Take Charge

a Wellness Connection newsletter

January 2013

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Let's jumpstart the New Year with new health goals.

Consider your current health, stress and fitness levels, and how your new goals will fit into your lifestyle.

Don't wait. Make a plan and get moving!

New year, new you!

Happy New Year from the Wellness Connection team!

Busy getting reorganized for the new year? Don't forget to fulfill your wellness engagement, get healthy and save yourself $300.

There are five ways to complete the requirement:

- Speak with a Cigna health coach over the phone by calling 800-997-1406. Tell the representative you are a city employee.
- Attend a health improvement seminar. A list of seminars can be found at houstonwellnessconnection.org.
- Get additional preventive care such as a mammogram or dental checkup. Only preventive care activities between May 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013 can count toward your fulfillment.
- Attend a Weight Watchers introductory class at a city facility.
- Sign up for the YMCA Smart Start program. See attached for participating YMCA locations. (Need to include location attachment.)

Visit houstonwellnessconnection.org to register for a health improvement seminar, Smart Start at the YMCA, or a Weight Watchers class.

Employees who subscribe to a city Cigna health plan must complete a wellness engagement requirement between October 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013, or pay an additional monthly $25 May 2013 through April 2014.

What to expect from your wellness team in 2013

- The ongoing 2012 wellness engagement ends March 31, 2013.
- The annual health assessment will run June 1, 2013 through Aug. 31, 2013.
- The 2013 wellness engagement will begin in November.
- NEW! Monthly awareness campaigns: Jan. 1, 2013 – Dec. 31, 2013.
    - Your wellness team is hitting the road and coming to a building near you! Look for a wellness team member at your city facility.

Prevention Tips

Worn out from the holiday overload? It's normal to feel tired and frumpy after the holidays. Here are a few things to get you moving from holiday slump into New Year bliss.

Clean out your refridgerator and pantry. Get rid of all the unhealthy holiday extras. Replace them with wholesome snacks and foods. Opt for fruits, vegetables and lean proteins, and cut back on foods high in calories, fat and sugar.

Invest in a pair of good tennis shoes. Having the right kind of footwear when exercising is likely to help you avoid injuries. Also, you are more likely to exercise with your new tennis shoes rather than see them collect dust in your closet.

Order a health magazine for well-researched facts and tips about health. While many people enjoy reading online,

receiving health news in a hard copy at your doorstep can be a convenient alternative for others.

Bag it or box it. Instead of eating out, try packing a healthy meal. You'll be less tempted to eat oversized portions and make unhealthy choices. Always rushing in the morning? Pack your lunch the night before and set a daily reminder to get it before you leave in the morning.

Showcase your new healthy eating plan with a healthy family dinner. Over dinner,

- Department-specific wellness programs: Jan. 1, 2013 – Dec. 31, 2013
  - The wellness team will host department-specific competitions and challenges to help employees improve their health.

Win an iPad, Wii, or Samsung Galaxy tablet

Complete your wellness engagement requirement early and earn chances to win an iPad, a Nintendo Wii Ultimate Bundle (console plus three fitness games), or a Samsung Galaxy Tablet.

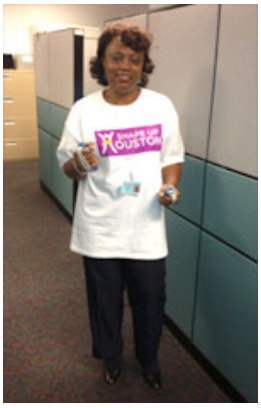
- Three chances to win if you complete the requirement between Oct.1, 2012 and Jan.31, 2013.
- Two chances if you complete the requirement between Feb. 1 and 28, 2013.
- One chance if you complete the requirement between March 1 and 31, 2013.

Taking the Next-step Challenge

We challenge each city department to have at least a 90 percent wellness engagement completion rate of eligible employees. The department with the highest completion rate in their specic department-size level will be crowned a Taking the Next Step Challenge champion.

- **Level A - Departments with at least 1,500 employees:** Fire, Police, Public Works and Engineering
- **Level B - Departments with 500 to 1,499 employees:** Aviation, Health and Human Services, Library, Parks and Recreation
- **Level C - Departments with up to 499 employees:** Administrative and Regulatory Affairs, City Council Offices, City Secretary's Office, Controller's Office, Office of Business Opportunity, Neighborhoods, Finance, Fleet Management, General Services, Housing and Community Development, Houston Emergency Center, Human Resources, Information Technology, Legal, Mayor's Office, Municipal Courts, Planning and Development, Solid Waste Management

Find what fits with Shape Up Houston



Join the city's Walk a Marathon in a Month Challenge by signing up for a free account at shapeuphouston.org. Click "Get Started", create an account and join your department group. If you join before Jan. 31, you will be entered into a drawing for a $50 Target gift card. Use the activity log to enter all your physical activities. Complete 26.2 miles by Feb. 7 and get a chance to win an iPad!

Check out Ms. Yvonne Stafford in Human Resources doing her daily power-walk!

Weight Watchers

Weight

talk about your wellness goals and workout plan. Getting your family involved increases your chances of success while helping improve your family's overall health.

Feb. 1 is National Wear Red Day

Help raise awareness about the number one killer of women – heart disease.

Wear your favorite red dress, shirt, or tie to show your support for The Heart Truth campaign, a national movement that asks women to speak with their doctor about their risk of developing heat disease.

Don't wait. Make an appointment to see your doctor to learn if you are at risk for heart disease. Visit the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute to learn more.

New city employees

New employees who are subscribed to a

city health plan with their benefit effective dates between September 1, 2012, and February 28, 2013, must complete one wellness engagement activity.

24-hour health information line

City employees who subscribe to a Cigna health plan can call the Cigna customer service line, 800-997-1406, to talk to a nurse about health issues, get assistance, or access a health information audio library to learn about a wide range of health topics.

Registered nurses will speak with you 24 hours a day. They can:

You can sign up for Weight Watchers at a discount with no joining fee, thanks to the city Wellness Connection initiative.
You can pay the monthly-pass fee of $39.99 plus tax with a debit or credit card, and the card information will be used for your pass to be automatically renewed each month until you cancel it.

Come to one of the following meetings to find out more and talk with a Weight Watchers instructor.

Every Thursday, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.
1200 Travis St., 24th floor, ADR conference room

Every Thursday, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
900 Bagby St., third floor conference room

Or sign up today for your monthly pass:

- Log on to https://wellness.weightwatchers.com
- Enter the following
  - Company ID: **56929**
  - Company pass code: **ww56929**
- Sign up for a location convenient for you.

If you have any problems purchasing your monthly pass, please call Weight Watchers at 866-204-2885.

We are working with Weight Watchers to revamp our program. Look for more information in next month's Take Charge.

Help you locate doctors or pharmacies if you're away from home.
Direct you to call 911 or other area emergency services if you need emergency care.
Answer questions about your symptoms and advise you on self or professional care.

Call Cigna's customer service line at the above number, which is also on your Cigna health insurance card, and listen to prompts to be directed to the 24-hour nurse line and health information audio library.

January health seminars

Come learn more about leading a healthier lifestyle. We have more than two dozen seminars through early February on heart health, diabetes and stress for employees designed to meet city employees' needs. Don't delay. Sign up at houstonwellnessconnection.org today!