Behavioral Health Systems, Inc.

Volume 10 Issue 6
2014

BHS A.S.S.I.S.T.
June Newsletter

This Month's Issue:

Self Care _____1
Health _____2
Self Care _____3
Work _____4

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH: SAFE USE OF PAINKILLERS

With so much talk of drug use in America, you may not realize that some of the most potentially dangerous drugs are sitting in many home medicine cabinets. More people die daily from prescription painkiller overdoses than from heroin and cocaine combined, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Driving the problem is the availability of painkillers, as enough are prescribed annually to medicate every American adult around the clock for one month, according to the CDC. And in many of these cases, the pills are not a necessary treatment to manage pain, say experts, as safer alternatives are available.

"Prescription painkillers are often prescribed when safer medications could be used. Unfortunately, long-term use of opioid painkillers, such as OxyContin or Vicodin, can lead to addiction that patients never intended to have," says National Safety Council Medical Advisor, Dr. Don Teater.

This June, which is National Safety Month, patients can become advocates for their own safety, says Teater. He recommends the following tips to reduce danger and increase safety for anyone prescribed a prescription painkiller:

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

Are non-opioid painkiller alternatives a possibility for you? Talk with your doctor about your options, including over-the-counter possibilities. If an opioid is still prescribed, request the lowest dose possible for the shortest duration.

Make sure your doctor knows about all other medications and drugs you take and about how much alcohol you consume.

SAFE HABITS

Know how long the medicine will be in your body, whether and when you can drive, and what other limitations will affect your routine. Avoid mixing opioid drugs with alcohol, sleeping pills and anti-anxiety medications.

Opioid medications should be kept in a locked container or locking medicine cabinet so that only the patient has access to them.

Nearly 70 percent of people who misuse prescription medicines report getting the drugs or taking them, without asking, from friends or family members, according to a survey from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

SAFE DISPOSAL

Done with your treatment? Never save leftover opioids for later use, and never give them away. Doing so can risk the medication getting into the wrong hands or being used for recreational purposes.

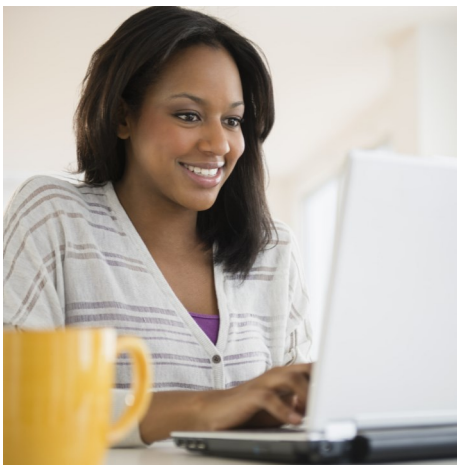
Just be sure that when you do dispose of medications, you do so properly.

Take-back programs and other community safety events allow the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal, and many pharmacies offer mail-back programs. If these services are not easily accessible for you, you can go online to learn about safe medication disposal options.

This National Safety Month, take steps to learn more about the prescriptions you take, and their possible consequences.

If you may have a problem with prescription medications, speak with your Care Coordinator: 800-245-1150.

Source: The Miami News Record - www.miamiok.com



TURBOCHARGE YOUR MORNING ROUTINE

My morning routine at work starts with a cup (or two) of Joe and perusing my email inbox. And it seems I'm in good company. According to an Accountemps survey, 58% of chief financial officers (CFOs) said reading email is the first thing they do at the office. Working on a project was a distant second (13%).

Most office workers start their day by checking email to see if something urgent has come up. For CFOs, reading the company's "morning news" is vital because a matter may require their immediate attention. But spending too much time reading and responding to routine emails can hamper efficiency. So how can you kick-start your day and stay focused on the highest-priority assignments? Here are five tips for turbocharging your morning routine.

PINPOINT YOUR TOP PRIORITIES
Take 15 minutes to identify your most critical and time -sensitive tasks. Creating a prioritized to-do list will help you start off on the right track — and can serve as a road map to stay focused and productive throughout the day. Devising a game plan on Monday mornings is particularly important to map out key tasks for the rest of your workweek.

DON'T LET EMAIL OWN YOU
Be disciplined and allot yourself a set amount of time to review your inbox, and then move on. Also, don't feel compelled to open and respond to every message the instant it arrives.

BE MINDFUL OF DIGITAL DISTRACTIONS
Much like your email inbox, the Internet is full of potential diversions. In most cases, you shouldn't spend more than a few minutes scanning news headlines or checking social media.

FOCUS ON ONE THING AT A TIME
Every professional needs to multi-task to some degree. But continuously tackling several tasks simultaneously is mentally taxing and can lead to costly mistakes. When working on a project, particularly a high-profile one, give it your full attention.

DE-CLUTTER DAILY
Scrambling to find files due to poor organization wastes time and creates unnecessary stress. Invest a few minutes at the end of the day to organize yourself for the next day. That way, you can get off to a swift start the following morning.

7 STEPS TO LOVE MORNING WORKOUTS

Put down the banana: According to a new study published online in the British Journal of Nutrition, people who exercise early in the morning on an empty stomach burn more fat than those who nosh before hitting the gym.

This news may be easy enough for early birds to swallow, but what if you've got a profound relationship with your snooze button? Here are seven tips to tackle exercise first thing in the a.m. so you can take advantage of a study like this, too.

