

Employee Newsletter



January, 2020

Volume 7, Issue 1

Special points of interest:

- Return Deadline for 2019 Wellness Packets is Friday, January 10th.
- The new “Know Stress Challenge” begins on January 20th!
- Saline County Employee Health Fair slated for February 11th & 12th. *(Updated information found within...)*

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The Truth About Alcohol—by Trinh Le, MPH, RD

Mixing, mingling and making merry this holiday wouldn't be the same without alcohol. But for those of us with an agenda to neutralize weight gain, adding alcohol to the equation makes this a tough one to balance. Here's why:

ALCOHOL IS THE SECOND MOST POTENT SOURCE OF CALORIES

Partying with alcohol is fun because we like feeling intoxicated, but this intoxication comes with a caloric price tag. One gram of alcohol is 7 calories, which is more than one gram of carbohydrate (4 calories) and protein (4 calories) but less than one gram of fat (9 calories).

WE DON'T BURN EXTRA CALORIES TO METABOLIZE ALCOHOL

Not like we do from digesting carbs, fat and protein. This phenomenon, called the “thermic effect of food”, refers to the energy we use to digest food into small, absorbable components. Because alcohol is so easy to absorb, it enters our bloodstream without burning any extra calories.

YOUR LIVER DOES THE DIRTY WORK

Because alcohol is seen as a toxin, the liver prioritizes metabolizing alcohol first (get in line, fat...it's not your turn!) which means you won't

be burning calories from other sources while that happens. The liver is only able to clear alcohol at a rate of around one-ounce liquor per hour, which is why consuming more than this will leave you feeling tipsy.

ALCOHOL MAKES YOUR BLOOD SUGAR DROP, MAKING YOU WANT TO REACH FOR THE CARBS

The liver helps keep our blood sugar steady, but a liver busy at work metabolizing alcohol can't do this effectively, causing your blood sugar to drop and stay low until the alcohol is metabolized. This explains why you crave carbs and wake up the next day with a headache.

(cont. page #2)





The Truth About Alcohol—continued from page #1

ALCOHOL CALORIES THAT AREN'T BURNED WILL BE STORED AS FAT

This is true for all extra calories eaten no matter the source, but what makes alcohol calories worse is that they are stored in your liver first. It takes time for the liver to ship out the alcohol-induced fat for proper storage in your fat cells. If the liver doesn't do this fast enough (or if you drink too much, too often) the fat stays stuck in your liver and around your abdomen giving you what we refer to jovially as a "beer belly."

This of course doesn't mean you need to completely dodge all social sips this season. Here

are some tips to help prevent you from gaining too much of your holiday cheer:

1. POUR YOURSELF HALF AS MUCH

This will help you limit yourself to one or two drinks per party.

2. AVOID HIGHER CALORIE MIXED DRINKS

Forgo eggnog, margaritas, mudslides and other sugary mixed drinks — or have one and consider it dessert.

3. ALTERNATE BETWEEN HAVING ALCOHOL AND WATER

You'll stay well hydrated.

4. SIP SLOWLY

Take the time to enjoy your alcoholic beverage.

5. KEEP YOUR ALCOHOL BUDGET AT OR BELOW 200 CALORIES

Pick these lower calorie alcohol alternatives:

Red or white wine: 5 ounces | Calories: 125, Carbohydrate: 4g

Light beer: 12 ounces | Calories: 100; Carbohydrate: 5g

Champagne: 5 ounces | Calories: 100; Carbohydrate: 1g

Vodka, whiskey, rum or gin: 1.5 ounces | Calories: 96; Carbohydrate: 0g

-end

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 and click "MEMBER LOGIN" at the top of the page. Use Saline County username and password. Contact HR for login information or give Continuum a call if experiencing difficulty.

*Next Wellness

Committee Meeting:

Monday, January 13, 2020 in the Courthouse Conference Room, 8:30 a.m.

*Next Safety Committee

Meeting: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 in the Courthouse Conference Room, 8:30 a.m.

Master Your Self-Care Strategy—Continuum EAP



Self-care is not just about getting enough sleep, eating well, or taking time off for a massage. Rather, it is a conscious process of being attentive to your physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, but with a goal in mind — to build resilience that allows you to be more capable of bouncing back from adversity and managing stress better.

To practice this strategic form of wellness, focus your attention on:

- ① Physical fitness and emotional wellness (how you manage thoughts, feelings and beliefs so you engage in positive thinking).
- ② Being aware of your emotions and the emotions of others with whom you interact, and use this awareness to make better decisions and communicate more effectively.
- ③ Knowing how to create positive emotions. Does walking outside for 15 minutes improve your mood? Does taking five minutes to tidy up your office lift your spirits?

When you arrive home after work, does sitting down to play the piano inspire you? Know your "go to" natural, healthy and positive mood enhancers and use them routinely.

