

Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program

October 2012

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Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse



Here are some signs and symptoms to look out for if you are concerned about the possibility of a loved one being involved with substance abuse of any kind. Different drugs produce different effects resulting in slight variations in outward indications. Some signs and symptoms are specific to opiates and narcotics and distinct from those experienced with Central Nervous Stimulants like Cocaine or depressants like alcohol.

The National Library of Medicine documents these telltale signs in drug-taking children that should alert parents:

- Change in friends-hanging out with a new group
- Seclusive behavior - long periods spent in self-imposed isolation
- Long, unexplained absences
- Lying and stealing
- Involvement on the wrong side of the law
- Deteriorating family relationships
- Obvious intoxication, delirious, incoherent or unconscious
- Changes in behavior and attitude
- Decrease in school performance

Always remember that any one of the above signs may not be enough to indicate substance abuse but should be enough to suggest that there may be a problem.

There are several other signs and symptoms that relate more specifically to the mental and physiological effects of substance abuse.

An obvious sign of opiate and narcotic abuse is the tracks of needle marks normally found on the upper arms of users. These needle marks often turn into skin abscesses that may leave visible scars. People who use this type of drug often cover up their arms even when the weather suggests more appropriate wear.

Opiate and narcotic abusers will experience an accelerated heart rate, constricted pinpoint pupils and a relaxed or euphoric state that may lead to a dangerous level of respiratory depression resulting in coma or death.

Other signs and symptoms of drug abuse are dilated pupils, restlessness, hyperactivity, euphoria, slurred speech, disabled coordination, decreased attention span and impaired judgment.

Source: Government information from The National Library of Medicine in the Public Domain.

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Webinar Reminder

Signs & Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Connect with Deer Oaks and a trained counselor for live confidential chats.

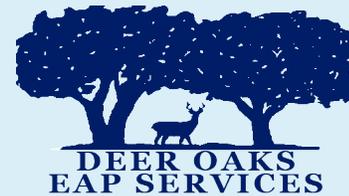
When:

October 17, 2012

Session Times (CDT):

- 12:15 PM to 12:45 PM
- 6:00 PM to 6:30 PM





10 Quick Exercise Tips for Enhancing Overall Health

by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

There are enough studies showing the value of daily exercise to convince even the most skeptical of folks. The benefits of a daily workout include reducing long-term health conditions (such as coronary artery disease and Type II Diabetes), helping maintain or reduce weight, increasing muscle and bone strength, boosting self-esteem, lifting our spirits, and generally enhancing overall health.

By committing as little as 30 minutes a day (which you can even break into smaller increments) to fitness, you'll see and feel the results of your dedication while avoiding hypokinetic diseases such as obesity -- which are conditions related to inactivity and sedentary lifestyles.

Here are 10 quick exercise tips for healthier living and improved overall health.

- 1. Just do it... daily.** You don't need fancy equipment or an expensive gym membership to get started working out -- but you do need to make the time, even if it is just three 10 minute workouts throughout the day. Just remember to get the OK from your doctor before starting -- and then make a commitment to daily fitness.
- 2. Choose to walk.** By walking to work or choosing the stairs over the elevator, you can build at least part of your exercise into your work or school day. The current movement is for people to walk 10,000 steps daily -- the equivalent to about five miles. Even if you do other workouts, adding walking to your daily fitness routine is an easy and smart choice.
- 3. Stretch it out.** Before you begin any strenuous kind of workout, take the time to do a few basic stretches. Stretching increases flexibility, which leads to reduced risk of injury from exercising, but it also gives your muscles a light workout and increases your strength.
- 4. Find a workout buddy.** Always exercising by yourself can get both lonely and boring. Having a friend as a workout buddy can not only make exercising more enjoyable, but you'll also find yourself more motivated to workout -- especially if you are having a friendly competition.
- 5. Take a hike.** Nothing beats the combination of walking and being in a natural setting. Find a local park or preserve and walk vigorously while enjoying the natural beauty of your surroundings. Just remember to stay on the trails and be extra careful when hiking up or down steep hills.
- 6. Ride a bike.** Nothing beats riding a bicycle -- whether to commute to work, run errands, explore local attractions, or simply to bike around the neighborhood. Remember to adjust the bike seat to fit your height, always wear a helmet, and ride with traffic while obeying all vehicular laws and regulations.



