

SPOTLIGHT

Date: May 6, 2005 Volume II Issue 2

NUTRITION

The following is an excerpt from a Nutrition Manual that we are currently writing. This information has been prepared for you by Candace Combe, a registered dietitian and a licensed dietary nutritionist. Please watch for the latest nutrition updates coming to you soon.

HELP YOUR CHILD FIGHT THE FAT

According to government statistics, 15 percent (9 million) of children between the ages of 6-19 were overweight in 2000. Until recently, most of the attention about overweight has been on adults; all of the popular weight loss plans are geared to adults. But now doctors are warning parents that childhood obesity and overweight are serious concerns that can lead to health problems later in life. Obesity is a devastating problem in the United States. Recent estimates suggest that diseases related to obesity result in over \$100 billion in health care costs annually.

Some parents may take a wait-and-see approach, hoping that their child will "outgrow" overweight. Unfortunately, this rarely happens. In fact, studies show that

an overweight child has an 80 percent chance of becoming an overweight or obese adult.

The contributing factors to the overweight epidemic in children are complex, but most experts agree on the bottom line: children are eating too much and not exercising enough. Knowing the cause won't necessarily help change things, however. Eating habits develop over years, are often hard to change, and parents themselves often struggle with the same weight issues as their children. It becomes a "do-as-I-say-and-not-as-I-do" argument unless parents and children all work together.

Once a child reaches adolescence, the parent has less influence and control. It is much easier to address overweight in a young child. Regardless of your child's age, if your child is overweight, there are some steps you can take:

Limit television

Most children watch about 4 hours of TV each day. Have your child choose his or her favorite shows, and limit TV watching to these times.

Exercise with your child

Regular (daily if possible) walks are a

great way to spend time together and burn calories at the same time.

Limit junk food and soda

Sugar sweetened soda consumption is one of the primary causes of overweight in both children and adults.

Eat more fruits and vegetables

Studies show that children and adolescents will choose healthy food if it is available. Keep cut up vegetables on hand in the refrigerator and serve with a low fat dip.

Monitor the school lunch

Work with your child's school to see that healthy foods and beverages are offered. Many school departments are beginning to limit soda sales in response to concerns from health authorities and parents.

Model Good Habits with your child

Offer positive reinforcement when healthy choices are made. Being a good example is often the best way to help your child make any behavior change, but if you feel you aren't making progress, check with your child's pediatrician. Early intervention is crucial to avoid a lifetime struggle with health issues caused by overweight and obesity.

Chairman's Message



Armand E. Sabitoni
General Secretary - Treasurer
and New England Regional Manager

Springtime is the most anticipated season. After being held hostage by winter's dreary weather, the rise in temperature invigorates us to get up and move about. As Laborers, we look forward to springtime more than most people because it represents the beginning of the construction season. However, the combination of a full work load and our natural desire to perform outdoor activities poses a potential risk for muscular strains and sprains. Annually, over 100,000 construction Laborers sustain on-the-job back injuries and many others strain their necks, arms, or legs engaging in work-related or recreational activities.

The good news is that most of these injuries can easily be prevented through the use of a daily exercise program. Consider adding a walking routine to your daily schedule. Walking is the easiest exercise plan available. It can be done anytime or anywhere and it is absolutely free. It provides necessary cardiovascular activity and helps improve muscle and bone strength. By simply "gearing" up for spring and warm weather activity, we can eliminate many musculoskeletal sprains.

Be sure to stretch before exercising or performing tasks and remember to always lift objects by bending at the knees rather than the waist. By remaining active and using proper technique you can be in peak shape for all on-the-job and recreational activities that springtime brings.

DON'T BE A GROWING STATISTIC!

Over the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in overweight and obesity among the U.S. population. Sixty-five percent of adults are currently overweight-a 40 percent increase. Obesity has increased 100 percent to nearly 59 million adults. Moreover, the epidemic is not limited to adults: the percentage of young people who are overweight has more than doubled in the last 20 years. Of children and adolescents aged 6-19 years, 15% - about 9 million young people - are considered overweight.

Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating contribute to obesity, cancer, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, arthritis, and diabetes. Together, these two behaviors are responsible for over \$100 billion in health care costs and at least 400,000 deaths each year. Only tobacco use causes more preventable deaths in the United States.

Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, more than 50% of American adults do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits and 26% are not active at all in their leisure time. More than a third of young people in grades 9-12 do not regularly engage in vigorous physical activity. Daily participation in high school physical education classes dropped from 42% in 1991 to 32% in 2001.

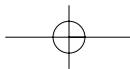
Promoting regular physical activity and healthy eating is essential to reducing the epidemic of obesity. Additionally, workers who are physically fit sustain fewer injuries on and off the jobsite. Regular physical activity reduces risks for heart attack, colon cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and stroke. It also helps to control weight; contributes to healthy bones, muscles, and joints; reduces falls among older adults; helps to relieve the pain of arthritis; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; and is associated with fewer hospitalizations, physician visits, and medications.

