



HEALTH NET

FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE GUIDE



Health Net®

FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE

A WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAM FOR PROVIDERS AND THEIR STAFFS

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INTRODUCTION



HEALTH NET CARES about the health of our provider partners and acknowledges that a positive, healthy, workplace environment contributes to a favorable and productive workday. Health Net's Fit Providers for Life worksite wellness program provides simple tips and tools to develop your own customized worksite wellness program.

A worksite wellness program promotes and sustains healthy behaviors leading to increased job productivity, satisfaction and morale, and reduced absenteeism. Helping staff to be physically active and eat healthier also leads to improved health outcomes and reductions in chronic health risks by supporting stronger bones, reduced stress, boosted energy levels, a healthy weight, and an improved self-image. Empowering staff to have greater control over their lifestyle decisions is key to sustainable behavior.



DEVELOPING A WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAM



Implementing a worksite wellness program can be fun and rewarding, whether incorporating worksite improvements, an activity challenge, or just focusing on one of these areas at a time. This is an excellent opportunity for team building, healthy competition for your staff, and promoting a positive and active lifestyle.

WORKSITE IMPROVEMENT

The worksite improvement component focuses on assessing current workplace conditions, environment and staff behaviors. The purpose is to help your site adopt new policies to support healthy eating and physical activity.

FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

The worksite activity challenge introduces a 10-week program that challenges staff to be physically active while at work. Handouts and resources are included to assist staff in meeting this challenge.

The key to developing a successful wellness program is to plan the activities and steps necessary to implement and accomplish these activities, and assess whether you achieved the desired outcome.

Planning the Program

- Form a worksite wellness planning committee. Invite enthusiastic staff, including a program champion, such as an office manager or doctor. The committee reviews the information and inserts contained within the Fit Providers for Life worksite wellness program, and decides which components to use
- Obtain staff feedback and survey them on what wellness activities or changes they feel are needed in the workplace. Obtaining feedback tends to increase participation
- Establish 1 or 2 goals you would like to accomplish for each wellness program. Examples can include increasing staff productivity by 10 percent, reducing absenteeism by 5 percent, or eliminating fatty snacks and high-sugar drinks from the vending machine
- Determine how you will measure success. Develop an evaluation, such as a satisfaction survey, or identify existing performance measures based on goals established for this program, and determine whether you have reached them
- Plan a fun kick-off event to announce your worksite wellness program. Include activities, such as an exercise demonstration, a potluck with healthy or low-fat foods, or a drawing for a fitness-related gift
- Identify incentives and ways to recognize outstanding worksite wellness participation. Refer to the Recognition and Incentives section for ideas
- Identify ways to promote the wellness activities and kick-off event. Emails, meeting announcements, flyers, and company newsletters work well in delivering your message. Personal invitations from management and the planning committee are also effective ways to increase participation
- If you are planning an activity challenge, post the enclosed *Join Fit Providers for Life Activity Challenge* poster with a sign-up sheet to allow those interested to get involved

Implementing the Program

KICK-OFF EVENT

- Thank those present for attending and discuss the purpose of the wellness program
- Share any new policies or worksite improvements, and discuss how these will be implemented
- Mention program incentives (if any)
- Include fun activities (healthy potluck, exercises, etc.)
- Distribute and review the *Tips for the Office – Tips for the Home* handout and distribute copies of the *Fit Families for Life* DVD

Additional Fit Providers for Life Activity Challenge Talking Points:

- Thank staff who have already signed up for the activity challenge, and encourage others to enroll
- Review instructions for activity challenges, and mention related incentives (if any)
- Provide participants with a copy of the *Fitness Tracking Sheet*
- Form teams if you have a large staff and choose team captains. Provide each team captain with a copy of the *Team Fitness Tally* to track team progress

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- Have team captains meet with their teams weekly to plan daily activity breaks, lunch-time walks, and share any other ideas for physical activity
- Send weekly emails on health-related topics, such as healthy recipes, exercise tips and healthy food selection in restaurants, to promote healthy living all the time
- Challenge staff or teams to walk or exercise during breaks and lunch time
- Plan milestone celebrations throughout the program to recognize successes
- Be consistent and enforce new policies or changes to worksite practices

Evaluating the Program

- Review program progress during and after the program. The planning committee should implement evaluation tools to monitor goals
- Make changes to the wellness program during implementation if current progress is not ideal
- To encourage continued participation, acknowledge positive changes that staff members have experienced as a result of program activities





RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

The following resources and materials may help you plan kick-off events, program activities, new workplace policies, and wellness meetings. These materials are designed to benefit your staff, regardless of their participation level.

Worksite Improvement

Review existing job-related activities for ways to promote healthier habits. Your worksite and job-related activities should support and empower staff to make positive changes. Refer to the Resources and Web Sites section for supporting content regarding the following suggestions.

WORKPLACE MEETINGS

- What types of snacks and drinks do you offer? Mix it up with fruits, veggies, whole wheat crackers, and other nutritional snacks. Make water available, and choose diet and low-calorie options instead of sweetened beverages
- Incorporate stand-up and stretch breaks, or take a 10-minute exercise break using the Fit Families for Life DVD
- Designate time to discuss a health topic, such as stress or the importance of sleep

WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Does your worksite support a vending machine? Post a healthy selection tip sheet or stock healthier snacks
- Post healthy messages to reinforce program goals, such as the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables, improved nutrition or physical activity

- Can your site offer a physical activity break once or twice a week during regular paid work hours? Encourage walking or physical activity whenever possible. Be creative!

Safety Precautions

Health Net's Fit Providers for Life worksite wellness program can be safe for all participants. Review the following safety measures with staff. Instruct staff to call their doctor if they experience light-headedness, chest pain, excessive fatigue, nausea, or severe muscle or joint pain and stop physical activity immediately. In an emergency, call 911.



Physical activity may increase one's risk for injury. It is always a good idea to review basic safety measures to prevent injury.

- When being physically active, start off slowly and gradually work up to a faster pace. Check with your doctor if you are unsure of your physical limitations or have a pre-existing condition
- Stretch before you exercise
- Don't overdo it! If you're out of breath and cannot talk while exercising, slow down
- Drink water. Always bring a bottle of water when you exercise to stay hydrated
- Wear safety gear, such as helmets and padding for cycling, skating or related activities
- When outside, use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, sunglasses and a hat
- Be aware of your surroundings when exercising outdoors
- Have a pre-determined walking plan and be mindful of the time needed for the return trip
- Walk with a partner whenever possible
- Choose sidewalks and designated walking paths whenever possible

Beat the Elements

Suggest these exercise alternatives to staff when the weather might hamper their progress.

- Explore the worksite. Are there stairwells or long walkways that your staff can use?
- Suggest walking in place, which can be done in the smallest of worksites throughout the day and evening

- Hit the mall! Mall walkers have the convenience of an atmosphere free from extreme temperatures
- Use the Fit Families for Life DVD in the office

Tracking Progress

- Make copies of the *Fitness Tracking Sheet* insert for each Fit Providers for Life Activity Challenge participant
- For simplicity, consider 10 minutes of walking or fitness activity to equal 1 mile
- Have each participant write down his or her own time spent walking or being active (minimum of 10 minutes per segment to be counted) during the week on the *Fitness Tracking Sheet*
- Count activity and walking time during breaks, lunch-time and after-work activities
- If this is a team activity, captains should record their team's total activity time for each week on the *Team Fitness Tally*. Team progress should be submitted to a designated committee member
- Designated committee members could chart each team's total activity miles on a poster to highlight progress. Send emails with the weekly results if you do not have space to display the poster

Recognition and Incentives

Wellness programs are more successful when participants work towards an incentive or a form of recognition. The availability of incentives may differ from one office to another. Keep in mind that incentives do not have to be monetary. Acknowledgement from management,



recognition on the company Web site, or certificates of appreciation can also serve as incentives. A combination of items may serve as an end-of-program or pre-determined milestone prize.

Scavenger hunts are a fun way to encourage participants to walk more. Create maps with pictures or lists of items to locate. Have participants write down the address where they found the item. Be sure to put a time limit on this activity and let participants know where completed forms should be submitted. Offer a prize to the winning teams.

