Employee Wellness: Opportunities for Developing a Healthy Lifestyle

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An ounce of prevention . . .

. . . is worth a pound of cure!

77% (n=603) reported at least one improved behavior change in nutrition and/or activity choices

Florida’s Capital County

Leon County, Florida
Population: 230,452
Government: 45,058
Private Wage/Salary: 71,173

Healthy Employees Benefit Employers

Fewer sick days and absences
Higher morale
Improved productivity
Reduced health care costs


Biology of Aging

Young, active

Older, sedentary

➢ In mid-forties, women lose ¼ to ⅓ lb of muscle per year
➢ They gain that much – or more – in fat.

The StrongWomen Program, M. Nelson, Tufts University.
Biology of Aging

Approximately 10 million Americans have osteoporosis – 80% are women
One in two women will experience an osteoporosis-related fracture

Arthritis affects more than 20 million Americans
Women are more commonly affected than men
Arthritis contributes to sedentary lifestyles
Sedentary behavior increases joint stiffness and pain

Today’s Actions Determine Tomorrow’s Abilities

Cold calls to targeted employers
- Brochures
- Meetings
County Human Resources
- Education & Training Coordinator
- Senior management meeting
County Well Workplace Initiative
County Public Information Office

Technology’s Impact on Today’s Lifestyle

Educational program series
- 4-6 weeks
- Lunch & Learn
Provide marketing materials
- Posters
- Email

Getting Started

Developing Relationships
An Ounce of Prevention

- 12-week session
- 2 – 3 classes per week
- Pre/Post assessments required
- Peer volunteers essential to maintenance

Required Equipment

- Set of dumbbells
- One adjustable ankle weight
- Towel
- Water
- Yoga mat (optional)

Exercise Program

- Upper Body
- Lower Body
- Floor
- Stretching

Program Assessment
A Pound of Cure

- Participants increasing upper body strength: 79%
- Average increase: 34%

Participants increasing lower body strength: 67%
Average increase: 21%

58% increased upper body flexibility by an average of 12%
45% increased lower body flexibility by an average of 16%

... is a fun, friendly competition promoting physical activity and personal wellness.

Walking Through Florida Partnership
UF/IFAS Extension – Leon County
Leon County Board of County Commissioners
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Florida Department of Education
DISC Village
Leon County Health Department

Easily Accessible
Celebrating Our Success

After participating in WTF . . .
- 76% began or increased amount of exercise
- 41% felt less stressed
- 41% had increased energy levels
- 24% decreased sedentary activity time
- 38% reported weight loss
- 34% made positive changes in eating habits

Employees Report Success After Walking Through Florida
- Weight loss and decreased blood pressure
- Lowest cholesterol in one year
- No longer need blood pressure medication
- Began training for a marathon
- Ran first 5K
- Wore out a treadmill

Reducing Risk for Chronic Disease
- Identifying risk factors
- Reading food labels
- Making healthful food choices
- Recipe modification

Making a Difference
- 94% increased knowledge about risk factors
- 97% increased knowledge about making healthful food choices
- 75% made one of more behavior changes
Three Months Later

30% increased exercise
72% make healthy choices when eating out
69% use food labels to make healthy choices
7 out of 14 improved blood pressure levels

Session Topics
Successful Weight Management
  Cutting Extra Calories
  Controlling Fat in the Diet
  Reading Nutrition Labels
  Recipe Modification
  Meats and Meat Alternatives
  The Importance of Calcium
  Weight Maintenance

Healthy Lifestyle Changes
55% decreased fat
55% increased fruit consumption
45% more likely to eat dried beans and peas
45% increased low fat or non fat dairy intake
45% more likely to remove skin from poultry
45% increased use of nutrition labels

Six Weeks Later, I . . .
  . . . lost 14 more pounds
  . . . started an exercise program
  . . . kept up with my walking
  . . . joined a tennis league
  . . . had to wear a belt or my pants would fall down

The Next Step
  WTF 365
  County Wellness Series
  VolunteerLeon Internship