Sleep in your gym gear. Your gym gear is comfortable, so why make an additional change before you exercise? Sleep in your workout gear or work out in your pajamas. The extra 10 minutes to get dressed can make the difference between going to the gym or ditching it.

Wake up and smell the coffee. Studies show that the smell of coffee energizes you. Auto set your coffee the night before.

Stretch while sleepy-eyed. Hit snooze, and then start stretching. This helps you wake up and you can skip this step later.

Set your alarm to energetic beats. Are Paula Abdul and Lady Gaga on your workout playlist? If that's what livens you up, make an energetic tune your wake-up call.

Make it habitual. Don't think of morning workouts as a commitment you're making forever—that's too daunting a challenge for reformed night owls. Instead, find a way to get up a few days in a row. Just three days will help you get used to it.

Commit to a short workout. Convince yourself to put in a solid 15 minute workout. A shorter time commitment will get you out of bed quicker, and chances are, you'll stay for longer.

Drink up. While this new study suggests exercising on an empty stomach, sip some water before hitting the gym. Water energizes and refreshes the body, and gets you going. Put a glass by the bed the night before.

Source: Jenna Birch for Women's Health - www.prevention.com

SAFETY AT HOME

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY SAFE AT HOME

Keeping your family out of harm's way is your #1 priority. Unfortunately, many of our homes can be dangerous – preventable injuries and deaths continue to rise in homes and communities.

The National Safety Council estimates approximately 245 people die everyday of unintentional injuries in homes and communities. In 2007, the six leading causes of unintentional injury and death in the U.S. were: **motor *vehicle crashes, falls, poisonings, choking, drowning, fires, flames and smoke*.**

When someone is injured, the effects go beyond that person and extend to family members, friends, neighbors, employers and communities. The key to preventing injuries is making simple changes to your lifestyle - recognizing where most hazards are and how injuries can occur when participating in different activities.

Below are a few of the many strategies to prevent injuries:

- Stay off your cell phone when you are driving. Your safety practices directly influence the safety practices of your children.
- Get trained in first aid, CPR and AED online or in a classroom.
- Check and if necessary, change the batteries on your smoke and carbon monoxide detector.
- Properly dispose of unused and expired medications.

Explore more safety practices and share these strategies with family, friends and neighbors. You can play a large part in keeping those around safe and alive.

MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY

Every year nearly 36,000 people are killed and more than 3.5 million people are injured in motor vehicle crashes, making it the leading cause of unintentional injuries and death for people between the ages of 1 and 33. Distracted driving is one of the many issues affecting families traveling on the roadways.

The National Safety Council estimates that 23 percent of all motor vehicle crashes involve cell phone use signifying distracted driving as an increasingly large problem on our nation's roadways. Talking on a cell phone while driving makes you four times more likely to crash, and texting while driving increases your chance of crashing by up to 8 to 23 times.

Your family is at risk any time a driver is using a cell phone behind the wheel, but there are a few ways to decrease that risk.

Key Research – Learn more about the dangers of cognitive distraction and share this information with family and loved ones.

State Laws – Become familiar with and follow your state's laws concerning cell phone use while driving. Teach these laws to your family and set a good example by following them yourself.

Public Education – Educate the public on the dangers of distracted driving and how it affects families in your community.

Source: National Safety Council www.nsc.org

Work Toward SMART Solutions

Sustainable solutions to workplace conflicts are SMART solutions. That means they are:

Specific: Be clear about what each employee will do, when, where, and how.

Measureable: Be clear about how all of you (manager and the employees embroiled in conflict) will be able to tell that something has been done, achieved or completed.

Achievable: Make sure that whatever solutions you agree on fits the situation; that it complies with both the law and organizational policy; that everyone involved has the ability and opportunity to do what is required of them. Don't set up anyone to fail.

Realistic: Check calendar dates for holidays and vacations; look at past performance to predict future actions; allow extra time for glitches and delays; don't assume that the best-case scenario will come true.

Timed: Create reasonable deadlines or target dates; include a few ideas about what to do if something unexpected occurs; be willing to adjust and set new dates if necessary.

Summary

Disputes, full of emotional complexities and interpersonal histories, are the headaches of the workplace. They're always going to pop up, even in the most cordial of workplace environments. The good news is that when managers are armed with the tools they need to work toward productive resolutions – *resources that an employee assistance professional can help provide* – managers can use them to strengthen an organization rather than harm it.

Source: National Conflict Resolution Center

BARBECUE PULLED CHICKEN

Recipe source: eatingwell.com

Ingredients:

- 1 8-ounce can reduced-sodium tomato sauce
- 1 4-ounce can chopped green chiles, drained
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon sweet or smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon ground chipotle chile
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed of fat
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced

8 servings | Active Time: 25 minutes | Total Time: 5 1/2 hours

Instructions:

1. Stir tomato sauce, chiles, vinegar, honey, paprika, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, ground chipotle and salt in a 6-quart slow cooker until smooth. Add chicken, onion and garlic; stir to combine.
2. Put the lid on and cook on low until the chicken can be pulled apart, about 5 hours.
3. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board and shred with a fork. Return the chicken to the sauce, stir well and serve.

Nutrition (Per Serving): 364 cal, 13g fat, 30g protein, 32g carbs, 477 mg sodium