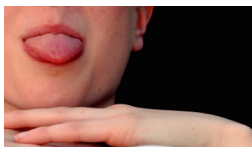


Wellness Works Coordinator's Bulletin

Providing your wellness committee
with updates and relevant health
information!

April 2016

Highlights from this Month's Bulletin:



Taste Bud Rehab
Tips to coax your
taste buds into loving
simple, less intense
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28th Annual Wellness Conference

Register today to reserve your spot!

Tuesday, April 26, 2016

The 28th Annual Wellness Conference will be held on Tuesday, April 26, at the Harraseeket Inn, in Freeport, Maine.

Our keynote speaker will be Amy Morin, LCSW. Amy is the author of the bestselling book, *13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do*. In her keynote presentation she will address why some people struggle to overcome life's challenges, while others bounce back from adversity better than before. In an inspiring presentation filled with clear action steps and anecdotal stories, Amy will provide the answers.

We have an exciting day planned for you! In the afternoon, we also have a special guest from the National Donor Program to celebrate April as Organ and Tissue Donor Month and lots of opportunity to network with other wellness groups from around the state and hear what Wellness Works has for new and upcoming programs!

Registration is filling up fast, so if you haven't reserved your spot yet, don't delay, register at <http://www.memun.org/InsuranceServices/MaineMunicipalEmployeesHealthTrust/WellnessWorksConference.aspx> Each wellness group can send two attendees to the conference.

Questions? Contact Anne Charles at acharles@memun.org

Making Your Fitbit Fit Your Lifestyle

Oh no...the panic that sets in when you realize that you have no idea when you last saw your Fitbit or maybe you just remembered you had a Fitbit, but forget to put it on every day (not doing you much good that way). How on earth are you supposed to keep track of this little device that has promised to keep track of you?



This topic has come up several times in our own office, as well as from some of the participants that earned their Fitbit last year. Our very wise assistant, Amanda, came up with a few bright ideas to remind people (and herself) to remember to clip on their Fitbit in the morning:

- Think ahead. Plan out your outfit the day before and actually clip your Fitbit to your clothing so you don't forget it on your bureau day after day after day...
- If you wear your Fitbit on your belt, clip it to your belt every night when you take it off (provided you aren't going for a long walk or run...don't want to miss all those steps!)
- Hang your Fitbit on the toothbrush holder or tie a string around your deodorant and hook it on that...as an added bonus, this will remind you to brush your teeth and put on deodorant!
- Try putting your Fitbit in a place that you visit after or as you're getting dressed...maybe the coffee pot?

For "real" advice, you can check out www.Fitbit.com and search for "I lost my Fitbit." Here are a few of their suggestions (not nearly as practical as our own!):

- Check your dashboard to see the last time your tracker synced. If it synced recently, that means it is within 15-20 feet of a computer with the Fitbit Connect software installed and a dongle plugged in.
- Look near your laundry if you use a clip-on tracker. Many customers find that these trackers wind up in the dirty clothes pile.
- If your Fitbit tracker is connected with a mobile device, take that device to the area where your tracker may have been lost and watch for a sync. (To initiate a sync, tap your tracker name at the top of the mobile dashboard and then tap Sync Now.) If a sync happens, you know the tracker is nearby.

Taste Bud Rehab

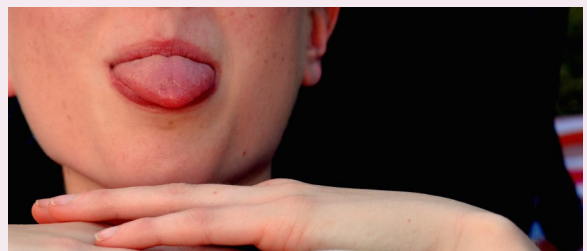
If you're like most Americans, the never-ending stream of ultra-processed, highly palatable foods that define our modern food supply has hijacked your taste buds. But have no fear! Fortunately, our sense of taste is highly malleable. This means that your taste buds can be coaxed into loving the simple and less intense flavor profiles typical of Mother Nature's disease-busting foods - like vegetables, fruits, beans and whole grains. All it takes is a little knowledge and know-how. If you make a commitment to incorporate a few key practices into your daily diet, you too can reach the "ultimate goal" of healthy eating as a way of life. In time, I know from experience that you will truly crave and seek out super-healthy foods like kale and other dark leafy greens. So how do you retrain your taste buds? Time for Taste Bud Rehab!

