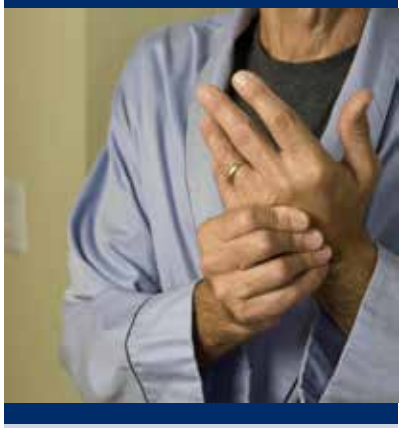
NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM



August is National Psoriasis Awareness Month.

NDPERS Wellness
building healthy members

Coordinator Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 11
August 2013

August is National Psoriasis Awareness Month

Psoriasis — the most common autoimmune disease in the U.S — affects more than 7 million Americans. This chronic disease features red patches of skin topped with silvery scales, according to the Mayo Clinic. People with psoriasis can also develop psoriatic arthritis. Unfortunately, no cure exists for either condition. As a result, it is important to manage symptoms and prevent damage to joints.

Most people with psoriatic arthritis develop the skin disease first. Early detection and treatment can help prevent or limit joint damage that occurs in the later stages of the disease. Below is a list from the National Psoriasis Foundation of some of the symptoms of psoriatic arthritis:

- Generalized fatigue
- Tenderness, pain and swelling over tendons
- Swollen fingers and toes
- Stiffness, pain, throbbing, swelling and tenderness in one or more joints
- A reduced range of motion
- Morning stiffness and tiredness
- Nail changes, such as the nail separating from the nail bed and/or becoming pitted and mimicking fungus infections
- Redness and pain of the eye, such as conjunctivitis

If you recognize any of these symptoms, please see a doctor.

Send us your Wellness Stars

Do you know of an employee who is living a healthy lifestyle? We are looking for success stories and would like to start regularly recognizing these efforts. If you know an employee who is demonstrating a healthy lifestyle through exercise, healthy eating or smoking cessation, we encourage you to nominate him or her as a "Wellness Star of the Month."

Please contact Stacy Duncan at stacy.duncan@bcbsnd.com or 701.277.2884 to complete the nomination form.

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Healthy Activities Spotlight: Picnics

Plan a healthful and safe picnic.

Potato salad. Hot dogs. Brats. Hamburgers. Food thermometer. All the fixings for a perfect picnic.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota Director of Worksite Wellness Melissa Olson encourages everyone to think of food safety when preparing for a picnic. Olson is also a registered and licensed dietitian.

Olson recommends following these tips from Home Food Safety:

- Wash your utensils and cutting boards. Be sure to wash your hands before, during and after food preparation. And remember to wash your fruits and vegetables before you cut them.
- Separate your raw meats from other foods to avoid cross-contamination, which can cause foodborne illnesses.
- Cook: It is important to cook your meat to the proper temperature. Not sure what that is? Check out this handy chart.
- Refrigerate. You will need to refrigerate leftovers within two hours. If it's a hot day (90 degrees F or warmer) and the food is left outside, your time is reduced to one hour. The two hours start from the moment you pull the dish from the grill, oven or the refrigerator.

Olson adds, "The rule of thumb is: When in doubt, throw it out. It's not worth of risk of getting sick as anyone who has experienced food borne illness will tell you."

"If you have a food thermometer, you can use it to grill your meat to the proper temperatures and it can also help you keep your hot foods hot and your cold foods cold," Olson said. Cold foods should be stored in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs and kept at 40 degrees F.

And when you're at the picnic, wash your hands as often as you would during food preparation. If water is not available, bring along a jug of water and soap. "Hand wipes are better than nothing," Olson said.

Olson also encourages picnickers to put on sunscreen and to reapply if they go into the water. Likewise, wear hats and appropriate sun gear.

And no picnic can be enjoyed if you're fighting mosquitoes, so be sure to pack bug spray, Olson adds.

Plan a picnic in celebration of National Picnic Month!

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Try this cool and refreshing Crunchy Cucumber-Dill Salad.