A drawing with the chance to win a gift card is another great incentive. Present raffle tickets for reaching specific milestones. For example, a milestone could be 10 miles for an individual or 50 miles for a team.

Some items may require a monetary expense, while others may be obtained as an in-kind donation. Check with local businesses to find out if they would be willing to donate items to the program. Incentive suggestions include:

- Promotional items, such as sweatshirts, t-shirts, caps, tote bags, coffee mugs, and stainless steel water bottles
- Movie tickets
- Restaurant or store gift cards
- Use of a designated or reserved parking space
- Ribbons and trophies
- Company-sponsored lunch
- A feature highlight in the office's newsletter or email announcement

Remind participants that increased energy, muscle tone and good health are great incentives too!

Milestone/End of Program Celebration

A fun way to celebrate participants' success with the program and encourage continued healthy habits is to provide a celebration, such as a light lunch or healthful potluck, when participants reach a specified milestone or to mark the end of the 10-week activity challenge.

AT THE CELEBRATION

- Share successes
- Recognize everyone for their participation
- Identify those who walked consistently and increased their walking times
- Distribute prizes, if available

Resources and Web Sites

The following inserts are located in the back pocket of this guide. Copy, distribute and use these materials to support your worksite wellness program:

- Fit Providers for Life tip sheets encourage healthy habits at the office and home
- *Stress Signs, Symptoms, Triggers, and Actions to Reduce Stress* reinforces a health education topic
- *Fitness Tracking Sheet* documents an individual's weekly fitness status





- *Join Fit Providers for Life Activity Challenge* poster initiates participation in the program and activities
- *Team Fitness Tally* provides a tracking tool for team captains to showcase team successes
- *Fit Families for Life DVD* supports an active lifestyle to be used at meetings, breaks or for individual use

There are also a number of free online resources available to help you develop your worksite program:

- **www.americanheart.org**
The American Heart Association Web site offers various materials to assist with developing a worksite wellness program. It also provides good information for staff to review and use to make positive lifestyle changes through exercise and healthier eating
- **www.mapmyrun.com**
Offers a tool to create maps for exercise routes. Create different routes so participants can choose the length of their walks
- **www.calorieking.com**
The Calorie King Web site helps users choose healthier foods by posting nutrition facts

- **www.welcoa.org/freeresources**
The Wellness Council of America Web site offers a variety of meeting topics, resources and presentations, such as types of incentives and the benefits of a good night's sleep
- **www.barbre-ergonomics.com/Brochure.html**
Barbre Ergonomics Web site offers a printable poster on stretching
- **www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/nut/lacollab/LACollabEdIn.htm**
Offers educational presentations and handouts for subjects such as *Rethink Your Drink/Sugar Savvy* and more
- **www.nojunkfood.org/vendors/healthy_snack_list.html**
Offers a healthy snack list
- **www.takeactionca.com/california-fit-business-kit-tools.asp**
Offers comprehensive tools to support your worksite wellness ideas

Thank you for using the Fit Providers for Life worksite wellness program. Health Net is interested in learning what worked well and which resources were particularly helpful. Please complete the evaluation form located in the insert pocket and return it to Health Net as directed.



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FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE

TIPS FOR THE OFFICE



BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AND EATING HEALTHIER ARE TERRIFIC WAYS TO STAY IN SHAPE AND FEEL GREAT. EXERCISING CAN INCREASE YOUR ENERGY LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE DAY.



Fitness Tips:

- Check with your physician first if you have not exercised recently
- Park your vehicle further away from the entrance to work, stores, etc. Even a few extra steps can add up to better fitness
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator whenever possible
- Leave a pair of athletic shoes and socks at your desk to make exercise convenient anytime
- Walk during breaks. Each 10 or 15 minutes adds to your total activity for that day
- Form a walking group. Exercising with others helps to encourage the longevity of a fitness program
- Map different routes to vary the time and length of your walks
- Incorporate stretching or lifting light weights at your desk during breaks
- Challenge yourself to exercise more each week

Nutrition Tips:

- Always eat breakfast. Studies show that those who eat a healthy breakfast maintain healthier weights than those who skip it
- Eat 4 to 6 smaller meals instead of 3 large meals to avoid

overeating. This also allows the body enough time to use the food for energy

- Eat foods high in fiber (more than 5 grams per serving), especially a variety of colored fruits and vegetables, whole grains or beans
- Eat out only occasionally and pack a healthy lunch on most days
- Order grilled foods instead of fried
- Have a small salad with low-fat dressing instead of fries or chips
- Keep a bottle of water and a bowl of fruit at your desk for a healthy snack
- Do you love your specialty coffees? Try a small café latte using fat-free milk instead of a medium with whole milk to save almost half the calories
- Choose diet or low-calorie beverages instead of soda or other sweetened beverages
- Set a weekly nutritional goal, such as trying a new fruit or drinking water instead of soda and other sugary drinks
- Choose healthy snacks from the vending machine with less than 5 grams of fat per serving and less than 30 grams of carbohydrates per serving

FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE

TIPS FOR THE HOME



YOUR HEALTH IS IMPORTANT.
EXERCISING AND EATING HEALTHY
FOODS AT HOME CAN HELP YOU AND
YOUR FAMILY ACHIEVE THE LEVEL OF
HEALTH THAT YOU ALL DESERVE.

Fitness Tips:

- Wear comfortable shoes and clothing when exercising
- Check the weather to avoid exercising outside in very hot or cold temperatures
- Stretch before exercising to improve muscle tone and flexibility
- Stretch after exercising to reduce muscle pain and stiffness
- Set a goal to exercise for 30 minutes, 3 days a week. Gradually increase to 5 days a week
- Try different walking/jogging routes near your home and invite a family member, neighbor or friend to exercise with you
- Set a daily schedule for exercise and stick to it. An after-dinner walk for the family is a great option
- Keep track of your progress on the tracking sheet
- Incorporate more walking activities. Try walking to the store instead of driving
- Stay hydrated by carrying a small water bottle
- Mix it up. Walk, jog, bike, swim, play sports, dance, do push-ups, stretch, or exercise using the Fit Families for Life DVD
- Make time to be physically active and have fun. You deserve it!

Nutrition Tips:

- Buy seasonal fruits and vegetables, which are often on sale and less expensive. These healthy snacks can be enjoyed cut-up with low-fat dips, if desired. Or use pre-packaged fruit cups with little or no sugar added for a convenient, quick snack
- Whole-grain snacks are rich in fiber and excellent for curbing hunger attacks. Consider whole-grain pretzels, peanut butter on whole-wheat crackers, or air-popped popcorn
- Don't forget about nuts and seeds, which are full of vitamin E and protein
- Choose foods that have monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats ("good" fats), such as olive oil, fish oil and peanut oil. Saturated and trans fats ("bad" fats), which include lard, vegetable shortening, coconut oil, palm oil, whole milk, and the skins from poultry, should be avoided
- Use natural seasonings, such as garlic, lemon, lime, pepper, vinegars, and herbs, to add flavor to your food instead of salt
- Plan weekly meals using healthy recipes and then make a grocery list. Stick to it as closely as possible. Involve your family in grocery shopping and food preparation to teach healthy eating and cooking habits
- Call your local community center to see if they offer free nutrition classes
- For a tasty variation, add a slice of lime, cucumber or orange to a glass of water

FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE

STRESS SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, TRIGGERS, AND ACTIONS TO REDUCE STRESS



STRESS CAN LEAD TO POOR HEALTH OUTCOMES AND IMPACT JOB PERFORMANCE IF NOT PROPERLY ADDRESSED. WHILE SHORT-TERM OR INFREQUENT STRESS INTERVALS POSE LITTLE RISK, STRESS OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME HAS HARMFUL EFFECTS ON THE BODY. LEARN TO RECOGNIZE THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF WORKSITE STRESS AND TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE ITS EFFECTS.

