

# Saline County

December, 2016



## Health & Wellness Newsletter *Merry Christmas!*

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### Question of the Month

**BONUS: 25 WELLNESS POINTS** for correct answer

What hormone, made by the pineal gland in the brain, helps control your daily sleep-wake cycles?

- A. Melatonin
- B. Calcitonin
- C. Dozemastatin
- D. Androgens

*\*The answer to the November Question of the Month: C) 5-7*

Email your name and correct answer to:  
[salinewellness@gmail.com](mailto:salinewellness@gmail.com)

*"Your body will be around a lot longer than that expensive iPhone. Invest in yourself!" ~Unknown*

## 8 Bad Habits Ruining Your Sleep—Rachel Gillett, Business Insider

A good night's sleep has the power to increase productivity, happiness, smarter decision-making, and unlock bigger ideas. Conversely, research shows there's a direct correlation between getting less sleep and workplace inefficiency.

The prefrontal cortex, where the problem-solving functions of the brain are housed, is degraded if we don't get enough sleep. Working when you're sleep deprived "we now know is the cognitive equivalent of coming to work drunk," Arianna Huffington, author of "The Sleep Revolution" and The Huffington Post editor-in-chief, tells Business Insider. The trick for getting enough sleep is planning ahead and not letting bad habits sabotage you.

These behaviors are setting you up for a bad night's sleep:

### Skipping your workout

Studies have shown that morning and afternoon workouts can increase a person's quality and amount of sleep at night. One study found that exercise adds around 45 minutes of extra sleep. "Staying active won't cure sleep complaints," Rodney Dishman, a researcher at the University of Georgia told Huffington for her book, "but it will reduce the odds of them."

### Eating a late night meal

"If we have a big meal and then go straight to bed, our sleep is not going to be as restorative because our di-

gestive system is occupied digesting, instead of everything being able to slow down and recharge for the next day," Huffington tells Business Insider.

Eating earlier in the day can also help mitigate acid reflux, which often keeps people up at night and is exacerbated by sleeping on a full stomach.

### Not unwinding before bed

"When stress rises and becomes cumulative during the day, it's much harder to fall asleep at night because it's harder to slow down and quiet our brains," Huffington says.

—cont. *Bad Habits*, pg2

## 2017 Wellness Program Finalized

The Wellness Committee has finalized the 2017 Wellness Program which included some of your offered recommendations for change. The committee continues its wish to hear from all participants moving forward; program changes, monthly challenge ideas or educational classes, etc.

The power of our employee Wellness Program is fueled by its potential in helping improve how we all focus upon healthy lifestyles. But we also need to focus our attention on where we want to go. Therefore, your help is needed to find the most effective way to get there. Please contact any member

of the Wellness Committee with ideas or suggestions on that topic. —end

### NIRMA Online University

The following online class is the current dedicated offering to employees until December 30. Complete this NIRMA Online University Class to receive 75 Wellness Points: "Understanding Anxiety Disorder"

## ...*Bad Habits* — continued from page 1

Without taking some time to unwind before bed and shift our thoughts away from work, it's near impossible to fall asleep because you're still thinking about the worries from the day.

One way to unwind, referred to as the "mind dump," involves writing down all the things you need to do the next day before bed. This could help empty your mind and tell your brain it no longer needs to run through your to-do list for the rest of the night.

### Scanning your smart phone in bed

The LED screens of our smart phones give off what is called blue light, which studies have shown can damage vision and suppress production of melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate the sleep cycle. "For me, the key is to every night before I'm going to go to sleep, thirty minutes before, turn off all of my devices and gently escort them out of my bedroom," Huffington says.

### Working in bed

The light given off by your laptop can also prevent your brain from releasing melatonin, and working in bed likely means you're not giving yourself enough time to unwind before sleep.

What's more, working in bed sends the signal that the bedroom is a place for work, not sleep. The more you continue to work in bed, the more your brain associates the bedroom with staying focused and alert.

### Drinking alcohol too close to bedtime

"We think having a nightcap, having a drink, is going to relax us and be like a sedative. And it does act like a sedative at the beginning, but then shortly after we fall asleep, it changes allegiances," Huffington says.

According to the National Institutes of Health, drinking alcohol just before bedtime decreases the amount of time you spend in REM sleep — a deep and restorative phase of sleep.

### Drinking coffee in the afternoon or evening

It may be tempting to reach for another cup of coffee as your energy wanes at work, but it may make you more tired in the long run.

Caffeine can take six hours to wear off, researchers from Wayne State University and Henry Ford Hospital find, which can seriously disrupt our sleep. "The risks of caffeine use in terms of sleep disturbance are underestimated by both the general population and physicians," the study authors write.

### Sleeping in on weekends

If there's a major difference between your weekday sleep schedule and your weekend sleep schedule, you likely suffer from social jetlag.

Sleeping late on the week-ends resets your body clock to a different cycle, and it's reset again when you go back to waking up early during the workweek. "It's the equivalent of taking a flight one direction every Friday and going back every Sunday," Michael Parsons, a behavioral geneticist at the Medical Research Council Harwell in England, tells ScienceNews.

The best strategy for getting better sleep is to stick to a consistent sleep schedule. —end

## Holiday Stress: Eating Healthy —Sullivan Benefits Group

Holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's bring to mind thoughts of family, friends, fun and food. However, each year, millions of Americans struggle to maintain their waistlines during the holidays while surrounded by tempting holiday treats.

### Holiday Parties

By following the healthy tips below, you will be on your way to enjoying all your holiday parties, while also staying in control of your eating. For example:

- Do not leave the house on an empty stomach – it promotes overeating.
- Avoid standing near the food table, a sure-fire way to overindulge.
- Make socializing your top priority; conversation will keep you occupied and away from the food.
- Limit your drinking; alcohol increases hunger and lowers will-power.
- Offer a low-calorie alternative; for example, if you have volunteered to bring a dessert, bring fruit rather than a cheesecake.
- Listen to your stomach; reduce your portion sizes and stop eating when you feel satisfied rather than stuffed.