Physical activity need not be strenuous to be beneficial; people of all ages benefit from moderate physical activity, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking five or more times a week. Start every workout with a warm-up to make your muscles and joints more flexible. Pay attention to your body and be sure to stop exercising if you feel very out of breath, dizzy, faint or nauseated, or have pain. Have fun and enjoy yourself. Remember, increased physical activity and flexibility will put you in prime shape for avoiding musculoskeletal injuries many people sustain during springtime on and off the job.



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HOW MUCH EXERCISE IS ENOUGH?

First we were told 30 minutes of exercise daily is sufficient. Then it was suggested that 60 minutes a day is necessary to maintain health and fitness. The type of exercise is also questionable. To most of us, it's all too confusing! But it doesn't have to be. First determine what your goals are. Do you want to be fit, lose weight or both? If your goal is to be fit, then follow the list below for various activities and their respective intensity levels. However, if you want to lose weight you may have to exercise longer and restrict your caloric intake. Remember, you should consult your physician before starting an exercise program.

Light Intensity Activities (60 minutes 5 times per week)

- Walking slowly
- Golfing, using powered cart
- Swimming, slow treading
- Gardening or pruning
- Bicycling, very light effort
- Conditioning exercise, light stretching or warm up

Moderate Intensity Activities (30-60 minutes 5 times per week)

- Walking briskly
- Golfing, pulling or carrying clubs
- Swimming, recreational
- Mowing lawn, using power walk mower
- Tennis, doubles
- Bicycling 5 to 9 mph, level terrain, or with a few hills
- Weight lifting, machines or free weights

Vigorous Intensity Activities (20-30 minutes 5 times per week)

- Race-walking, jogging or running
- Swimming laps
- Mowing lawn, hand mower
- Tennis, singles
- Bicycling more than 10 mph, or on steep uphill terrain
- Circuit training



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT SPRING CLEAN UP

Whether you had time off from construction or worked all winter long, spring is a good time to inspect, clean, and/or replace your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Hard Hat: Look for cracks in the shell and cracks and tears on the suspension and replace if necessary. (If you have stickers on your hard hat check the helmet from inside as the sticker may be covering a crack or defect.) Manufacturers recommend replacing the shell after no more than 5 years, and the suspension after no more than 1 year. Hard hats do not last forever! The protective properties of the shell degrade from exposure to temperature extremes, chemicals, sunlight and normal daily wear and tear.

Safety Glasses: Inspect the frame for cracks and distortion. Inspect the lens for scratches and dings that may blur your vision. Check to see if your frame accepts a replacement lens (you may be able to replace just the lens). Give your safety glasses a bath! Soak them in warm water with a mild soap. Dry with a clean soft cloth. They will look and feel great after a good cleaning.

If acceptable by your employer obtain a tinted lens for summer outdoor work. Store your glasses in a clean place. Remember, if they get dust on them that dust may later enter your eye(s) causing discomfort or injury.

Hearing Protection: Start the season off with new, clean, hearing protection. Make sure it is readily available for use when exposed to hazardous noise on the job (according to OSHA, over 90 dBA in an 8 hour work day).

Respirators: Inspect straps, face piece, exhalation and inhalation valves daily for damage and cleanliness. When replacing filters, cartridges, head gear, or valves, be sure to use the same manufacturers' replacement parts.

Gloves: For non-chemical applications, chose a light weight glove of breathable material to prevent your hands from sweating.

SPRING CLEANING.... INCLUDE YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

Spring is finally here! It's time to get rid of a winter's worth of dust and dirt. While you're working to freshen up each room in the house, be sure to refresh your medicine cabinet. This is the perfect time to take stock of medicines to ensure you have what you need and to eliminate those that have expired or are no longer used.

Since many drugs start to lose potency after their expiration date it is vital that you discard out of date medication. Additionally, eye drops that have touched the eye or cough syrups and antacids that have been ingested straight from the bottle could be contaminated and should be discarded. Sort through prescriptions and discard those you no longer need, especially antibiotics - the antibiotic tetracycline can actually become toxic over time.

While restocking medications be sure to always store them out of the reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet. Use the airtight containers they were dispensed in and keep in a cool, dry place.

Follow this list of essential items necessary for a properly stocked home medicine cabinet. *Your inventory will vary slightly if you have children, take prescription medications or have health problems.*

- Chewable aspirin (325 mg) to chew immediately if concerns of heart attack arise
- Acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fever or pain
- Cough and cold medicine and decongestant for head congestion
- Thermometer (and alcohol to clean it between uses)
- Saline spray and drops for irrigating nose and eyes
- Oral rehydration solution for diarrhea or vomiting
- Antacid for heartburn
- Hydrogen peroxide to clean and sterilize cuts and scratches
- Antibacterial ointment for wounds
- Gauze and adhesive bandages to dress cuts or scrapes
- Antihistamine (i.e. Benadryl) for allergies and allergic reactions
- One percent hydrocortisone cream for certain rashes
- Sunscreen
- Tweezers



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) no longer recommends the use of syrup of ipecac to induce vomiting in children suspected of swallowing medication, poison or cleaning products. Instead, contact your poison control center and/or your physician. The Poison Control Center can be reached 24 hours a day at 800-222-1222.