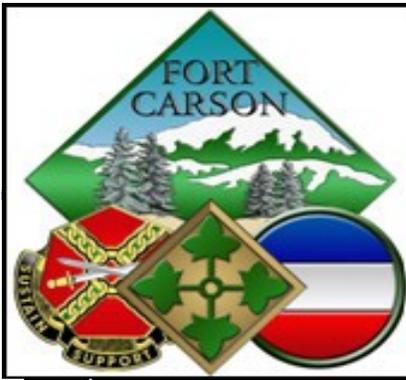


FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!



Employee Assistance Program, 1638 Elwell Street, BLDG 6236 Fort Carson, CO 80913 719-526-2196

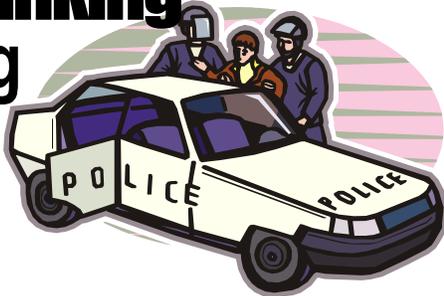
Cook and Eat Healthier at Home

It's easy to skip cooking at home when you face long work days, aggravating commutes, day-care drops, and errands. Unfortunately, you're likely to be consuming more calories from carbohydrates, sugar, frozen meals, and instant foods when you're on the go. To get healthier, gain less weight, and reduce the hassle of cooking at home, think pasta, casseroles, stews, curries, soups, risottos, stir-fries, and salads. With planning, you can easily stock up for two weeks with fresh, frozen, canned, and dried goods to cook fast and fresh meals. Research shows those who cook at home also eat less when they do eat out. Consider this book with the best reviews: "Cooking Light's Fresh Food Fast: Over 280 Incredibly Flavorful 5-Ingredient 15-Minute Recipes." Buy it gently used online for one cent (Amazon.com) plus shipping.



Holiday Drinking and Driving Don't Mix

Holiday drinking and driving don't mix. On average, a drunk driver will drive 80 times under the influence before his or her first arrest. One person in the U.S. is killed in a drunk-driving incident approximately every 35 minutes—about 40 people a day. Ninety percent of all drunk drivers had someone sober nearby who could have intervened to help prevent their getting behind the wheel. Fifty to seventy-five percent of people who have their license suspended due to drunken driving drive anyway.



Source: National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence

Don't Fool Around with Flu

Influenza can lead to hospitalization, even death. Each year, on average 35,000 people die from flu in the U.S. The majority are over 65. Being healthy as an ox won't make you resistant to it. So the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends getting vaccinated. Concerned about the vaccine's risk, safety, what's in it, and side effects? Learn more at www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/general.htm. Flu virus strains change, but did you know the most infective strain hit in 1918-19? It killed 40 million people rivaling the Black Death of Europe in the 14th century!



Cost of Incivility at Work

Incivility at work is tit-for-tat exchanges, slights, verbal jabs, condescension, and discourteous interactions many employees give and get. Different from bullying, which is a form of workplace aggression and mistreatment, incivility is lower key. It's more ambiguous, but it's still harmful. Many researchers have shown that employees spend hours after an uncivil act thinking about it, processing it with a friend, and planning how to avoid the next incident. All this eats into productivity and has an economic cost. Incivility can be a factor in burnout, too, prompting workers to do less and call in sick more and continuing a cycle of morale problems.



Holiday Tips for Diabetics

When January rolls around, will you be satisfied and proud that you did not let your diet get out of control? Here are a few time-tested tips from the American Association of Diabetes Educators to help you manage seasonal stress and the holiday food parade. (1) Decide that you will enjoy the fun but still be healthy this season. Spend a few quiet moments planning out this goal. (2) Make a written contract with yourself—literally, in writing, and sign it to help you stay motivated. (3) Plan your plates to increase the veggies and reduce the starches, and choose the lean, nonfat meats on party trays that come your way. (4) Alcohol—it's everywhere. If your doctor says you can drink alcohol, remember it can interfere with some medications and insulin. Go with the light drinks—spriters. Avoid the mixed drinks. (5) Keep moving and stick with your exercise routine. After a meal, steer clear of the couch or lounger—take a walk instead. (6) Consider a volunteer activity during the season. It will keep you moving, and the payback is comradeship while helping others and inspiring positivity and gratitude. (7) Purposely plan time to unwind. Stress can wind you up like a clock spring. If you're traveling, plan your diabetic supplies (double up) to prevent problems with travel delays and disease management mishaps.

