



# Saline County Employee Newsletter

## HOLIDAY DIABETES AWARENESS

### 4 WAYS TO SPREAD THE WORD (CHEER)

by Seraine Page

Like many diseases, it's one that is difficult to see. Yet more than 30 million Americans are impacted by it, and it's a leading cause of death and disability in the U.S.

It can cause kidney failure, stroke, blindness, and more.

There's also no cure for diabetes, a disease that results in too much sugar in the blood (high blood glucose). There are a few types of diabetes — type 1 (juvenile), type 2 (adult onset), and gestational.



This time of year presents a great opportunity to educate ourselves and each other on how to better understand this topic in light of the many snacks we will find placed in front of us during our holiday celebration.

*(Continued page #2...)*



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## DIABETES AWARENESS DURING THE HOLIDAY'S

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### Why Should We Spread the Word?

Unfortunately, diabetes is a costly disease — in the case of life quality and economics. Spreading awareness helps educate those who know little about the disease, and it builds empathy toward those suffering from diabetes.

New research released by the American Diabetes Association shows the total cost of diagnosed diabetes has risen to \$327 billion — a 26% increase over a five-year period. Healthcare costs for those with diabetes is 2.3X higher than those without the disease. Additionally, \$1 out of every \$7 of health care dollars is spent on diabetes and its complications.

### A few indirect costs of diabetes:

- ◆ Reduced work productivity
- ◆ Increased absenteeism
- ◆ Inability to work

People with prediabetes are more likely to have a stroke, heart attack, and potentially develop type 2 diabetes. In the case of type 2 diabetes, it's often preventable. Studies show that prediabetics who participate in structured lifestyle change programs lose 5-7% of their body weight through physical activity and healthier eating. They also cut their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58%!

Ready to spread/learn awareness?

### Here are four easy ways to spread/learn diabetes awareness:

#### 1. PARTICIPATE IN A DIABETES FUNDRAISING EVENT

One of the best ways to raise awareness is to form a team to participate in a fundraising event. The American Diabetes Association

hosts Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes events across the country. Start a company team to promote wellness and awareness while raising funds for a diabetes cure. Creating a group is a great team building exercise that also encourages employees to boost their leadership skills like problem-solving and goal-setting.

Other fundraising ideas:

- ◆ Sell diabetes-themed t-shirts and donate proceeds
- ◆ Host a dinner with diabetic-friendly meal options
- ◆ Organize a car wash and donate proceeds
- ◆ Matching gift program

#### 2. POST ON A BULLETIN BOARD

Share a wealth of information, diet or recipes for anyone who passes by a hallway bulletin board. Get as creative as you want — the more your board stands out, the more people will stop and read the content. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) has a great fact sheet with stats to post. Or create a collage with clippings from magazines like Diabetes Forecast or Diabetic Living.

#### 3. ADD DIABETES INFORMATION TO YOUR NEWSLETTER

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends sharing the following information about diet or healthy recipes with fellow employees in our monthly newsletter.

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States. One in 10 Americans have diabetes — that's more than 30 million people. *(Continue on page #2...)*

## DIABETES AWARENESS DURING THE HOLIDAY'S

*CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE #2*

And another 84 million adults in the United States are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Depending on your age, weight, and other factors, you may be at higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The good news is that making healthy changes can greatly lower your risk. To help prevent type 2 diabetes:

- ◆ Watch your weight
- ◆ Eat healthily
- ◆ Get more physical activity

### 4. JOIN OR CREATE A LIFESTYLE CHANGE PROGRAM

In your work environment, consider joining a lifestyle change program together. Make it fun and enticing so your fellow workers keep up with it. Host a monthly steps challenge, set up a gym buddy system, or take weekly spin classes at your local gym together.

Type 2 diabetes — the most common form of diabetes — can often be controlled with healthy eating and being active. While some groups have a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes than others, getting your team involved in healthy lifestyle choices together is never a bad idea, especially since about **1 in 3 American adults has prediabetes**. If you'd like to take part in a CDC-recognized program, check out the curriculum of how to build a successful lifestyle change program on their website.

The CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program focuses on:

- ◆ Healthy eating
- ◆ Weight loss
- ◆ Stress reduction and coping skills
- ◆ Increasing physical activity
- ◆ Lifestyle changes

### **Make a Difference**

While diabetes may be common, spreading awareness can still help save a life. Perhaps an employee with a family history of diabetes has been putting off a physical because they're scared or too busy for a check-up. The resources you offer during this Holiday Season might be the push you/we/they need to see the doc.

Diabetes kills more people each year than AIDS and breast cancer combined and having the disease nearly doubles a person's risk for heart attack. The risk factors are serious, and preventive measures are encouraged.

By educating yourself with proper resources and encouraging your fellow workers to make small lifestyle changes, you can show each other care and that their health matters.

