



Volume 1, issue 13

December 2009

Healthy on the Job! Workplace Wellness Newsletter

Family & Community Health Sciences
Rutgers Cooperative Extension



Joanne Kinsey, M.S., CFCS
Family & Community Health
Sciences Educator

Rutgers Cooperative Extension
of Atlantic/Ocean Counties

6260 Old Harding Highway

Mays Landing, NJ 08330

P609.625.0056

F609.625.3646

jkkinsey@njaes.rutgers.edu

www.rutgers-atlantic.org

www.njaes.rutgers.edu

fcsedu-connector.blogspot.com



FOCUS: BRAIN HEALTH

When was the last time your doctor asked you about the health of your brain? Probably not recently enough. The brain is packed with tiny, fragile cells that are damaged by the same things that can hurt the heart—too much alcohol, high blood sugar or too much cholesterol. The difference between the brain and the heart is that the heart can recover from injuries and neglect; but

once a nerve cell in the brain is dead, nothing can bring it back. To improve brain health and prevent disease, follow these steps:

- Exercise your body
- Exercise your mind by staying engaged in learning activities
- Stay socially engaged
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Manage stress
- Eat a healthy diet
- Lower cholesterol or high blood pres-

sure levels

- Get enough sleep
- Treat any health problems you may have
- Don't drink to excess, smoke, or use illegal drugs.

If there's on thing the head and the heart can agree on, it's what steps you can take to be a healthier person.

For more information on Brain Health, visit
www.aarp.org/health/brain

Deskercise!

- Ballet Bends: Stand with your feet comfortably apart, your toes turned slightly outward. Hold the back of a chair if you need support. Keep your back straight and slowly bend your knees over your toes. (It's important not to extend your knees beyond your toes in order to avoid stress on the knees.) Straighten by pushing up through your feet.
- For more deskercises, visit: <http://uclivingwell.ucop.edu/deskercise>

Remember to always consult your physician before beginning an exercise program.



Smoking & Brain Health: Smoking on the Job

The health consequences of smoking are widely understood as serious—smoking leads to premature death and significant disease and disability. The habit negatively affects the heart and lungs and causes various cancers. Since second-hand smoke has many of the same effects, workplaces across the country have imple-

mented bans on smoking, much to the relief of non-smokers. In 2005, Florence C. Adams conducted research that examined the effect of such bans and she had promising results: "smokers who have some workplace restriction

have on average one less work day per year missed to illness, and have fewer doctors office and emergency room visits than smokers who have no workplace restriction." She concluded that workplace bans on smoking increase productivity and benefit the health of employees. For information on cessation of smoking, visit the American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org

If you are trying to quit smoking, make the most of your smoke breaks. Take a walk around your worksite or munch on a healthy snack instead of inhaling a toxic cigarette.

Recipe of the Week

Winter Vegetable Soup

Makes 6 servings

Total time: 45 minutes

1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes (not oil-packed)

1 cup onions, cut into wedges

1 sweet potato

2 carrots

1 lb. Banana or Hubbard squash

1 cup parsnips

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 red bell pepper, cut into 1/2 strips

2 cups low-sodium, low-fat vegetable broth

1 cup pureed tomato

1 tablespoons lime juice

1/4 teaspoon cayenne

1 (10 oz) package frozen peas

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon black pepper

Peel sweet potato, carrots, squash & parsnips, cut into 3/4 inch pieces. Cook onion, potato, carrots, squash, parsnips, garlic and 1 cup broth in covered pan for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add few tablespoons of water if veggies stick to the pan. Add 1 more cup of broth with bell pepper, tomato, lime juice, & cayenne pepper. Return to a boil, then reduce heat. Simmer covered 12-15



minutes. If stew sticks or gets too thick add more broth as needed. Add peas, stir until hot, about 2 minutes. Add salt & pepper to taste. Serve in bowls with thinly sliced green onions or cilantro.

Nutrition information: Per serving: 150 calories; 1 g fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 30 g carbohydrates; 8 g protein; 8 g fiber; 390 mg sodium.

For more healthy recipes, visit <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>

Stay Focused at Work!

from Prevention Magazine

Ever caught yourself zoning out at the desk or rereading the same passages again and again without comprehending a word? Not to worry—our brains are programmed to wander whenever possible. This habit, though natural, can lead to lost productivity, so it's best to save it for another time. To stay focused at work:

-Organize—Decide which to do to tackle first.

Participate—During meetings, think of questions to ask the speaker and raise your hand as much as possible.

Relocate—When you start to lose focus, take a walk or go to your car. This way, your mind will associate your desk with work, not a loss of focus.

Top web sites for additional info!

Www.alz.org the Alzheimer's Association offers information and resources about brain health.

Www.brainhealth.utdallas.edu The University of Texas at Dallas links to the latest news through the Center for Brain Health.

Www.stockton.edu/scosa The Stockton Center on Successful Aging provides a series of informational lectures, resources, programs, on brain health. The center is located at Stockton College in Pomona, NJ.

Www.aarp.org Search the AARP website for brain health, and a variety of challenging brain games for adults.

Www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu The Get Moving Get Healthy NJ initiative provides information and resources to keep the boy and brain fit and healthy!

Www.sharpbrains.com The Sharp Brains: Brain Fitness For All website (by Scientific American) has articles, brain exercises, and links to resources.

Featured Food: Brain Foods

In order to keep the brain buzzing day and night, it is important to supply it with all the nutrients it needs. And one of the most important nutrients for brain health is Omega-3 fatty acid. Remember hearing the old argument that fish is good for your brain? That's because these types of fatty acids can mostly be found in fish—tuna, her-

ring, salmon and mackerel. But don't worry if you're not a fan of seafood. Omega-3 fatty acids can also be found in flaxseeds, flaxseed oil, canola oil, soybeans, soybean oil, pumpkin seeds, walnuts and walnut oil. You can also find fish oil supplements in any health store.

Source: University of Maryland Medical Center Online