

# Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



August 2007

## Wellness Options for a Healthy Lifestyle

Currently healthcare spending has risen to 1.8 billion dollars, accounting for approximately 15.5% of the country's gross domestic product. This continuous rise in healthcare cost and spending has elevated concerns regarding these costs from serious to critical. Along with other measures, this has also precipitated a trend in promoting wellness among employers throughout the country.

This effort of employers in promoting wellness is seen by many as a longer term solution to not only lower costs, but also improve the quality of life of their employees.

This concept is in concert with what CHP has been providing to its members through various channels including educational train-



ing sessions over the past three to four years. Looking forward it will become even more imperative for people to take responsibility and control of their utilization of healthcare.

In an ongoing effort to assist members, CHP is providing a series of Health Awareness newsletters dedicated to promoting various affordable wellness options, along with training presentations that will provide awareness of wellness options for employee/employer implementation.

A common misperception is that the outside physical appearance and/or age of a person determines health status. This is a false assumption. Disease and/or other

health conditions can affect people of any size, age or gender. Following are samples of affordable wellness options included in this series;

- 30 to 45 minutes of continuous aerobic activity three to five times a week
  - ◆Swimming, biking, walking, dancing or jogging
- Drink plenty of water
  - ◆8 - 12 glasses per day
- Learn to relax
  - ◆Try some short, simple exercises (stretches, pushups, march in place etc...)



(Over)

## Wellness Options . . .

(Continued)

- ◆ Try meditation - Sit comfortable with eyes closed, breath deep, concentrate, relax and clear your mind.
- Get plenty of sleep
  - ◆ Infants - 16-18 hours of sleep per day
  - ◆ Adults - 7-8 hours of sleep a day
  - ◆ Take your medication properly (even over the counter medications)
- ◆ Take each medication exactly as it is prescribed
- Make healthy choices regarding diet
  - ◆ Consume more vegetables
  - ◆ Grilled chicken
  - ◆ Less red meat
  - ◆ Cut back or eliminate butter or margarine and white bread
  - ◆ Order the smallest portions at restaurants
- Examples of portion sizes: A single serving equals
  - ◆ Apple is the size of a baseball
  - ◆ Potato is the size of a computer mouse
  - ◆ Bagel is the size of a hockey puck



### Remember, You are in Charge of Your Wellness

Adoption of a healthier lifestyle, including aerobic exercise and a low-fat diet, can help reduce risk of diabetes, high cholesterol, and, ultimately, the risk of coronary heart disease.

Source: WebMD at [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)



## A cup of health and beauty

You've probably heard the buzz about the power of polyphenols in **green tea**. These incredible antioxidants have been known to fight certain cancers, lower cholesterol, and reduce high blood pressure. But you don't always have to drink it to reap its rewards. Make a soothing spritzer by steeping 1/2 cup unflavored green tea leaves with 2 cups spring water. Strain the leaves, and refrigerate the tea in a spray bottle. Use it as a mouthwash, an antiseptic for minor cuts, or a treatment for blemishes.

## Benefits Corner

Routine physicals are an excellent prevention tool. The following exams are a few examples of those recommended by age group.

Colorectal Cancer combination of the following;

After age 50, one or a annual fecal occult blood test, barium enema, flexible sigmoidoscopy

Prostate Cancer

Annually, beginning at age 50 prostate screening, including digital rectal exam and PSA test

Mammogram

Beginning at age 40, every 1-2 years

Clinical Breast Exam

Begin at developmentally appropriate age, part of routine care

Check plan document for additional information and level of benefit.