It is never too late to lure your taste buds back to their native state where healthy foods actually taste good. Commit to the following three essential steps to see for yourself:

- ◆ Make a concerted effort to decrease your taste bud's exposures to the most notorious foods for desensitizing and hijacking your sense of taste. These include all traditional fast foods, desserts and sweets like cakes, pastries, donuts, cookies and candy, and foods and beverages sweetened with no-calorie artificial sweeteners.
- ◆ Be proactive in regularly exposing your palate to healthy foods, particularly non-starchy vegetables. The more you eat a food, the better it tastes over time, even if you don't like them at first. And that is a well-documented fact!
- ◆ When you eat healthy foods, constantly reinforce to yourself how good they are for your body and how much better they can make you feel. Studies show this simple practice of "positive associations" makes them taste better.

Looking for more clever ways to get good food that tastes good too? Contact Abby at adipasquale@memun.org to discuss what nutrition programs might be a good match for your group!

Source: Dr. Ann Kulze, MD, www.drannwellness.com



Thinking About Fall?

I know, I know, we haven't even gotten into Spring yet, but it is time to start thinking about Fall already! Especially if you have any Wellness classes, competitions, or screenings you would like to do after the fun summer months. Our calendars do book up pretty quickly, so if there is a specific date or time that works better for your group, it is best to contact us early to get it on the schedule!

Many of our groups tell us that they are healthier in the summer months and then in the fall and winter begin backsliding...why not put that age old theory to the test and schedule some fitness assessments in early fall? Contact Danielle at dyale@memun.org or Abby at adipasquale@memun.org to get started on the planning process today!

You Are A Crafty Genius!

Using your brain power for fun, creative activities really helps keep your brain healthy. These hobbies may seem mindless, but a new study in journal Neurology shows that letting your creative juices flow may reduce your risk of memory loss by 73%! Creative tasks and activities keep your memory sharp by causing you to focus and relax your brain (much like meditation does) as well as requiring you to do a lot of visualization and problem solving! Don't feel like learning a new hobby or don't think you have time for hobbies you already know how to do? That's okay. Just get out a blank piece of paper and doodle your way to better brain power! Studies show that mindless scribbling can increase your ability to recall boring information by 29%. Want to share this creative benefit with coworkers? Print out some coloring pages and leave them with a box of crayons in the employee break room and watch the masterpieces emerge!

Move Over Sugar

How much did you love the "Kick the Sugar Habit" class? If you were like many of our groups, that class created a lot of discussion and had many people beginning to make some serious changes to the amount of sugar they were consuming...but what's next? I'm so glad you asked...

Danielle is pleased to introduce her new class, "Move Over Sugar"- it takes a closer look at sugar alternatives, tips to reduce your sugar consumption and how to stay on the sugar-free bandwagon to improve your health. This program takes the "Kick the Sugar Habit" class to the next level! Contact Danielle at dyale@memun.org to schedule "Move Over Sugar, the follow up class to "Kick the Sugar Habit."

Oodles of Zoodles!

Zoodles (zucchini noodles) are all the rage! The Julienne Peeler/Vegetable Slicer is great for making twisty, simple to eat toppings for salads, summer squash, cucumbers and carrots...not to mention the numerous delicious meals you can create with the recipe book we include with this incentive prize! The Peeler/Slicer features dual stainless steel heads (one for peeling, one for julienne slicing) that are razor sharp to cut right through the toughest veggies, a super soft ergonomic grip, includes a snap-on cover for the blades. Dishwasher safe.

For more information about the incentive program, contact Anne Charles at acharles@memun.org.



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