



THE STRATEGIC LINK™

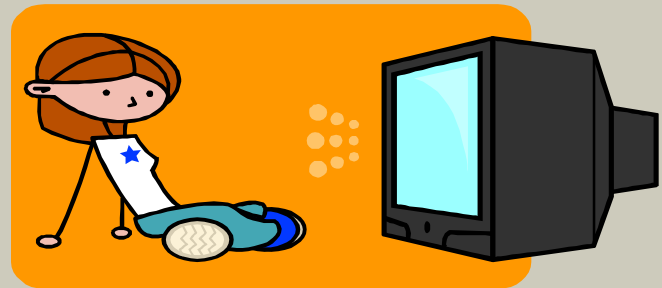
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Lack of Exercise—Sedentary Death Syndrome

Small Business Times –June 9, 2006

This may sound shocking but remember when the early warning signs of tobacco usage were considered farfetched? The organization that identified Sedentary Death Syndrome faces those same hurdles in their efforts to educate the public about the dangers of physical inactivity. Just as tobacco kills, so does inactivity.

Recent Health Risk Appraisal results show we are making progress in changing people's eating



habits, as evidenced by improvements in cholesterol levels. However, we are not seeing significant changes in weight, body fat percent or body mass index measurements. The conclusion...people are not exercising.

Studies show that 7 out of 10 American adults don't exercise despite the proven health benefits. Obesity, which is closely linked to physical inactivity, costs the United States \$117 billion per year.

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Celebrating Quitters and Losers

Quitting smoking and losing weight are among the most sought after and most difficult health goals people strive for. So when employees reach these goals,

why not celebrate their achievements? Studies show that rewarding healthy behavior helps encourage people to maintain good health habits. Here are some

ways to reinforce the positives in healthy quitting and losing: Offer congratulations, gift cards, time off, and shared celebrations.

Wellness & Safety e-bulletin Oct 06

Women and Lung Cancer

(Redbook magazine July 2006)

Women who don't smoke are twice as likely to get lung cancer as nonsmoking men. The fact is, lung cancer kills more women than breast, ovarian and uterine cancers combined—some 72,130 women in the U.S.

will die of it this year alone.

Lung cancers incidence in women has jumped fourfold in the past 30 years and 41% of all lung cancer occurs before 50. Scarier, nearly 20% of women

sufferers have never smoked. Research suggests women are more susceptible to the carcinogens in cigarette smoke.

What you can do? Smoke-proof your environment and help others quit smoking.

CDHP users more preventative, less acute care

Consumer driven health plan members seek more preventative care and less acute care than patients enrolled in preferred provider organizations, a UnitedHealth Group study reveals.

The study compared cost and utilization trends among 40,000 people in high-deductible plans connected to health reimbursement accounts to data from 15,000 people in PPOs between 2003 and 2005. About 5% more CDHP members sought preventative care, compared to PPO enrollees, during each of the three years.

Hospital admissions and emergency room visits fell among CDHP users annually, but increased among PPO users.

Chronically ill CDHP enrollees reduced their use of acute care, but continued to visit their primary care physician at the same rate as their peers in traditional plans. Cost per member fell 3% to 5% among CDHP users, but rose 8% to 10% among PPO participants, compared to the 2003 baseline.

The results are "not yet conclusive," admits Mike Tarino, CEO of Definity Health, a UnitedHealth Group company, but they support anecdotal reports that CDHPs can lower costs and boost health care outcomes.

CDHPs can reduce cost-sharing for patients who spend the least and the most on health care, but increase cost-sharing for those who fall in the midrange, according to

a new study published in *Health Affairs*.

With HSA contributions shielded from federal and state income taxes in most states, very healthy people would have lower cost-sharing under a CDHP than under a comprehensive plan.

Those with medical expenses between \$700 and \$2,500 per year would see an increase in cost-sharing. PricewaterhouseCoopers health care expert Mike Thompson says HSAs have the most influence in low-cost, high-frequency items like office visits and prescriptions.

(Benefits News July 13, 2006)



"We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves strong. The amount of the work is the same."
-Carols Castaneda

Lack of Exercise

(Continued from page 1)

“Most people will tell you that eating right and exercise are important parts of a healthy lifestyle,” says Karin Peterson, Certified Health and Fitness Specialist. “But most people will also tell you that they practice neither.”

Peterson believes that emotional, not information, drives lifestyle choices. “We need to meet people where they are at emotionally, physically and intellectually, and explore the

barriers that keep them stuck in the current lifestyles choices.”

We have to actually make a plan to get physically active. Surveys have revealed the excuses for not exercising and here are some solutions.

- Lack of time— Schedule your exercise time.
- Fatigue—Regular exercise will give you more energy.
- Perception about adequate exercise—daily activity

does not provide enough physical activity.

- Difficulty getting started— start with small goals.
- Difficulty staying motivated—Give yourself rest days and change your routine.
- Changes take to long—give your body time to react to exercise.
- Taking time away from family—take family walks and show your family the importance of physical activity.

Wonderful Website

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/calorie-calculator/NU00598>

This Mayo Clinic website will help you calculate your daily caloric intake. All you need is your height, weight, age and activity level. If you were to increase your activity level, It will also show you what your new calorie amount would be.

The Mayo Clinic website prides itself on providing “tools for healthy lives.” The Healthy Living tab has many categories on health and wellness.

The Food and Nutrition category (under the Healthy Living tab) provides resources such as the food pyramid, elements of a healthy diet, healthy cooking techniques, nutrition facts and grocery lists.



The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.
-Stephen Covey

The B&A Buzz

B&A is welcoming a new team member, Valerie Lemke, the Communication and Wellness Specialist.

Valerie comes to us from a school district in southeastern Wisconsin

where she worked in the Human Resources Department and was the Wellness Coordinator. Valerie has a Bachelors degree in Communication from the University of Wisconsin, Parkside.



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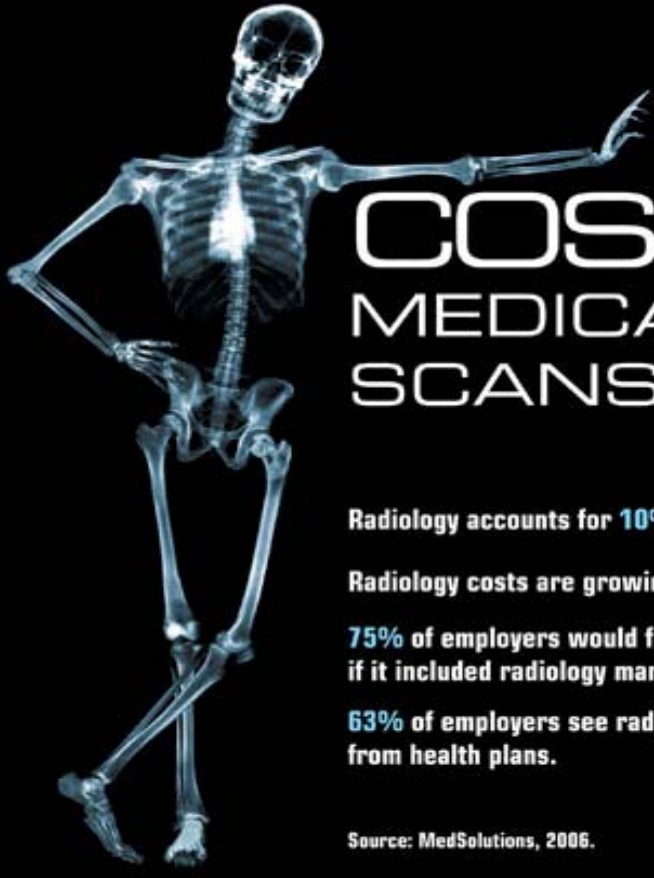


just good business.

To keep the body in
good health is a duty....
Otherwise we will not be
able to keep our mind
strong and clear.

-Buddha

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COSTLY MEDICAL SCANS

Radiology accounts for **10%** of health spending.

Radiology costs are growing by **18% to 20%** each year.

75% of employers would find a health plan more appealing if it included radiology management.

63% of employers see radiology costs delineated in reports from health plans.

Source: MedSolutions, 2006.