- ④ Having someone with whom you can confide in and process challenges. Continuum EAP can be a resource for this support.
- ⑤ Eating right and getting enough sleep.
- ⑥ Having constructive ways of dealing with emotional stress — a hobby, spiritual practices, networking, leisure activities, etc.

Examining this list, do you see opportunities to improve upon your self-care strategy? -end

Know Stress Challenge

Staff participants who would like to invest a bit of time, stress-free of course, in the upcoming “Know Stress Challenge” offered and spearheaded by our Continuum EAP associates are welcome to read the following invitation:

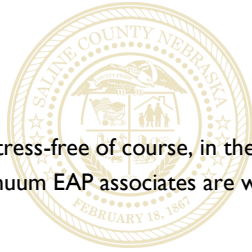
What is causing your stress?

There is no doubt about it. We live in stressful times and can often feel stretched beyond our limits. While some stress is OK, chronic stress can have harmful and lasting effects on our health, relationships and work performance. You may have an idea of what or who is stressing you out, but this five-week challenge will help pinpoint your top stressors and then provide tools to address your unique situation.

How is this Challenge going to work?

After completing 10 mini-assessments, the online Stress Profiler will identify your top three areas of stress and provide suggestions to appropriately manage them. Throughout the challenge, you will complete one of the activities suggested to reduce stress in each key area identified. You will practice the skills learned, record your progress and — in the last week of the challenge — complete The Stress Profiler again to see how your stress levels have improved.

Interested in participating? **See the accompanying flyer for registration information.** —end



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January - March, 2020 —NIRMA Online University Class

The upcoming quarter offers the following NIRMA Online University course. Successful completion provides 75 Wellness incentive points by completing the following offering:

"Understanding Pre-Diabetes"

January, 2020 Question of the Month

The AHA recommends eating fewer than which of the following each day for a maximum of 5-days a week?:

- A. 4-helpings of green, leafy vegetables
- B. 1/4 lb. of well-done red meat
- C. 6-oz of cooked lean meat
- D. 2 leftover turkey sandwiches

Email your name and correct answer to:

salinewellness@gmail.com

*Accepted answers must be received prior to the subsequent month's newsletter distribution.

Smoking Cessation Classes NOW Available

For County employees who wish to support a decision to “kick-the-habit”, yet feel additional support would be helpful in the form of a tobacco cessation program, the Wellness Committee is offering, through June 30, 2020, to fund the \$150 cost of this program offered through Madonna Fit for Work. The Madonna “Fit to Quit” program is effective with all forms of tobacco use—from cigarettes to smokeless varieties.

If interested, please contact Caitlin Orth at Madonna and let her know of your interest as a Saline County employee to participate. Phone: 402.413.3937, or via email at corth@madonna.org. —end



Return of 2019 Wellness Packets



After the close of this year, in order to claim your Wellness incentives earned in 2019, all staff members will need to return 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 10, 2020.

Please ensure that all medical forms are placed inside the smaller, **medical envelope ONLY**.

Please ensure that your tobacco affidavit form is provided in the **main document envelope ONLY**.

Denote the anticipated choice of incentive requested (as found on page #26) with the points anticipated to have earned. The Committee will review, tabulate and deliver final point tallies after the 2020 Health Fair, taking place in February.

All participants will be provided notification of the total incentive points earned once they are tabulated by the Wellness Committee.

An announced ‘protest period’ will be opened in order to insure proper calculation of points—Protests are intended to correct miscalculations of points. —end

Wellness Committee

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Eating This Could Increase Your Risk of Premature Death



By Jodi Helmer—More data is showing that compared to a plant-based diet, red meat-eaters have an increased risk of heart disease and premature death. A high intake of red meat has been linked to increased risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers. Now, new research has found a connection between eating red meat and an increased risk of premature death, providing even more reason to replace a T-bone with tofu.

THE LATEST RESEARCH—The latest findings, published in *The BMJ*, followed more than 81,000 adults ages of 30–75 who did not have a diagnosis of cancer or cardiovascular disease at the start of the eight-year study.

While high intake of all red meat increased the risk of dying during the study period, increasing intake of processed red meat such as hot dogs, sausages and bacon, increased the risk of death by 13%. Replacing one serving of red meat per day with whole grains, eggs, fish and other sources of protein helped decrease the risk of death by 17% over the eight-year period.

WHAT MAKES RED MEAT UNHEALTHY?—The combination of saturated fat and cholesterol in red meat has long been blamed as a contributor to increased risk of health issues, but Dr. Stanley Hazen, section head of preventive cardiology and rehabilitation at the Cleveland Clinic found another culprit.

