay on course with these tips.

- **Enjoy a small portion.** Don't give up these foods. In your overall healthy diet, include a small portion of the less healthy foods you crave. Better to enjoy a square of chocolate than to avoid it altogether.
 - **Eat something healthy first.** It's often easier to eat less of the food you're craving if you're not ravenously hungry.
 - **Keep the food you crave out of the house.** Buy the item only when you plan to eat it, or order it at a restaurant.
 - **Change your mental picture.** When you experience a craving, replace the image of the food with a picture of yourself doing your favorite activity or some other pleasant image.
- **Distract yourself.** Food cravings usually pass after 20 minutes. Try taking a walk or talking to a friend.
 - **Chew gum.** Chewing sugarless gum reduces hunger and cravings for sweet and salty snacks.
 - **Get enough sleep and exercise.** These habits help lower your levels of the hormone ghrelin, which stimulates appetite. Lack of sleep can lead to food cravings and overeating.
 - **Substitute a healthier option.** Satisfy your craving for something smooth and creamy with something low-fat or fat-free, such as yogurt, pureed fruit or buttermilk. Eat a piece of fruit as a healthy sweet snack.

Source: www.mayoclinic.com

Take a Stand—The Effects of Sitting at Work

Take a Stand will provide you with an eye-opening look at how sitting is affecting our health. The average American sits for more than 60 hours a week, roughly 8.5 hours per day. Regardless of how much you exercise, that much sitting is going to do damage! This would be a great class to offer during the cold winter months when we are all doing more sitting, because Abby will offer you some solutions to curb the sitting problem right at your desk. Contact Abby at adipasquale@memun.org to schedule today!



**IF IT
WAS EASY,
EVERYONE
WOULD
DO IT.**

Americas's #1 Stressors

Even with the U.S. economy on the rebound, Americans are more stressed out about money than ever, and the financial strain is harming the nation's health. The American Psychological Association's "Stress in America" survey results for 2014, released this week, shows that 72% of adults report feeling stressed about money at least some of the time, and 22% say that they experience extreme stress about money. Top reported triggers include paying for unexpected expenses, paying for essentials, and saving for retirement. Women shoulder much of the burden. Far more women than men say they have lain awake at night in the past month due to stress — 51%, compared with 32% of men.

For the first time, the annual report shows a disturbing trend: All of this financial strain is negatively affecting Americans' health. Parents are more likely than nonparents to report engaging in unhealthy stress-management techniques, such as drinking alcohol and smoking. And 32% of adults say that their lack of money prevents them from living a healthy lifestyle, while 12% report skipping going to the doctor because of financial concerns. Almost a third of adults with partners (31%) report that money is a major source of conflict in their relationships.

Chronic stress is directly linked to myriad health issues, including high blood pressure, ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, headaches, and depression. As difficult as it is to find a way to relieve the mind when life is a pressure cooker of stress, taking a moment to care for oneself is incredibly important. Studies repeatedly show that one of the best ways to reduce stress is with exercise, which lowers stress hormone levels in your body — and it doesn't mean spending hours at a gym every day. Experts agree: Even a simple walk around the block for a few minutes can do a world of good for the body and mind.

Looking for ways to help your co-workers relieve stress and manage finances? Wellness Works can help! Anne Charles offers a Financial Fitness class to help with the money side (contact her at acharles@memun.org), Abby offers a Managing Stress and Living Well class (contact her at adipasquale@memun.org) and Danielle offers many fitness related classes—like FitME (contact her at dyale@memun.org).

Get Ready for Donate Life Month

Join the New England Organ Bank in the celebration of National Donate Life Month this April. The month-long celebration showcases various perspectives of those touched by donation and transplantation. Every year since 2002, April has been filled with stories to spread the lifesaving message of donation in order to motivate people to register as organ, eye and tissue donors. Approximately half of the U.S. adult population is registered as donors. Still, the number of people in need of transplants continues to outpace the number of donor organs. On average, 21 people die each day because the organs they need are not donated in time. Registering your decision to become a donor (www.DonateLifeNewEngland.org) is the most effective way to ensure you can save lives through donation and serves as a sign of hope to those who continue to wait.

So what can your wellness program do to promote Donate Life Month? The New England Organ Bank can provide 3x5' flags to be flown at municipalities; promotional materials, such as posters and brochures that can be displayed at your offices; and speakers (people from the community who have personally been touched by donation). There is no cost for the flags, materials or speakers. These speakers make great lunch n' learn presenters and can shine a light on this important topic. If you would like more information on getting these materials or a speaker lined up, contact Jennifer Cray at New England Organ Bank via her cell: (617) 571-9582 or email: jennifer_cray@neob.org



Tips for Starting and Sticking with a Workout Routine

For some of us out there, if we could just convince ourselves that there is enough time in the day to exercise, we could be on track to a great fitness program. For others, we get started but quickly lose momentum and give up. To help get started and stay on track, here are a few tips:

1. **Throw away** the bathing suit you wore in high school... and the memory too. It's normal to have a mental image of yourself when you last exercised like a fiend. But if that image is from high school, you could be in big trouble. Even if it's from last year, forget it. Remember as little as possible of what you used to look like. Starting today, make new memories.
2. **Prepare.** We already know you don't have the time, so write it down like an appointment every day. You wouldn't cancel an appointment, why would you cancel on yourself? Aren't you important too?
3. **Start slowly.** Do much less than what you're capable of. Take a 20-minute walk if you're returning to exercise. You might feel like it's not enough, but it's a good start.
4. **Get the family involved.** Run while your daughter rides her bike. Go to a local track and let the kids play their own games. Run with your spouse. Sign up for a local 10K. Walk with your son. Celebrate with a little something special after every activity.
5. **Where are your friends?** Four words, four reasons – motivation, inspiration, determination, conversation. Surround yourself with friends who think positive and live large.
6. **Put the pain in perspective.** When the going gets tough, remember that you have survived carpools, loads of laundry, baseball games, dinners and family vacations. What's the big deal?
7. **Allow yourself to slow down.** You're driving this bus! For the first time today, you are in control.
8. **Sign up for a race.** It's a goal to strive for and adds a little meaning to your everyday workout.
9. **Run/walk in public.** Be proud of your accomplishment. Take in all the sites and be an inspiration to others.
10. **Just show up.** Go to the gym, class, or the park. Once you're there, it's hard to say no. 98% of life is showing up.
11. **Eat.** Follow a healthy eating pattern. If you limit your calorie intake, you will not have enough energy to work out and your metabolism will slow down.
12. **Understand your energy cycle.** There are peaks during our days. Even during the week. Try to complete your workout when you feel good about yourself.
13. **Wallow in your greatness.** You can exercise to become a better exerciser, or you can exercise to become a better mother, a better father, doctor, teacher, or a better friend – or you can exercise to become BETTER. Be proud of that accomplishment.
14. **Have fun.** Where's your childlike spirit? When you can make workouts "playouts," you've got it made.
15. **Don't give up on yourself.** After all, it's never too late to be that healthy person you might have been.

Source: Sparkpeople.com



Upcoming....April Health Observances



- Alcohol Awareness Month
- National Autism Awareness Month
- National Cancer Control Month
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Stress Awareness Month
- National Public Health Week (April 6-12)
- World Health Day (April 7)
- Earth Day (April 22)
- Take Your Son or Daughter to Work Day (April 23)