

Oregon Military Department's



Stay Well Newsletter

January 2009

Welcome to our Agency's quarterly Health and Wellness Newsletter. The goal of this newsletter is to provide you with health and wellness information and tips on a quarterly basis. As the agency's Health and Wellness Coordinator, I encourage you to participate by providing me with topics or ideas you may have as they relate to Health and Wellness. I will try to share some of that information with other employees within our agency through this link. You can contact me at 503-584-3581 or email me at Robin.M.Webb@mil.state.or.us.

UP COMING & CURRENT EVENTS

FREE Health, Wellness & Job Fair - The Oregon Military Department is hosting two free Health, Wellness and Job Fair's this month. Both of these events are FREE and open to the public.

The first Fair will be held at Camp Withycombe located at 10101 SE Clackamas Rd, Clackamas, on Tuesday, January 20th from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The second Fair will be held in Salem on Saturday, January 31, 2009 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm and Sunday, February 1st from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Salem Auditorium located at 2310 17th St NE, Salem.

Both fairs will offer job booths represented by several State Agencies and outside companies such as the American Red Cross and Marion Estates. Representatives from various colleges and businesses will be in attendance. A representative from Tri-West Insurance (Tri-Care) and the Oregon National Guard Family Program will also be in attendance.

Some free services that will be provided are chair massages, chiropractic spinal scans, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure checks, etc. There will also be door prizes and free refreshments.

For more information please call me at 503-584-3581 or send me an email at Robin.M.Webb@mil.state.or.us

HOW WINTER CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH

If you're feeling more tired, irritable or depressed, you may be experiencing a condition called Seasonal

Affective Disorder (SAD). This condition is brought on by the darker days and affects millions of North Americans, especially those in northern climates.

Researchers at the Stritch School of Medicine out of Loyola University indicate the reduced exposure to light could cause a biochemical imbalance in the brain. Those with mild to moderate cases begin to notice symptoms in the fall. Here is what you can do to give yourself a more upbeat outlook:

1. Get outside for 30 minutes a day. Go out at mid-day when you can.
2. Doctors at emedicinehealth.com recommend taking multivitamins that include magnesium, B complex and minerals. They also suggest avoiding caffeine and practicing stress management.
3. Walking and aerobic exercise can improve mood and strength.

There are treatments for SAD. In light therapy, patients sit near a special lamp called a light box or wear a visor outfitted with a bulb for prescribed periods of time each day. Some doctors prescribe antidepressants for this condition. Seasonal mood changes should be taken seriously and discussed with your doctor. If not treated, they can become more serious in years to come.

PANDEMIC FLU – ARE YOU PREPARED?

Preparing for a Pandemic influenza outbreak involves everybody. The threat of pandemic influenza is real. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health experts agree that it is not a question of **IF** a pandemic will occur, but **WHEN** it will occur.

Pandemic Flu is an outbreak of a new flu virus that spreads around the world. The virus will spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. Because the virus is new to people, everyone will be at risk of getting it.

In the 20th century, three flu pandemics were responsible for more than 50 million deaths worldwide and almost a million deaths in the United States. The 1918-1919 flu pandemic was the most severe; it caused the deaths of at least 675,000 Americans. If a pandemic of similar severity occurred today, 90 million Americans could become ill, and approximately 2 million Americans could die.

There are important differences between pandemic flu and seasonal flu. People will have little or no immunity to pandemic flu since it is a new virus to humans. With seasonal flu, people have some immunity built up from previous exposure to the viruses. Symptoms of pandemic flu may be more severe than seasonal flu. More people are likely to die from pandemic flu than from seasonal flu. Pandemic flu could happen at any time of the year. Seasonal flu usually occurs in the fall and winter in the United States. Vaccines for pandemic flu may not be available for 4-6 months after a pandemic starts. Vaccines for seasonal flu are available each year and are based on known flu strains.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), CDC, and health experts, they suggest you stock up on food and other necessities, improve health and plan ahead for how you will care for you and family members during a flu pandemic. Here are some suggestions:

Stock Up:

- ✓ Store nonperishable foods, bottled water, over-the-counter drugs, health supplies, and other necessities.
- ✓ HHS recommends having a 2-week supply, but stocking up can take place over time.
- ✓ These supplies can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages.

Improve Health:

- ✓ Wash your hands with soap and water frequently throughout the day.
- ✓ Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Plan Ahead:

- ✓ Plan for what you will do in the following cases:
 1. if schools are dismissed
 2. if you cannot go to work, or
 3. if you or a family member becomes sick and needs care.

For more information you can visit www.pandemicflu.gov

DID YOU KNOW?

There are health benefits associated with owning a pet that may go beyond companionship?

According to Health.com, since the 1980s, studies have linked dogs and cats to health benefits such as higher survival rates after illness, fewer visits to the doctor, and better physical and psychological well-being in the elderly. Cat owners, for example, may be less likely to die from a heart attack or stroke, according to a study presented at the 2008 American Stroke Association Annual Meeting.

Not all researchers agree on the relationship between pet ownership and health, but animal lovers don't need much convincing. Thousands of pet-praising blogs (which include ones "written" by the pets themselves, as CNN has reported) permeate the Web. Even January Payne, a medical reporter for U.S. News & World Report, has blogged about her poodle's impact on her health.

Although most pets aren't dragging little boys out of wells, they are involved in saving lives. Seizure dogs provide an alarm system for epilepsy patients, and diabetic alert dogs are trained to identify the scent changes that accompany hypoglycemia. Research has even shown that dogs may be able to smell melanoma and other types of cancer.





CASCADE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free confidential benefit that can assist you with problems that interfere with your day to day activities. This confidential service provides telephone contact and/or in-person sessions. There is no charge to you or your eligible family members. Types of services EAP offers are marital conflict; interpersonal relationship problems; conflict at work; financial, legal, consumer concerns; child care, elder care; depression or anxiety; career changes; stress management; family relationships; grieving a loss; personal decision making; referrals to community resources and information on alcohol and drug abuse. You can contact them in Portland at 503-639-3009; Salem/Keizer at 503-588-0777 or all other areas 1-800-433-2320. You can also contact them on the web at www.cascadecenter.com

BENEFIT RESOURCES

Oregon.gov/das/pebb
Questions about your benefits?

Inquiries.pebb@state.or.us

(503) 373-1102

(800) 788-0520

Medical Plans

Kaiser Permanente: my.kp.org/nw/pebb

Providence Choice: providence.org/pebb

Regency BCBSO: or.regence.com/pebb

Samaritan Select: samaritanselect.com

Mail Order Prescriptions

PPS: ppsrx.com

Walgreens: walgreenshealth.com

Dental Plans

Kaiser Permanente: my.kp.org/nw/pebb

ODS: odscompanies.com/pebb

Willamette Dental: willamettedental.com

Optional Plans

Standard Insurance: standard.com

UnumProvident: unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb