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Better Blood Pressure Through Lifestyle Changes

The third quarter of 2012 Benefit Options Wellness is focused on Hypertension. As part of your wellness benefits, ADOA Wellness offers mini health screenings to help in monitoring your blood pressure in addition to a hypertension health management course. Visit the wellness website at www.benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness to find classes and screenings near you.

Lifestyle Changes

Lifestyle is the way you live your life. It is what you eat and drink, what activities you participate in, whether or not you smoke, and how you handle stress.

Sometimes, healthy lifestyle changes alone can bring high blood pressure down to normal. If your blood pressure is not dangerously high, it is worth trying lifestyle changes before moving on to other treatment options, such as medications. If your lifestyle changes work, you need to continue them. You also need to have your blood pressure measured regularly, to be sure that it remains normal.

Lifestyle changes can help many people maintain a healthy blood pressure. These changes are especially important for people at special risk for getting high blood pressure. Lifestyle changes are also helpful for people whose blood pressure is made worse by heart disease, stroke, high cholesterol, and diabetes. There are various steps you can take to help prevent high blood pressure or to help treat it without resorting to medications. Talk to your doctor about what is right for you.

Diet

In recent years, a special diet called Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) has been shown to be very effective in lowering blood pressure. The DASH diet is tasty and easy to prepare. It emphasizes a lot of fruits and vegetables, which are rich in fiber, potassium, magnesium and calcium, all of which seem to protect against increased blood pressure. The DASH diet is low in salty foods, which tend to raise blood pressure. Some people seem to be more sensitive to salt and benefit from cutting down on salty foods. Recent studies indicate that salt reduction may be especially beneficial for people over age 60 and for African-Americans.

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Workplace Health - How to Prevent Back Injuries on the Job

Four out of five adults will experience significant low back pain in their lifetime. In many cases, this back pain is caused by injuries, and often these injuries are workplace-related. Back injuries account for nearly 20% of all injuries and illnesses that occur in the workplace. They are common in a variety of fields, from construction work to health care and child care. However, many of these injuries can be prevented.

Healthy Back Guidelines

Here are some of the most important steps you can take to avoid back injuries at work or at home.

- Use the correct techniques for bending, lifting and moving loads.
- Exercise your back and abdominal muscles regularly to provide stronger support for the back

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Mobile On-Site Mammography (MOM)

Mobile On-Site Mammography (MOM) travels to perform mammography screenings at worksites across Arizona. MOM will directly bill insurance. Benefit Options health plan members do not have to pay a copay at these events.



Call MOM at 480-967-3767 to schedule your appointment

Scheduled Screenings:

- May 8 -- AZ State Hospital, Phoenix
2500 E. VanBuren
7:30a-4:00a
- May 15 & 16 -- Women's Health Week, Phoenix
State Capitol
8:00a-5:00p
- May 23 -- Dept of Gaming, Phoenix
1110 W. Washington St.
7:00a-11:00a
- May 23 -- Dept of Insurance, Phoenix
2910 N. 44th St.
7:00a- 4:00p
- May 24 -- The Pioneer Home, Prescott
415 W. Gurley St.
8:00a- 1:00p
- May 23 -- DES, Prescott
1519 W. Gurley St.
2:30p- 5:30p
- May 30 -- ADOA, Phoenix
100 N. 15th Ave.
7:00a-5:00p

Check the wellness website at:
www.benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness
for additional dates to be added.

Mini Health Screenings

All State employees and Benefit Options members are eligible to participate in mini health screenings.

The basic screenings are **FREE** and optional screenings are priced as indicated:

- Height & weight; BMI; blood pressure; and percent of body fat (body composition).
- Cholesterol and blood sugar (fasting and non-fasting available)
- Facial skin analysis with Visiderm machine
- Free osteoporosis screen for women 40 and older. \$30 for women under age 40.
- \$5 PSA screen (blood draw) for men 40 and older. \$42 for men under age 40.

You will need your Employee Identification Number (EIN) and/or Insurance card for these events. No appointments necessary.

Schedule of Worksite Screenings:

- May 15 -- Women's Health Week, Phoenix
State Capitol-Executive Tower
10:00a - 2:00p
- May 16 -- Women's Health Week, Phoenix
State Capitol-Executive Tower
10:00a - 2:00p
- May 21 -- ADOT, Phoenix
2739 E. Washington St.
8:30a - 10:30a
- May 24 -- ADOT, Flagstaff
1801 S. Milton
8:00a - 11:00a

For questions about these screenings, please contact Benefit Options Wellness at wellness@azdoa.gov or 602-771-9355. If you would like to have a Mini Health Screening at your agency please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate you and your employees.

Lifestyle Changes, continued

Weight

The bigger you are, the harder your heart has to work to pump blood to all parts of your body. Reducing your weight may be all that is necessary to prevent or cure high blood pressure. Losing extra pounds improves your blood pressure even if you do not reach your ideal weight. This is especially true for people who carry extra bulk around the waist; those who are apple shaped rather than pear shaped. To determine if you are overweight for your height, it is important to learn your body mass index (BMI). BMI is a measure of body fat based on your height and weight.

