

Optimus

Optimus Mission & Vision

To provide research-based lifestyle interventions designed to reduce the risks for chronic diseases.

We strive to provide a positive, safe, and comfortable environment to help you achieve your personal health and wellness goals.

Optimus staff members are experienced health and wellness professionals. Optimus has state-of-the-art fitness equipment for total body conditioning and various services to better your health and fitness.

We have a NEW Website!

Check us out online at

www.optimushealth.com

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Bi-Monthly Newsletter for Optimus: The Center For Health

Volume 3, Issue 2

WORKSITE WELLNESS:

Increase your profits by investing in healthier employees

Health insurance expenses are the fastest growing cost component for employers. Premiums for employer-based health insurance rose by 6.1 percent in 2007 and have nearly doubled since 2000. Small employers saw their premiums, on average, increase 5.5 percent. Firms with less than 24 workers experienced an increase of 6.8 percent*.

The average annual healthcare cost per person in the United States far exceeds \$3,000, and preventable illness makes up approximately 70% or more of the total costs of illness. A successful company, large or small, is always looking for ways to improve technology, enhance capital, minimize costs, and maximize return in order to gain maximal profit. Why should the health and productivity of the employee be any different? A healthy workforce minimizes health care costs to the employer, and maximizes the productivity of the employees in order to create a stronger, more profitable workplace.

Over the past twenty-five years, study after study in company after company has proven that a healthier workforce produces higher quality work, uses less of the company health care benefits, has higher morale and productivity, is less likely to become ill or injured, is absent less often and is less likely to have worker's compensation claims. Does this sound too good to be true? Well it isn't. If you're still not convinced, consider these success stories:

- Employee health promotion programs at Coors saved the company over \$2.3 million in lost wages and over \$1.9 million in rehabilitation costs and cost avoidance.
- Westinghouse workers who participated in health promotion programs cost the firm \$1,715 less than those who did not.
- Johnson & Johnson reduced absenteeism by 15 percent in two years and cut hospitalization costs by 34

percent in three years after implementing a worksite health promotion program.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Large and small businesses alike can use health promotion programs and strategies to improve the overall health of their employees and ultimately reduce the utilization and cost of health benefits, decrease absenteeism and turnover, and improve productivity and morale. With preventable illness making up 70 percent of all illness and the associated cost, can you, or your company, afford not to give it a try?

Beginning a worksite health promotion program doesn't have to be expensive or difficult. Start by taking a good look at how you're currently spending your employee health benefit dollars and what's putting your employees on sick leave. Did any of your employees have a major illness or disability last year? Look for red flag conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, pre-term delivery of a newborn, back injury, or accidents. Employees with these potentially high-dollar claims can drive up your health care costs exponentially and drain your workforce with absenteeism.

Smoking, being overweight, eating a high fat diet, excessive alcohol use, uncontrolled diabetes, stress, and living a sedentary lifestyle contribute to both cardiovascular disease and cancer. Excessive weight, stress, alcohol or other drug use, and sedentary lifestyle contribute to back injury and other on-the-job injuries and accidents. So, the next step is to do a quick survey—a Health Risk

Assessment (HRA)—of your employees to find out which of those risk behaviors are the most prevalent. Then you'll know which behaviors to address first.

Interested in implementing healthier habits among your employees? Are you curious about where your com-



A healthier workforce produces higher quality work, uses less of the company health care benefits, has higher morale and productivity, is less likely to become ill or injured, is absent less often and is less likely to have worker's compensation claims.

pany stands in health risks compared to other businesses? Whether you're on the management team of your business or working part-time, rising healthcare costs effects us all. Healthier workplaces encourage healthier employees, healthier families, and healthier futures. Optimus: The Center for Health and The Insurance Group are teaming up to promote healthier employees in Mid-Missouri and beyond. With our Optimus Health Promotion Program, we not only assess the current health risks within your company, but also provide the tools to your employees that empower them to lead healthier, more productive lives and reduce their risks for preventable chronic diseases. Call Optimus today to find out how your company can get started on the road to better health.

