



Financial Stress Affects Employees

Employees dealing with the daily anxiety of financial burden may put their health at risk. A recent Consumer Financial Protection Bureau study finds 61% of employees cited finances as their number one stressor. Of these respondents, 45% said the stress was overwhelming and 52% said they had experienced changes in sleep quality and quantity or irritability issues from this stress. This financial stress increases their likelihood for heart conditions like high blood pressure, ulcers and digestive issues. The cost impact on your benefits claims experience and absences or disability leave can be significant. If you are experiencing this type of difficulty in your life you can alleviate the stress by making a realistic weekly budget.

This is often the most difficult part of the process, because you will need to list all monthly bills and up coming expenditures. Now make sure that you allow yourself some weekly spending money above and beyond the necessities, even if it is just a few dollars. Pay down as much extra debt and interest as quickly as possible especially credit card debt with high interest rates. Mortgage interest rates are generally lower and not considered to be 'bad' debt. Financial stability won't happen overnight but the pro active approach helps with stress.

continued

Get into the habit of asking yourself before each purchase "Can I live without this thing". By being pro active you will soon begin to feel better.

Water Saving Tips:

- When hand washing dishes, use a dish pan so that you can save the left over water for watering the garden.
- Store a water bucket in the kitchen, pour used water from boiled eggs or salad washing into bucket and use on the garden when bucket is full.
- Buckets of used bath, dish or washing water can be used to flush toilet.
- Mulch garden to keep moisture in the soil.
- Water plants very early in the morning to avoid evaporation.
- Rethink that shiny car and green lawn, maybe it's not a pretty thing in the Summer.
- If a lawn is to be seeded it could be done in the Fall or early Spring not in the Summer.
- Check for leaking pipes, faucets and hoses, it's suprising how many litres of water a day can be lost through leakage.
- Keep drinking water in the fridge to avoid running tap water to get a cold drink.
- Wait for a full load to run dishwasher or to do laundry.
- Take a short shower and use a low flow shower head.
- Turn off water while brushing teethe.
- Use a broom not a hose to clean the sidewalk or driveway.
- 3/4 of all water is used in the bathroom, so try to use less.
- Install rain barrels under your down pipes.



Sun Safety

We do need sunshine for it's healthy vitamin D and feel good effects. But too much of a good thing can be damaging to our health.

Skin cancer is the number 1 health risk and so it is important to understand how to prevent over exposure.

Tip # 1 ...think ahead. Plan your activities according to the time of day and location.

Going for a road run at 2 pm is not a good idea, but running in the forest or in the gym at 2 pm is sun safe.

Off to the beach? Great, but do you have a shade umbrella, hat and sunscreen? Tennis anyone? Probably not a good idea in the middle of the day, better to play before 10am or after 6:30pm.

Tip # 2 ... keep a supply of non toxic sunscreen in your bag for ready use.

Non toxic sunscreens don not contain carcinogens such as parabens.

Tip # 3 ... Protect your eyes with good quality sunglasses that absorb/protect 99 to 100 percent UVA and UVB light.



Tip #4 ... Wear a hat with a 3 inch brim to block up to half of the UVB rays from your eyes or eyelids.

Tip #5 ... Check the UV index before going outside, if it is moderate or above wear sunscreen, hat and sunglasses.

Tip # 6 ... UVA rays can pass through glass, protect yourself with a screen.

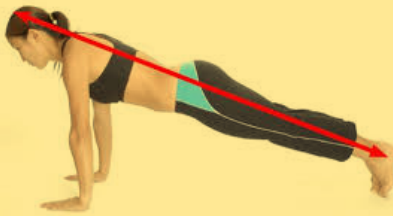


To contribute ideas to the Wellness Newsletter please contact Sue Tompkins stompkins@comox.ca



Get The Most From Your Workout

A few exercises done properly can be far more beneficial than many exercises performed with poor technique. Incorrect form is a major cause of injury even in the most simple exercises. To focus on intended muscle groups the amount of weight and muscle group need to coincide to be productive. Even a push up needs to be performed



correctly; as you can see in the picture the head stays up in line with the back and ankles. The body stays firm and supportive through the motion not allowing the mid section to drop. Really every muscle group is engaged but the arms create the motion.

Even a few of these pushups done correctly can be very strengthening. The same focus on proper technique applies to weight lifting. Lift a comfortable amount of weight that can be repeated 15 times. Don't set yourself back by over lifting because you are more likely to be injured than to increase strength. Maintain correct posture and always engage the core when lifting. Breathe throughout the motion since holding your breath can dangerously increase blood pressure. Breathe out when lifting and in when lowering. Book a fitness trainer to learn more about proper form and technique.



HOW TO ENCOURAGE A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

It can be a delicate balance trying to encourage co-workers to be healthy. Telling friends what they 'should do' can create guilt and resentment.

Maybe we could just remove the word 'should' from the health dictionary.

Some of us feel bad about health routines and find ourselves saying,

- "I was doing ok for a while but I had to stop because I'm too busy".
- "I'm so mad at myself for falling off the wagon".
- "I wish I wasn't so bad at sticking to it"

Self blame and scolding will not help most of us get inspired. I know for myself I usually revert to chocolate and potato chips when I feel that I have failed. Working people are busy and many also care for young families or elderly parents. Time is valuable and it is not always easy to give up family time for fitness. So how can we encourage a healthy work force?

- 1) Acknowledge small efforts in co-workers ...don't patronize
- 2) Ask a co-worker to walk with you on a lunch break
- 3) Be careful not to preach about what people 'should' do
- 4) Carry on with your own fitness and often co-workers are encouraged by the example you set
- 5) Work places could offer reduced rates for fitness fees
- 6) Share food...bring in garden vegetables or start a weekly group salad bowl. Everyone adds one item to the mix.
- 7) Be supportive and non judgemental with peoples choices.

Recipe

Quinoa Bites

unsalted butter

2 1/2 cups cooked quinoa, at room temperature

4 large eggs, beaten

scant 1/2 teaspoon fine grain sea salt

1 small onion, finely chopped

1/2 cup crumbled feta

1 clove garlic, minced

1 cup very finely chopped kale

1/2 cup shelled edamame

3/4 cup bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 375f, with the rack in the top area.



Butter mini-muffin tins generously, and line with a strip of parchment paper in each indent, this makes popping the bites out of the pan after either baking or freezing simple (see photo).

Combine the quinoa, eggs, and salt in a medium bowl. Stir in the onion, feta, garlic, kale, and edamame. Stir in most of the bread crumbs, and let sit for a few minutes so the bread crumbs can absorb some of the moisture. Fill the prepared muffin tins with the quinoa mixture, pressing the mixture down, and then sprinkling with the remaining bread crumbs. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until baked through and deeply golden crusted.

Remove the quinoa bites from the pans after a few minutes. Enjoy either hot, or at room temperature spread with salted avocado and lots of chopped chives.

Makes 2 dozen mini-bites.