

Employee Newsletter



February, 2020

Volume 7, Issue 2

Special points of interest:

- Continuum EAP HelpNet Webinar Challenge for February
- "Know Stress Challenge" currently underway!
- Saline County Employee Health Fair slated for February 11th & 12th.

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American Heart Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Every year, 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease.

A 2019 study found that nearly half of Americans have some type of cardiovascular disease, often a result of high blood pressure. Worse yet, heart disease continues to rank as the number one cause of death in the U.S. Stroke trailed closely behind as the fifth leading cause of death.

Both of these conditions are also the most expensive medical conditions for employers, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions. Communities, health professionals, and families can work together to create opportunities for people to make healthier choices.

Make a difference in your workgroup: Spread the word about strategies for preventing heart disease and encourage people to live heart healthy lives.

You can make healthy changes to lower your risk of developing heart disease. Controlling and preventing risk factors is also important for people who already have

heart disease. To lower your risk:

- Watch your weight.
- Quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation.
- Get active and eat healthy.

You and your fellow employees are the heartbeat of our Saline County government.

-end

Be someone's...



Heart Healthy Valentine



Eight Walking Mistakes to Avoid if You Want to Lose Weight—Marc Lindsay

A consistent walking routine can be an excellent way to get rid of excess belly fat and tone your body. But if you've reached a weight-loss plateau, don't worry. From simply strolling leisurely to omitting strength training, these common walking mistakes can easily be fixed to help you reach your weight-loss goals:

YOU'RE NEVER VARYING INTENSITY—While walking at a leisurely pace is better than no exercise at all, research shows walking at a brisk pace is the best for torching calories and weight loss. If you find it hard to up the pace, try doing so for shorter intervals of 1–2 minutes, with a minute of recovery in between. This HIIT-style workout can help rev your metabolism and break through a weight-loss plateau.

YOU'RE ALWAYS TAKING THE SAME ROUTE—If you stick to the same route, over time your body adapts and it won't be as challenging. To boost weight-loss (and keep things exciting) change your scenery a couple days a week. This could be a hilly trail, the beach, an urban hike or even a new park. Not only will you feel mentally refreshed, but different terrain also engages different muscle groups to burn more calories.

YOU'RE NOT STRENGTH TRAINING—Strength training is a key part of weight-loss since it helps build muscle, which burns more calories at rest compared to fat. Whether it's with simple bodyweight exercises or using equipment like kettlebells, strength training can help you build the core, glute and hip strength needed to walk further and faster. It can also help prevent injury, which means you'll reach your goals sooner.

YOU'RE NOT USING PROPER FORM—Poor walking technique slows your pace, causing you to tire more quickly, and potentially results in injury. Since this can affect how far and long you are able to walk (or keep you from walking altogether), working on improving your form is essential to losing weight. Pay attention to the following on your next walk:

Stride length: A lot of walkers over-stride. If your steps are too long, your speed can suffer and more stress is placed on your joints. To check your stride length, lift a foot and lean forward. Where the foot naturally falls is where you should be striking the ground. Shorter steps increase your cadence and make it easier to walk faster.

Arm swing: Swinging your arms helps you get more power and propels your forward motion

Standing tall: Slouching as you get tired is a common problem when walking. While you might need to strengthen your core to make it happen, work on keeping your back straight and your head up.

YOU'RE NOT FOCUSING ON PROPER NUTRITION—A hard walking workout can sometimes make

you feel hungrier than normal. While you want to fuel your walks with smart snacks, it's important to pay attention to your overall diet, too, to make sure you're in a calorie deficit for weight loss. The MyFitnessPal app is a great way to track your food intake and keep you motivated to reach your goals.

YOU'RE NOT USING WEIGHTS CORRECTLY—Many people use ankle weights to burn more calories and make their workouts more challenging. However, if you prefer this style of workout, adding weights should be done with caution. Ankle and wrist weights can place extra stress on your lower back, hips and knees, causing muscle strains and other injuries. If you choose to use ankle weights, limit it to no more than one or two days per week. Keep it to easy walks, and avoid using them on days when you have a longer duration or high-intensity interval training. If you want to increase the intensity of your workouts without relying on ankle weights, trying hitting the trails, where hills and other challenging terrain can boost your calorie burn and help build strength.

YOU'RE SETTING UNREALISTIC GOALS—Goals are almost always a good thing. They can provide motivation to exercise daily and push you to challenge yourself. However, it's important to avoid habitually setting unrealistic goals. For instance, your goal may be to walk a marathon. But if the event you want to complete is only a month away and you've never walked more than a few miles at a time, it's going to be difficult to ramp up your mileage for a marathon without getting injured. Failing to meet your goal or expectations can lead to disappointment and negative thinking.

