

PTH NEWSLETTER

Issue 16 July - September 2010

Performance Through Health



Dehydration

Water is extremely important for our bodies to work properly. It is essential for lubricating the joints and eyes, aiding digestion, keeping skin healthy and flushing out waste and toxins.

As your body works it produces waste products, some of which are toxic. The body gets rid of them through the kidneys in urine, which is mainly made up of water.

We also lose water when we breathe and sweat. As the temperature rises and we do more activity, this increases the amount of water the body loses.

You can also lose fluid through vomiting and diarrhoea or through urinating too frequently (if you have diabetes). Drinking too much alcohol can also cause dehydration. The headache associated with a hangover indicates that your body is dehydrated.

To stay healthy you need to replace the fluids lost.

Dehydration is generally caused by not drinking enough fluids, or by losing fluid and not replacing it.

If you think you may be dehydrated, monitor how often you pass urine and how concentrated it is. If you urinate fewer than three or four times a day, the quantity of urine is small and unusually dark in colour, then you are probably dehydrated.

Dehydration can be avoided by drinking plenty of fluids. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) recommends that if you live in the UK you should drink about six to eight glasses of fluid every day.

As well as water, the FSA recommend the following drinks:

- semi-skimmed milk
- diluted fruit juice
- diluted squash

If you are active or the weather is particularly hot, there is an increased risk of dehydration.

When exercising, you should drink up to one litre (two pints) of fluid per hour of exercise, in addition to your normal daily amount. This should be increased if you are exercising in warm conditions as you will sweat more and fluid will be lost from your body more rapidly.



Sources: www.eatwell.gov.uk, www.nhs.uk/conditions

Wellbeing at Work

The annual economic costs of sickness absence related to working age ill health is estimated to be over £100 billion.

In order to promote a healthier work population, NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence), has made recommendations on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health in the workplace. Focus has been, following Dame Carol Black's review of health (2008), and The Boorman report (Nov 2009), on workplace health promotion. This highlights 3 key areas:

1. Promoting physical activity in the workplace.
2. Promoting mental wellbeing at work.
3. Management of long term sickness absence and incapacity for work.

The aims are to help employers and OH professionals develop strategies to increase physical activity levels which could significantly improve people's health.

Promotion of mental wellbeing of employees which can yield economic benefits for the organisation, in terms of increased commitment, job satisfaction, staff retention, improved performance and reduced absenteeism.

Finally the encouragement of employers to establish and implement sickness absence policies along with health and safety practices in order to minimise long term sickness absence.

A key focus is early liaison with employees who are on long term sickness absence to facilitate a return to work. Strategies such as encouraging employees to walk or cycle to work, help employees to be physically active during the working day, encourage use of stairs rather than lifts, set organisational goals linking to other internal policies e.g. smoking, alcohol, flexible working and travel. Employers are encouraged to create an understanding of mental wellbeing and ensure a positive approach to mental health taking into account the nature of work and the workforce of the organisation.

With regard to long term sickness absence management, it is suggested in NICE guidelines that before 12 weeks of absence (**ideally between 2-6 weeks**) an initial enquiry should be made as to the nature of the sickness, if appropriate treatment has been sought and the time factors involved. Options for returning to work and action needed to be taken to prepare for this can also be discussed. Detailed assessments may be necessary at further stages. In all aspects of the NICE wellbeing at work guidance, OH can offer support to employers and employees to implement policies and practises as well as to be able to offer links to external resources if needed.

The NHS has made the health and wellbeing of its workforce a key priority with the rationale that a healthier NHS staff will improve patient care. Other strategies implemented have been the provision of occupational health advice lines for small businesses, National Education service for GPs and the implementation of fit notes and development of **Health work wellbeing** resource site with a workplace wellbeing tool.

The goal, with effective strategies, is to create new perspectives on health and work, improve work and workplaces and offer support to people at work.