Red meat increases levels of trimethylamine N-oxide or TMAO, a substance produced by gut bacteria during digestion. It appears that higher levels of TMAO can lead to clogged arteries and boost the risk of developing blood clots, raising the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Hazen, who published the original findings in the journal *Nature*, calls TMAO, “the missing link” in our understanding of how red meat contributes to heart disease risk.

“Heart disease is the number 1 killer in the U.S.,” he says. “We’ve become good at keeping people alive after a heart attack but we haven’t halted the development and progression of the disease.”

While too much red meat could spike cholesterol levels, beef, pork and lamb are also good sources of nutrients such as protein, vitamin B12 and iron, which might provide some protection against heart disease.

IS A PLANT-BASED DIET THE SOLUTION? —Compared to meat eaters, vegetarians had a 22% lower risk of coronary heart disease but a 20% higher risk of stroke, according to a 2019 study.

Lead author Tammy Tong, PhD, a nutritional epidemiologist at Oxford University, believes vegetarians often have lower BMI, cholesterol, blood pressure and diabetes rates than meat eaters, which protects their hearts. When it comes to higher risks of stroke, Tong admits the mechanism is unclear.

Low levels of vitamin B12, which are more common in vegetarians and vegans, could be to blame, but she adds, “There is currently only limited evidence, and more research is needed.”

Before your next meal, consider this: The American Heart Association recommends eating fewer than 6 ounces of cooked lean meat per day for a maximum of five days per week.

Hazen acknowledges that diet is a personal choice and while some may choose to adopt vegetarian or vegan diets, others might choose meatless meals once or twice per week. The important thing to remember, he says, is “the more portions [of red meat] per week, the higher the lifetime risk [of heart disease]. Knowledge is the first step on the path toward understanding what one can do to lower the risks.” -end

2020 Saline County Health Fair



Plan ahead now for the 2020 Saline County Employee Health Fair! This annual health screening provides an opportunity for you to know your personal health numbers, what the healthy ranges are, and ways to maintain or improve your health. You save valuable time and money since the screens are offered in the workplace and paid for by Saline County. AND, you receive 500 Wellness Points!

This screening is currently slated for **February 11th and 12th, 2020 from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. at both the Law Enforcement Center and Courthouse** respectively. Additional information will be forthcoming in January.

The basic screening options will be **FREE** for all Saline County employees. Due to new insurance policies Blue Cross—Blue Shield will **NOT** be utilized this year. Therefore, spouses who wish to participate with their married employee, will be required to pay the basic \$79.00 fee in full. Each optional lab work performed; TSH, PSA, A1C & Vitamin D, will be add-on costs for all participants.

January 1st remains the perfect time of year to RESOLVE being healthier than you were last year! -end

'Shop with a Cop' Says, "Thank you"!



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Members of our Saline County Law Enforcement agency would like to thank all the contributors, organizers and volunteers who made this year's event a success! It continues to be a rewarding for everyone involved. The donations from area business's and individuals remains a blessing to children and parents of those who find the need in filling an empty void during the Christmas season.

In looking forward to next year, please be open to continue your gift of giving. Toys, and donations in which to purchase them, remain a staple. However, you are more than invited to contribute in a variety of other ways; gift wrapping paper, tape, gift tags, gift bags and the like are needed also. Therefore, equal value will be placed on the donation of those items equal to all other donations relative to this worthwhile event. Thank you again. Merry Christmas! *-end*

How Soup Can Help You Drop Pounds—by Lisa Fields

When the weather cools off, you might be inclined to eat more soup. Not only is it warm and comforting but it can also be super nutritious, especially if it's filled with low-calorie, fiber-rich vegetables. It also has another big perk: Soup may aid your weight-loss efforts, because it is hydrating and helps you to feel satisfied, preventing overeating.

THE SCIENCE

Researchers found when you start your lunch with a serving of low energy-dense (Read: low-calorie) soup, such as chicken broth filled with vegetables, you'll eat 20% fewer calories than usual at lunch, and then you'll eat the normal amount throughout the rest of your day, rather than feeling ravenous and trying to make up for the missed lunchtime calories. Over the long term, eating 20% fewer calories at lunch every day can lead to weight loss.

"You just tend to eat the same amount for dinner, [because] soup is a really satisfying food,"

says study author Barbara Rolls, PhD, a professor and director of the Laboratory for the Study of Human Ingestive Behavior at Penn State University. "If you compare [calories in] soup, for example, to crackers, you're going to get a much bigger portion of soup than you do of the crackers, because of the calorie density. Water gives you volume, weight and no additional calories, so water-rich foods give you a bigger bang for your buck."

WHY SOUP IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN A GLASS OF WATER

To feel satisfied, the water needs to be cooked into the soup; you won't get the same result from drinking a glass of water. That's because soup provides numerous satiating signals:

- Seeing a full bowl helps you recognize you'll be enjoying a large amount of food.
- The smell and taste contribute to satisfaction

levels.