Instead, set smaller, more realistic goals that lead to a bigger goal. If you want to walk 26.2 miles eventually, your more immediate goal should be to work toward walking a 10K or half-marathon first. Give yourself plenty of time to prepare and expect some setbacks. Once you've accomplished a smaller goal, take the time to celebrate your progress, and then make a new one.

YOU'RE PROCRASTINATING—Whether it's mindlessly surfing the internet or not using social media to your advantage, it can be easy to procrastinate and avoid your walk. If you don't have a set routine it can be easy to say, "I'll start tomorrow" or procrastinate until you end up shortening your workout or skipping it altogether.

To avoid procrastinating, set a schedule and try your best to stick to it. Whether it's waking up early, exercising during your lunch hour or making a post-dinner walk a habit, you'll be more likely to make your daily walk a consistent part of your routine if you set aside a dedicated window of time when you can make it happen. If you miss one day, don't beat yourself up, simply resume your routine as soon as possible. —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 Task: Monday, February 3, 2020 in the Courthouse Assembly Room, 8:30 a.m.

***Next Safety Committee**

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

Know Stress Challenge—Underway

Staff members who have indicated a desire to participate in the “Know Stress Challenge”, offered and spearheaded by our Continuum EAP associates, are numbered to be twenty-two (22).

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

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 okay, chronic stress can have harmful and lasting effects on our health, relationships and work performance. People may have an idea of what or who is stressing them out, but this five-week challenge will help pinpoint top stressors and then provide tools to address those unique situations. The challenge will progress through February 23rd. —end

Smoking Cessation Classes 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

HelpNet *webinar*—potential replacement for NIRMA Online U

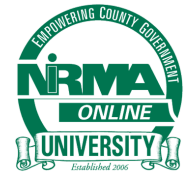
“Understanding Forgiveness” *webinar* Challenge

The Wellness Committee may be learning of the phasing out of the “NIRMA Online University” portal offered through LocalGovU. These are the quarterly classes touted in our Wellness Program as assignments designated toward the banking of 75 Wellness points.

In an effort to find a suitable replacement, we wish to offer something within the Continuum EAP webinar series, found available on their website once logged on as a member—of which we are as Saline County.

The month of February will be used as a test month in making use of this option in the future. Therefore, a February topic entitled, “**Understanding Forgiveness**”, if participated in sometime during the month of February will be something the Committee will use—hopefully with feedback from those who partook, to better grasp the process and any difficulty along the way. So, consider this a ‘challenge’ worth 25 points. The following should be helpful directions:

- February HelpNet Challenge begins on February 1st and concludes on February 29th.
- To access Continuum’s HelpNet, visit 4continuum.com and complete the member login at the top of the page. (You received a flyer with login information along with your 2020 Wellness packet.) From HelpNet’s home page, click the featured webinar of the month, “Understanding Forgiveness”.
- Participants MUST print out the completion certificate, listing a February date, returning it to Jamie or Tim by end of day, Friday, March 13th. —end



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”

February, 2020 Question of the Month

In lowering your risk of heart disease, which tool is missing from this list?

- Watch Your Weight
- Quit Smoking & stay away from 2nd Hand Smoke
- Control Your Cholesterol
- If You do, Drink Alcohol in Moderation
- Get Active
- Eat Healthy

Email your chosen answer to: salinewellness@gmail.com

*Correct answers must be received prior to the subsequent month’s newsletter distribution to be eligible for the earning of 25 Wellness points.

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2020 Saline County Employee Health Screening 2020



What you'll get:

Savings: Free on-site health screening saves you time and money. PLUS you receive 500 WELLNESS POINTS!

Support: Education and goal-setting opportunities give you the superpowers to become your own health crusader.

Saline County Health Screenings:

1. Tuesday, February 11, 2020 (5:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.) at the Law Enforcement Center
2. Wednesday, February 12, 2020 (5:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.) Saline County Courthouse—Assembly Room

Health Screen Includes:

- A. **Key Lab Measures** for Heart Risk, Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome (Cholesterol, Triglycerides, LDL, HDL, Glucose & more). This baseline screening is FREE for all employees of Saline County. *(Non-employee spouses wishing to participate will be charged \$79.00. This is due to new limitations placed on employer sponsored Health Fairs by BCBS.)*
- B. **Biometric Measures:** Weight, Waist, Blood Pressure, Body Fat% & BMI
- C. **Optional:** Hemoglobin (A1C), Prostate (PSA), Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) tests available to you at an additional cost of \$30 for A1C, \$45 for Vitamin D, \$20 for PSA and \$15 for the TSH test.