* (Data from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Employee Health Benefits: 2007 Annual Survey. 11 September 2006).

NO MORE EXCUSES: Living a life of health, love, and happiness

The following story comes from a fellow Personal Health Coach in St. Louis, MO. Read her personal story of living life to its fullest.

Tis' the season for resolutions. I, like many others, vowed between bites of Christmas cookies that 2009 would be the year that I got completely healthy – no more junk food, EVER. No more skipping workouts, EVER. I was going to be perfect...set on a robotic path to a body that Michelangelo would be desperate to sculpt! Then, something happened that made me change my mind about what it was exactly that I wanted.

Sadly, on December 26th of 2008, one of my clients, Kathy Reardon, passed away in her sleep. She died at the age of 57, after losing 100

pounds in about 2 years. When we first met, she told me that she wanted to lose weight because a friend of hers had just passed away and she didn't want a similar fate. Her motivation was bigger than wanting to fit into a size 8 dress. Although she and I still had some pounds to lose together, I think about how much better her life was in that final year. She felt good about herself; she was able to move comfortably, she went on vacations that she could have never gone on before. I like to think that I contributed to that quality of life. Her death really made me pause to think about why I do what I do, and it made me realize that I do it for the people like Kathy.

I do it because I want people to live long, and live completely. I don't do it for the aesthetics, so clothes will fit

better...I do it so that people can LIVE. I want you to not only add years to your life, but life to your years. It is not about looking a certain way; it is about feeling a certain way. Feeling like Kathy did, a person who was honestly excited about waking up to her Cream of Wheat in the morning, followed by hours of workouts in the pool. It made me think about what I do to my body on a daily basis. Do I fuel it in the best possible way, or do I grab something just because it tastes good and is easy? Do I treat it like the machine that it is...keeping it running with challenging workouts, or do I slack off? It is amazing what you think about when confronted by a death that could have been prevented.

So no more excuses. Stop complaining about being tired and about

"In order to change we must be sick and tired of being sick and tired."

-Author Unknown

not having enough time. We all get 168 hours a week; how do we choose to spend them? Stop thinking about having to give up your steak for a salad; stop whining about taste and start thinking about the benefits! Don't let the way your husband or wife or children eat determine what you eat; your family needs you around for the long haul! Diets are hard, working out is hard. But nothing worthwhile is ever easy, and your life is definitely worthwhile.

Member Spotlight: Jackie Lenox

Jackie Lenox has been a member of Optimus: The Center for Health for over a year. Jackie participated in 1 year of INTERxVENT with mentor Carolyn Skelton. She is very pleased with the behavior and lifestyle changes she has incorporated into her life. Jackie stated she especially enjoyed learning about carbohydrate and fat gram counting and the importance of regular exercise 5 times a week. Jackie also met with Carolyn Skelton for individual nutrition coun-

seling, and she enjoyed going to the grocery store and learning about healthy items.

Jackie stated she has a new outlook on life, is much happier and more content, and she has met a new group of friends who she looks forward to seeing at Optimus. Jackie stated her level of fitness has improved. She listed 55 reasons she exercises. This year, at an MU football game, Jackie took 5 flights of stairs instead of the elevator and she stated when

she got to the top, "I could not have done that a year ago." Jackie has increased her cardiovascular fitness on the elliptical from 1 min at level 1 to 20 minutes at level 10. Jackie has improved her health to the point that her doctor discontinued most of her medications. She trains once a week with a trainer to continue her progress.

"Not only does Jackie consistently meet (and exceed) new challenges in her workouts, but

she does her part too by getting in additional activity throughout the week. Jackie is a joy to work with and always brings the best attitude to every workout session," says mentor Joanne Loethen.

We wish Jackie continued success with her lifestyle changes and health and fitness goals. Way to go Jackie!

Health Tip: Exercise for Stress Management

Exercise—Nature's Own Tranquilizer

When faced with stress, changes occur in the body to prepare you for physical activity (called the "fight or flight" response). Exercise, the most logical and beneficial response to a stressful situation, reduces the duration and intensity of the stress response. It helps the body return to a relaxed and balanced state. Exercise has been called nature's own tranquilizer.

