



HealthMatters  
Wellness with Purpose



# Monthly Employer Newsletter May 2010

## In This Issue:

Employer Tools regarding this month's theme are now available on the *client only* part of our website!

*If you don't have a login yet, request one from Amanda Moser at [amanda.moser@lmcins.com](mailto:amanda.moser@lmcins.com).*

### Wellness News Happenings

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## May's Theme: Employee Appreciation

This month, on our *client only* portion of our website, you will find the following tools for you to utilize:

- Bonus Monthly Flyer for Employers** -- Sometimes coming up with creative ways to motivate employees can be difficult. This month, we have put together some information on what works and what doesn't when it comes to showing your employees you appreciate them.



- Monthly Employee Newsletter:** This month, learn about high blood pressure, safe biking tips, financial spring cleaning, 100 calories or less snacks, and a recipe for a Greek pasta dish.

- Monthly Flyer – High Blood Pressure Awareness** This month's flyer gives some ideas for prevention for high blood pressure.

- Monthly Poster – Go Bananas** This month's poster lists the numerous health benefits of bananas.

*Only clients of LaMair Mulock Condon Co. are able to access these free monthly resources, as a value-added service. Please contact Amanda Moser at [amanda.moser@lmcins.com](mailto:amanda.moser@lmcins.com) to be set up with a username and password.*

## Wellness News Happenings

### Computer Technology Keeps Patients in Touch with Their Doctors

About six months ago, Angela Thomas had a health concern that was not of an urgent nature. So instead of calling her doctor's office to make an appointment as she has done for years, Thomas used her computer.

[Read more...](#)

### Most Americans “Live to Work,” But Don't Prepare for Illness or Injury That Could Put Their Income at Risk

Most American workers say they derive satisfaction from their job and “live to work.” But only about a third say they have actively prepared for being sidelined due to an injury or illness, even though nearly nine out of 10 say they know there are steps they can take to protect themselves. [Read more...](#)

For information on wellness news, visit our [HealthMatters](#) website and click on [“Healthy Happenings”](#).

## On your mark!

Tis' the season for races! Here are just a few of the races taking place in the month of May. For a more complete list or for more information please visit the Fitness Sports website at [www.fitnesssports.com](http://www.fitnesssports.com).

### May 8th:

#### March of Dimes May Day 5K

9am, Blank Park Zoo

#### 5K Fun Run/Walk for Special Olympics

8am, Dallas Center, IA

#### Walk / Run to Break the Silence of Ovarian Cancer

9am, Raccoon River Park,  
West Des Moines, IA

### May 15th:

#### Whamm (Windsor Heights Annual Mini-Marathon) 5K & 10K

8am, 66<sup>th</sup> and University  
Windsor Heights, IA

#### Lincoln Highway Bridge Days 5K Run

8am, Tama, IA

#### Run for Ronald Run / Walk

5K, 10K and Kids Run  
Principal Park, Des Moines

### May 22nd:

#### Arthritis Walk

Blank Park Zoo, Des Moines

#### Penny's Pieathlon Triathlon

7:30am, Waukee, IA

## Salt Taking a Cut in Groceries, Restaurant Menus

Associated Press  
April 27, 2010

Sixteen food companies plan to cut the amount of salt in bacon, flavored rice and dozens of other products as part of a national effort to reduce American's sodium consumption by 20 percent.

Companies including H.J. Heinz Co., Kraft Foods Inc. and Starbucks will commit to the voluntary National Salt Reduction Initiative, a public-private partnership initiated by New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced Monday.

"Sodium is a major cause of high blood pressure, which in turn can lead to heart attack and stroke," Bloomberg said.

Mark Broadhurst, director of corporate affairs for Mars Foods, said the company would cut the salt in its Uncle Ben's flavored rice products by 25 percent over five years.

"When it comes to reducing sodium, if you can make it here you can make it anywhere," Broadhurst said.

Lanette Kovachi, corporate dietitian for Subway, said the sandwich chain has already cut sodium by 30 percent in its European outlets and is working on reducing salt in its U.S. restaurants.

"We're actively working with our food suppliers to reduce sodium in all of our menu items," she said.

Heinz had announced that the company would reduce sodium by 15 percent in all the ketchup it sells in the U.S. starting May 1. Heinz spokesman Michael Mullen said the move is part of the company's ongoing commitment to sodium reduction. Heinz has already cut sodium in Bagel Bites frozen pizza snacks by more than 20 percent, for example.

Most health organizations recommend a range of 1,500 to 2,400 milligrams of salt a day for healthy adults. Consuming too much salt can lead to health problems including high blood pressure, stroke and cardiovascular disease.

"If we reduced our sodium intake to recommended levels, we would prevent 44,000 to 92,000 deaths per year in the United States and save \$10 billion to \$24 billion in health care costs per year," New York City Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley said.

But Lori Roman, president of the Salt Institute, a trade association, said the initiative was "not based on sound science." "The Italians eat about 40 percent more sodium than Americans, yet they have better cardiovascular health than Americans," Roman said. "So it's not the sodium. It's an overall diet high in fruits and vegetables."

The salt reduction initiative has set a goal of cutting the salt in 62 categories of packaged foods and 25 categories of restaurant foods by 25 percent over five



years. That would lead to a reduction in the nation's salt intake by 20 percent, health officials said.