Additional Details:

- i. Avoid eating or drinking anything other than water for 8-10 hours before your appointment.
- ii. You can take medications (with water) the morning of your health screening.
- iii. Remember to drink plenty of water the day before the screening so you are well hydrated.
- iv. Avoid caffeinated coffee, tea, pop, energy drinks and nicotine before your appointment.

Questions? Call Tim at 402-821-3900 or email tim.mcdermott@saline.nacone.org if you have any questions.

Who will see my results? Your results are for your eyes only. Madonna Fit for Work will ensure that your personal health information is kept confidential. You will receive your own personal Health Risk Scorecard that is based on your lab results and biometric measures. The Health Risk Scorecard is scientifically linked to how likely you are to develop diabetes, metabolic syndrome or heart disease in the next 10 years.

Will my health screening results be sent to my physician? Madonna Fit for Work will fax a copy of your screening results to your physician, please bring the name of your physician and a fax number to your screening appointment.

When will I get my results? You will receive your results during, or soon after, the "Know Your Numbers" presentation on Wednesday, March 4th at 10:00 a.m. The presentation will be held in the Courthouse Assembly Room. If you are unable to attend, your wellness packet will be distributed to you after the meeting by a committee member. —end

Aging Services to host "Shamrock Shuffle" Event—March 14, 2020



Saline County Aging Services will soon be hosting its second "Shamrock Shuffle" event on Saturday, March 14th. Additional information will be provided in the March newsletter. "Git yer' new rompers polished!"

Shamrock Shuffle

5K (3.1m) or 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk

More...to follow

Oftentimes when you set out to lose weight, it involves deeming some foods 'good' and others 'bad' and restricting those in the latter category. This often backfires, however, because when you deprive yourself of the things you love (and eliminate entire food groups) it usually leads to a hard-to-break cycle of yo-yo dieting.

Instead, focusing on eating more of the healthy foods you love could actually help you lose weight. By choosing foods with lower energy density (aka fewer calories for their bulk) like fruits, veggies and lean proteins, you can eat more volume but consume fewer calories to stay within your overall calorie goal.

HOW EATING MORE NUTRIENT-DENSE FOODS CAN HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT

① IT HELPS YOU FEEL SATISFIED

"If your healthy eating plan emphasizes eating more nutrient-dense foods like fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats, you'll be better able to stick to it, since you won't feel hungry all the time, and you won't feel restricted during mealtime," says Chicago-based registered dietitian Amanda Kostro Miller. "High-fiber, high-water foods like fruits and veggies can help you feel full for fewer calories, so you won't be as tempted to reach for a huge piece of cake." (*Continue on page 6...*)

Could Intermittent Fasting Actually Help You Live Longer?—*Liz Millard*

Over the past couple years, intermittent fasting has gained significant attention for its potential role in weight loss, but recent research suggests there may be far more benefits to the strategy than just whittling your middle — it's possible it might even extend your life.

In a [review article](#) published in The New England Journal of Medicine, neuroscientist Mark Mattson, PhD, of Johns Hopkins Medicine looked at numerous intermittent fasting plans and concluded that two, in particular, are especially effective: either restricting your eating time to a 6–8 hour window every day, or a technique called 5:2 fasting that involves eating normally for five days and then eating only one moderate-sized meal two days per week.

"We are at a transition point where we could soon consider adding information about intermittent fasting to medical school curricula alongside standard advice about healthy diets and exercise," he notes.

SOLID RESEARCH

Why would something as simple as not eating for a big chunk of time help you live longer? The answer lies in the breadth of benefits that have been found in both animal and human studies.

For example, fasting has shown improvements in blood pressure and resting heart rate, making it advantageous for cardiovascular health. Several studies have also suggested it may

be effective for weight loss, which can help prevent obesity and diabetes — which have both been connected to shorter lifespans.

A [2018 study](#) done on mice showed that when animals ate only one meal per day, and therefore had a longer fasting period, they not only had longer lifespans, but also demonstrated considerably less risk for age-related liver disease and metabolic disorders.

In his review, Mattson says studies indicate fasting improves blood sugar regulation, lowers inflammation and increases resistance to stress. All of those can have significant effects when it comes to longevity.

PLAYING WITH TIME

Like any strategy that involves changing how you eat, individual results will vary, especially if you make some initial missteps like overeating during your "food window," choosing unhealthy foods, being sedentary and making drastic changes.