And, you might just save a life. *—end*

# KICK BUTTS: HOW TO HELP YOURSELF QUIT TOBACCO

—BY SERAINE PAGE—REVISED



**BELIEVE IT OR NOT, NEARLY 38 MILLION AMERICANS STILL SMOKE CIGARETTES.**

Quitting smoking can be a challenge for even the most motivated of people. That's why the American Cancer Society dedicates a day in the year as the Great American Smoke-out. This national event encourages smokers to start living a smoke-free life one day at a time. But in spite of this annual event, today will always be the best day to start.

**It may be hard to quit smoking, but with a plan, it can be done.**

**HERE'S AGAIN IS A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HOW SALINE COUNTY HAS ADDRESSED THE TOBACCO HABIT FOR OUR EMPLOYEES TO DATE:**

## **TOBACCO-FREE WORKSITE POLICY**

County workplaces are required to be completely smoke/tobacco-free work sites. By the way, when was the last time you saw someone smoke on an airplane? Or in a restaurant? Or in most hotel/motel rooms? Or at sporting events; often outdoor events.

Twenty-seven states (plus the District of Columbia) have adopted smoke-free workplace laws. It's a wise move as it benefits the health of workers and the pocketbooks of employers. According to the CDC, for every tobacco user a company helps to quit, health care costs for the employer decrease by \$2,583.

### **Benefits for the Employer**

- Fire risk is lowered
- Healthcare costs may be reduced
- Non-smoker complaints are reduced
- Office equipment (furniture, curtains, etc.) last longer
- Insurance coverage negotiations are possible when fewer employees smoke

### **Benefits for Employees**

- A smoke-free environment helps create a healthier workplace
- Shows the county cares deeply about employee health
- Non-smokers won't be exposed to polluted air at the worksite
- Smokers will appreciate clear policy procedures

As an advanced warning, the Saline County Wellness Committee, along with approval of the Saline County Board of Commissioners have increased incentives to employees with added or forfeited Wellness Points for its 2019 program. Please take note of this when you receive your 2019 Wellness information packet in late December. *(Continue on page #5...)*

## SMOKING/TOBACCO CESSATION IDEAS TO CONSIDER

While removing tobacco from your life will be challenging, it doesn't have to be completely agonizing. **Here are five ideas to get yourself onboard with quitting nicotine.**

### GO COLD TURKEY

Go "cold turkey" for a day with a tobacco habit. Then soon after, try two-days, then three days.

### SEND ENCOURAGING NOTES TO A FELLOW WORKER

Keep in mind the employees around you trying to actively quit using tobacco. Then send cheerful emails or a simple note to encourage them. It may also help to understand the difficulty they are going through, and perhaps a degree of patience may be required of you.

#### **Helpful comments to use for those trying to quit:**

- *"Many people all over the world have quit smoking. You can too."*
- *"Your health is everything. Keep going down the road of health!"*
- *"Do not smoke – not even one puff!"*
- *"Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire, which transcends everything." - Napoleon Hill*
- *"Think of the day you completely stop smoking. How will it feel?"*

### COUNTY WELLNESS PROGRAM INCENTIVES

They say money is a motivator. Saline County offers cash prizes (or gift cards) at the end of the program year in addition to earned reductions in health premium costs to employees. This has been a helpful motivator already for some to quit using tobacco. It is hoped to help others also.

### STOP-SMOKING AIDS

Smokers have found help by trading their cigs for beneficial nicotine replacement options like gum, patches, or lozenges. Sometimes, former smokers just need something to chew on like carrots, lollipops, and sugarless chewing gum.

### SHARE RESOURCES

Quitting smoking is challenging and having valuable resources can make it easier. All states have designated "quit-lines" with counselors trained to help smokers quit. Nebraska's Tobacco Quitline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW. The National Cancer Institute's line is open Monday through Friday 9 am to 9 pm, EST, for example. The number is 877-448-7848.

#### **The Time is Now**

Anytime is a good time to quit smoking. Let the start of 2019 be that extra push to help you or fellow employees get it done.

If you're on the fence about "kicking butts", think about how much it would mean to your family to embrace the holiday season and 2019 with a smoke-free lifestyle. There's no better gift to share with your employees than the gift of a healthier life. –end

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

B	I	N	G	O
Relax and do something you enjoy for an hour 3 times each December week	Eat fresh fruit for a mid-day snack at least one day every week in December	Maintain your weight (or lose weight) during the month of December	Do strength training for at least 15-minutes 6 times in December	Try a form of exercise you have never done before 3 times in December
Incorporate 20 squats or 20 push-ups into your routine for 5 days in December	Avoid tobacco every day in December	Volunteer your time with a church, civic organization or fundraiser in December	Drink at least eight 8oz glasses of water 3 days each week in December	No carbonated beverages for seven consecutive days in December
Do cardio for at least 30 minutes 6 times this December	Perform a kind deed for someone in need this Thanksgiving Holiday		Exercise 30 minutes on 3 days each week during the month of December	Avoid sugary sweets for three consecutive days at least twice during the month of December
Replied with the correct answer to the December "Question of the Month"	Avoid placing a candy cane in your mouth 30 out of 31 days in December	Count each and every one of your blessings during the month of December	Avoid alcohol five consecutive days each week in December	Find a healthy recipe that you've yet to try and prepare it for dinner this month
Avoid fast food for one full week in December	Avoid sitting between each quarter & during the entire half of at least one Bowl Game	Stretch for 5 minutes after waking up 3 consecutive December days each week	Eat 4 cups of fruits and/or veggies for five consecutive days in December	Get at least 7 or more hours of sleep 5 days each week in December

