

## IDEAS FOR INTRODUCING AND PROMOTING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN THE WORKPLACE

Jump start your employees by organizing any one of the following ideas:

- Host a “fitness walk” during lunch break; get the CEO to lead a fitness walk with employees.
- Rent a basketball hoop for lunch hour pick-up games in the parking lot.
- Provide bottled water to all employees.
- Give employees a pedometer and encourage them to take a few extra steps in honor of NEHF day (visit the following link for free, online pedometer programs: [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org)).
- Place informational/inspirational health and fitness posters throughout worksite (visit <http://www.foodandhealth.com/CHO101.pdf> to print poster on healthy carbs).
- Sponsor a healthy breakfast/lunch for employees (the American Cancer Society provides a Meeting Well toolkit for worksites to plan healthy meetings and events, visit [www.ACSWorkplaceSolutions.com](http://www.ACSWorkplaceSolutions.com) or call 800-ACS-2345).
- Provide prize drawings (health/fitness related items) throughout the day for participating in a “fitness walk” or walking/riding a bike to work that day.
- Create an indoor walking course at your worksite or around your building with directional signs.
- Place nutrition or physical activity action signs on phone handsets or other “in your face” locations.
- Invite a fitness instructor to offer a before- or after-work class.
- Provide worksite health screenings for employees (contact your local hospital for scheduling information).
- Leave a piece of fruit at each employee’s workstation with a physical activity/nutrition message.
- Make a free “wellness day off” one of the prizes for employees who report being physically active.
- Encourage employees to be active during their work day by holding a “worksite relay” where employees take the stairs to deliver the baton to an employee on a different floor (include a check list with employee names and floor locations).
- Have a healthy potluck luncheon with a guest speaker to discuss a health/wellness topic.
- Organize an employee outing at a local park with a picnic lunch and outdoor sports (volleyball, Frisbee™, softball, etc.)

Promote year-round physical fitness by implementing any of the following:

- Post “point of action” markers near elevators encouraging employees to take the stairs (check out the CDC’s “StairWELL to Better Health” campaign <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/stairwell/index.htm> for free, downloadable point of action posters).
- Encourage employees to “Smart Commute” by walking, biking, or using public transportation to go to work or meetings/errands during their workday.
- Provide healthy snacks in break room.
- Encourage employees to “take 10”—a 10-minute physical activity break during their workday.
- Provide employees with an opportunity to sign up for discounted gym membership. (Perhaps your local YMCA would provide a free day pass for every employee.)
- Encourage employees to hand-deliver messages instead of using voicemail.
- [Click here](#) to see slides of changes in portion sizes over the years.
- The American Cancer Society has a 5-A-Day Worksite Implementation Guide that addresses policies related to food served at work. [Click here](#) to access this guide.

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### ROI Statistics on Wellness Programs:

- The average ROI is reported as saving employers about \$3 for each dollar invested. That is, if you invest \$100 to \$150 per employee per year in health promotion, you can expect a \$300 to \$400 savings per employee per year. (US Department of Health & Human Services, 2003)
- Coca-Cola saved \$500 per employee annually with an exercise program alone; 60% of employees participated.
- Obese individuals spend more on both healthcare services and medication than daily smokers and heavy drinkers. (RAND Corporation)
- Obesity increases costs in the workplace. The annual per capita increase in medical expenditures and absenteeism associated with obesity ranges from \$450 to \$2,500 per obese employee. The estimated cost of obesity at a firm with 1,000 employees is about \$285,000 per year. (IDEA Fitness Journal, Jan. 2006)
- The following article is from the State of Texas – Comptroller, entitled Fighting Obesity, The Business Response, the article discusses the direct impact obesity and inactivity have on employer expenses and how simple wellness programs can have a positive influence on ROI.

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/obesitycost/06fightingobesity.html>

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## Resources:

National Association for Health and Fitness [www.physicalfitness.org](http://www.physicalfitness.org)

Michigan Surgeon General [www.michiganstepsup.org](http://www.michiganstepsup.org)

America on the Move [www.americaonthemove.org](http://www.americaonthemove.org)

The President's Challenge [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org)

Promotional items for NEHFD <http://jimcolemanltd.com/nehf/>

Institute for Health and Productivity Management <http://www.ihpm.org/>

Partnership for Prevention <http://www.prevent.org/>

The Wellness Councils of America <http://www.welcoa.org/>

Healthy Work Environments <http://mihealthtools.org/work/>

Capital Area Transportation Authority [www.cata.org](http://www.cata.org)

Jackson Fitness Council [www.fitnesscouncil.org](http://www.fitnesscouncil.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Healthier Worksite Initiative [www.cdc.gov/hwi](http://www.cdc.gov/hwi)