Also, keep in mind that you may need to play around with variations on intermittent fasting to find what works best for you. Although Mattson indicated that the time-restricted window of 6–8 hours or the 5:2 approach seemed the most effective, neither of those might be the best fit for you, and that's OK. You can still do intermittent fasting using a different tactic.

For example, you might expand your eating

window to 10 hours, or you can play around with the number of fasting days, according to Dr. Luiza Petre, a cardiologist who practices intermittent fasting herself and advises the strategy for patients.

She notes that the 5:2 plan can be tweaked to 7:1 or 1:1, based on how someone wants to implement intermittent fasting in day-to-day life.

"When you're getting started, it's much better to see this as a long-term strategy and experiment with different schedules, rather than think you need to stick to one specific schedule because that's what worked for a friend or family member," Petre says.

GETTING STARTED

Intermittent fasting doesn't involve specific foods, but rather, a strict schedule regarding when you eat, says Dr. Jason Fung, author of "The Complete Guide to Fasting." That said, it's a great opportunity to overhaul your diet if you've been getting a little too junk-food-reliant lately.

"One major advantage to intermittent fasting is that it can be part of any eating plan you're following like low-carb, ketogenic, Paleo or something else," he says. "It can also be a nice kick off to changing your eating habits to include healthy foods if you're not doing that already." (*Continued on page 6...*)



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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.*

Intermittent Fasting—cont. from pg. 5

The easiest way to try intermittent fasting is to do the most common variation first, he suggests, which is an 8-hour block, followed by fasting time that includes sleep. For example, “breaking your fast” — which is how breakfast got its name, after all — at 9 a.m. and having dinner at 5 p.m. and then not eating again until the next morning.

Not only can this confer the benefits Mattson mentions, but it also gives you additional advantages in terms of digestion and sleep quality, since going to bed on a fairly empty stomach has been shown to be better for both of those issues.

Fung suggests trying that for about a week or so to give your body time to adjust. After that, you’ll know better if you have to tweak your time block to some degree, or if you’d prefer to switch to a different variation like the 5:2 eating plan or a similar on-off fasting schedule.

Giving yourself at least a few days — and ideally longer — every time to switch strategies is important, because it allows you to see improvements in non-food areas such as more energy, deeper sleep and mood. Just as you might with food tracking, record the effects of intermittent fasting daily to determine how well you’re adjusting.

It’s also possible that intermittent fasting is not your groove, and that’s OK, too. But most likely, simply trying this way of eating is likely to make you more conscious not just of when you eat, but also what you’re consuming.

“Even if you decide not to do this type of strategy, you’ll probably create more awareness around your food,” says Fung. “And that is always a good thing.” *-end*

Eating More to Lose Weight—cont. from page 5

② IT KEEPS YOU FROM FOCUSING ON THE TABOO

Positive, actionable plans that add healthier foods to your diet help you avoid thoughts about subtracting or restricting foods from your diet. If you keep telling yourself, “Don’t eat chocolate,” instead of “If I’m hungry and in the mood for dessert, then I’ll eat fresh fruit instead,” you’ll be fixated on forbidden chocolate every time you think about your dietary goals.

“Restriction is the best way to get someone thinking about that food constantly and can lead to bingeing behavior,” says Shena Jaramillo, RD. “This is often followed by negative thinking: ‘I blew it. I ate 3 pieces of pizza. Why bother trying to eat healthy anymore?’ This type of thinking lends to a cascade effect that is challenging to return from.” Instead, Jaramillo encourages those wanting to lose weight to focus on what healthy foods they can add to their plate versus what they should take away.

③ IT CAN HELP YOU STAY MOTIVATED AND CEMENT HEALTHY HABITS

If you stock your grocery cart wisely, with old favorites and new ingredients you’re curious to try, then you’ll indulge in delicious, healthy foods that you’re excited to eat. This may give you momentum, encouraging you to continue on a healthy-eating journey.

“Food is designed to be pleasurable, so once we begin to notice how enjoyable healthy food choices are, we can substitute them in for more and more unhealthy food choices, creating new positive habits that don’t leave harmful effects on our bodies, like junk food does,” says Bracha Goetz, author of “Searching for God in the Garbage.” Over time, this “reinforces neural pathways in the brain that make the delightful habit of eating a handful of nuts instead of a bag of chips more deeply satisfying, especially since the pleasure is not accompanied by any negative repercussions.” *-end*

Stop the BAD HABIT Blurb

Drop the term “resolution” and use “commitment” for a stronger sense of promise in reaching your goal.