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to Wellness Committee on or before Friday, January 7th

## ONLINE LEGAL RESOURCES

Continuum EAP's online resources includes a library of 100+ free fillable legal forms, including:

- **Wills/Living Trusts**
- **Bill of Sale**
- **Rental Agreements**
- **Promissory Note**

To get started, visit [4continuum.com](http://4continuum.com) and click "**MEMBER LOGIN**" at the top of the page. Use Saline County username and password. Contact HR or give Continuum a call if experiencing difficulty.

## DECEMBER WELLNESS QUESTION OF THE MONTH

How many American adults have pre-diabetes?

- A. 31%
- B. 33%
- C. 35%
- D. 37%

BONUS: 25 WELLNESS POINTS for correct answer

*\*Answer to the November Question: "E: None of the Above"*

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

*\*All answers submitted for the Question of the Month must be received prior to the subsequent month's newsletter distribution.*

## HOLIDAY BINGO—CHRISTMAS EDITION

Join us for this year's Christmas Bingo Challenge!

The rules are socked with simplicity. Using the provided game card in this newsletter, note the tasks needing completion in order to place good cheer onto that game card. For each "Bingo" you wrap up, (across, down, diagonal) you will have gifted yourself five (5) Wellness Points. There are no additional incentives for



"Blacking Out" the night sky. Work through each box of goodness with enjoyment and find blessing

in overcoming the least of these challenges. There is potential to sleigh up to 60 Wellness Points in total.

This Challenge is on the honor system. Christmas is about nice; not naughty! Return your form on or before Friday, January 7, 2019. —end

## ANGER *IN THE* WORKPLACE

If you blow up at disappointments, rage at inconveniences, or bark at others' mistakes, then you may already recognize that you have an anger management problem. Are you still struggling to get a handle on it?

### The change you want entails:

- Education about anger, self-awareness and triggers.
- Practicing alternative responses.
- Logging attempts at change.
- Practicing response tactics.
- Apologizing to others when you slip up.
- Measuring of progress.

Anger responses become engrained, which is why a programmatic approach is often needed for long-term success.

Contact Continuum EAP to work with a professional and develop a plan that helps you gain and keep control. —end

## NIRMA ONLINE UNIVERSITY

Depression is among the most prevalent psychiatric conditions, yet it remains challenging to understand and treat.

**"Understanding Behavior, Burnout and Depression"** establishes an organizational framework for understanding the multiple pathways that can lead to depression.

Successful completion of this course, through the end of December, provides 75 Wellness Points.

\*Next Wellness Committee Meeting: Monday, December 6, 2018 in the Courthouse Conference Room, 8:30 a.m.

\*Next Safety Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday February 13, 2019 in the Courthouse Conference Room.

## WELLNESS COMMITTEE

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

Log onto the Wellness webpage online to review meeting minutes, Wellness newsletters, annual Program document and Fitness Center information.



## 2019 HEALTH FAIR

The scheduled dates for the 2019 Employee Health fair will be in February 12th & 13th, 2019 from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. at both the LEC & Courthouse respectively;

- February 12, 2019 at the LEC from 5:00 am – 8:00 am
- February 13, 2019 at the Courthouse from 5:00 am – 8:00 am.

There will again be an online registration process that will allow employees, and BCBS covered spouses, to choose their available time and location to participate via an “online portal”. Additional information will follow in the January newsletter and via email once this event is fully planned. *-end*

## 2018 WELLNESS PROGRAM ENDS

### NOTICE:

1. After the close of this year, in order to claim your Wellness incentives earned in 2018, employees will have returned their program booklets, and sealed medical verification forms in the envelope provided, to the Wellness Committee via Jamie Houser in the Assessor’s office by end of day, Friday, January 11, 2019.
  - Please ensure that all **medical forms** are placed in your **medical envelope ONLY**
  - Please ensure that your **tobacco affidavit form** is provided in the **main document envelope ONLY**
1. Write down the anticipated benefit with the points calculated as earned. The Committee will review and tabulate final points after the 2018 Health Fair.
2. You will be provided notification of the total incentive points earned by the Wellness Committee after they are tabulated.
3. An announced ‘protest period’ will be opened in order to insure proper calculation of points—*Protests are intended to correct miscalculations of points. –end*

## 2019 WELLNESS PROGRAM BEGINS

### NOTICE:

2019 Wellness Program packets will be available by way of delivery to your department during the last week of December. Speak to your supervisor or Wellness Committee member, if you have not received yours by the first of the year. *-end*

*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 or legal professional.*