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Stress Management

The second quarter of 2012 Benefit Options Wellness is focused on Stress and Pain. As part of your benefits, ADOA offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through ComPsych Guidance Resources, which provides free assistance to employees and their dependents on personal issues, planning for life events or simply managing daily life. For more information on the services ComPsych and the other contracted EAP providers available to state employees go to: www.benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness and click EAP.

Understanding the natural stress response

Your body's stress reaction was meant to protect you. But when it is constantly on alert, your health can pay the price. Take steps to control your stress. Your body is built to react to stress in ways meant to protect you against threats from predators and other aggressors. Such threats are rare today, but that does not mean that life is free of stress.

On the contrary, you undoubtedly face multiple demands each day, such as shouldering a huge workload, financial concerns, taking care of your family, or just making it through the morning rush hour. Your body treats these so-called minor hassles as threats. As a result you may feel as if you are constantly under assault. But you can fight back. You do not have to let stress control your life. If your mind and body are constantly on edge because of excessive stress in your life, you may face serious health problems. That is because your body's "fight-or-flight reaction," its natural alarm system, is constantly on. When you encounter various threats that "startle" you, a large dog barks at you during your morning walk, for instance, your brain sets off an alarm system in your body. This alarm system causes a release of hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol.

Adrenaline increases your heart rate, elevates your blood pressure and boosts energy supplies. Cortisol, the primary stress hormone, increases sugars (glucose) in the bloodstream, enhances your brain's use of glucose and increases the availability of substances that repair tissues. Cortisol also curbs functions that would be nonessential or detrimental in a fight-or-flight situation. It alters immune system responses and suppresses the digestive system, the reproductive system and growth processes. This complex, natural alarm system also communicates with regions of your brain that control mood, motivation and fear.

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Managing the Pain of Osteoarthritis Day by Day

Exercise Can Reduce Joint Pain: Exercise can help reduce stiffness and pain, and it can also help you lose weight, which takes pressure off of aching joints. Losing as few as 11 pounds can cut the risk of developing knee osteoarthritis by 50% for some women. Always ask your doctor before doing an exercise for pain management. Depending on the cause and intensity of your pain, some exercises may not be recommended and can be harmful.

Warming Up is Critical: Warming up with gentle stretching can help get your body ready for your workout.

Gentle stretches such as side bends, shoulder shrugs, arm circles, overhead stretches, and bending to reach (but not touch) your toes are all good warm-up exercises. Do three to five repetitions of each stretch.

Joint Friendly Aerobic Exercises: If you have osteoarthritis in your knees or hips, you want to avoid any jolting exercise like jogging that causes your feet to pound the ground. Lower-impact aerobic activities such as walking, swimming, bicycling, and water aerobics are easier on your joints. Aim for 30 minutes of low-impact activity most days of the week or work up to that if you need to start slow.

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Mobile On-Site Mammography (MOM)

“Early detection is the best defense we have at this time for catching breast cancer in its earliest stages,” says Catherine Midgette, Executive Vice President of MOM. “If we find the cancer in its earliest stages, the patient has a 97 percent survival rate.” 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:

Mar 1 -- ADE, Phoenix
1535 W. Jefferson
7:00a-11:00a

Mar 1 -- ADE, Phoenix
2005 N. Central
12:30p-4:30p

Mar 27 -- ADOT, Tucson
1221 S. 2nd Ave.
7:30a-5:00p

Mar 27 -- State of Az, Tucson
400 W. Congress
7:30a-4:30p

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:

Mar 1 -- Water Resources, Phoenix
3550 N. Central Ave.
8:00am - 10:00am

Apr 3 -- Game and Fish, Phoenix
5000 Carefree Hwy
8:00am - 10:00am

More dates to be added

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.

Quote of the Month

“A man’s health can be judged by which he takes two at a time - pills or stairs.”

- Joan Welsh

Stress Management, cont'd.

When the natural stress response goes haywire

The body's stress-response system is usually self-regulating. It decreases hormone levels and enables your body to return to normal once a perceived threat has passed. As adrenaline and cortisol levels drop, your heart rate and blood pressure return to baseline levels, and other systems resume their regular activities. But when the stressors of your life are always present, leaving you constantly feeling stressed, tense, nervous or on edge, that fight-or-flight reaction stays turned on. The less control you have over potentially stress-inducing events and the more uncertainty they create, the more likely you are to feel stressed. Even the typical day-to-day demands of living can contribute to your body's stress response. The long-term activation of the stress-response system — and the subsequent overexposure to cortisol and other stress hormones — can disrupt almost all your body's processes. This puts you at increased risk of numerous health problems, including: heart disease, sleep problems, digestive problems, depression, obesity, memory impairment, and worsening of skin conditions.

