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is a **free** service
for you and your
eligible family members.

All EAP services are
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Better Choices for a Healthier Lifestyle

Have you been hesitant to try to break your bad health habits because you thought the task would be too difficult? Then get ready for some good news.

“Every day, new research indicates that Americans can take control of their own health by making simple and realistic lifestyle changes,” says Lawrence Stifler, Ph.D., a behavioral psychologist and president of Health Management Resources in Boston. “By modifying a few of their unhealthy behaviors, people can actually lengthen and improve the quality of their lives. A small commitment of a few hours a week could add eight to ten quality years to a person’s life.”

How healthy you’ll be in coming years can be predicted by your number of risk factors for disease. Having one risk factor doesn’t necessarily doom you to poor health, but your odds increase dramatically when several risks are combined. For example, high cholesterol increases the likelihood of developing heart disease. People who smoke, have high cholesterol and high blood pressure dramatically increase their risk for heart attack.

Your disease risk is determined by factors that fall into these three categories:

Medical indicators: obesity and being overweight, high cholesterol, elevated blood pressure, high blood sugar, a previous or on-going major medical problem, and a family history of genetic or biological problems.

Lifestyle behaviors: smoking, a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet low in fiber, fruit, and vegetables, excessive alcohol consumption, drug use, and a sedentary lifestyle.

Environmental conditions: exposure to secondhand smoke, failure to use seat belts, and prolonged exposure to sun and radon.

No matter how many years you’ve practiced bad habits and no matter your



age, you can make a fresh start and improve your health.

Get out and walk

Exercise is probably the single most important thing you can do for your health. Regular physical activity — 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week — can reduce your risk for heart disease, hypertension, obesity, stress, and osteoporosis. If you don’t like walking or running, consider bicycling, swimming, or aerobic dancing.

Eat your veggies

Eating 2-1/2 cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit every day displaces some of the fat in your diet and may lower your risk for heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Avoid smothering the fruits and vegetables in high-fat, high-sugar creams and sauces, cheese, butter, or chocolate.

Use seat belts

Wearing a seat belt reduces your risk of dying in an automobile accident by almost 60 percent. To be effective, seat belts must be worn 100 percent of the time.

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Learning the Power of Patience

You know the price you pay for being impatient -- a tightening of the chest, rise in blood pressure and surge of irritation and anger directed at a person or circumstance.

But have you considered the benefits that come with being patient? You make better decisions, reduce your stress and anger and increase your peace of mind.

“Patience with yourself, with other people and with the big and small circumstances of life is a determining factor in your peace of mind,” says M.J. Ryan, author of “The Power of Patience.” “Impatience is a habit; so is patience. And by practicing being patient, you can increase its presence and power in your life.”



Ms. Ryan defines patience as the capacity to stop before you act so you're clearly able to decide the best course of action or choose the right words to say instead of simply reacting. Patience accomplishes this by bringing these three qualities of mind and heart together:

Persistence. Patience gives you the ability to work steadily toward your goals and dreams.

Serenity. Patience gives you calmness of spirit. Rather than being thrown into anger, panic or fear by circumstance, you can put it into perspective and keep your cool.

Acceptance. Patience gives you the ability to cope with obstacles graciously and respond to life's challenges with courage, strength and optimism.

“It's easy to be accepting when all is well,” says Ms. Ryan. “But when you're patient when things aren't going the way you want, you're truly practicing patience.”

Patience boosters

“Patience is something you do, not something you have or don't have,” says Ms. Ryan. “It's a decision you make again and again. Patience is a quality that can be strengthened like a muscle.”

Here are several steps you can take to strengthen your patience:

Reframe the situation by asking yourself one question: How else could I look at this situation that would increase the possibility of a good outcome or greater peace of mind? “What you're looking for is an interpretation that offers possibility instead of panic, hope instead of hysteria,” says Ms. Ryan. “Your payoff will be a huge jump in your ability to engage resourcefully with life when it doesn't appear to be going your way.”

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Wear sunscreen

Protect your skin from the sun by wearing sunscreen or sun block, protective clothing, and a hat. In order to get enough vitamin D, however, expose your face, arms, hands, or back (without sunscreen) to the sun for 10 to 15 minutes at least two times per week. More exposure than this to the sun is a primary cause of skin cancer. Limit your time in the sun, even if you take these measures.

Quit smoking

Even if you can't kick the habit completely, you still can lower your health risk by reducing the number of cigarettes you smoke.

Avoid secondhand smoke

Government figures estimate smoke accounts for 25,000 to 50,000 deaths in this country every year. It clearly affects lung function, and probably contributes to deaths from heart attack and lung cancer. Try eliminating it from your home and workplace — the two places you probably spend the most time.

Reduce the fat in your diet

Avoid fried foods and reduce the amount of saturated and trans fats that you consume.

Eat fish twice a week

People who regularly eat baked, grilled, or broiled fish have significantly lower

levels of heart disease. If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, limit your fish intake to no more than 12 ounces of fish per week, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

Be radon aware

Test your house for radon if this carcinogen is known to pose a threat in your area.

Be a role model

Your children and other family members are likely to develop lifestyle habits based on what they see you do.

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Coaching: What Makes an Effective Coach?

As a manager, supervisor, or team leader, you probably have valuable experience that can be shared with your co-workers to create a more effective team. But experience alone won't make you an effective coach. Below is a list of other tips and techniques that are important for you to learn in order to mentor and support your team well:

- Recognize and develop your employees' strengths.
- Ask for ideas and listen to what your team members share.
- Look at your employees as partners who drive the success of your organization.
- Give your employees recognition when they succeed.
- Set and model workplace performance.
- Hold your team members accountable when they don't meet organizational expectations.
- Remind everyone of their roles and responsibilities.
- Provide training opportunities and additional support programs.
- Give your team members the room to do their jobs.
- Define priorities and expectations for each employee.
- Understand that you're a role model and can positively and negatively influence the workplace.
- Keep things said to you in confidence, except when such information is illegal.
- Give clear reasons behind your decisions.
- Provide notice to your employees in advance of the changes that are coming in your company.
- Set meetings to discuss workplace performance with each team member.
- Do your part to protect employees from harmful, on-the-job stress.
- Encourage your employees when they feel overwhelmed by or lost in their work.
- Build trust with your team members at every opportunity.



Written by Life Advantages - Author Delvina Miremadi ©2015

Five Things You Should Know About Credit Cards

1. Use them carefully. Credit cards offer great benefits, especially the ability to buy now and pay later. But you've got to keep the debt levels manageable. If you don't, the costs in terms of fees and interest, or the damage to your credit record, could be significant.
2. Choose them carefully. Don't choose a credit card just to get freebies (T-shirts or sports items) or because there's no annual fee. Look for a card that's best for your borrowing habits. Example: If you expect to carry a balance on your card from month to month, which means you'll be charged interest, it's more important to look for a card with a low interest rate or a generous "grace period" (more time before your payments are due).
3. Pay as much as you can to avoid or minimize interest charges. If possible, pay your bill in full each month. Remember, paying only the minimum due each month means you'll be paying a lot of interest for many years, and those costs could far exceed the amount of your original purchase.

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4. Pay on time. You'll avoid a late fee of about \$35 or more. But more importantly, continued late payments on your credit card may be reported to the major credit bureaus as a sign that you have problems handling your finances. And if your credit rating gets downgraded, your card company could raise the interest rate on your credit card, reduce your credit limit (the maximum amount you can borrow) or even cancel your card. Late payment on your credit card also can be a mark against you the next time you apply for an apartment or a job.
5. Protect your credit card numbers from thieves. Never provide your credit card numbers — both the account numbers and expiration date on the front and the security code on the back — in response to an unsolicited phone call, e-mail or other communication you didn't originate.

When using your credit card online make sure you're dealing with a legitimate Web site and that your information will be encrypted (scrambled for security purposes) during transmission.

Major credit card companies also are offering more protection by providing "zero-liability" programs that protect consumers from the unauthorized use of their card.

In general, only give your credit card or card numbers to reputable merchants or other organizations.

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Remind yourself that change is inevitable. When times are tough, it's helpful to remember that this, too, shall pass. Doing so gives you the strength, hope and patience needed to carry on.

Take yourself on a mental vacation. "If you're aggravated by standing in line or waiting on hold on the phone, visualize the most peaceful place you can think of. See, hear and feel yourself there," says Ms. Ryan. "Rather than focusing on how long you have to wait, relish a chance to take a quick daydream trip to Tahiti or the Alps."

Ask for help. Lots of times we're impatient because we're overloaded. "There's no prize at the end of your life for doing too much, particularly doing it in a frazzled state," says Ms. Ryan.

Start a patience movement. Thank others for being patient when you've been the one fumbling for the right change and holding up everyone. "It will defuse their tension and yours, and perhaps encourage others to be more patient as well," says Ms. Ryan.

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How to Use Your EAP

When help is needed call 800-433-2320. The intake counselor will ask for your name, employer and a brief description of your presenting concern. If an emergency exists you will be given immediate assistance. If your situation is not an emergency, you will be offered telephone assistance and/or in-person sessions to complete an assessment and make a referral for treatment if needed.

Meetings with your counselor are completely confidential. Your employer will not know you have used the EAP. No one will be provided any information about you without your written consent. Exceptions would occur only in the event of you being considered dangerous to yourself or someone else.

At the first appointment you should be prepared to give the counselor some background information to assist in formulating an action plan. Many people find it helpful to prepare a list of things they wish to discuss at each session.

For Assistance Call: 800-433-2320
Or Text: 503-980-1777
www.cascadecenters.com

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