



Wellness Works

MARCH 2008

March is Nutrition Awareness Month

March is nutrition awareness month, and the health promotions educators are teaming up with Sodexo nutritionists to teach patients and staff about making healthy food selections. Check with your pavilion health educator or nutritionist for days and times of educational activities – please join in the fun!

It is important to realize you shouldn't go on a diet just to lose weight. Instead, change the way you eat to be healthier. Diets, by definition, are temporary strategies to lose weight, and they have a high relapse potential because they are not sustainable over the long term. If you want to lose weight and keep it off, change your lifestyle – such as the foods you eat, how you prepare them, and selecting the right serving sizes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have dedicated many resources to teaching people about healthful eating. There is a great section on its Web site about tracking your daily food and exercise to help you figure out what is working and what is not in terms of your nutrition and exercise lifestyle. To learn more about caloric intake and what types of foods are best, visit www.mypyramid.gov.

Five Tips for Improving Your Eating Habits

1. Eat fresh whenever possible. Anything in a box or can contains added sugar and/or salt. Try to shop on the outside aisles of your supermarket – that's where the fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, meats and grains are found. The other aisles contain the processed foods.
2. Try eating raw vegetables. Cooking some foods can break down the nutrients, so raw or steamed is usually best. Don't be shy about trying unfamiliar vegetables – expand your options! Try to use little or no dressing.
3. Pick whole grains whenever possible. White breads are bleached and have fewer nutrients than brown breads. Similarly, brown rice is better than white rice, as are brown flake cereals.
4. Lose the salt shaker. Try substituting pepper and other no-salt spices like coriander, cumin and herbs. You'll experience new flavors that are also much healthier! Salt substitutes like Mrs. Dash can help you make the transition.
5. Water, water, water. Most people do not drink enough water. Water regulates all of our cells, so it is critical we have enough to drink. Be careful drinking alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, as they can dehydrate the body. Try adding one extra glass or bottle of water to your daily intake, to start. Water-filled fruits and vegetables like celery, lettuce, watermelon and peaches can also be a good source of water. When exercising, drink before, during and after the activity. A good rule of thumb — if you actually feel thirsty, your body is telling you that you have gone too long without water.

Embodying the Six

Dimensions of Wellness

In each issue of Wellness Works, the Employee Wellness Program highlights an employee who exemplifies one or more of the six dimensions of wellness: emotional, physical, occupational, social, spiritual and educational. This month we salute Sandra Herrera, unit clerk and interpreter at Ben Taub General Hospital.

Herrera works the night shift in the labor and delivery unit, and has been with the hospital district for almost four years. "Translating for the patients so they can have a better understanding of their care here at Ben Taub is really rewarding for me, but the best part of my job is the excitement of coaching a patient when it is her time to deliver," said Herrera.

A mother of three, she says raising children is her biggest challenge. In her spare time, she likes to help out at the local church, where her father is the minister, and work on the family's two-acre farm.

You might think Herrera is too busy to be concerned about her health and that of her colleagues, but you'd be wrong. Herrera, with the support of her unit, has formed an exercise group fondly known as the P.H.A.T. Club (Pretty Hot and Tempting). What started with a few people who wanted to walk laps at work has grown to more than 100 members. They have walking groups and exercise classes, and have even scheduled

a family walkathon on April 5. They are also organizing a team for the upcoming March of Dimes 5k walk/run.

This is a perfect way to improve the occupational wellness of Herrera's entire unit by getting fit and having fun while establishing a strong sense of social and physical wellness.

"Establishing a group and expanding it to this size isn't simple," said Herrera. "Try to work together and bring in other people who have the same interests. Then find a good goal for your motivation. Our main goal here in labor and delivery is to improve the quality of our lives through diet and exercise and serve as an encouragement for others."



Teams are now forming for an after-work volleyball league. Contact employee wellness to learn more at 713-566-6360 or at employee_wellness@hchd.tmc.edu.

WOW!

