



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

WORKPLACE HEALTH

Canada's Healthy Workplace Week has become **Canada's Healthy Workplace Month!** Sept. 29 to Oct. 26, 2008

Healthy Workplace Month is now a four-week-long celebration and promotion of healthy workplaces. This month promotes fostering a workplace culture of trust and respect where people are happy and healthy at work. In a healthy workplace, people want to come to work. During the month of October, every employer is encouraged to take extra time to recognize their employees and show them how vital they are to the success of their organization.

The theme for 2008 is: **Take the Healthy Workplace Challenge**. Each week, your workplace will be challenged to participate in an activity based on the National Quality Institutes (www.nqi.ca) Healthy Workplace elements. The weekly challenge themes are:

Week 1: Healthy Habits – Fit at Work Challenge

Challenge your employees to increase their physical activity level.

Week 2: Healthy Culture at Work – Support at Work Challenge

Assess your workplace culture.

Week 3: Your Physical Environment – Green at Work Challenge

How environmentally friendly is your organization?

Week 4: Keep it going All Year Round – Champions at Work

Keep the momentum going; submit an event or share your story!

Your organization will be able to register at www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca to participate in some, or all, of the challenges. The Canadian Healthy Workplace Council will announce winners for each week. Workplaces are encouraged to step up and take the challenge.

The website for Canada's Healthy Workplace Month (www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca) provides short-term practical tools and ideas for organizations to help them participate. As well, it provides case studies and long-term strategies for organizations to adopt as part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to organizational health.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

September

- Sept. 14 - Terry Fox Run
- Sept. 28 - Lynn Valley Trail Hike

October

- Sept. 29-Oct. 26 - Healthy Workplace Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Oct. 5 - Run for the Cure
- Oct. 1 - Prenatal Health Fair
- Oct. 22 - Workplace Networking Breakfast

November

- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Nov. 17-21 - Drug Awareness Week

December

- Happy Holidays!



Let's celebrate Canada's Healthy Workplace Month!

Ten effective STRESS BUSTERS



1. Pinpoint what's really causing your stress. Keep a diary of when you feel stressed. For instance if you often feel stressed at work, note that down. Try to make sure there is a balance between the effort you put into a task and the reward you receive from it.

2. Commit to a sound sleep routine. Not getting enough sleep, or poor quality sleep, can make it very difficult to handle everyday stress. Go to bed and wake up at the same time everyday, even on weekends. Avoid alcohol, upsetting TV news, arguments, discussions about financial matters or anything that causes you distress before bed.

3. Sign up for an assertiveness training class, available at local community centres and other organizations. It teaches people to control their emotions and be firm with others, which is important for many people.

4. Visualize a place or memory that you find relaxing. Is it a beautiful waterfall at your local park or your grandmother baking oatmeal cookies? Visualization is an effective means of reducing stress. Use it whenever necessary to calm yourself down.

5. Get physically active on a regular basis. It's your body's natural way of getting rid of toxins caused by stress. Make it specific and commit to the time. For example, you may go for a walk around the block every evening after dinner; run on the treadmill three times a week, bike in your local park on Tuesdays and Thursdays and garden on the weekends. If you've been inactive, talk to your physician before starting any exercise program.

6. Identify places you can go when you need a break from the stress of your busy life. You may find it helpful to visit a near by park, chapel, temple or library, or to create a room in your home

that is designated quiet space where you can do crossword puzzles, listen to soft music or just sit without interruption.

7. Get away from it all. Even if it's just a weekend in the country or a week at home spent watching your favourite movies or sports, you need that downtime to function at work.

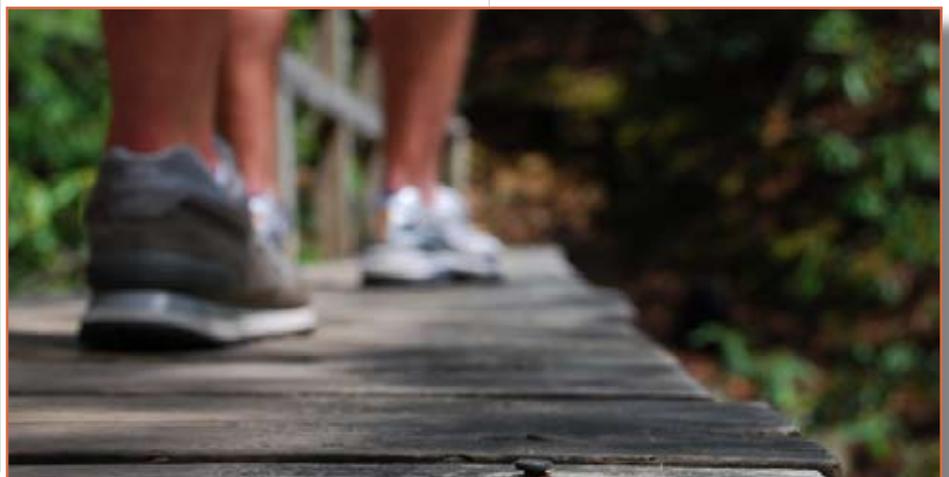
8. Volunteer for a cause you believe in. Helping others can take attention away from yourself and this may reduce your anxieties.

9. Learn how to breathe deeply and slowly, which can lower stress and blood pressure. Breathing practices such as yoga, meditation, tai chi, or Pilates may help. Try one or more of these offered by a board of education, recreation centre or local community college to find the one that works best for you. Ask your family, friends or colleagues to sign up with you.

10. Pet a dog or cat. Evidence suggests this can help some people reduce blood pressure and relax.

For more information visit www.heartandstroke.ca

Stress, itself, is not the problem, but rather our reaction to the problem.





