

Providing your wellness committee with updates and relevant health information!

Wellness Works Coordinator's Bulletin

March 2016

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Webinars On-Demand

A new way to promote wellness when it is convenient for participants.

As you know from Anne's "EAP and You" class, our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is much more than a hotline when life gets tough. With topic areas covering everything from identity theft, to wills, to finding a caregiver for your family members (even the furry ones). The EAP program is free for everyone at your worksite (part-time, and full-time) as well as anyone living under their roof—even your deadbeat brother who sleeps on the couch. This program offers a wealth of information and resources for improving all aspects of health and we are pleased to announce one more...Wellness Webinars!

Now you can view a variety of wellness webinars on-demand—anytime, anywhere. Each month a new wellness topic is added and participants can submit questions and receive responses via email. To view a webinar on demand, go to anthemeap.com and enter MMEHT. You'll find a listing of monthly wellness topics and other seminars listed in the "Online Seminars" section. We have also included a link to the yearly topic list as a PDF attached to this months' bulletin.

If you haven't offered the "EAP and You" class at your worksite, contact Anne Charles at acharles@memun.org to schedule.



Annual Wellness Conference – 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! You will be receiving the registration form via e-mail within the next week or two, so keep your eyes opened and don't forget to register. Each wellness group can send two attendees to the conference. Questions? Contact Anne Charles at acharles@memun.org



The Wellness Council of Maine will be holding a Wellbeing Symposium on April 5th at the Morgan Hill Events Center in Hermon, Maine. This symposium will focus on helping organizations to achieve true well-being from employees to culture. We have a national well-being leader as our keynote! Tony Buettner from Blue Zones (which you may have heard Danielle present on). This is their first presentation in Maine and sure to inspire you and your community! For more information on this event, visit: <http://www.wellnesscouncilofmaine.org/news.html>

How to Use Stevia Leaves

Stevia offers sweet taste without impacting blood glucose levels. A natural, calorie-free sweetener approximately 200 to 300 times as sweet as sugar? Sounds too good to be true, but it's not; it's stevia. This ultra-sweet plant originated in South America, but it's been used in many countries for hundreds of years as a natural sweetener. Using stevia in place of sugar can cut calories and may keep your blood glucose level more stable, according to University of Utah Health Care. Whether you're diabetic or just looking for a natural alternative to white sugar, saccharin or aspartame, stevia is a good choice.

Use fresh stevia leaves as a sweetener in beverages, such as tea and lemonade, or in sauces. A few fresh stevia and mint leaves make a refreshing herbal tea when steeped in a cup of boiling water. Add fresh stevia leaves to beverages or foods as a sweet, edible garnish. Although the fresh leaves are less sweet than dried leaves, they're still much sweeter than sugar. Taste-test your beverage before serving to ensure you don't over-sweeten your drink.

Use dry stevia leaves to make a powdered sweetener. Bundle and hang fresh stevia plant stems upside down in a warm, dry location until the leaves are thoroughly dry, then strip the leaves from the stems. Fill a blender, food processor or coffee grinder to half full with dry leaves and process at high speed for a few seconds. Store the powdered sweetener in an airtight container. Use the powder in recipes that call for a sweetener, but make adjustments in the amount used due to its dense sweetness. A general rule of thumb is that 2 tablespoons of stevia powder equals 1 cup of sugar.

Use dry stevia leaves to make a syrup for sweetening beverages, sauces or other syrups. Add one cup of warm water to one-quarter cup of fresh, finely crushed stevia leaves. Put the mixture in an airtight container and allow it to set for 24 hours before straining the leaves from the mixture. If desired, you can cook the strained mixture on low heat, reducing it to a more concentrated syrup. The syrup should last for several years, if kept in an airtight container in your refrigerator.

For more information on sugar, contact Danielle to schedule her "Kick the Sugar Habit" and its follow up class, "Move Over Sugar" at dyale@memun.org



Leave Stress at the Office

How many of us leave at the end of the day with deadlines and to-do lists looming over our heads? If you are like most people, you probably have a hard time leaving work at the office. Well, here is a great strategy to reduce the stress of work left undone.

At the end of your day, write yourself a note about what needs to be done to finish up your tasks/projects the next time you are in the office. Even if it isn't for a few days, this simple task will help you transition your brain from the workplace hustle to a calmer, more in control person at home.

Need some other ideas to help you manage your time and stress less? Danielle offers a Time Management class, contact her at dyale@memun.org and Abby offers a Living Well and Managing Stress class, contact her at adipasquale@memun.org

Shamrock Shake Remake!

McDonald's super yummy Shamrock Shake is back and so is a skinny version! Get ready to enjoy every sip of my dreamy, minty, milkshake...Guilt-free!!! You'll be totally amazed how much it tastes like the real thing but it's completely fat-free. No need to make it just once a year. I hope you get a chance to try it soon!

Ingredients for Shake (courtesy of SkinnyKitchen.com)

¾ cup fat-free frozen vanilla yogurt

½ cup fat-free milk

¼ teaspoon peppermint extract or mint extract

5 drops green food coloring

3-4 ice cubes

Instructions

1. Combine all shake ingredients in a blender and blend on high speed until smooth. Stop blender and stir with a spoon to help blend everything. Blend again for a few seconds.
2. Pour into a glass. Top with light whipped cream, if desired and enjoy immediately. You really don't need the whipped cream. It still tastes great without it!

SKINNY FACTS: for 1 serving (1½ cups) (not including whipped cream)-184 calories, 0g fat, 0g sat. fat, 2.5mg chol, 9g protein, 36g carbs, 0g fiber, 132mg sodium, 27g sugar

FAT FACTS: for 1 (16 oz) Mc Donald's Shamrock Shake-550 calories, 13g fat, 13g protein, 96g carbs, 0g fiber, 180mg sodium, 82g sugar

Walking at Work

Many worksites now have smart TVs, or at least access to a computer and YouTube. This is a great wellness resource that can be used to your advantage. Cumberland County Courthouse recently turned a vacant office into a Wellness Room, complete with exercise equipment and a TV. A group of about 10 coworkers get together at noontime and either complete a 30 minute walking video or use the TV to look up other workout videos (our personal favorites are Leslie Sansone and JessicaSmithTV). This a great way to stay motivated together and get some extra steps in while at work!



Bands, Bands and More Bands!

If you've done Danielle's "Snap into Shape" class you know how much of a workout resistance bands can provide.

One of our new incentive prizes is a 5-pack of resistance tubing bands. Each band is 49 inches in length and offers a variety of resistance levels: Yellow (2-4 lbs.), Blue (4-6 lbs.), Green (10-12 lbs.), Black (15-20 lbs.) and Red (25-30 lbs.) Also included in the set is a door anchor, 2 ankle straps, 2 handles and a carrying bag— so you can exercise on the go, no matter where you are!

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



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