### Cooking and Baking

If you are the one hosting, use that to your advantage – it puts you in control of what will be served. For example, substitute high-fat or calorie-laden ingredients with more healthy choices, such as using an egg substitute rather than a whole egg. There can also be a downfall when it comes to hosting: the temptation to sample the food while you are preparing it. To help you resist the urge to snack while cooking:

- Keep your mouth occupied with a piece of sugar-free gum or sip tea to reduce your urge to sample while you cook.

...continue page 4

# Merry Christmas

<b>B</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>O</b>
Reply with the correct answer to the newsletters "Question of the Month"	Relax and do something you enjoy for an hour 3 times each week	Eat fresh fruit for a mid-day snack at least one day every week in December	Do strength training for at least 15-minutes 6 times this month	Incorporate 20 squats or 20 push-ups into your routine for 5 days this month
Avoid fast food for a full week	Count your total calorie intake on three consecutive days in December	Stretch for 5 minutes after waking up 4 consecutive days twice this month	Drink at least eight-8 oz glasses of water 3 days each week in December	Avoid tobacco every day in December
Do cardio for at least 30 minutes 6 times this month	Perform a kind deed for someone in need this Holiday season		Avoid alcohol five consecutive days each week in December	Find a healthy recipe that you've yet to try and prepare it for dinner once this month
Say NO to a Christmas cookie	Maintain your weight (or lose weight) during the month of December	Volunteer your time with a church, civic organization or fundraiser	No carbonated beverages for seven consecutive days	Walk, Run or Bike 30 minutes on 3 days each week during the month of December
Get at least 7 or more hours of sleep 5 days each week in December	Avoid sitting between each quarter & during the entire half of at least one football game	Try a form of exercise you have never done before three times this month	Eat 4 cups of fruits and/ or veggies for five consecutive days in December	Avoid sugar for three consecutive days twice during the month of December

## Bingo Instructions:

- It's BINGO! Further instructions are rarely needed. However...
  - Play throughout the month of December. Then scan, email ([salinewellness@gmail.com](mailto:salinewellness@gmail.com)) or otherwise turn in your Bingo Card to any Wellness Committee member and they or you will bring them to Brandi at the Assessor's office. Sheets must be turned in on or before January 6, 2017 in order to qualify for the incentive points.
  - Incentive earnings are valued at 25 points per Bingo, with a maximum of three (3) Bingo's per sheet.



## Saline County

### Wellness Committee

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*"Providing opportunities for employees to develop healthier lifestyles and supporting an adoption of habits & attitudes contributing to their positive well-being."*

[co.saline.ne.us/webpages/committees/wellness.html](http://co.saline.ne.us/webpages/committees/wellness.html)

### December 8th Educational Class

Judy Florian will be conducting another Essential Oils class on December 8th for those interested. In addition, a "ZYTO Compass Scan" topic will be covered and made available on an individual basis subsequent to the presentation.

The ZYTO Compass scan utilizes proprietary software and galvanic skin response (GSR) technology to provide helpful information when making oil/vitamin purchase decisions. *(Those interested in learning more about this process should contact Judy directly at, 402.821.3221.)*

### "Operation Under the Tree" Donations Taken Until Dec. 2

In the stead of donations given to Aging Services of Saline County, as stated and attributed to the Wellness Program document, a unique replacement in helping our countywide neighbor is being offered. We will join forces with the County Sheriff's department, police & fire departments, Doane University and others in collecting new toys and/or clothing for kids in need for Christmas. The program is called, "Operation Under the Tree". If you would like to participate this year, drop off your donation to the Law Enforcement Center **prior to December 2nd**. Excepted will be new toys, new clothing or cash donations. For simplicity, cash donations should be in the form of a check and made payable to "Crete FOP". *(Keep your canceled check as documentation of that type of donation. Wellness points will be provided in equal proportion to dollars spent for your gift. Drop-off a copy of your receipt with your name so a record of such can be maintained.)* Let us together provide some needed joy!

### Holiday Stress—continued from page 2

- Prepare foods on a full stomach. You will not be as tempted to taste what you are making.

#### Cocktails and Beverages

Before you reach for the eggnog, remember that some mixed drinks may have as many calories as a dessert. It's okay to indulge in some holiday spirits, but keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Pace yourself; drink water or seltzer between drinks. The more you drink, the more the temptation to snack increases.
- Try ice water with lemon or non-caffeinated soft drinks.
- Consume mixed drinks with diet soda, club soda or tonic when possible.



### 2017 Employee Health Fair

- February 7th at the Law Enforcement Center—5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
- February 8th at the Extension Building—5:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

### 2016 Wellness Books

As the year begins to close, please be reminded that all 2016 Wellness Books and participant documents will need to be returned to the Wellness Committee by January 27, 2017.

Also, don't forget to obtain your 2017 Wellness Program packets before the start of the new year. This information is likely to be delivered to you. However, if you find you haven't received your materials at the beginning of the new year, please contact any member of the Wellness Committee and we will insure the delivery of your documentation.

In order to expedite the review process, please make sure your small and large calendar data is readable and has provided the mandatory information required. This information should include: Exercise type, time and associated points for each and every day, etc. (Provide a legend if helpful.) -end

### Enjoy the holidays...

Don't abandon health habits or feel pressured to eat and drink more than usual just because of the holidays. Make sure you get plenty of sleep, exercise, and plan your meals ahead of time; you will make it through the holidays feeling satisfied and in control.

NOTE: Articles found in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and are not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical professional.