Why you react to life stressors the way you do

Genetics: The genes that control the stress response keep most people on a fairly even keel, only occasionally priming the body for fight or flight. Overactive or underactive stress responses may stem from slight differences in these genes.

Life Experiences: You may have some friends who seem laid-back about almost everything and others who react strongly at the slightest stress, most reactions to life stressors fall somewhere between those extremes.

Learning to react to life stressors in a healthy way

Stressful events are a fact of life. And you may not be able to change your current situation. But you can take steps to manage the impact these events have on you. You can learn to identify what stresses you out, how to take control of some stress-inducing circumstances, and how to take care of yourself physically and emotionally in the face of stressful situations.

Stress management strategies include:

- Eating healthy, getting regular exercise, and plenty of sleep
- Practicing relaxation techniques
- Fostering healthy friendships
- Having a sense of humor
- Seeking professional counseling when needed

The payoff of managing stress is peace of mind and — perhaps — a longer, healthier life.

Source: www.mayoclinic.com, www.guidanceresources.com

Well Woman HealthCheck Program- Breast Cancer License Plate

Your License Plate Can Help Save a Life!

Help provide vital breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to uninsured women throughout Arizona by purchasing a specialty Pink Ribbon/Cancer Awareness License Plate.



This distinctive plate is a visible sign of solidarity and support in the fight to end breast cancer and serves as a reminder of the importance of early detection.

There is a \$25 initial application fee and a \$25 annual renewal fee for the plate. \$17 (68%) of this fee goes to a special fund administered by the Arizona Department of Health Services' Well Woman HealthCheck Program. The Well Woman HealthCheck Program provides free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostics for uninsured women in Arizona.

The plate can be ordered online or in person through the Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles. It may be personalized with a maximum of six characters and is available with a disability symbol.

Source: www.azdhs.gov/wellwoman/savealife

Mountain Bike Basics- Dead Horse Ranch State Park



AZStateParks.com

Saturdays, March 24, 31, April 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5. Park Ranger, Randy Victory, of Dead Horse Ranch State Park in Cottonwood will offer guided mountain bike rides from 12pm until 4pm, or until everyone finishes. The cost is \$5.00 per rider. Regular entrance fees to the park will apply. Annual passes will also be honored.

Mountain Bike Basics are beginner trail rides on the dirt, with a little instruction on the pavement. Victory, a certified cycling instructor, will touch on everything from basic riding techniques to trail etiquette. The minimum age for the rides is 15 years old. Helmets and a completed acknowledgement of risk form (parents must sign for riders under 18) are required. Participants should also bring water and make sure their bike is in good working order. Riding gloves and puncture protection such as Slime or Tuffy Liners are strongly recommended. The rides will start at the Raptor Trailhead at the top of Roadrunner Rd. Email rvictory@azstateparks.gov with questions.

Get out to the beautiful State Parks and get moving for Wellness!

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:

Mar 5 -- DHS, Phoenix
1740 W. Adams
8:00a-12:00p

Mar 12 -- DEQ, Phoenix
1110 W. Washington
8:00a-1:00p

Apr 2 -- ADOT, Hollbrook
2407 E. Navajo Blvd
7:00a-12:00p

Apr 24 -- DPS, Phoenix
2101 Encanto Blvd
7:00a-1:00p

Managing OA, Continued

Tai Chi and Yoga for OA: Tai chi, an ancient Chinese exercise incorporates slow, gentle movements. Yoga typically involves deep breathing, stretching, and poses that tone, strengthen and align the body. Both exercises are easy on the joints and can improve flexibility and muscle strength.



Lat Stretch: The latissimus dorsi is the broadest muscle in your back. Stand with your back straight and feet shoulder width apart. Hold your arms above your head, and hold one hand with the other. Pull upward while leaning straight over toward your right side. Keep your lower body straight, you should feel the pull along your left side. Hold for 15-30 seconds, then switch sides.