You may have noticed the walking signs at your pavilion that show how many laps you need to walk to reach a mile and how many calories you will burn. There are also signs near stairwells that show how many calories you can burn using them instead of the elevator. This has helped encourage many employees to walk during their breaks and form clubs to walk together. Keep in mind to be respectful of patients and other employees by moving out of their way during your laps. If you'd like to start a walking club or join one, contact employee wellness at 713-566-6360 for your pedometer and walker's guide.



Sandra Herrera, unit clerk at Ben Taub General Hospital, is proud to be a founding member of the P.H.A.T. Club.



Wellness Works

In advance of the Harris County Hospital District becoming smoke-free Sept. 1, 2008, the Employee Wellness Program is offering free smoking cessation classes, quit kits, and a one-month supply of nicotine patches to employees. If you are interested in quitting smoking, please plan to attend one of these helpful sessions.

For more information, call the Employee Wellness Hotline at 713-566-2000 or e-mail employee_wellness@hchd.tmc.edu.

| Location | Language | Day | Time | Resource Code | Contact | Number | Department |
|---|----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|--|----------------|---------------------------|
| Administration - HH Human Resources Conference Room | E | 2nd & 4th Thursdays | 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. | ESMK | Rhonda Randolph | (713) 566-6285 | Health Promotion Services |
| Acres Education Room | E | 1st Wednesday 2nd Monday | 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. 2 - 3 p.m. | ESMK | Angelia Guinara | (281) 260-3374 | Health Promotion Services |
| Aldine Conference Room | E/S | Wednesdays twice/month | 1 - 2 p.m. | ESMK | Gonzalo Murillo | (281) 985-7679 | Health Promotion Services |
| Baytown Conference Room | E/S | Tuesdays twice/month | 2 - 3 p.m. | ESMK | Yesenia Mora | (281) 837-2772 | Health Promotion Services |
| BTGH 2nd Floor Conference Room | E | 2nd & 4th Thursdays | 3 - 4 p.m. | ESMK | Arcy Segura | (713) 873-3995 | Health Promotion Services |
| Casa de Amigos Conference Room | E/S | TBA | TBA | ESMK | Adria Jones | (713) 236-7930 | Health Promotion Services |
| Gulfgate Conference Room | E | 1st & 3rd Thursdays | 12 - 1 p.m. | ESMK | Jennifer Roberts | (713) 566-6538 | Health Promotion Services |
| LBJ UT Annex, Room 132 | E/S | 2nd & 4th Thursdays | 3 - 4 p.m. | ESMK | Lizette Escamilla or Milet Portales | (713) 566-4608 | Health Promotion Services |
| MLK Basement Classroom | E | 4th Thursdays | 2:30-3:30 p.m. | ESMK | Melodie Pierce | (713) 873-4705 | Health Promotion Services |
| Northwest Conference Room | E/V | 2nd & 4th Tuesday | 1 - 2 p.m. | ESMK | Rhonda Randolph | (713) 873-4775 | Health Promotion Services |
| Peoples Room #102 | E | 4th Monday 2nd Friday | 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | ESMK | Karla Phillips | (713) 219-3025 | Health Promotion Services |
| Settegast Conference Room | E | 1st Tuesday 3rd Thursday | 10 - 11 a.m. 1 - 2 p.m. | ESMK | Latecia Murphy | (713) 566-6289 | Health Promotion Services |
| Squatty | E | 2nd Tuesday | TBA | ESMK | Latecia Murphy | (713) 566-6289 | Health Promotion Services |
| Strawberry | E | 2nd & 4th Thursday | 12 - 1 p.m. | ESMK | Coby Crawford | (713) 566-6922 | Health Promotion Services |
| Thomas Street Room #309 | E | Every Thursday | 10 - 11 a.m. | ESMK | Jeff Benavides | (713) 873-4026 | Health Promotion Services |
| CHC Conference Room | E | 2nd & 4th Thursdays | 12 - 1 p.m. | ESMK | Jennifer Roberts | (713) 566-6538 | Health Promotion Services |