The program is modeled on a similar initiative in the United Kingdom, where food makers have reduced salt levels by 40 percent or more in some products.

Dr. Jonathan Fielding, director of public health for Los Angeles County, who attended the New York news conference, said consumers would not miss the salt.

"People really won't notice the difference in terms of taste, but your body will notice it," he said. "Your blood pressure will be lower. Your risk of getting high blood pressure will be reduced."

## Doctor, Health Care Pals Start Child Obesity Pilot

*Associated Press*  
April 26, 2010

It was on their morning runs that a pediatrician, dietitian, physical therapist and exercise therapist thought up a way to tackle childhood obesity.

They decided to blend their specialties into a free pilot program involving the whole family to help children ages 6 to 16. The friends wanted to get beyond old methods of doctors advising kids to miraculously cut calories and increase exercise to lose weight.

The old way doesn't work, say care providers who have watched the childhood obesity rate rise to 17 percent nationwide.

"As a pediatrician I'm constantly frustrated with, 'How can I help these kids?'" said Mindy Gaddis, one of the running partners. "I really cannot do this by myself."



Gaddis teamed with dietitian Stacy Beeson, physical therapist Sima Tavazoie and exercise specialist Maria Covey to create Youth Engaged in Activities for Health, or YEah!

It's "more of a cooperative effort, instead of a more traditional medical model where I give advice and expect them to take my advice," Gaddis said. "Let's identify together what the barriers are to change."

Through YEah!, which is in its seventh month, families visit a grocery store with Beeson to learn economical and healthy cooking ideas. Beeson directs them to the perimeter of the store, saying that's where the healthy foods are found. And she recommends filling the cart at least one-third with things that don't need labels, such as fruits and vegetables.

"Foods high in sugar and fat almost always cost more," Beeson said.

A social worker counsels families on reasons why children overeat - such as boredom or for comfort - and advises parents on helpful ways to talk to kids about their weight.

"Just telling the patient's family to eat an apple, that's not going to make them do that," said pediatrician Victoria Rogers, who directs childhood obesity prevention program at the Maine Medical Center in Portland.

Kids in the YEah! program exercise together with Covey once a week at a YMCA. The families stay in touch with Gaddis and coordinator Sue Peterson, a nurse, through meetings and phone calls to discuss goals and lifestyle changes.

Programs like YEah! that involve families have been popping up around the country.

"The programs that have shown the most robust effect are programs that have a multi-pronged approach," said Denise Wilfley, a specialist on childhood obesity who teaches psychiatry and medicine at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. "They work to change behaviors at multiple levels."

But most insurers don't cover obesity treatment, so pilots like YEah! need to find continuing grants or other funding.

Wilfley said she's hopeful Michelle Obama's new focus on childhood obesity, and the health care overhaul will direct more money to obesity prevention. Her childhood obesity program is supported by a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; 500 families called to see if they could get one of the 120 spots.

Mary Savoye, a dietitian who is medical director of Yale University's Bright Bodies obesity treatment program, said insurers hesitate because many childhood obesity programs haven't yet published results showing that they make a significant difference. The programs also require long term, repeated visits to care providers.

"You may have to go with a program for a year," said Savoye. "It hasn't been an easy situation for the insurance companies."

Gaddis and her partners started YEah! with a \$50,000 grant from PacificSource, a not-for-profit health insurance company, and with help from their own employers, who are donating their time. The founders are donating their time as well.

Apart from cost, another obstacle to effective treatment is the busy schedules of kids, said Gaddis. While food and video games take their share of the blame for obesity, Gaddis said she was also startled by how many families in the program have told her their kids' involvement in organized sports forced them to stop for fast food at dinnertime.

"Time seems to be the largest barrier in our culture to change, in terms of incorporating exercise into our daily life and changing our eating habits," said Gaddis. "People are on the go with all these extra afterschool activities, so there is not time to cook a healthy dinner at home. I have been surprised at how significant that issue is."

Organized sports themselves aren't necessarily an antidote to weight problems. Calories from fast food and snacks served on the field can more than compensate for the energy used in soccer practice.

"Everywhere you look, it's really easy to get food," said Rogers, who developed the 5, 2, 1 formula - popular with many health professionals - to structure nutritional advice. That's five or more servings of fruit and vegetables, two hours of screen time (or less), and at least one hour of exercise (Rogers includes 0, for limiting sugar-sweetened beverages).

Jill Chick of Boise, whose 8-year-old daughter Emily takes part in YEah!, said the whole family now exercises more, using Wii Fit.

"This has helped me push her more that this is the way it is, and we're going to all be healthier as a family instead of me just making time for myself to go exercise," said Chick.

Collaborative programs with families and counseling take treatment in a new direction, said Rogers.

"When we started using 5, 2, 1, 0 in a health care setting in 2004, we weren't trained in nutrition," said Rogers. "Doctors shied away from talking about weight because it's such an emotional issue."

The numerical formula helped put providers and patients at ease.

"When doctors started to use 5, 2, 1, 0, they could have a really good discussion about drinking soda, and didn't have to talk about weight," she said.

The rise in weight gain, among adults and children, might be leveling off, according to a January report in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Start early, Gaddis urges.

"It's easier to motivate a young child to change than an older adolescent," she said.