Ref: www.workingforhealth.gov.uk, NICE public health guidance 13, 19,22, Working for a healthier tomorrow. Dame Carol Black Mar 2008. Boorman interim report Aug 2009.

PTH NEWSLETTER

Issue 16 July – September 2010



Performance Through Health

HEALTH AWARENESS DATES FOR THE DIARY

		Equality Act 2010
July 1-31	Sickle Cell Awareness Month http://www.sicklecellsociety.org/	<p>The Equality Bill has been designed to simplify and strengthen previous legislation. It is intended to provide a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.</p> <p>The bill will require organisations of all types and sizes to promote equality and avoid discrimination in the workplace.</p> <p>Employers should ensure that their equal opportunity and recruitment policies are compliant when the new legislation comes into force. The Government Equalities Office 'GEO' currently envisages that the provisions in the Act will come into force as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2010: Main provisions. • April 2011: The integrated public sector Equality Duty, the Socio-economic Duty and dual discrimination protection. • 2012: The ban on age discrimination in provision of goods, facilities, services and public functions. • 2013: Private and voluntary sector gender pay transparency regulations (if required) and political parties publishing diversity data. <p>Pre-employment screening is not going to be outlawed in the Equality Bill, but the employer must be able to justify the means of testing is proportionate and does not discriminate health reasons at the time of job offer. Task based pre-employment is valid per se, but must be after the job offer is made, providing the questions you ask are relevant. There are many instances of companies using health reasons to select out prospective employees and this will be outlawed.</p> <p>PTH can assist with policy writing, please call Liza Fellows on 01527 577242/email: liza.fellows@pthgroup.co.uk</p> <p>Sources: www.equalities.gov.uk, www.thisismoney.co.uk, www.bbc.co.uk/news</p>
4-10	Dementia Awareness Week http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/	
24	24/7 Samaritan Awareness Day http://www.samaritans.org/	
August 23 – 28	Gut Week http://www.loveyourgut.com/	
September 4-10	International Suicide Prevention Awareness Week http://www.iasp.info/wspd/2009_wspd_activities.php	
5-11	Migraine Awareness Week http://www.migraine.org.uk/	
6-12	Fybromyalgia Awareness Week http://www.fibromyalgia-associationuk.org/	
13-19	Know Your Numbers (National Blood Pressure testing week) http://www.bpassoc.org.uk/microsites/kyn/Home	
15	World Lymphoma Day http://www.lymphoma.org.uk/	
18-24	National Eczema Week http://www.eczema.org/	
18-25	Pituitary Awareness Week http://www.pituitary.org.uk/content/view/393/193/	
20-26	Meningitis Awareness Week http://www.meningitis.org/	
24	World's Biggest Coffee Morning http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Fundraising/WorldsBiggestCoffeeMorning/WorldsBiggestCoffeeMorning.aspx	
26	World Heart Day http://www.world-heart-federation.org/index.php?id=123	

Health Promotion: Heart Matters

The British Heart Foundation is offering a free service of support and information for people looking to improve their heart health.

As a member you'll benefit from:

- ♥ A free Heart Health Lifestyle Check with personalised advice on how to have a healthy lifestyle.
- ♥ Regular issues of Heart Matters Magazine.
- ♥ A dedicated helpline staffed by cardiac nurses and heart health advisers.
- ♥ Exclusive access to a members' area with online tools and resources.

To find out more details or join, please go to:
https://www.bhf.org.uk/living_with_a_heart_condition/how_can_we_help_you/heart_matters.aspx

Contacting PTH OH Advisers (OHAs) on non-contract days

Due to the increasing demand for customers needing to speak to their contracted OHA on non contract days and OHAs being in busy clinics, please see the procedure below that PTH will now be using:

- 1) OHAs will endeavour to be available to take calls between 8.30am-9.30am and 4.00pm-4.30pm, depending on clinic location.
- 2) Please call your clinical administrator who will contact the OHA to inform them you wish to speak to them.
- 3) Depending upon their availability, OHAs will return calls at the end of the day or the following morning.

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.