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Why Workplace Wellness Program?

The American Heart Association has launched an ambitious movement to create a culture of healthy eating and physical activity throughout the country. We're putting our plan into action where most Americans spend a lot of time: at work. It's a long-term commitment. And we're passionate about it. But the more we learn about heart disease and stroke, the more we understand what a huge difference physical activity and healthy eating can make.

THE BAD NEWS

As a nation, heart disease and stroke are killing us. Seventy percent of us don't get enough exercise. We don't have time. We're not motivated. We're full of excuses. Our eating habits aren't much better. Every day, the average American eats more than double the recommended limit of 1,500 milligrams of sodium.

This is not only bad for individuals. It also hurts employers. At least 25 percent of healthcare costs for workers are the result of poor diet and lack of exercise. Those are things we can fix.

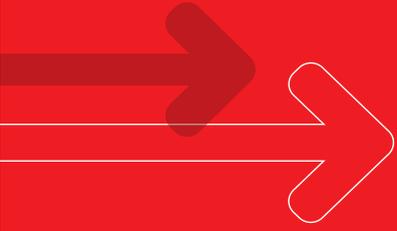
THE GOOD NEWS

All it takes is 30 minutes of exercise a day to put someone on the path to a stronger, healthier life. And a longer life. Studies indicate employees can gain about two hours of life expectancy for each hour of regular exercise. Heart health gets a boost, stroke risk drops, and blood pressure and bad cholesterol stay under control. That can make everyone feel better.

Employers also gain from a healthy workforce. Reducing just one health risk increases a person's productivity by 9 percent and reduces absenteeism by 2 percent. In fact, every dollar spent on a worksite wellness program nets employers \$3 to \$15 in benefits.

Employers with on-site health and well programs get a lot in return::

- **Healthcare costs decrease by 20 to 55 percent**
- **Short-term sick leave drops by 6 to 32 percent**
- **Short-term sick leave drops by 2 to 52 percent**



Steps for Success

your step-by-step guide

Step 1

LET US HELP

First, meet with your American Heart Association representative. This is the person who will help you plan your Heart Walk, help you coordinate it with your Worksite Wellness Program, show you how to set up your teams and provide information about other resources from the Healthy Living™ Program. Find your representative by visiting heart.org/localoffice.

Step 2

GET LEADERSHIP BEHIND YOU

- Present the program to your CEO and executive leadership to request a commitment to better health for your employees.
- Ask these leaders to set the pace by launching the program with a four-week challenge.

Step 3

MAP OUT A ROUTE

- Use the icons found in your Workplace Wellness kit to map out a 1-mile walking course in your workplace, with icons placed every 50 feet.
- Consider multiple routes:
 - One course for those who can't climb stairs
 - One rigorous course for the competitive walkers
 - One outdoor course for nature lovers
- Post maps in common areas to rally participation.

Step 4

WALK YOUR COMPANY

Track your activity using an online or printable tracker to show your company's progress. It's a great way to build unity as well as develop incentive programs and initiate challenges among co-workers.

*

Step 5

GET THE WORD OUT

- Ask your CEO to send a company-wide email or voicemail inviting employees to sign up.
- Walk through your company with senior management to encourage participation.
- Send regular reminders to employees by email, voicemail, newsletters, and posters.
- Challenge your employees with fun, creative goals such as:
 - Walking the distance from Los Angeles to New York City
 - Walking the cross-country distance from one facility to another
 - Walking farther than your competing departments
 - Holding a healthy recipe contest
 - Launching a challenge to give up sugary drinks
- Put the window *decal* in high-traffic areas, such as in the front of your building, to show everyone you're walking and eating healthy.

Step 6

RECRUIT EMPLOYEES

- Send an invitation to every employee.
- Ask for volunteer Walking Group Leaders who will recruit four walkers to join each group.
- Give walking route maps to each person.

Step 7

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

- Ask employees to record their miles online.
- Calculate progress weekly and communicate that to Group Leaders.
- Ask Group Leaders to encourage participants to put mileage stickers on their participation cards. Have Leaders display their group's progress on the Group Tracking Poster.
- Share successes and congratulate employees who continue to step up the pace.

