

PTH NEWSLETTER

Issue 17 October - December 2010

Performance Through Health



Start Living - Stop Stressing

3 November 2010 will be the 12th National Stress Awareness Day. According to recent research by insurance company, AXA, stress levels have doubled in four years.

This year's theme, as organised by the International Stress Management Association (ISMA) will be 'Start Living – Stop Stressing'.

Below are the Top 10 key steps ISMA recommend to stress-free living:

START

1. **Start to put yourself first:** If you eat & drink healthily, schedule regular physical activity that you enjoy & manage your time effectively, you'll be in a better position to help others.
2. **Start to prioritise tasks:** There are only so many things we can do well during each day, so choose your top 3 most urgent tasks each morning and make them your priority. Reschedule, renegotiate your commitments or delegate – you can make it happen!
3. **Start to make time to relax & mentally unwind:** Relaxation, breathing & meditation exercises have been proven to be effective in reducing stress and anxiety, they are an ideal way to switch off AND they boost your immune system. Just a few minutes a day will pay huge dividends.
4. **Start to empathise with others:** There are many different behaviour styles that affect how we communicate with each other. Be aware that different people can perceive your words & actions in a way you didn't always intend. Take time to listen to others & look for solutions.
5. **Start to live life to the full:** Bring some fun into your life & spend a few minutes each day appreciating the good things you have in your life. This will help you to see opportunities for growth and learning, even from the most challenging situations.

STOP

6. **Stop ignoring your needs:** Know what is expected of you & what is reasonable. Take short breaks throughout the day & know when and how to say 'No' both at work & home.
7. **Stop getting distracted:** If you're experiencing too much pressure or just have a lot going on in your life, staying focused isn't easy. It may help to ask for support from colleagues or friends & prioritise urgent, important & non-urgent tasks.
8. **Stop allowing others to make you feel inferior:** The key to stress-free living is to accept yourself for exactly who you are today, including past mistakes and things you might not be so proud of. Work on your self-belief and confidence and then just go for it!
9. **Stop being judgmental:** Try to adopt a more flexible thinking style which will improve your mental well-being, whilst reducing unnecessary pressure for both you and those around you. Practice being objective and understanding.
10. **Stop avoiding the things you least want to do!** We often put off tasks that can become a recipe for worry. Take control & promise yourself a reward when you get it done.

To find out how to take part in this event, please visit: www.isma.org.uk
Source: ISMAUK

World Psoriasis Day

29 October 2010

Psoriasis is a skin condition which affects 2 to 3 % of the population of the United Kingdom. Psoriasis is not infectious so cannot be caught from other people. Psoriasis can affect anybody at any point during their life. It appears as red raised patches of skin covered in silvery scales. This condition is due to the acceleration of the skin cell replacement. Usually the cells take 21-28 days but with the areas affected by the psoriasis this is reduced to every 2.6 days resulting in an accumulation of skin cells on the skin.

These areas are known as plaques. Most people affected by psoriasis have psoriasis vulgaris. Vulgaris means common and this affects about 80% of sufferers. The plaques are generally found on the scalp, lower back, elbows or knees but can be on any part of the body.

Guttate psoriasis is more common in children and teenagers. The plaques are smaller than those of psoriasis vulgaris. They are often less than 1cm in diameter but can be many and affect many areas of the body. This form of psoriasis can be triggered by a throat infection.

Psoriasis can also be found in sensitive areas of the body such as the groin and under arm pits. Plaques in these areas are usually red and shiny with little or no scaling.

At one time psoriasis was thought to be a condition of the top layer of skin known as the epidermis but research has found that it is an auto immune disease. It is caused when some of the immune cells called T cells are triggered and become overactive. The T cells make chemicals as if they were healing a wound or fighting an infection which produces the rapid growth of the skin cells which then leads to the formation of the plaques.

Approximately 30% of people with psoriasis have a family history of the condition. There are genes now that have been identified as linked to psoriasis. Even if these are inherited it may not lead to the person having psoriasis as a trigger is required for the condition to occur. This could be physical or emotional stress, a throat infection, some drugs or an injury to the skin.

There are many treatments for psoriasis. Some are topical creams, lotions or ointments. Some people are prescribed tablets. Phototherapy is also a treatment using ultraviolet light. The newest treatment is injections which can block the actions of the T cells but this is only used in severe cases where other more traditional treatments have not been successful.

For more help or information about psoriasis you can contact the Psoriasis Association on 0845 676 0076 or visit their website at www.psoriasis-association.org.uk

PTH NEWSLETTER

Issue 17 October - December 2010

Performance Through Health



HEALTH AWARENESS DATES FOR THE DIARY

October		20	World Osteoporosis Day http://www.nos.org.uk/
1-31	Breast Cancer Awareness Month http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/	29	Wear It Pink http://www.wearitpink.co.uk/
1-31	Tuberous Sclerosis Month http://www.tuberous-sclerosis.org/uk	29	World Psoriasis Day http://www.worldpsoriasisday.com/
1 Oct – 31 December	Flu Awareness Campaign http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/index.htm	November	
1	Jeans for Genes Day http://www.jeansforgenes.com/	1-30	Lung Cancer Awareness Month http://www.roycastle.org/
10	World Mental Health Day http://www.wfmh.org/00WorldMentalHealthDay.htm	1-7	Psoriasis Awareness Week http://www.psoriasis-association.org.uk/
11-17	Encephalitis Awareness Week http://www.encephalitis.info	3	National Stress Awareness Day http://www.isma.org.uk/
11-17	Back Care Awareness Week http://www.backcare.org.uk/	14	World Diabetes Day http://www.worlddiabetesday.org/
12	World Arthritis Day http://www.worldarthritisday.org/	17	World COPD Day http://www.lunqk.org/
14	World Sight Day http://www.vision2020.org/main.cfm	22-28	Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Week http://www.pancreaticcancerawareness.org/
18-24	Alcohol Awareness Week 2010 http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk	25	White Ribbon Campaign UK http://www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/
		December	
		1	World AIDS Day http://www.worldaidsday.org/

Dark chocolate can be good for the heart!



According to a recent US study, older women who eat dark chocolate once or twice a week could be lowering their risk of heart failure.

It found those eating chocolate once or twice a week cut the risk of developing heart failure by a third, but those eating it every day did not benefit.

The Boston study, looked at nearly 32,000 Swedish women aged 48-83 over nine years. The study notes that one or two 19-30 gram servings of dark chocolate a week led to a 32% reduction in the risk of heart failure. This fell to 26% when eaten once to three times per month. Those who ate chocolate every day did not appear to reduce the risk of heart failure.

The researchers concluded that the protective effect of eating chocolate reduces as more or less is eaten than the optimum one – two servings a week.

Too much chocolate is unhealthy because it contains high levels of sugar and fat which can make people put on weight.

If you're going to have a treat then dark chocolate is probably a good choice IN MODERATION!

Source: BBC News. www.bbc.co.uk/news

PTH Group Limited Tel 01527 577242 Fax 01527 832618 Website www.pthgroup.co.uk

Disclaimer: The information contained within the PTH Newsletter contains information of a general nature and whilst PTH has taken every care that all information is accurate and up-to-date, PTH does not guarantee that this is the case. We do not therefore accept any liability, which may arise directly or indirectly from the use of the information in this Newsletter.