Weight Training: Strengthening exercises like weight training help you build the muscles that support your joints. This can be done using hand weights or even a 1-liter water bottle. Start with weights that you can lift 12-15 times without slouching or poor form. Talk to a physical therapist or trainer to help design the best strengthening program for you.

You are Never too Old for Video Games: The latest Wii games are designed to make getting fit fun. Here are eight great new Wii games for adults.

EA Sports Active— A virtual personal trainer takes you through a circuit-fitness routine of exercises and activities, including cardio dance, tennis, squats and lunges.

Rock Band— Sing and play music you actually recognize. It is not so much a workout, but it improves hand-eye coordination.

Wii Sports Resort— The sequel to Wii Sports offers family-friendly games including Frisbee, Ping Pong, archery, canoeing, and wakeboarding.

Your Shape— A camera scans your body, assesses your shape, then puts your image on the screen, letting you select a personalized workout based on your body-type evaluation, your overall fitness and your goals.

Grand Slam Tennis— Play tennis greats in Wimbledon, the Australian, French and U.S. Opens. It is a tennis lovers dream.

Wii Fit Plus— The enhanced version of the original exercise program with 15 new balance games and 6 new yoga and strength poses.

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 10— This game is considered by many to be the best video golf game ever made.

Jillian Michaels' Fitness Ultimatum 2010— "The Biggest Loser" trainer works you out on an island through varied terrain.

Exercise and OA, Develop Your Plan: Mix up your exercise to keep your joints in tip-top shape and your workout routine fresh and fun. Do low-impact aerobic exercises such as walking. Add in gentle stretches with yoga or tai chi, plus range of motion exercises. Weight training can round out your routine. A well-rounded conditioning program can help improve your ability to move, stay limber, and increase muscle strength.

Source: www.arthritistoday.org, www.webmd.com

Healthy Recipe Tortilla Lasagna



Ingredients (serves 8):

- 6 8-inch fat free flour tortillas
- 1T olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2T chili powder
- 2t ancho chili powder
- 2t minced garlic
- 2C strained tomatoes, divided
- 1 15oz can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 medium zucchini, diced
- 1/2C frozen corn kernels
- 1 1/2 C shredded Monterey Jack or Pepper Jack cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Toast tortillas on 2 baking sheets for 5 minutes or until light brown, turning once.
2. Heat oil in saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, sauté until soft. Stir in chili powder, ancho chili powder, and garlic, cook 30 seconds. Add 1 1/2 C tomatoes, beans, chayote, corn and 1/2 C water. Cover and cook 10 minutes or until zucchini is tender.
3. Coat 2"x8" round baking dish with cooking spray. Spread 1/4C tomatoes in bottom of pan. Set 1 toasted tortilla in pan; top with 3/4C bean mix and 1/4C cheese. Layer 4 more times. Spread remaining tomatoes over top and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake 30-45 minutes or until casserole is bubbly and cheese has melted.

Nutrition Information

Servings per Recipe: 8

Calories:	226
Protein:	11
Carbohydrates	27g
Total Fat	9g
Cholesterol	19mg
Sodium	506mg
Fiber	10g
Sugars	4g

For more vegetarian friendly recipes visit
www.vegetariantimes.com

Getting to the Heart of Oral Health

Recent studies have shown possible links between gum disease and heart disease. Researchers have found that people with gum disease are roughly twice as likely to have coronary artery disease.

Gum disease, which affects the tissues that surround and support teeth, is an infection caused by a sticky film of bacteria called plaque that forms on the teeth, mainly along the gum line. In its early stages, called gingivitis, gum disease can be treated and often reversed.

It is unknown whether gum disease aids in the cause of heart disease but several theories exist to explain the possible connection. One is that bacteria from diseased gums enters the blood stream and once in the blood it may attach to fatty plaques in the heart's blood vessels. This may contribute to clot formation, potentially leading to heart attack. Another theory points to the inflammation associated with gum disease. One common risk factor for both gum and heart disease is smoking. Smoking is a major cause for heart disease, and it is estimated that over half of gum disease in the U.S. is related to smoking.

To keep your mouth and heart healthy follow these tips: brush your teeth at least twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, floss at least once a day, schedule regular dental check-ups, eat a healthy diet and do not use tobacco.

Source: www.azoralhealthexpert.com



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.