Step 8

MOTIVATE AND SUPPORT YOUR WALKERS

- Keep walking top-of-mind with weekly emails to participants.
- Motivate walkers with weekly incentives, such as bottled water or healthy snacks. To help walkers start the week off on the right foot, ask Group Leaders to distribute incentives on Mondays.

Step 9

CELEBRATE

- Ask your CEO to host a celebration the week after your walking challenge ends. We also recommend celebrating at your Heart Walk or on National Walking Day in April. It's a great way to recognize the hard work and positive change for employees, and it shows that your company is taking the right steps to create a healthy workplace.
- Make the event fun by incorporating these ideas:
 - Award prizes or gift certificates.
 - Ask employees to share personal success stories.
 - Make the celebration a potluck meal with participants using recipes from heart.org/recipes.
 - Have a contest for the best recipe.
 - Offer attendees heart-healthy snacks.

Step 10

KEEP MOVING

- Approximately every three months, update program participants with the progress your company is making toward its long-term goal. Aim to be an American Heart Association Fit-Friendly Worksite.*
- Host a celebration or recognition event every three months to celebrate your company's healthy progress.
- Have a Walking Challenge every six months or yearly to re-energize employees and bring in new recruits.
- Keep spreading the word about living a healthier life to co-workers and family members. Continue inviting them to participate in the Heart Walk.
- Don't let your employees break stride. Walk. And keep walking.

LIFESTYLE CHANGE AWARD PROGRAM

Lifestyle Change Awards allow you to acknowledge colleagues who are making positive improvements in their lifestyle. Employees can nominate others, or themselves, by completing a *nomination form* available on your Resource CD. Nominations are accepted up to 30 days before your Heart Walk.

American Heart Association volunteers review nominations and select winners. Lifestyle Change Awards are presented at the Heart Walk.



Don't Stop Now

keep going

The real health benefits continue as long as people keep moving and filling their plates with healthy foods. Be sure to get involved in our other programs so that you can make health a priority all year. Each is designed to put more spring in everyone's step.

The Fit-Friendly Worksite program recognizes employers that champion the health of their employees and work to create a culture of physical activity in the workplace. Implementing this kit is a great first step toward achieving Fit-Friendly recognition.

Applications will be accepted, reviewed and awarded by the American Heart Association for the **final** Fit-Friendly cycles in April and November of 2016.

We are excited that Fit-Friendly has expanded and evolved in to our new Workplace Health Solutions program that supports continuous quality improvement in your workplace health culture.

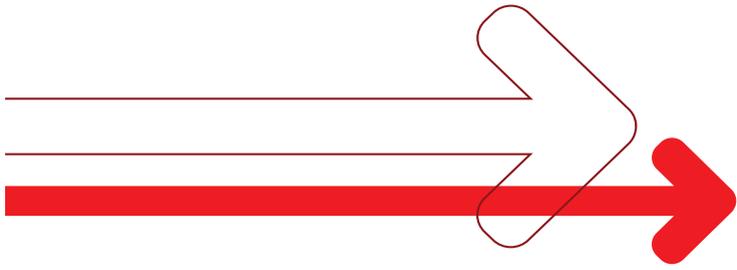
You may enroll in the Workplace Health Solutions program in addition to submitting your Fit-Friendly application in 2016. heart.org/workplacehealth

On National Walking Day, the first Wednesday in April, employees are encouraged to wear their sneakers to work and commit to walking 30 minutes a day. **National Eating Healthy Day, the first Wednesday in November,** raises awareness for the importance of good nutrition and making the best eating decisions. Companies host rallies and all-employee events to raise awareness and celebrate healthy lifestyles. These awareness days provide the perfect opportunity to get everyone excited about your health initiatives and to reward achievements. Sign up at heart.org/nationalwalkingday and heart.org/nationaleatinghealthyday.

At CEO events, business leaders gather to discuss workplace health issues and how they are creating heart-healthy companies and communities. Each event is also used to kick off local Heart Walk fundraising campaigns, launch Workplace Wellness Programs and recognize Fit-Friendly Worksites.