Source: <http://www.diabeteseducator.org> (search "holidays")



Avoid Ageism at Work

Ageism is stereotyping of and prejudice against older persons. It's a growing area of concern for the workplace because people are working longer into their senior years and their numbers are growing because of aging baby boomers. As with reducing racism and sexism, reducing prejudice is about understanding and being aware of your biases (we all possess a few) and then choosing to eliminate their influence on your interactions on the job. What are your beliefs about older people? What about old age? How about the aging process? These are all areas to examine in order to tease out your biases. Each plays its part in how you demonstrate tolerance and positively interact with older workers. Gain awareness of these attitudes and you empower yourself to eliminate ageist behaviors at work.



Use Effective Eye Contact in Public Speaking

Acceptance and believability are the foundation of success in public speaking, and they begin with eye contact. Begin making eye contact with members of your audience before you present and you will reduce anxiety dramatically, appear less mysterious, and build trust faster to have them engage with you more. Crowd behavior is contagious, so positive interactions resulting from this warm-up step can rub off on others. When speaking, don't speak to "the masses." Instead, continue making eye contact with individuals to enhance your authenticity. And here's a tip: When speaking, "smile with your eyes." This practice engages your whole face and makes it light up. You will appear more inviting from the podium and draw your audience emotionally toward you. The technique of smiling with your eyes is easier than "remembering to smile," which can create an off-putting forced grin. Test this notion this with a friend and you'll adopt it as a personal secret to a great presentation.



Helping Children Learn "Giving Back"

Will you be using the holiday season to help a child learn about charity or volunteerism? The goal, of course, is helping a child grow into an adult who values the importance of helping others who are less fortunate. Your community is sure to have many opportunities, but even a simple craft gift made by a child can brighten the day of someone in need. Tip: Try discussing with the youngster the positive feelings of doing something beneficial for others. This small exercise in self-awareness will reinforce the experience, help the child understand the concept of gratitude, and create feelings of positive self-esteem in a way that only sharing one's resources or personal efforts to help others can produce.





Holiday



Stress

Holidays are often a joyful time of year, but they can also be a time of competing demands and long to-do lists that lead to high stress levels and unhealthy coping. The best way to conquer holiday stress and ensure that your holidays are truly a joyful and positive time for all, is to plan for how you will manage your stress in a positive way. The following are seven practical tips for how best to manage holiday stress and stay relaxed during the upcoming season:

1 Be Realistic- Let go of trying to make everything perfect. Be flexible and open to changing things up. Traditions are great, but sometimes it is necessary to modify traditions to reduce conflict and keep stress levels low. Be realistic with expectations of yourself and others and in-stead of focusing on what could or should be focus on what is.

2 Stick to a budget- Before you start gift or food shopping decide how much money you can afford to spend and stick to your budget. If money is tight this year try making a homemade gift or donating to a charity in someone else's name. Sometimes handmade gifts are for more special than store bought ones.

3 Acknowledge Your Feelings- The holidays can be particularly difficult if you have recently experienced the loss of a loved one or cannot be with your family during the holidays. Feeling sad, disappointed, and lonely are normal emotions to feel. Give yourself permission to feel these emotions and if you need to talk try to reach out to someone nearby; such as a friend, a spiritual organization, or a counselor.

4 Plan ahead- Make a to do list and don't wait until the last minute to get everything done. If you need to, delegate tasks to family members. Think about what you can achieve ahead of time and set weekly goals to get tasks done.

5 Learn to say "No"- Saying yes to everything may lead you to feel overwhelmed and stressed to the max. Be realistic with how much you take on during the holidays, and learn to say no to family and friends when it gets to be too much.

6 Keep healthy habits and avoid unhealthy ones- No matter how busy you are during the holiday season don't put healthy habits on hold. Continue to eat healthy, limit caffeine and sugary foods, exercise regularly, and be sure to get plenty of sleep. Avoid unhealthy coping strategies such as alcohol, drugs, or fatty foods.

7 Practice relaxation time- Try to set aside time each day to do something relaxing and just unplug from the holiday stress. Try reading a good book, taking a hot bath, talking a walk or run, playing an instrument or listening to music. Identify which relaxation techniques work best for you and challenge yourself to practice them daily.

To learn more about this topic or to schedule an individual appointment, please contact the EAP Coordinator at 719-526-2196