- When it reaches your stomach, the volume stretches your stomach, which helps to release satiety hormones, indicating fullness.

HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOUP TO HELP WITH WEIGHT LOSS

"Broth-based and clear soups are best as a first course, since they tend to be lower in calories than cream-based soups, chowders and pureed soups," says Sofia Norton, RD. "Egg drop soup is a good example of a broth-based soup that's low in calories, with roughly 66 per cup (150g). A bowl of Panera's potato soup, on the other hand, has 350 calories." Look for something that's "higher in fiber and contains lean protein, which is the best combination to enhance satiety," adds Rolls.

If you do opt for chowders, bisques and cream-based soups, "[They should be] eaten as main courses," says Norton. If it's your main course, "look for one with at least 10 grams

of protein," recommends Diana Gariglio-Clelland, RD. "Bean-based soups are a great option because they're high in fiber and protein," she says.

It's also important to be mindful of sodium levels. There's often a fair amount of salt added to homemade recipes, and many canned soups are high in sodium, too. Consider replacing some of the salt in your soup recipes with pepper or other spices. "If you do choose a prepared soup, try to pick one with less than 20% of the daily value for sodium per serving," Gariglio-Clelland says. "[Keep in mind that] many cans contain more than one serving, so the sodium amount increases based on how much you consume." *-end*





**Saline County Nebraska
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“Providing opportunities for employees to develop healthier lifestyles and supporting an adoption of habits and attitudes contributing to their positive well-being.” - Saline County Wellness Committee

**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.*

Health Resolutions Anyone Can Stick To

By Seraine Page—The new year is almost upon us. And a decade is coming to a close! So, if you love setting New Year’s resolutions, now is the time to start planning how to kick-off a fresh decade. Whether you want to eat healthier, plan smarter, or get stronger, your New Year’s resolutions are yours to decide upon.

Not sure where to start? Here’s a list of healthy New Year’s resolutions anyone can stick to:

Opt for a Good Health Challenge - There are so many great free health challenges you can participate in to meet your wellness goals. Whether you decide to go it alone or ask a friend to join, plan out 30-day challenges ahead of time for the best success rate. It can be as simple as drinking a half-gallon of water daily or taking a 30-minute daily jog.

Take a Walk - The benefits of walking are well documented. Aside from being a free form of exercise, the flexibility of being able to change your scenery can benefit you, too. If you’re stuck in a creative rut or you need to improve your heart health, walking is the way to do it. Add in hand or ankle weights for an additional challenge and cardio boost.

Eat Veggies Daily - Get your daily dose of necessary nutrients by incorporating veggies into every meal. Toss a handful of spinach into your smoothie. Make a huge salad for lunch topped with protein. Create a colorful veggie stir-fry for dinner. The more colors, the better!

Drink More (Water, That Is) - One of the easiest healthy New Year’s resolutions is to drink more water. The human body is around 60% water, which means it needs a steady replenishment throughout the day. Anytime you’re feeling sluggish or hungry, down a glass of water first. Aim for the 8X8 rule: Eight ounces daily at eight times per day.

Start Your Day Inspired - Starting your morning on a positive note helps set the tone for the rest of your day. Consider waking up with a calm alarm

tone, turning on your favorite music, or listening to an inspirational podcast. You might even start your day with prayer or meditation to get going. A morning routine will help you feel less frazzled and more inspired to tackle your day.

Move Your Body - This is perhaps the most popular New Year’s resolution every year: Exercise more. In order to stick to it, you have to create a disciplined routine. One way to do this is to work with an accountability partner. Ask a fellow co-worker or friend to join you in the pursuit of a stronger, healthier body in 2020. Whether it’s a daily walk, yoga class, or spin session, mark it on the calendar and make it happen.

Volunteer - There’s something rewarding about giving your time back to an organization you really believe in. Not only is volunteering good for your community, but it’s also good for your health. Studies show volunteers have a lower risk of depression and reduced stress levels. Aim to volunteer at least once a month at a local nonprofit near you.

Healthy New Year’s Resolutions Are Yours to Make - With 2019 coming to a close, now is the time to

plan your healthy New Year’s resolutions. If you haven’t been great at sticking to your goals, that’s okay. We all fall off the wagon sometimes.

No matter what healthy New Year’s resolutions you set, each one has to be important to you.

Resolutions often fail if it’s set with the intention of impressing someone else. If you create your 2020 goals with self-improvement in mind, it makes it easier to stick with your goals.

Don’t be fooled, while the above resolutions are simple, it doesn’t mean it’s easy to continue on with these goals past January. When the novelty of the new year fades, you might find yourself right back to your bad habits. *—end*



Technology in America’s Healthiest Employers’ wellness programs is on the rise

- 35% of programs use fitness wearables, a 10% increase from 2015
- 51% of employers are supporting health management programs with technology, including apps and dedicated web portals