At the Heart Walk, the American Heart Association's signature fundraising event, more than 1 million walkers participate in 300-plus events nationwide. Walkers raise awareness about heart-healthy living as they raise money for the work that saves lives from heart disease and stroke. All by simply putting one foot in front of the other.

Visit HeartWalk.org for more information.



we can help Questions?

Here are a few of our frequently asked questions.

1. How can I help ensure the success of the programs?

Keep walking. Keep contributing. And keep moving. Staying involved in American Heart Association programs all year can help keep your employees walking consistently and eating healthy foods, which is important to a healthy workplace. With a little momentum, you'll be amazed at what you can achieve. One step at a time.

2. Will the American Heart Association organize and staff my health fair or walking event?

The American Heart Association relies on volunteers to achieve its mission. Volunteers even represent our organization at community events. If you would like a volunteer to attend your event, we will do our best to find one. Our staff is truly grateful for the ways you are supporting our mission. We couldn't do it without you.

For additional information and resources, please visit heart.org/volunteer.

3. Can I get American Heart Association products and materials for my event?

Yes. You can purchase all materials, such as pedometers, shoe wallets and other supplies at ShopHeart.org.

4. How do I get American Heart Association health brochures for my staff?

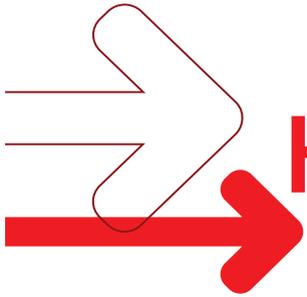
You can order our catalog of brochures at shop.krames.com/AHA.

5. How can I reach my local American Heart Association office?

Visit heart.org/localoffices to find contact information for an office near you.

6. Doesn't the American Heart Association have an online tracker and reporting center?

We used to. Unfortunately, that tool reached its end of life in September 2015 and was retired. We will communicate any development information on a new online tracking tool in our monthly Healthy Living e-newsletter and our quarterly Heart At Work e-newsletter. Sign up for those at heart.org/EnewsSignUp and heart.org/HeartAtWork.



Healthy Eating Habits for the workplace and at home

Here are easy-to-embrace healthy eating tips to lowering your risk of heart disease and stroke. Even small changes can result in big improvements that put you and your family on the path to healthier hearts and better, longer lives.

- **Download the Healthy Workplace Food & Beverage Toolkit** at heart.org/foodwhereur. This useful tool was created to help organizations improve their food environment and promote a culture of health. It provides practical action steps and suggestions that are easy to understand and apply.
- **Go meatless every now and then.** Adding meatless meals to your weekly menu is an easy way to lower your cholesterol and reduce the risk for cardiovascular diseases. Fill a pot of chili with black beans and vegetables instead of ground chuck. Find heart-healthy recipes at, heart.org/recipes
- **Have a game plan in place when eating out.** Your heart-healthy intentions may crumble when you see a menu full of calorie-loaded options. Instead, decide what heart-healthy meal you're going to order before you head out the door for lunch. That will help you avoid the temptation of ordering meals high in fat, calories and sodium. Get more tips at heart.org/diningout
- **Snack the heart-smart way.** Instead of heading to the vending

- **Take the pledge to reduce the sodium in your diet.** The average American eats about 3,400 milligrams of sodium every day. But you can make an effort to get your sodium count down to the recommended 1,500 milligrams or less by buying reduced sodium products. You can also use spices, herbs and other flavorings to give foods a kick without using salt. heart.org/sodium
- **Separate the bad from the better fats.** Not all fats are bad. Some can actually help protect your heart when consumed in moderation. These better-for-you fats are called monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and can be found in oily fish such as salmon, nuts and vegetable oils. Get more information at heart.org/fats

GET MORE AT HEART.ORG!

- Need recipes to build a heart-healthy menu or tips for healthy cooking at home? Find that and more at heart.org/healthyliving.
- Learn about heart-healthy foods before heading to the supermarket at our Heart-Check Mark Certification website, heartcheck.org.
- Log on to My Life Check at heart.org/mylifecheck to receive a personalized heart assessment and customized life plan to improve your health.