

# CLAREMONT EAP IMPACT

October-December 2010

Employee Newsletter

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Free "Simple Will" Kits are available from Claremont EAP
- A free credit report is available once per year
- Claremont EAP provides legal referrals for family law, consumer issues, traffic violations, and personal injury
- Referrals are available for child care, adult/eldercare, adoption assistance, school/college selection, and pet care

800.834.3773

[www.claremonteap.com](http://www.claremonteap.com)

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## START SOME HEALTHFUL HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

The month of December can produce extra stress, a breakdown in healthy eating habits, even depression. But you and your family can adopt some new traditions that may help relieve the season's stress and make your holidays healthy and happy.



"Each December, millions of Americans find themselves spending more money than they can afford, taking on more responsibilities than they can handle and having less relaxed time with their families than they have at any other time of the year," explains Jo Robinson, co-author of *Unplug the Christmas Machine*. "Too many people attempt to celebrate someone else's holidays. They're taking their cues on what the holidays should be from television shows, ads, store displays or their own parents, rather than doing what would be most meaningful to them."

### Your physical health

When the holidays become more than you bargained for, your physical health can be compromised because you may put aside healthy habits. And stress can put additional demands on your body. Here are some tips on maintaining your health during the holiday season:

- Don't do too much. Give yourself some time to relax.
- Share the workload. Let everyone play an active role; make the holidays a family affair so you're not burdened with all the work.
- Establish priorities. You can't do everything; say no to some demands on your time.
- Simplify your life. Be less elaborate this year. Relax your housekeeping and holiday preparations.



- Continue to exercise. Don't let your regular regimen lapse.
- Eat healthy foods and limit your consumption of high-fat holiday treats. Serve healthy fare at your family's holiday party.

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## HEALTHFUL HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

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### Your emotional health

It's easy to become overwrought this time of year, especially if you believe something is lacking in your holiday celebration. Here are some ways to create new holiday traditions that will help level your emotions:

- Ask yourself if you really enjoy all the rituals or whether they have merely become habits. Try adopting less elaborate traditions of holidays past.
- Don't be afraid to scale down gift giving. You'll probably receive a lot of support.
- If your annual party is too much to handle, postpone it until after the holidays when you have more time to prepare. This also will help alleviate post-holiday letdown by giving you something to which you can look forward.
- If you are unable to be with your family, get out around people. Plan to be with friends or volunteer to help others who also may be separated from their families.

### Happy and healthy kids

Children are especially vulnerable to commercial stimuli during the holiday season. But basically, all kids really need are realistic expectations about gifts, an even-paced holiday season and strong, loving family traditions. Here are some ways to make the holidays special for your children:

- Spend more time with your kids. Entertain less and attend fewer parties that exclude children.
- Watch less television and do more activities as a family.
- Include your kids in all preparations. Let your children help you decorate and bake, even if it means your creations aren't perfect.
- Teach children the meaning of giving. Adopt a needy family and have your youngsters help you prepare a meal for them. Suggest that your children buy a gift for an underprivileged child with their own money. Or ask them to donate one of their own gifts to a less fortunate child.
- Teach your children that gifts don't have to be tangible. Trade intangible gifts with each other -- such as helping with homework, washing the dishes and polishing shoes. Let your children come up with their own ideas of what they can offer. ■

## EVERYDAY WAYS TO ACTIVATE YOUR LIFE

Moderately intense activities (activities during which you feel some exertion but can carry on a conversation comfortably during the activity), such as walking briskly from your parked car to the mall entrance and taking your dog for a quick jog after dinner, won't help you train for a sport. But they can help you achieve and maintain a healthful weight and improve your overall fitness level.

They can also help reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis, put you in a better mood and improve your balance, coordination and agility.

You have dozens of opportunities each day to increase your activity. Here are 13 ways to help get you started. ■

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## EVERYDAY WAYS TO ACTIVATE YOUR LIFE (Continued from page 2)

### Ways to get moving:

- Pace when you're talking on the phone instead of staying put. Though this won't burn a lot of calories, getting out of your chair throughout the day can help improve your circulation.
- Deliver memos in person instead of having your assistant do it, sending them via interoffice mail or faxing them. Consider these excursions exercise breaks.
- Go window shopping or browsing in your spare time. Shopping is the ultimate easy walking workout. Wear athletic socks and walking shoes.
- Paint your house. You'll burn an average of 300 calories an hour and get a good upper-body workout.
- Clean your house vigorously. You can burn about 420 calories an hour cleaning floors, vacuuming carpets, washing windows and scrubbing tile.
- Do your own yard work and gardening. Hoeing burns about 360 calories an hour, the same as playing badminton. Cutting your lawn with a push mower burns about 420 calories an hour, on par with playing tennis. Trimming trees burns about 500 calories an hour, equivalent to swimming the crawl.
- Turn lunchtime into an exercise adventure. Don't eat at the company cafeteria or the same old place. Instead, discover new restaurants within walking distance from your workplace.
- Carry a basket instead of pushing a cart if you're getting just a few things at the supermarket. Consider it a free weight that keeps getting heavier. But switch the basket from hand to hand periodically to balance the effect on your upper-arm and shoulder muscles.
- Park your car in the garage and leave it there if you're going anywhere less than a mile away. Taking the hilliest route possible when you're walking will burn extra calories.
- Sign up for a corporate fitness challenge. Whether you walk or run, you'll have fun and feel a sense of accomplishment that can spur you to stay in shape long after the race is over.
- Limit sedentary activities during your leisure time. For example, turn off the television several nights a week. Without TV programs to distract you, you'll move around more than you would otherwise .
- Make exercise a hobby. There's nothing like getting involved in an activity to take the chore out of exercise. Whether it's salsa lessons or learning to play golf, you'll be working out without even knowing it. Dancing can burn as many calories as walking, swimming or riding a bike. Square dancers covered nearly five miles in one evening, one study found.
- Use the stairs. Each flight of stairs you climb burns 10 calories. That doesn't sound like much, but taking 10 flights a day for a year can result in a 10-pound weight loss. ■



## FIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

Personal productivity results from setting goals, learning to work effectively and knowing how to relax. Here are five ways to improve your productivity:

### 1. USE LONG-TERM AND SHORT-TERM PLANNING

Long-term plans describe what you want to accomplish in the next three months. Short-term plans cover what you plan to do today or this week. Short-term plans can also be steps toward longer-term objectives.

### 2. PRIORITIZE YOUR TASKS

Before you start any job, evaluate how it relates to your long- and short-term goals. Divide tasks into three categories: A Essential; B Important; C Nice-to-Do. When prioritizing work, ask yourself why you're doing a particular task. How urgent is it? Can it be delegated to someone else?

### 3. GET ORGANIZED

Make monthly, weekly and daily to-do lists. Stay focused on what's important. Reduce clutter on your desk and shelves. Check your calendar daily and weekly.

### 4. MANAGE YOUR TIME

Complete your most difficult tasks when your energy is at its peak. Break large jobs into smaller ones. Plan private time each day when you can work without interruptions. Screen phone calls and learn to handle unexpected visitors. Practice saying "no" to activities that don't support your long-term goals. Use your commute time wisely.

### 5. ENJOY YOUR LEISURE TIME

Have fun along the way. Make time to exercise and have fun with your family. Keep some time for yourself. Develop your own personal interests and activities. ■



## CLAREMONT EAP

Claremont distributes this newsletter to provide employees with general behavioral health information. If you have concerns about these or other behavioral health issues, you can call Claremont to arrange for assistance.

You will be directed to an appropriate, experienced professional who can offer guidance in a variety of work and family matters.

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