MENTAL HEALTH

How much is it costing your company?

In Canada, mental health in the workplace is a year-long issue. Consider these statistics from Health Canada and the Canadian Mental Health Association:

- Two to three percent of Canadians suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).
- 15% of Canadians get the winter blues.
- In Canada, suicide rates are highest in July and August.
- One in five Canadians will have a mental illness in his or her lifetime.
- 80% of Canadians will be affected by a family member, friend or colleague with a mental illness.

If you are an employer and are looking for how to address mental health in the workplace, consider several sources:

- Contact your employee assistance provider to find out if help is available.
- Visit www.mentalhealthworks.ca for information on recognizing the problem, how to talk to your employees, rights, responsibilities, accommodation, prevention, hiring, training and tools.
- Check out the Business and Economic Plan for Mental Health and Productivity at www.mentalhealthroundtable.ca for a “how to” plan for dealing with mental health in the workplace.

If you are not a manager but want to take action on mental health issues in your

workplace, consider the following suggestions:

- Break the silence. Talk openly about suicide, mental health and mental illness.
- Learn more about how you can support a friend or family member dealing with a mental health issue.
- Promote community resources:
 - CAST (Crisis Assessment and Support Team) 1-866-487-CAST (2278) is a 24 hour mental health crisis line.
 - Child and Youth Crisis Service at the Haldimand-Norfolk R.E.A.C.H. A qualified professional can help you over the phone or in person 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 1-866-327-3224 or Pager # 905-540-2718.
 - The Canadian Mental Health Association (www.cmha.ca) is a nationwide, charitable organization that promotes the mental health of all, and supports the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness.

If you think you need help, consider the following:

- Talk to your doctor and your employee

assistance provider (EAP).

- Measure your mental health and emotional well-being by using the following surveys:
 - The Emotional Wellness Survey (www.mentalhealthworks.ca) is a free online survey and report. (Please note, you are required to give some personal information to access this.)
 - Check Up from the Neck Up (www.checkupfromtheneckup.ca) is a private online mental health check up. No personal information is required.
 - Print the results from either of these surveys and bring it to your doctor and EAP for discussion.

The Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health argues that employers and employees are paying for the cost of mental illness in Canada out of their pockets on top of their tax contributions to health care. Mental illnesses affect people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures, and it's treatable. Even if mental health issues don't apply to you, someone you love or work with may have a mental health issue. Make an effort to understand mental illness better.

THE FACTS

- 7.5 million Canadians suffer from depression, anxiety, substance abuse or other mental disorder each year.
- 43% of respondents to a 2006 study reported an increase in the frequency and cost of depression and/or anxiety related claims among their employees.
- More than 10% of general drug plan costs are for mental illness drugs and more than 21% of all drug claims are connected to mental illness.
- When medical conditions co-occur with mental illness, specifically depression, total pharmacy costs related to mental illness increase by a factor of three.
- The number of mental-illness-related pharmacy claims increased 5.4% from 2004 to 2005, compared to a total pharmacy claims increase of 3.8%.

(From the Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health, 2007.)

Save the date

What: Stress Management for the Workplace

Jean Montgomery, Canadian Mental Health Association

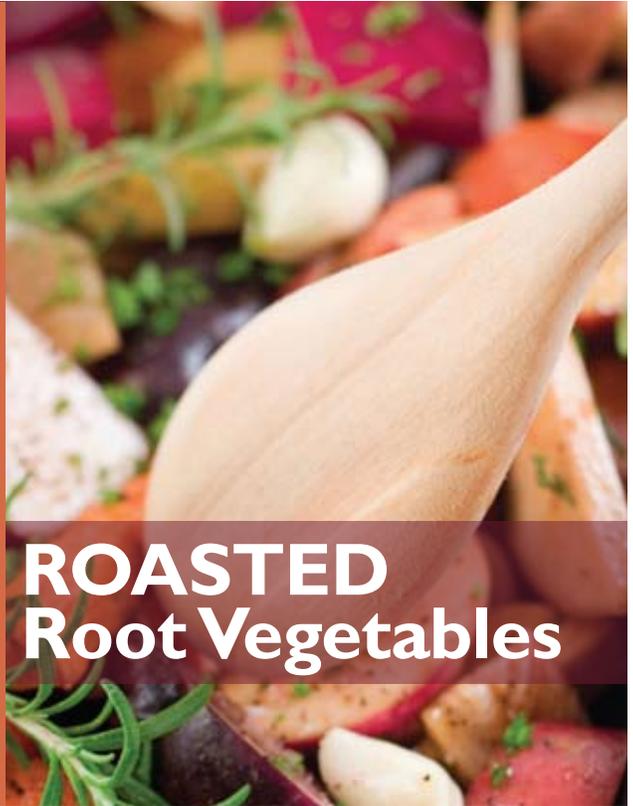
When: Oct. 22, 2008
8 to 10 a.m.

Where: The Greens at Renton

Call 519-426-6170 Ext. 3236 to register.



Recipe



ROASTED Root Vegetables

Ingredients

- ½ butternut squash
- 3 carrots
- 2 onions
- 2 parsnips
- 3 sweet potatoes
- Oil
- 1-2 teaspoons rosemary or thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste

You want about two pounds of hard vegetables, cut into one-inch cubes. You can substitute acorn squash and turnip in various combinations with the vegetables listed above so feel free to experiment.

Mix vegetables with a bit of oil and put in a roasting pan or on a cookie sheet.

Roast vegetables at 425°F for up to an hour or if you're in a hurry, roast at 500°F for at least 30 minutes. Stir occasionally and roast until soft and browned.



NEW! Workplace Violence Prevention in Health and Community Care video by OSACH

Call the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170, Ext. 3236 to borrow a copy.

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