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7. **Play a sport.** One way to obtain the exercise you need is to make it part of something larger -- as well as part of a competition. Consider sports such as tennis, golf, or basketball -- and have fun competing against others while getting in better shape.
8. **Join a gym.** Be careful of sinking too much money into something you may never fully use (or stop using after a few short visits), but a gym membership opens the door to many types of exercises -- often with the option of having an exercise routine developed for you by a personal trainer.
9. **Keep hydrated.** Always bring a water bottle with you whenever you are exercising. Staying hydrated is essential to a good workout -- and essential to good health. Next to oxygen, water is the most crucial element your body needs to function well. Drink before and during a workout.
10. **Make it fun.** Fitness should be fun. If you dread exercising, then your workouts will become what diets are to eating -- something you feel you have to do, but for which you find no enjoyment or satisfaction. Exercise in a favorite place -- or to some favorite music. And occasionally reward yourself when you achieve a fitness goal.



Final Thoughts

If you are truly serious about improving your health and wellness, then exercise must be part of your daily life. While you should start any workout routine slowly -- and only after consulting with your doctor -- the ideal plan is dedicating at least an hour to a varied fitness and exercise routine. The hour can be broken into smaller time periods -- and you should strive for a weekly combination of strength-building and aerobic exercises.

Finally, don't limit yourself when exercising. Look for exercise videos and DVDs -- and programs run by your local parks and recreation office or YMCA -- to find other beneficial fitness tools such as swimming, rebounding, kickboxing, yoga, dance, Pilates, Tai Chi, stepping, and others. If you have the financial resources, consider buying a Wii Fit, which has balance, strength-training, yoga, and aerobic exercises.

Source:

EmpoweringRetreat.com: 10 Quick Exercise Tips for Enhancing Overall Health

High Blood Pressure Deflated

Physical fitness may reduce the risk of high blood pressure in people with a family history of it.

If your parents have a history of high blood pressure, you can significantly reduce your risk of developing the disease with moderate exercise and increased heart-healthy fitness, according to research in the American Heart Association's *Journal Hypertension*.

In a study of more than 6,000 people, those who had a parent with high blood pressure but were highly fit had a 34% lower risk of developing high blood pressure themselves, compared to those with a low-fitness level who had the same family history.

Health-e headlines TM

An EAP Reminder

Life Can Be Hectic. The EAP Can Help You Find Your Balance.

Deer Oaks, your EAP, is always available to you and your household members.

If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.

Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.





Personal Budgeting: Plan for Periodic Expenses Instead of Being Surprised by Them

Some household expenses come every year whether you're ready or not. For example, both holiday and tax debts are periodic, meaning they are not part of regular monthly expenditures. In that regard, they join the ranks of other expenses such as auto registrations and vacations. Often, we know when these events will occur, but still fail to plan for them. Unfortunately, when these expenses arise, many people rely upon credit to extend their monthly incomes; using credit this way is one sign of pending financial trouble. To avoid this scenario, follow these tips when planning for periodic expenses:

- **Determine what you spent last year for periodic expenses:**
Assume that you will spend close to the same amount this year.
- **Don't hide expenses:**
Just because you don't list an expense doesn't mean you won't have to spend money on it. Don't forget things like back-to-school expenses, auto repairs, routine maintenance, and birthday gifts. Remember that some items, like auto insurance premiums, may occur more than once a year.
- **Expect the unexpected:**
Cushioning your savings account for those "unplanned" expenses can make the difference between a minor financial setback and a major financial disaster.



When you have a realistic idea of what you will need to spend on periodic expenses during the year, divide the total amount by 12 and save that amount each month. Designating a savings account for this purpose may help to organize this process. Check with your financial institution, you may be able to have the amount automatically transferred to save you the hassle.

Accelerate your savings schedule by including all of your "windfall" money. This "free money" includes increased income from a pay increase, birthday gifts, insurance settlements, escrow overages, and inheritances. Since this is extra money that you don't normally rely on, you won't miss it if you deposit it directly into your savings account.

Finally, don't forget to revisit your overall spending plan several times throughout the year to make sure you are on track. Common sense and flexibility are important keys to financial success.

About Money Management International

Money Management International (MMI) is a nonprofit, full-service credit-counseling agency, providing confidential financial guidance, financial education, counseling and debt management assistance to consumers since 1958. MMI helps consumers trim their expenses, develop a spending plan and repay debts. Counseling is available by appointment in branch offices and 24/7 by telephone and Internet. Services are available in English or Spanish. To learn more, call 800.432.7310 or visit www.MoneyManagement.org.