Exercise

Even if you are not overweight, exercise can reduce high blood pressure. Aerobic exercise, such as jogging, biking or brisk walking has been shown to be effective in preventing or reducing high blood pressure, if you do it three to five times a week for at least thirty minutes. It is not entirely clear how this happens, but one theory is that exercise widens the millions of small arteries in your body, and that this increases smooth blood flow. Exercise also conditions the heart to pump more efficiently, reducing its workload.

Alcohol

Having more than two alcoholic drinks (one ounce of alcohol) a day significantly raises your risk of having high blood pressure. Reducing your alcohol intake can sometimes diminish your need for high blood pressure medications. However, there is some evidence that having one to two alcoholic drinks a day for men, and one drink a day for women, is good for the heart, including people with high blood pressure. So, how much is "one drink"?

- 12 ounces of regular or light beer
- 4 to 5 ounces of table wine
- 3 ounces fortified wine (sherry, port, Madeira)
- 1-1/2 ounces 80-proof liquor (bourbon, gin, rum, scotch, tequila, vodka, whiskey)
- 1 ounce 100-proof liquor

Smoking

If you have high blood pressure, smoking increases your risk of having a heart attack. The nicotine present in tobacco products cause decreased oxygen to the heart, increased heart rate, increased blood clotting, and damage to the cells that line coronary arteries and other blood vessels.

Stress

Stress reduction can sometimes lead to a modest reduction in blood pressure. During stressful situations, your body produces a surge of hormones. These hormones temporarily increase your blood pressure by causing your heart to beat faster and blood vessels to narrow. Learning to manage stress reduces these effects.

For more information on high blood pressure, lifestyle changes, stress management, or smoking cessation visit:

www.mayoclinic.com, www.intelihealth.com, www.webmd.com

Stress Reduction Techniques

Relaxation techniques are commonly used to reduce stress. Most are easy to learn. To get good at them, you have to practice.

Relaxation Response: Every day, plan to spend some time at rest (not asleep). Sit somewhere comfortable, close your eyes and relax your muscles. Focus on breathing regularly. Continually repeat one word. Repeat it aloud or in your mind. It should be a simple word, such as "relax" or "easy," a religious word or phrase, or a meaningless word like the "om" used in transcendental meditation. Continue regular breathing with your muscles relaxed.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation: This technique allows you to relax your entire body. Start at your head. Tense your facial muscles by clenching your teeth and furrowing your brow. Hold the tension for five to ten seconds, then release it. Next, tense your shoulder muscles by shrugging them and tucking in your chin. Hold the tension for five to ten seconds, then release. Next, tense your arm muscles by making fists. Hold the tension for five to ten seconds, then release. Continue to tighten and release each group of muscles in your body until you have worked all the way down to your toes. Picture the tension evaporating as you release each muscle. Focus on the warmth and heaviness of the body parts as they relax.

For more information on relaxation and stress management techniques visit: www.intelihealth.com

Volunteer In The Parks



Have you ever dreamed of leading bird talks and discovering what brings people to Arizona? Arizona State Parks has many different ways for you to donate your time and talents and welcomes volunteers for one-time projects as well as long-term assignments.

If you live near a park, you may choose to be a local **Parks Volunteer** on a regular basis. Recruitment of community members occurs throughout the year, with volunteer open houses and trainings occurring during busy seasons.

If you are interested in archeology, become a **Site Steward** volunteer. Site Stewards help to protect and preserve the cultural resources and the heritage of Arizona. Their primary role is to monitor archaeological, historical, and paleontological sites and report any looting or vandalism to the land manager.

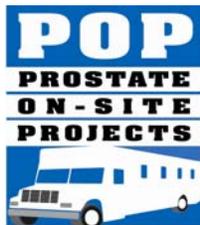
If you have an RV and would like to volunteer as a campground host or interpretive guide, please log on to azstateparks.com/volunteer and check the Projected On-Site Openings grid. Positions are available year round.

Visit azstateparks.com/volunteer for a list of site-specific opportunities. For more information call 602-542-7152.

Prostate On Site Projects (POP) Screenings

**Take a Stand Against Cancer...
It could be the most important 15 minutes you spend**

The State of Arizona is now offering FREE Prostate Cancer Screenings for benefits eligible, male employees 40 years and older. The POP mobile medical unit takes convenient, 15 minute appointments at your workplace. Maintain your health, schedule your appointment NOW!



