



National Women's Health Week:

Take the pledge! Make yourself a top priority by taking steps to improve your physical and mental health and lower your risk of disease during National Women's Health Week (May 10–16th) and National Women's Check-Up Day (May 11th). Schedule a check up, record your family history, and take the pledge to Eat Smart, Move More and Stress Less.

Logon and Learn about online tools that send you reminders when you need a preventive screening, give you personalized health information and tell you how hospitals and clinics in our region are following quality care guidelines: www.kingcounty.gov/employees and click on "Take the Pledge", or call: 206-296-3822.




Tonya, Diane, and Shonita from Public Health sat down and took the pledge together.



Health Watch

H1N1 (swine flu) information
 Stop Germs, Stay Healthy!
 Wash hands often for 20 seconds.



Now 30 probable cases of H1N1 (swine flu) have been reported in King County. Learn what you can do to protect your family and yourself or our FAQ's for families. (Updated 7 a.m. May 6.)

What to do about H1N1 virus (swine flu):

Human cases of the virus have been confirmed in King County and in several states. Most cases have been mild. Health officials are closely monitoring and responding aggressively to in order to reduce the spread and severity of illness. Here's what you can do:

1) Stay home when sick

2) Cover your cough

3) Wash your hands

4) Have a family plan and be prepared.

For the latest local information, facts for families and tips on how to protect yourself and others from getting the flu, visit: Public Health - Seattle & King County www.kingcounty.gov/health.

Bike Hero Eileen Kadash

Many people might think trip to Costco by bike is too daunting. But Transit Planner Eileen Kadash and her husband have a set of simple tips to help you join the growing legion of shopper-bikers. "The most important advice for motivating yourself to use a bike when running errands is to 'do it when it makes sense'... If it's warm and sunny out, you have plenty of time, you only need small items, and you could use a little exercise anyway, then try biking. Once you get a routine, it actually becomes addictive!"



Get Eileen's full story in the May Health Matters e-Newsletter at www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters.

It's How We Roll

May is Bike to Work Month.

King County supports your efforts to reduce car pollution



and improve your health by biking to work. Even if you don't work downtown, you can participate. Join a team with friends or co-workers or register as a solo rider and ride just five times during the month to be eligible for prizes.

For more information and resources to help you get started, go to: www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters

and click on "Bike to Work Month" or call 206-205-5017.

Low-risk log deadline

May 15 is deadline to ensure you are gold

If Healthways notified you to keep a low-risk log as your individual action plan this year, be sure to begin it no later than May 15 to ensure you earn gold for your out-of-pocket medical expenses in 2010. To get started, go to www.kingcounty.gov/employees/gethealthy and look for "Low-risk individual action plans" on the right side of the page. Paper versions are also available at the Web site.

Haven't heard from Healthways about your action plan?

Call Healthways at 877- 279-0624. For questions about your health benefits, contact Benefits, Payroll and Retirement Operations at 206-684-1556 or kc.benefits@kingcounty.gov.

Shaking the salt habit

Results of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study indicate that seven out of 10 adults should limit their sodium intake to 1,500 mg a day to prevent or reduce high blood pressure. Results from last year's Wellness Assessment suggest that most King County employees and their partners probably do not meet this recommendation. Only about one-third (35%) of respondents reported that they "rarely cook with salt or add it at the table and rarely eat processed foods or salted snacks".

For ideas on how to reduce your sodium intake click on "Shaking the salt habit" from the Health Matters site (www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters).



Employee Resources

Quit Tobacco – May 31st is **World No Tobacco Day**. Smoking is expensive. Quitting is free. King County offers comprehensive benefits to help you make the move. Get free nicotine replacement therapy, 100% coverage for prescription drugs, covered visits with your medical provider, online and phone support, and more. Click on "Quit Tobacco" from the web site or call 206-263-6085.

Eat Smart – A great low-sodium Gazpacho recipe awaits you at the Recipe Box. From the Health Matters website click on "Eat Smart," then "Recipe Box".

May is Mental Health Month

When we get physically sick, we go to the doctor, tell them what's wrong, diagnose the problem and have it treated. When we find ourselves mentally or emotionally challenged we should do the same thing: go to a professional, talk about the problem, and begin a course of treatment.

King County offers employees and dependents two options that make talking about those problems free and confidential, visit www.kingcounty.gov/employees and click on "Employee Assistance Program/Making Life Easier" or call:

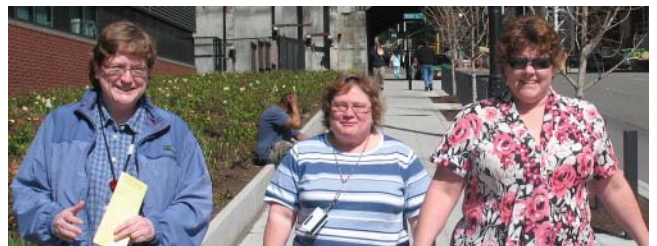
Making Life Easier: 1-888-874-7290

Employee Assistance Program: 206-684-2103.

When your best efforts aren't working, talk to a professional. No charge.

King County Walks 2009

More than 600 King County employees took to the streets the week of April 6-9 to Move More with their co-workers. Over 100 walk teams around the county signed up to participate in walks and received calendars filled with tips and places to track health information. For details, including a slide show of participating teams, check out www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters and click on "King County Walks".



Move More – Go online for a listing of local events ranging from bicycling and nature walks to 5Ks, intro to orienteering and local hikes. Click on "Move More" from the Health Matters website.

Stress Less - Check out the new tools from the Mental Health Alliance that can help you combat stress and promote health and well-being:

www.liveyourlifewell.org

For more information on all these resources and others, go to www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters or call 206-205-5017.