Signs and Symptoms of Stress

While the common warning signs and symptoms of stress may vary from person to person, the most common include:

- Upset stomach
- Recurring headaches
- Inability to sleep
- Short temper
- Lack of concentration
- Overall job dissatisfaction or low morale on the job

Worksite Stress Triggers

These conditions at the worksite often serve as stress triggers:

- Workload exceeding abilities, resulting in infrequent breaks and long hours at the office
- Concerns about job security or a lack of promotional opportunities
- Little or no social support networks from peers
- Unpleasant surroundings, such as noisy backgrounds or crowded work conditions
- Not getting along with peers or manager

Take Action to Reduce Stress

The following steps can be taken to reduce occurrences of short-term stress. Unresolved long-term instances may require

professional support or management assistance. When needed, seek professional help or make an appointment with your physician. These tips may help to reduce stress:

- Wake up 15 to 30 minutes earlier to decrease the hectic rush to work
- Accept those circumstances that are beyond your control, and refer to the things that are good in your life
- Keep a positive attitude throughout the day; do not dwell on negative thoughts
- Stop and take a few deep breaths; stretch to allow your muscles to relax
- Take a walk! Maintain physical activity in your daily schedule
- Retreat to a quiet and calm location during breaks. Don't eat lunch at your desk
- Take a few minutes to organize your tasks and resist the need to be a perfectionist
- Learn to say no. If your current workload matches or exceeds your current ability, refrain from taking on new projects or tasks
- Seek support from your peers and family. Express how you feel to a trusted associate; you may find helpful solutions from seeking a different viewpoint
- Take a hot bath or shower to relax tense muscles when you get home from work

FITNESS TRACKING SHEET



Instructions:

- Track the number of minutes spent walking or being physically active during breaks, at lunch time and after work.
- Total the minutes walked or being physically active per week and submit to your team leader or office manager at the time and date specified.

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 4		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 8		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 1		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 5		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 9		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 2		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 6		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 10		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 3		
	TOTAL	

	DATE	MINUTES WALKED/ BEING ACTIVE
WEEK 7		
	TOTAL	

DO YOU WANT TO BE
FIT AND FEEL GREAT?



JOIN FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

Benefits of the Fit Providers
for Life Activity Challenge:

- CONTROL YOUR WEIGHT
- REDUCE YOUR STRESS
- BOOST YOUR ENERGY LEVEL
- IMPROVE YOUR SELF IMAGE
- STRENGTHEN YOUR BONES

Complete the 10-week challenge
for a chance to win:

Please contact _____
at _____ to find out
how to join today!



TEAM FITNESS TALLY



GROUP NAME: _____

Team Goal: _____ **Miles** _____

Instructions:

- 1 Total minutes walked/being active for all team members.
- 2 Convert minutes into miles. Consider every 10 minutes equal to 1 mile.



MILES: WEEK 9

MILES: WEEK 10

MILES: WEEK 7

MILES: WEEK 8

MILES: WEEK 5

MILES: WEEK 6

MILES: WEEK 3

MILES: WEEK 4

MILES: WEEK 1

MILES: WEEK 2

FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE WORKSITE WELLNESS EVALUATION



THANK YOU FOR USING THE FIT PROVIDERS FOR LIFE WORKSITE WELLNESS GUIDE. PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THIS EVALUATION. YOUR RESPONSES HELP IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT TO THESE MATERIALS.

Name: _____ Worksite Telephone: _____

Worksite Name: _____ Worksite Email: _____

Worksite Address: _____

(Please check all that apply)

- 1 What motivated your office to use the Fit Providers for Life worksite wellness program?
 Improved health Staff involvement Increased productivity Other: _____
 Fitness Tracking Sheet
 Do You Want to Be Fit and Feel Great? poster
 Team Fitness Tally
 Fit Families for Life DVD
- 2 Which component(s) of this program did your site use?
 Fit Providers for Life Guide
 Resources and Web Sites
 Tips for the Office/Tips for the Home
 Stress Signs, Symptoms, Triggers, and Actions to Reduce Stress tip sheet
- 3 How many employees participated in this program? _____
- 4 In your opinion, how successful was the program at your office? Successful Somewhat successful Not successful
- 5 Would your office participate in this type of program again? Yes No
- 6 What was most helpful about the program materials and why?

7 What was least helpful about the program materials and why?

8 How can this program be improved?

9 Overall, how would you rate the Fit Providers for Life program?
 Excellent Very Good Satisfactory Poor

Thank you for your input. Please fax the completed form to (800) 628-2704.

