

EAP NEWS



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March Is American Red Cross Month

Ever since Clara Barton founded the organization in 1881, the American Red Cross has provided aid and disaster relief to millions of individuals.

From conducting blood drives and arranging family communications and other forms of support for our troops to providing relief for victims of natural disasters, the Red Cross carries out its emergency response services around the globe.

In 2005, the devastating hurricane season left millions of people displaced and homeless. The American Red Cross network of more than 800 chapters and thousands of volunteers helped to provide food, shelter, counseling, and care. Over time, the Red Cross helped more than a million Gulf Coast families.

By donating their time and energy to serve others, American Red Cross volunteers demonstrate the compassion and generosity for which Americans are known. Their service paves the way to a brighter future for our citizens and for people around the world.

We honor the American Red Cross in March, American Red Cross Month. ○

Eating Apples Protect Your Memory, Heart, And More

Chalk up another victory for Mom's "apple a day" advice.

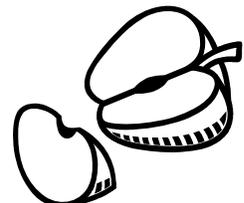
While medical researchers spend their lives making discoveries that will improve our health, sometimes they discover that good food can be great medicine.

When it comes to apples, the good news gets better all the time. Apples can preserve memory and help to prevent asthma, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

Researchers at the University of Massachusetts Lowell say the big news about apples right now is its possible

ability to keep Alzheimer's disease away. Apples can increase production of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine, resulting in improved memory. Neurotransmitters are also vital for good health throughout the body. The UMass study mostly used apple juice.

Apples are the best source of quercetin, an antioxidant that protects brain cells against oxidative stress. This is a tissue-damaging process associated with Alzheimer's disease.

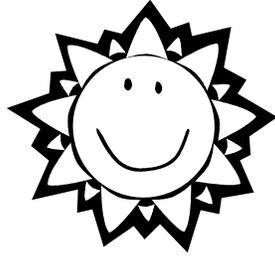


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The EAP is a free service for you and your eligible family members.

All EAP services are completely confidential.

Spring Sunshine Brightens Mood



After months of low temperatures and dark skies, isn't it delightful to celebrate spring again?

For many people, this wonderful

season of new life is a real morale booster. One reason: a brain chemical known as serotonin that soothes and balances the nervous system. For most people, serotonin production is linked closely to the amount of sunlight that strikes the retina of the eye.

When people are deprived of light, as usually happens during the winter months, the production of serotonin is slowed, and that could be a factor that produces a bad case of the winter blues. Conversely, the arrival of spring means more light, and for most of us, possibly a more cheerful mood.

Here are a few suggestions on ways to take advantage of spring sunshine.

- Adjust your schedule, whenever possible, to spend time with the sun. When the weather is bright outside, why not grab a sandwich and a beverage and carry them to your favorite outdoor bench? If you can get 30-40 minutes of exposure to bright sunlight periodically, your serotonin level will rise and the winter blahs will begin to fade.
- Get serious about exercise. If you're like most of us, you added a few pounds during the winter. Try committing to three or four half-hour workouts per week to shed that weight. (Consult your family physician before beginning any new exercise program.) About 30 minutes of brisk walking, every other day, is enough to improve cardiovascular fitness, while also elevating your mood.
- Change your diet to match the more active, outdoor lifestyle that begins with spring. Instead of fats, sweets and heavy starches, enjoy seasonal fruits and vegetables. You'll feel lighter and quicker on your feet. ○

For many people, This wonderful season of new life is a real morale booster

To Prevent Identity Theft

Whether you can arrange it so no one can view your credit reports depends on what state you live in.

Consumer advocates in the U.S. have long pushed for laws to allow individuals to freeze their credit files with the big three reporting agencies (Equifax Inc., Experian Group Ltd., and TransUnion LLC). Now many states are making that possible.

When a credit report is frozen, no new creditor that checks before doing business with you can view your files unless you first approve. At least six states have approved credit freezes, and

25 others have passed right-to-freeze laws. For a list, visit www.prig.org/consumer.

Freezes can't prevent all identity theft, but with a freeze in place, it's much more difficult for thieves to open an account in your name. According to The Wall Street Journal, to freeze your credit files, visit: Equifax.com. Click "Customer Service" then "How do I place a Security Freeze ...".

Go to www.experian.com/consumer/security-freeze.html.

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Drinking two cups of apple juice or eating three apples a day boosts production of quercetin.