**Appointments required.
Call Today 480-964-3013**

What you Need:

- **UnitedHealthcare** and **BCBSAZ/AmeriBen** members please bring your Benefit Options insurance cards to your appointment.
- **Aetna** and **CIGNA** members and **non-Benefit Options members** please bring your State ID badge and Employee Identification Number (EIN) to your appointment
- **Retired Benefit Options members** please bring your Benefit Options card and your Employee Identification Number (EIN)

Scheduled Screenings:

May 4 -- Mesa Community College, Mesa*
1833 W. Southern Ave.
10:00am-2:00pm

May 8 -- Phoenix College, Phoenix*
1202 W. Thomas Rd.
10:00am-2:00pm

***Non-state sites, but state employees are welcome to attend.**

Back Injuries, Continued

- Wear comfortable, low heeled, nonslip shoes.
- Do not smoke. Research shows that smoking reduces blood flow to the spine.
- Maintain proper posture to put the least strain on your back.
- If you are able, sleep on your side, on a firm mattress.
- Make sure that the work surface is at a comfortable height and that your chair offers good back support; sit as far back in the chair as you can to keep your lower back supported. If you work at a computer, adjust your equipment so you can sit properly.
- Follow proper techniques for doing your specific job. Employers and the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration have developed such guidelines for many occupations.

Safe Lifting

A large proportion of back injuries are related to lifting, and people whose jobs involve frequent bending or lifting face the greatest risk of back injuries.

These guidelines can help you to bend and lift safely:

- Plan your lift. Test the weight of what you are preparing to lift by pushing it with your hands or feet. Make sure you have enough room to lift safely.
- If the load is awkwardly shaped or too heavy, do not try to lift it alone. Get help, use a dolly, or split it into smaller loads.
- Take your time. Do not hurry or use jerky movements.
- Position yourself close to the load you plan to lift. Reaching increases the strain on your back. Keep the load close to your body as you lift.
- Plant your feet shoulder-width apart to provide a firm base of support.
- Bend at the knees, not at the waist.
- Tighten your stomach muscles, keep your back straight and your chin up, and lift with your leg muscles as you stand up.
- Avoid twisting as you lift. If you must turn, start with your feet and then pivot your body in the same direction.
- When placing a load on a high shelf, move close to the shelf. Spread your feet apart, with one in front of the other. Keep your elbows in and do not fully extend your arms as you place the object on the shelf. Remember to tighten your stomach muscles. Do not arch your back.
- Do not rely on a back belt. Studies have not shown that they help to prevent injuries.
- Use an assistive device such as a specially designed belt or board to help move a person.
- Take breaks. At least once an hour, stand and stretch. Place your hands on your lower back and slowly arch backward.

For additional information on back pain visit:

www.intelihealth.com, www.webmd.com, www.mayoclinic.com

Healthy Recipe Black Bean Salad



Ingredients (serves 6):

- 1/2 (15 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
- 1/2 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 avocado - peeled, pitted, and diced
- 1/2 (4 ounce) jar pimentos
- 1-1/2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 lime, juiced
- 1/4 cup Italian salad dressing
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the black beans, corn, green onions, jalapeno peppers, bell pepper, avocado, pimentos, tomatoes, cilantro, lime juice, and Italian dressing. Season with garlic salt.
2. Toss and chill until serving.
3. Add to a bed of lettuce for a summer salad or as a side to grilled chicken or steak.

For more healthy recipes visit www.allrecipes.com

Nutrition Information

Servings per Recipe: 6

Calories:	160
Protein:	5g
Carbohydrates	24g
Total Fat	6.3g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	562mg
Fiber	5.7g

Women's Health Week 2012 - May 15th -17th

In an effort to empower women to make their health a top priority, State employees are welcome to attend the FREE activities at the State Capitol Executive Tower, 1700 W. Washington, for National Women's Health Week.

Tuesday, May 15th

Health Expo: 10a-2p

25+ vendors providing health information and FREE screenings. Screenings include cholesterol and glucose testing, facial skin analysis, and osteoporosis screening.

MOM Mobile: 7a-5p

Sign up for a mammogram by calling 480-967-3767

Presentation: 12p-1p

Get Your PLAY On! How Physical Activity Benefits You
(Location: 1700 W. Washington, 5th Floor Conference Room)

Wednesday, May 16th

Health Expo: 10a-2p

25+ vendors providing health information and FREE screenings. Screenings include cholesterol and glucose testing, facial skin analysis, and osteoporosis screening.

MOM Mobile: 8a-5p

Sign up for a mammogram by calling 480-967-3767

Presentation: 12p-1p

The Dragon Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Stress Management
(Location: 100 N. 15th Ave #103, ADOA-BSD Training Room)

For more information visit: www.benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness



The Wellness website has the complete list of screenings, classes and other programs available for request and scheduling at State worksites.

Wellness events are requested and coordinated by State employees at worksites. If you are interested in hosting a program at your worksite, visit the Wellness website at:

www.benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness

to view what is available and learn what Wellness has to offer.

Event request forms must be completed and submitted online to wellness@azdoa.gov

Complete the brief form, including contact information, location and preferred event and click submit! A Wellness team member will reply to your request and begin scheduling your event.

Log on Today!

Take advantage of the many available programs and services to keep employees healthy.

Persons with a disability may request accommodations by contacting the ADOA Benefits Office. If you need this issue in an alternate format, please call 602-771-9355.