NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

NDPERS Wellness
building healthy members

Coordinator Newsletter

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February is National Heart Month

The American Heart Association recommends that heart attack prevention begin by age 20 for men and women. This means assessing risk factors and working to keep them low. For those older than 40, or those with multiple risk factors, it is important to calculate the risk of developing cardiovascular disease in the next 10 years.

Risk factors of heart disease that YOU can change:

- **Tobacco smoke.** A smoker's risk of developing coronary heart disease is two to four times higher than that of a nonsmoker. Someone who smokes a pack of cigarettes a day has more than twice the risk of suffering a heart attack than people who have never smoked.
- **High blood cholesterol.** The risk of coronary heart disease increases as with higher blood cholesterol numbers. A person's cholesterol level is also affected by age, sex, heredity and diet. Here's a good primer on where those numbers should be:
  - Total cholesterol: Less than 200 mg/dL
  - LDL (bad) cholesterol:
    - If you're at low risk for heart disease: Less than 160 mg/dL
    - If you're at intermediate risk for heart disease: Less than 130 mg/dL
    - If you're at high risk for heart disease (including those with existing heart disease or diabetes): Less than 100mg/dL
  - HDL (good) cholesterol: 40 mg/dL or higher for men and 50 mg/dL or higher for women
  - Triglycerides: Less than 150 mg/dL
- **High blood pressure.** High blood pressure increases the heart's workload and increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart failure. When high blood pressure exists with obesity, smoking, high blood cholesterol levels or diabetes, the risk of heart attack or stroke increases by several times.

You can lower your risk for heart disease.

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- **Physical inactivity.** Regular moderate-to-vigorous physical activity helps prevent heart and blood vessel disease. The more vigorous the activity, the greater your benefits. Physical activity can help control blood cholesterol, diabetes and obesity, as well as help lower blood pressure in some people.
- **Obesity and overweight.** People who have excess body fat are more likely to develop heart disease and stroke even if they have no other risk factors. Excess weight increases the heart's work and can make diabetes more likely to develop. Losing as few as 10 pounds, you can lower your heart disease risk.
- **Diabetes mellitus.** Diabetes increases your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. At least 65 percent of people with diabetes die of some from of heart or blood vessel disease.

The most common symptom of a heart attack is **chest pain or discomfort**. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly **shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain**. If you have a history of heart disease or have one or more risk factors mentioned above, be sure to consult your physician. If you are experiencing these symptoms or chest pain, call 911 for immediate attention.

My Life Check

No matter where you stand, it's never too late to make better health choices. All you need is a goal, a plan and the desire to live better. That's why the American Heart Association created My Life Check and the Simple Seven. This simple tool was designed with the goal of improving health by educating the public on how best to live.

To find out where you stand with the Simple Seven goals, take the My Life Check assessment. In a few minutes, you will get results to show you where you stand on the seven recommended areas of focus and a personalized action plan to start making healthy, positive changes for a long, healthy future.

Visit www.mylifecheck.heart.org to find out your heart health score.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month.

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Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. These messages and materials have reached millions of people in communities across the country.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits help children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

The ADA has free online resources that can help parents teach their kids fun oral health activities. Visit www.ada.org for more information.

Applications due Feb. 28

Feb. 28 is the deadline to submit your Wellness Program Discount Application (SFN 58436) and Wellness Benefit Funding Program Application (SFN 58361) for the upcoming plan year. Don't delay and submit your application today!

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Simple healthy cooking tips for Super Bowl XLV

Many of you may have heard of the American Heart Association's "Simple Cooking with Heart" program. This nationwide program offers healthy food choices to help people maintain a healthy weight. As a part of the program, the American Heart Association provides heart healthy party food tips for Super Bowl parties on Feb. 3:

- Have plenty of fresh cut vegetables and fruits around the buffet table, served on platters or place long veggies like carrots, celery and red pepper strips upright in tall glasses for visual interest (also saves table space).
- Choose assorted unsalted nuts, fiber-rich crackers and hummus or low-fat dressing for quick snacks or appetizers.
- Use low-fat or fat-free sour cream and cheeses in your recipes.
- Use brown rice and whole grains in recipes instead of white rice and refined flours.
- Toast slices of whole wheat baguette and top with roasted vegetables for quick and easy bruschetta.
- Add low-fat crumbled cheeses, dried fruit and nuts to your mixed green salads and use a bottled fat-free dressing for a "super" gourmet salad.
- Make vegetable main courses or use lean meats for your sandwiches and entrees.
- Bake or roast, sauté or steam, but don't fry foods. Use canola or olive oil when sautéing.
- Buy store bought angel food cake and add cut up fresh fruit for a heart healthy dessert.

For more tips, recipes and cooking videos visit: www.heart.org/simplecooking.

Make healthy snacks for the Super Bowl.

Try this healthy recipe from the American Heart Association

This recipe will be a big hit at your Super Bowl gathering.

Spinach Dip

Serves 12 (with 2 tablespoons per serving)

- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach
- 5 medium green onions (green and white parts), coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup watercress, stems removed, or arugula
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, stems removed
- 8 ounces fat-free or light plain yogurt
- 1 medium avocado, chopped
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt-free garlic seasoning
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon red hot pepper sauce, or to taste

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Prepare the spinach using the package directions, omitting the salt and margarine. Drain well and squeeze dry.

In a food processor or blender process the spinach, green onions, watercress and parsley until just blended; the mixture should be coarse. Transfer to a colander to drain.

Put the remaining ingredients in the food processor or blender. Process until smooth.

Transfer to a medium bowl. Stir the spinach mixture into the yogurt mixture.

Cover and refrigerate for at least one hour.

Cook's tip: For chunkier avocado in this dip, mash it with a fork instead of processing it.

Stir the avocado into the yogurt mixture when you add the spinach.

Nutrients per serving: Calories 48; total fat 2.5 g; saturated fat 0.5 g; Polyunsaturated fat 0.5 g; monounsaturated fat 1.5 g; cholesterol 0 mg; sodium 62 mg; carbohydrates 5 g; fiber 2 g; sugars 2 g; protein 2 g.

This recipe is reprinted from "The New American Heart Association Cookbook," Seventh Edition.

Gearing Up for Worksite Wellness Training

Registration date	Location	Due date
Feb. 25-26	Grand Forks, Choice Health & Fitness	Feb. 15
April 22-23	Minot, TBA	April 12
TBD, Spring	Bismarck, Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce	TBD

Remember, NDPERS Wellness Coordinators qualify for the discounted rate of $99. If you are interested, email stacy.duncan@bcbsnd.com for an NDPERS-specific registration form if you do not have one already.

Looking for other Worksite Wellness ideas? Join the North Dakota Worksite Wellness Blog: https://www.ndworksitewellness.org/blog.

Monthly Wellness Consultant Call/Webinar Schedule

Mark your calendar for these WC calls and webinars:

- Wednesday, Feb. 6 at noon CST
- Wednesday, March 6 at 11a.m. CST
- Wednesday, April 10 at 1pm CST

To join the monthly call/webinar: Go to http://www.webmeeting.att.com
Meeting number: 866-680-0148 Code: 704446
For audio: Dial 1-866-680-0148 Code: 704446

Friendly reminder: Please mute your phones during 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.

GEARING UP FOR WORKSITE WELLNESS

Don't miss it!

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Coming up in March

- National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
- National Nutrition Month
- International Woman's Day – March 8
- Kick Butts (Tobacco) Day – March 21
- American Diabetes Alert Day – March 26

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
Tara 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, My Health Center 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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