Healthy Recipes

Crunchy Cucumber-Dill Salad

Try this cool and refreshing recipe from the American Heart Association.

Ingredients

1 tablespoon lemon juice (fresh, if available)
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
¼ teaspoon pepper
2 cucumbers
½ small red onion
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill (or 1 teaspoon dried)

Cooking Instructions

In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice oil and pepper.

Peel cucumbers, and slice in half lengthwise. Thinly slice halves into half-moon shaped pieces and place in a medium bowl. Thinly slice onion and add to bowl. Sprinkle dill on top of cucumber mixture. Add lemon juice mixture and toss well to coat. Cover and chill 1-2 hours and serve.

NDPERS Wellness Coordinator Training

Mark your calendar for the Healthy North Dakota Worksite Wellness Summit, which will be held on Oct. 8 at the Holiday Inn of Fargo. NDPERS Wellness Coordinators qualify for the "student" discount rate and are strongly encouraged to attend.

The summit has earned the reputation as the "go-to" event for worksite wellness in North Dakota. You don't want to miss this event. To register, visit: www.ndworksitewellness.org.

Remember the North Dakota Worksite Wellness blog is a great source of wellness ideas. You can join the blog at https://www.ndworksitewellness.org/blog.

Monthly Wellness Consultant call/webinar schedule

Mark your calendar for these WC calls and webinars:

- Wednesday, Aug. 7 at noon CST
- Wednesday, Sept. 11 at 11 a.m. CST
- Wednesday, Oct. 9 at 1 p.m.

To join the monthly call/webinar: Go to http://www.webmeeting.att.com
Meeting number: 888 330 1716 Code: 704446
For audio: Dial 1-888-330-1716 Code: 704446

Friendly reminder: Please mute your phones during the calls as a courtesy to other listeners. If your phone does not have a mute button, dial #0 and then select option 1. To comment or ask a question, you can un-mute by again dialing #0-1. We would also like to ask that you avoid putting your line on hold, as the background music can be heard by all other participants. Thank you.

Reminder – Deadline approaching: Wellness vouchers for the plan year July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 are due by the 31st of August. Voucher points will be loaded to HealthyBlue by November 1, 2013.

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Coming up in September

Consider promoting these events next month!

- Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- Fruit and Veggies - More Matters Month
- Healthy Aging Month
- National Cholesterol Education Month
- National Preparedness Month
- National Recovery Month
- Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
- Whole Grains Month
- National Women's Health & Fitness Day: September 25
- Family Health & Fitness Day: September 28
- World Heart Day: September 29

A Partnership for Worksite Wellness

NDPERS and BCBSND are working together to support and provide you and your fellow employees the opportunity to have a healthier and more engaged worksite through Worksite Wellness tools. We appreciate feedback on all our wellness tools to serve your worksite better and welcome your suggestions.

Please take time to fill out surveys we may submit to you from time to time to evaluate these programs.

Here is a list of contacts that will be useful to you as a Wellness Coordinator:

Stacy Duncan
NDPERS Wellness Consultant
701-277-2884
stacy.duncan@bcbsnd.com
Stacy is your main resource contact. She can help you with general wellness program questions and assist you with enhancing your worksite wellness programs.

Rebecca Fricke
NDPERS
rfricke@nd.gov
Rebecca can help you with 1% premium questions, points on programs, updating coordinator information and the status or questions about the application process or forms.

Kathy Allen
NDPERS
kallen@nd.gov
Direct funding program questions to Kathy.

Onalee Sellheim
BCBSND
onalee.sellheim@bcbsnd.com
Direct questions about benefit plans or schedule Member Education programs through Onalee.

Jodi Crouse
BCBSND
jodi.crouse@bcbsnd.com
To collect aggregate data on your employer from the Health Reimbursement Arrangements, HealthyBlue and Health Club Credit, contact Jodi.

Milissa Van Eps
BCBSND
milissa.van.eps@bcbsnd.com
701-795-5360
Contact Milissa to set up a Member Education program if you are located in eastern North Dakota.

Heather Horner
BCBSND
heather.horner@bcbsnd.com
701-200-3905 (cell)
Contact Heather to set up a Member Education program if you are located in western North Dakota.

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