



LAUSD Employee Wellness Program

A Healthy Liver

Liver diseases appear to be on the increase with over 25 million Americans affected.

Why should you care about your liver?

Because your liver performs over 5,000 important functions every minute of the day to keep your body going including converting food into nutrients; storing vitamins, minerals and sugars; detoxifying substances that are harmful to your body; and processes the medications you take.

How can you keep your liver healthy?

Remember these action steps:

- A**void hepatitis and liver disease. Injection of drugs, use of shared or unsterile needles, unprotected sex, and regular exposure to toxins such as aerosol cleaners, bug spray, and paint fumes are risks. Also, always wash your hands after using the bathroom.
- B**e careful of what gets in your body. Avoid tobacco use and limit alcohol consumption. Avoid unnecessary medications - including prescription medicines and "natural" herbs. Don't take too many pain relievers, flu products or cold remedies. A well-balanced diet and maintaining a healthy weight is key to a healthy liver.
- C**onsult with your doctor. Discuss with your doctor vaccinations, testing and treatments for hepatitis a, b, c and other liver diseases.



The liver is the largest organ in the body and weighs about three pounds.

Source: American Liver Foundation

FALL 2008 WELLNESS CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
www.komen.org
- Healthy Lung Month
www.lungusa.org
- National Liver Awareness Month
www.liverfoundation.org
- Health Literacy Month
www.healthliteracy.com

NOVEMBER

- American Diabetes Month
11/14: World Diabetes Day
www.diabetes.org
- Great American Smokeout Month
11/20: Great American Smokeout
www.cancer.org

DECEMBER

- International AIDS Awareness Month
12/1: World AIDS Day
www.unaids.org
- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
www.preventblindness.org

KICK the habit

Habits and health problems can take years off your life:

- Smoking:** 8 years lost
- Obesity:** 7 years lost
- Hypertension:** 5 years lost
- Physical inactivity:** 3 years lost

Source: Good Housekeeping Magazine

Did You Know?



- ...quitting smoking could eliminate your need for cholesterol-lowering medication and result in significant savings?
- ...quitting smoking might help you avoid cervical abnormalities?
- ...self-massaging one's hands can reduce withdrawal symptoms?

For assistance in quitting, call **1-800-NO-BUTTS** or visit www.californiassmokershelpline.org or www.smokefree.gov.

BLOOD PRESSURE Know the Facts

Blood pressure is two measurements, separated by a slash when written down, such as 120/80. You may also hear someone say a blood pressure is "120 over 80."

The first number is the **systolic blood pressure**. This is the peak blood pressure when your heart is squeezing blood out. The second number is the **diastolic blood pressure**. It's the pressure when your heart is filling with blood - relaxing between beats.



The sphygmomanometer

High Blood Pressure: Systolic blood pressure of 140 mmHg or higher, or diastolic blood pressure of 90 mmHg or higher.

Normal Blood Pressure: Systolic blood pressure of less than 120 mmHg and diastolic blood pressure of less than 80 mmHg.

"Prehypertension": Systolic blood pressure of 120-139 mmHg and diastolic blood pressure of 80-89 mmHg.

Source: American Academy of Physicians, CDC, Mayo Clinic, American Heart Association

Should you go organic?



Foods labeled **organic** use farming techniques such as crop rotations, mulch and manure to help prevent weeds and pests. Conventional pesticides, fertilizers, bioengineering, and ionizing radiation aren't used on organic foods. Animals raised for organic meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products are fed 100% organic feed products. They receive no antibiotics or growth hormones. The **U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)** decides what food products may be labeled as organic.

Are organic foods healthier? So far, the verdict's still out. However, an important benefit of pursuing an organic diet is being mindful that what we eat impacts our present and long-term health.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Division of Risk Management & Insurance Services

Know Your Family Healthy History

About 96 percent of Americans believe that knowing their family medical history is important to their health - that it could in fact save their lives. But only one-third have ever tried to gather and organize their families' health history, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Your doctor can use your family medical history to determine your risk for certain medical conditions and to recommend treatments and lifestyle changes, determine what tests and screenings to order, identify conditions that might otherwise not be considered, and assess your risk for passing diseases to your children.

Your medical family tree should include the following information for at least three generations:

- Sex
- Date of birth
- Age and cause of death
- Diseases or medical conditions
- Behavioral factors including diet, exercise, smoking and drinking habits, and history of weight problems.

For help in creating your family's health history, visit <https://familyhistory.hhs.gov>.

Source: American Cancer Society



Employee Wellness Series Classes

From **November 20, 2008 - January 22, 2009**, Organizational Excellence offers and Employee Wellness Series with various health topics to choose from.

Instruction will take place at:
1543 Shatto St. Los Angeles, CA 90017.

Class topics and dates can be found at <http://wellness.lausd.net> or www.oetraining.net.

Register for classes at <https://lz.lausd.net/lz/index.jsp>.

For assistance in coordinating a class at your worksite, contact Jeanne Guzman at (213) 353-4300 or submit an online request form at <http://wellness.lausd.net> and click on "Classes and Seminars."



DO's for the Diabetes Diet

When you have diabetes, your food choices play a key role in controlling your blood sugar. You don't need to prepare separate meals or buy bland foods for your diabetes diet, though. **Improve your blood sugar with these tips:**

1. **Choose carbohydrate foods carefully.** Include quality carbohydrates. Focus on vegetables, dried beans and legumes, fruits without added sugar, and 100% whole-grain bread, cereal and pasta.
2. **Favor monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats over saturated and trans fats.** Choose olive or canola oil, nuts and seeds. Limit butter, stick margarines, fatty meats and high-fat dairy foods.
3. **Be wary of portion sizes.** Even healthy foods can raise your blood sugar if you eat too much.
4. **Limit sugar.** Regular consumption of sweets increase your calorie intake. Eating too many calories can lead to high blood sugar. Some people opt for artificial sweeteners, but beware; some artificially sweetened foods may still be high in calories.
5. **Eat on a schedule.** Have your meals and snacks at the same time every day and be consistent in the amount of food you eat.

Source: Mayo Clinic

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness



In 2007, an estimated **178,480** new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed among women.

Mammography screening remains the best available method to detect breast cancer early.

It is suggested women obtain regular mammography screening starting at **age 40**, perform monthly breast-self exams, and obtain a risk assessment from a physician.

For information on low-or no cost mammography screening, contact the CDC at (888) 842-6355 or visit www.cdc.gov.

Source: American Cancer Society, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, CDC



The Power of Pears

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, pears are now recognized as having more fiber. At six grams (formerly four grams) per medium-size pear, they're great at filling you up. Pears contain pectin fiber, which decreases blood-sugar levels, helping you avoid between-meal snacking.

Source: Good Housekeeping Magazine



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Risk Management and Insurance Services
Benefits Administration
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 28th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
E-mail: employeewellness@lausd.net
Website: <http://wellness.lausd.net>
Phone: (213) 241-7995