NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

NDPERS Wellness
building healthy members

Coordinator Newsletter

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September 2013

September is Fruits and Veggies More Matters Month!

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Eating fruits and vegetables may help reduce your risk of many diseases. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating more fruits and vegetables than any other food group.

All forms of fruits and vegetables count toward your daily recommendation – fresh, frozen, canned, dried and 100 percent juice.

The American Heart Association offers these tips to boost fruits and vegetables in your diet:

- **Keep it colorful.** Try fruits and vegetables with different colors. Consume a rainbow of fruits and vegetables during the week.
- **Add it on.** Add fruit and vegetables to foods you enjoy. Try adding frozen peas to mac'n'cheese, veggies on top of pizza and slices of fruit to breakfast cereals or low-fat ice cream.
- **Mix them up.** Add fruits and vegetables to pre-cooked or baked food. Mix vegetables with pasta sauces, lasagnas, casseroles, soups and omelets.
- **Roast away.** Try roasting cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, onions, carrots, tomatoes or eggplant. Long exposure to heat will cause the vegetables to caramelize, which enhances their natural flavoring.
- **Use healthier cooking methods.** Steam, grill, sauté, roast, bake and microwave are ideal preparation methods for vegetables. Use only oil low in saturated fats. Do not use trans fats!

Freeze garden vegetables for winter use

If you have a vegetable garden, consider freezing some of those vegetables for winter use.

According to the North Dakota State (NDSU) University Extension Office, to assure good-quality frozen vegetables, be sure to use a pretreatment called blanching. When you blanch your vegetables, the boiling water or steam inactivates naturally occurring undesirable changes in the plant.

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Steps for freezing vegetables

Follow these steps from the NDSU University Extension Office to ensure success.

1. Fill a large kettle with water and bring it to a rolling boil. Use one gallon of water for a pound of vegetables.
2. Clean and cut vegetables as needed. Place them in a wire basket or perforated blancher insert and immerse in boiling water. Keep the burner on "high."
3. Start timing as soon as the water returns to a boil, which should be less than one minute or you are adding too much vegetables. As shown, the time required for blanching varies among vegetables. Keep the kettle covered during blanching.
4. Remove the vegetables and immediately put them in ice cold water. Chill the vegetables until they are completely cold, about the same amount of time as blanching.
5. Drain well and package in labeled freezer containers or freezer bags in meal-sized amounts.

Vegetable	Preparation	Blanching Time
Beans (snap or wax)	Wash and remove ends. Leave whole or cut into 1- to 1 1/2-inch lengths.	3 minutes
Corn on the cob	Husk, then rinse and sort ears according to size.	• 7 minutes (small ears, less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter) • 9 minutes (medium; 1 1/4 to 1/12 inches in diameter • 11 minutes (large; more than 1 1/2 inches in diameter)
Peas (schelled)	Shell a batch at a time. Delay between shelling and freezing toughens skins. Blanch, cool and drain.	1 1/2 minutes
Peppers	Wash, cut off stems, remove seeds; dice or slice.	No heat treatment needed

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.

Healthy Activities Spotlight

September is National Cholesterol Education Month. This is a perfect time to have your blood cholesterol checked and learn about lipid profiles.

High blood cholesterol affects more than 65 million Americans. This serious condition increases risk for heart disease: the higher cholesterol level, the greater the risk. By adjusting food and lifestyle choices, you can help lower your cholesterol.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute offers helpful resources during National Cholesterol Education Month on their website at www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

If you know an employee who is demonstrating a healthy lifestyle, we encourage you to nominate him or her as a "Wellness Star of the Month."

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Healthy Recipes

Oatmeal Pecan Waffles (or Pancakes)

Try this healthful recipe from the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute's Deliciously Healthy Family Meal.

Oatmeal Pecan Waffles are great for breakfast or any time of the day.

Ingredients

1 cup whole-wheat flour
½ cup quick-cooking oats
2 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ cup unsalted pecans, chopped
2 large eggs, separated (for pancakes, see note)
1½ cups fat-free (skim) milk
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

For fruit topping

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, rinsed, stems removed, and cut in half (or substitute frozen strawberries, thawed)
- 1 cup fresh blackberries, rinsed (or substitute frozen blackberries, thawed)
- 1 cup fresh blueberries, rinsed (or substitute frozen blueberries, thawed)
- 1 teaspoon powdered sugar

Prep time	Cook time	Yields	Serving Size
10 minutes	30 minutes	4 servings	3 small (2-inch) or 1 large (6-inch) waffle (depending on waffle iron size) or pancakes

NDPERS Wellness Coordinator Training

There's still time to sign up for the Healthy North Dakota Worksite Wellness Summit on Oct. 8 at the Holiday Inn of Fargo. NDPERS Wellness Coordinators qualify for the "student" discount rate and are strongly encouraged to attend.

You can learn how to start or enhance your worksite wellness program. The summit will feature nationally recognized keynote speakers and breakout sessions with local experts. You can also hear how Cass County Electric Cooperative is promoting wellness to its employees and take part in the vendor fair.

"It is encouraging to see interest in worksite wellness programs and this event continues to grow in North Dakota. We invite anyone wishing to learn about how to start a program or improve their current efforts to attend," said Healthy North Dakota Worksite Wellness Director Pete Seljevold. "Our excellent panel of speakers and breakout sessions will talk about real issues worksites are facing and possible solutions."

To register, visit: www.ndworksitewellness.org.

Looking for other worksite wellness ideas? Join the Dakota Worksite Wellness blog at www.ndworksitewellness.org/blog.

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Monthly Wellness Consultant call/webinar schedule

Mark your calendar for these WC calls and webinars:

- Wednesday, Sept. 11 at 11 a.m. CST
- Wednesday, Oct. 9 at 1 p.m. CST
- Wednesday, Nov. 12 at noon CST

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.

Prepare for flu season

Autumn is almost upon us, which means flu season is almost here. Now is the time to start thinking about getting the flu vaccine. Even healthy people can get sick with flu and spread the virus to their loved ones. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent influenza — the more people vaccinated, the less the flu virus will circulate in the community.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the 2012-2013 flu season was moderately severe with more outpatient illness, higher rates of hospitalization and more influenza-related deaths when compared to past flu seasons . The last flu season was particularly severe for people 65 and older. The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older receive the flu vaccine. Children ages six months to eight years may need two doses of flu vaccine at least one month apart. Additionally, those at higher risk of complications should be vaccinated. Groups that are at high risk of developing flu-related complications include:

- Children younger than 5.
- Adults older than 65.
- Individuals who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, renal, hepatic, neurologic, hematologic or metabolic disorders.
- Individuals who are immunosuppressed.
- Women who are or will be pregnant during the influenza season.
- Children receiving long-term aspirin therapy.
- American Indians/Alaskan Natives.
- Individuals who are morbidly obese (body-mass index is 40 or greater).

Contacts to people at high risk for complications due to influenza should also be vaccinated to protect their loved ones.

The flu vaccine will become available in early fall. NDPERS Group Health Insurance Plan covers the cost of the flu vaccine and the administration fee — just bring your insurance card with you to your doctor's office, pharmacy or local public health unit.

For more information about influenza and vaccination, please visit www.ndflu.com.

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Coming up in October

Consider promoting these events next month!

- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- National Bullying Prevention Month
- National Down Syndrome Awareness Month
- Mental Illness Awareness Week: Oct. 7-13
- Drive Safely Work Week: Oct. 7-13
- Walk to School Day: Oct. 9
- National Health Education Week: Oct. 14-18
- National Mammography Day: Oct. 18

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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