Exercise Tips for Stress Management:

- Exercise at the end of the day to rid the body of stress by-products that have built up over the day.
- Go for a walk to take a break and put problems in perspective so they can be handled with a clear mind.
- After sitting for a long period of time at a tedious task, do a few stretches to relax the muscles of the face, neck, and shoulders.
- Avoid competitive physical activities for stress management purposes. You might be too aggressive.



INTERxVENT is now Nationwide Better Health and is offered exclusively by The Insurance Group to individuals and organizations in the mid-Missouri area

To complete your FREE online Health Risk Assessment:

- 1) Log on to the INTERxVENT^{USA} website: www.interventathome.com.
- 2) Select "Click Here to Sign On to Our Secure Server."
- 3) Click on the "Click Here" button to complete the Health Risk Assessment (HRA).
- 4) Accept the Privacy Statement and Service Agreement.
- 5) Complete the HRA. When you get to the question about the Company/Organization, select "PREVENT Consulting Services" from the menu.
- 6) When you have completed the HRA, click "Continue." Then click on the "Display Results and/or Print" button to receive your individualized report.

Nutrition Corner: Eating Healthy in the Workplace

By Carolyn Skelton

Employers providing a break room, kitchen, microwave and occasional hot meals are on the forefront of influencing their employees eating habits. An on-site break room allows employees to plan and pack their lunches ahead of time and store healthy food in the refrigerator. A study published in the *Public Health Nutrition Journal*, 2004, found employees who had canteens on-site were more likely to follow recommended food habits, when compared with other

subjects.

Most people today live a fast paced life. It is often very tempting to run out to a local restaurant or fast food chain and grab something high in fat, sugar and salt. To eat healthy during the workday, have a plan in mind. Make a list of items to eat for lunch and have available for mid-morning, mid-afternoon snacks. Some good foods to try are all natural deli meat, hummus, canned beans (rinsed), tuna in spring water, natural peanut

butter, salad greens, oil and vinegar dressing, raw vegetables and fruit, granola bars, dried fruit, yogurt, string cheese, nuts, whole grain bread, baked chips, and herbal teas. Head to the store and purchase a few of these items. Also remember to drink 1/2 your body weight in ounces daily to meet fluid intake requirements. For example, a 140 lb person would need to drink 70 ounces of fluid a day.

Packing a lunch for work is a great way to eat a nutrient dense



meal full of fiber, complex carbohydrates, protein and healthy fats. By planning ahead, the temptation to go out and grab fast food, loaded with fat, sugar and salt will decrease, resulting in a slimmer waistline, looser-fitting dresses or pants and a healthier body.



We have a new website!

Check us out online at
www.optimushealth.com

“Take care of your body with steadfast fidelity. The soul must see through these eyes alone, and if they are dim, the whole world is clouded.”

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Feature Recipes: Turkey and Pepper Roll-Ups/Pickled Beets and Cheese

www.eatingwell.com

Turkey and Pepper Roll-Ups

Crunchy bell pepper strips rolled in deli turkey makes a simple and satisfying protein-packed pick-me-up.

Makes 1 serving

- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat cream cheese
- 2 slices reduced-sodium deli turkey
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper slices

Spread cream cheese on turkey slices, top with bell pepper and roll.

Nutrients Facts (per serving):

Calories	114
Total Fat	5g
Carbohydrate	6g
Protein	12g
Dietary Fiber	1g
Sodium	486mg

Pickled Beets and Cheese

Zesty pickled beets become a sophisticated snack when topped with your favorite creamy cheese.

Makes 1 serving

- 1/2 cup sliced prepared pickled beets
- 1 tablespoon crumbled goat cheese or blue cheese
- Top beets with cheese.

Nutrients Facts (per serving):

Calories	85
Total Fat	3g
Carbohydrate	13g
Protein	3g
Dietary Fiber	1g
Sodium	78mg



Coming Soon to Optimus:



The month of February Optimus will be partnering with **HuHot Mongolian Grill and Barbeque** to offer a discount for Optimus members. See the handouts on the table in front of Optimus for information about the discount and the healthy options available at HuHot.

