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RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station

Deskercise!

- Heavy Hinges: Standing upright, push both arms straight back with your palms facing down and hold for five seconds. Bend in arms at the elbow (like a hinge), fingers pointing straight ahead, and hold for five seconds. Repeat 5-10 times.
- Let the Good Times Roll: Sit or stand tall. Lift your shoulders as high as you can. Bring them forward. Push them down. Pull your shoulders back, then return to standing position. Repeat 3-5 times.
- For more deskercise, visit: <http://uclivingwell.ucop.edu/deskercise>

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

Healthy on the Job!

Workplace Wellness Newsletter

Family & Community Health Sciences
Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Volume 1,
issue 4

Focus: Stress Less

The Importance of a Low-Stress Workplace

Challenges in the workplace are energizing and invigorating. When a challenge is met, we feel relieved and satisfied, but when challenges turn into demands that cannot be met, we risk becoming stressed at work. To many people, stress seems like no big deal, but repetitive stress can be hazardous to personal health as well as productivity. Stress sets off an alarm in the brain, and then prepares our body for defensive action (fight or flight syndrome). While occasional stress is not harmful, repetitive or continuous stress could be damaging because the nerves are kept in a constant state of activation, which could bring wear and tear to

the body. Once fatigued, the body is less able to repair itself and this can lead to a greater risk of injury or disease. Both worker characteristics and work conditions cause job stress. Some employers think that stress is a necessary evil - that companies must turn up the pressure to keep up productivity, but research has shown that employees working in these environments are more likely to be absent, be tardy, or quit. To prevent an overload of



stress, employers should offer stress management or employee health programs. Employees can start by making certain they understand their responsibilities, eliminate self-defeating behaviors, and find ways to dispel stress, such as getting time away, talking about problems, or finding humor in some situations. And always try to leave work at work!

Find a way to relax during your short breaks in the morning and afternoon, if you have them. Reading poetry can be a great stress-reliever, and one standard poem only takes a few minutes to read!

For the complete NIOSH publication "Stress...at Work" visit <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/stresswk.html>.

A Proven Cliché

As the old cliché goes, laughter is the best medicine. A study conducted in April 2008 found that anticipating a good laugh reduces the release of stress hormones that can weaken

your immune system over time. According to Lee Berk, the lead researcher of the study, by seeking out positive experiences that make us laugh, we can do a lot with our physiology to stay well." In previous studies, the

team found that the build-up for mirthful situations boosted health-protecting hormones. So there you have it: laughter really is the best medicine.

LOL!

Recipe of the Week

Pesto Minestrone

Makes 8 servings

Total time: 30 minutes

2 cups coarsely chopped cauliflower, equal to 2 small heads

1-1/2 cups chopped zucchini (1-2 medium)

3 14.5oz low-sodium chicken broth

1 16oz can diced tomatoes, drained

1 cup uncooked elbow macaroni or small pasta shells

3 cups kidney beans or black-eyed peas, drained

1 cup sliced carrot

1 cup chopped onion

Pesto:

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves

1 cup fresh, loosely packed basil leaves

1 tablespoon water

To make minestrone bring 1/2 cup water to boil in 5-6 quart saucepan. Add tomatoes, cauliflower, onion & carrots. Reduce heat and simmer covered 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add zucchini, beans and pasta. Return to a boil, reduce heat and simmer uncovered 10 minutes.

To make pesto place all ingredients in food processor or blender and process until finely chopped. Just before serving, remove soup from heat and stir in pesto.

Nutrition information: Per serving: 240 calories; 5 g fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 38 g carbohydrates; 13 g protein; 12 g fiber; 130 mg sodium.

For more healthy recipes, visit the CDC's Fruits and Veggies More Matter website at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>

**“Health is a large word. It embraces not the body only but the mind and spirit as well;...and not today’s pain or pleasure alone, but the whole being and outlook of a man.”
—James H. West**

Top web sites for additional info!

tures information and resources on their website.

www.cdc.gov/workplace/ The Centers for Disease Control offers resources on workplace hazards, illness, injuries & health disorders.

www.americaonthemove.org This site provides tips, advice, and resource links.

www.nj.gov/health/fhs/njcpfs/

[getfit.shtml](#) The Get Fit New Jersey program provides fitness tips and a downloadable book.

www.getmovinggetthehealthynj.rutgers.edu The Get Moving Get Healthy NJ initiative at the NJAES Family & Community Health Sciences Department links to valuable resources, the Walk NJ Point-to-Point program, and info about the importance of sharing family meals.

www.welcoa.org The Wellness Council of America links to resources and statistics related to workplace wellness.

www.americanheart.org The American Heart Association fea-

Quick Stats on Stress

(from the American Institute of Stress):

- 40% of workers report their job as very or extremely stressful

-25% view their jobs as the primary stressor in their lives

-26% say they are often

or very often burned out or stressed by their work
-Job stress is more strongly associated with health complaints than financial or family problems.

For more info:
www.stress.org

Healthy Habits at Home

Silence your cell phone at night. Interruptions to your sleep are likely to cause you to be stressed at work the next day.