C.Y. Lee, professor and chairman of the Department of Food Science & Technology at Cornell University, says apples are among the best choices for fighting Alzheimer's.

Lee says people should eat more apples,

especially fresh ones. Red Delicious has a very high antioxidant content. Be sure to eat the skin. It can have 6 times more antioxidants than the flesh.

Apples are well-known cancer fighters and heart protectors. They reduce risk of diabetes, asthma, and tooth loss. ○



During The Day And Evening

They are dietary sleepwalkers.

One Cornell University professor says many of us are dietary sleepwalking. It's like we're in a nutritional trance. We just eat whatever happens to be there without giving it a thought.

In his book, *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think* (Bantam), Professor Brian Wansink, director of the Cornell Food and Brand Lab, explains the psychology behind it all.

He writes about the "tablescape." How attractively food is arranged, how close it is to us, and how the room is lighted all affect how long we linger at the table and how much we will eat. Wansink recommends using smaller plates. With snacks, he says people using large bowls take half again as much as those using smaller bowls.

If there is more variety, people will eat more. He recommends the rule of two,

taking only two foods from a buffet at any one time. Refill as often as you want, but by taking just two foods each time, you'll eat less.

When dining with others, the enjoyable atmosphere can cause you to eat up to 40 percent more. One tip: At a party, don't start eating until the last person at the table starts. Or go back to the rule of two.

Wansink says it's best to avoid huge packages of snacks. He says half the food you buy in huge quantities will be gone in a week. If you want that 5 pound barrel of snacks, divide it into small plastic bags so you won't be eating a huge quantity at once.

Want to slim down over time? Forget starving yourself. The professor says that if you cut 200 calories a day, you will be 20 pounds lighter in one year without ever feeling hungry. ○

Want to slim down over time?

How To Stay Safe After Dark

Night driving can be challenging and hazardous, but new technology can help. Some of it is available right now, and some will be available soon.

Tinting mirrors are becoming common. They react to headlights coming from behind, dim the mirror reflection, and give

it a green tint. It makes it easier to look at, according to Chrysler.

Headlights that turn with the steering mechanism allow cars to "see around corners." Several cars now have this capability.

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TransUnion.com, click "personal," then "Fraud and Identity Theft," then "Preventing."

The freeze must be in place at all three credit reporting agencies.

Some say the problem with freezes is a lack of instant credit access. An almost immediate "thaw," however, solves the problem. Experian lets you do it on the Web.

Equifax and TransUnion require a call.

While the official policy says it may take 72 hours to unfreeze, it happens within minutes.

You could call from your car dealer and request unfreezing, that is, if you have your PIN with you. If you are buying a car or applying for a mortgage, it's best to call first and unfreeze.

A freeze won't prevent a crook from using a stolen credit card number for purchases or cash advances. ○

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* ~~Keep~~ your headlights, tail lights, and signal lights clean.

* Don't drink and drive. Drinking impairs driving ability, is a depressant, and induces fatigue.

* Turn lights on early in the day.

* Reduce speed at night and increase following distance.

* Don't overdrive your headlights. You should be able to stop inside the illuminated area.

* Keep your headlights on low when following another vehicle.

* If you're too tired to drive, pull off the road and rest.

Be careful. Traffic deaths are three times greater at night than during the day. ○

How to Use Your EAP

When help is needed call the office location most convenient for you. The office coordinator will ask for your name, employer and a brief description of your presenting concern. If an emergency exists you will be given immediate assistance. If your situation is not an emergency, you will be offered telephone assistance and/or in-person sessions to complete an assessment and make a referral for treatment if needed.

Meetings with your counselor are completely confidential. Your employer will not know you have used the EAP. No one will be provided any information about you without your written consent. Exceptions would occur only in the event of you being considered dangerous to yourself or someone else.

At the first appointment you should be prepared to give the counselor some background information to assist in formulating an action plan. Many people find it helpful to prepare a list of things they wish to discuss at each session. ○



PORTLAND:
503-639-3009

SALEM:
503-588-0777

CORVALLIS:
541-757-3013

If you live outside the Portland/Willamette Valley areas, call the toll free number listed below. You will be referred to a mental health provider in your area.

1-800-433-2320
www.cascadecenter.com

Please direct your questions or comments regarding this newsletter to this address:

EAP News Editor,
c/o Cascade Centers, Inc.,
7180 S.W. Fir Loop, Suite 1-A,
Portland, Oregon 97223

or via email to:

info@cascadecenter.com