March 30 through April 10th Dietetic Intern Hannah Holzum will be conducting dietary analysis and nutrition counseling for 15-20 interested Optimus members. She will also be teaching a nutrition class. If any Optimus member is interested in a dietary analysis, nutrition counseling or attending a nutrition class,

please let **Carolyn Skelton** know via email or phone and she will get you on the list and keep you posted of dates and time slot options.

Optimus

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Mark your calendars...

FEBRUARY

- * National Cancer Prevention Month
- * American Heart Month
- * Feb. 6—National Wear Red Day ("Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear—it's the #1 Killer of Women.")
- * Feb. 22-28—National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

MARCH

- * National Nutrition Month
- * Save Your Vision Month
- * March 2-6—National School Breakfast Week
- * March 13—World Kidney Day
- * March 24—American Diabetes Alert Day

Better health for a better you!

Member Birthdays

Happy Birthday everyone celebrating a birthday in February or March!

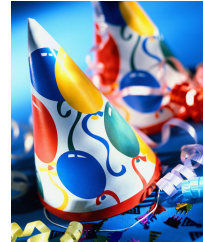
FEBRUARY

- Richard Edgar 2/2
- Barbara Bunton 2/10
- Frank Higgins 2/10
- Calvin Roebuck 2/11
- Herbert Willbrand 2/12
- Jill Walker 2/13
- Amber Palmer 2/15
- Krystal Palmer 2/15
- Susan Brooks 2/26
- Paula McDowell 2/28

MARCH

- Amy Vik 3/1
- Dale Nichols 3/7
- Kizzi Roberts 3/8
- Laurie Kelly 3/9
- Laura Van Matre 3/10
- Jeremy Meyers 3/13
- Ginny Edgar 3/14
- Charlie Digges Jr. 3/15
- Laurie Digges 3/16
- Jane Russell 3/17
- David Lile 3/18
- Jim Ford 3/19
- Jay Scribner 3/19

- Kathy Digges 3/21
- Kate Walker 3/22
- Will McWilliams 3/25
- Lynn Willbrand 3/26
- Jill Murphey 3/26
- Tricia Odom 3/26



Final Note: Upcoming Events and Congratulations

- February 7 - Nut Race 5K 9:00 am Reactor Park
- February 14 - Sweetheart Day 5K 9:00 am Boonslick Heartland YMCA Boonville
- March 7 - Run with the Eagles 5K 9:00 am East Pavilion Albert-Oakland Park
- March 14 - St. Patrick's Day 5K 8:00 am Ash Street

Congratulations to the following Insurance Group employees who completed the Resolution Run 5K on January 18th: Kim Sims, Cindy Corwin, Mary Davidson, Donna Edler, Barb Rogers, Barbara Stebbins, Lynda Hodges, Tina Scanlon, Charlie Digges, Allison Moore, and Amy Vik

Congratulations to Whitnee Maycock, who was one of three finalists for Women's Intersports Network Female Collegiate Athlete of the Year. Women nominated for this award have demonstrated superior athletic achievements in their sport, school and community involvement, outstanding spirit, and a commitment to a healthy, active lifestyle.

Congratulations to Kate Walker, who won the Best Female Lifter award at the American Drug-Free Powerlifting Federation and The Mexico High School Strength Club 2009 Open Powerlifting & Single Event Championships and Record Breaker in Mexico Missouri.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9am Boot Camp	6am Boot Camp	9am Boot Camp	6am Boot Camp		10am Boot Camp
5:30pm Pilates	5:30pm Hatha Yoga	5:30pm Pilates	5:30pm Hatha Yoga		

Articles in *Optimus Connection* are contributed by the health and wellness professionals of Optimus. Information and recommendations presented in this newsletter are research-based and are given in the best interest of Optimus members and the Columbia community. Please contact Optimus to speak with any of our experienced staff if you have any questions or concerns regarding the content of this newsletter. Newsletter edited by Shaun Kelly and Optimus staff members.

