

USDA ARS Wellness Program

2009

PURPOSE

The Cropping Systems Research Laboratory (CSRL) Wellness Program is designed to enhance the health and well-being of CSRL employees while increasing their productivity and morale, and decreasing absenteeism, workers' compensation expenses, turnover rate, deaths, and early retirements. With the accomplishment of these goals, CSRL has the opportunity to provide a positive influence on employee health and improve overall productivity, both immediately and in the future.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Wellness Program is to encourage employees to generate a healthy attitude and lifestyle and to develop habits that will improve their health, morale, and prevent illness. Wellness means taking responsibility for your health by learning to stay healthy, practicing good health habits, and giving up harmful/fatal ones.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The CSRL Wellness Program Committee is responsible for recommending the policy for the CSRL Wellness Program; and for providing technical guidance and advice to the CSRL Director and the CSRL Collateral Duty Safety Officer (CDSO). Supervisors are responsible for making the Wellness Program known to all employees and should encourage employees to participate in the program. (Supervisors may grant administrative leave for employees to obtain training, e.g. standard first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), employee counseling, and smoking cessation programs.)

WELLNESS PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The following information contains suggestions on how to improve your health through wellness activities. However, remember the following:

- Before getting involved in a physical fitness or weight reduction program, consult your physician.
- Eat a balanced diet
- Get plenty of sleep (6-8 hours) a night
- Balance leisure activities with work
- Exercise regularly.
- Know the early warning signs of illness and do not wait to get treatment.

WELLNESS PROGRAM BENEFITS

Wellness has several components that contribute to the overall health of an individual; physical, emotional, intellectual, nutritional, social, and work family life balance. Each of these areas is detailed below.

PHYSICAL

Major lifestyle changes are not required to achieve a level of physical fitness. Regular exercise strengthens the heart, helps reduce excess weight, maintains good body weight, and promotes a positive attitude about your self. Jumping rope, brisk walking, running, cross country skiing, swimming, and stationary cycling are some of the best exercises for a healthy heart and lungs.

Exercise can be fun! Before starting an exercise program, you should check with your physician. Establish an exercise program that is regular (3 times a week for 15-30 minutes) such as aerobics, walking, jogging, swimming, etc.

Before exercising, warm up 5-10 minutes to prepare your heart and lungs. Don't stop exercising suddenly. Cool down for 5-10 minutes after you exercise with a slow walk or jog and finish cooling down by stretching your arms, legs, and torso. This will help prevent stiffness and cramps. Any exercise program should start gradually and increase with your stamina. If you cannot easily talk with a friend while exercising, you're over exerting yourself (train, don't strain). Consult with your physician before starting an exercise program. This is especially important for those with cardiovascular disease (CVD). CVD is a disorder of the heart (cardio) and blood vessels (vascular). The most common consequences of untreated CVD are heart attacks and strokes. Exercising for flexibility helps prevent injuries and improves your body's ability to move. The same exercises mentioned above for warming up and cooling down can be performed. To improve your flexibility, gradually try to hold a position longer or increase the number of repetitions. While caloric restriction and a sedentary lifestyle (resulting in loss of muscle) cause your metabolism to slow down, regular physical activity and an increase in caloric intake increase your Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR). This makes it easier to explain why physically inactive dieters have difficulty continuing to lose weight after a few weeks and seem to put it back on very quickly. Furthermore, very active individuals can eat more, and remain lean because both factors elevate RMR. The calories burned during physical activity can be significant contributors to weight loss over a period of time. A daily one mile walk would burn roughly 100 calories for a person weighing approximately 125 pounds. This would burn enough calories to lose over 10 pounds of fat per year. Physical activity helps to regulate appetite to the number of calories burned. The amount of body heat developed during exercise helps suppress the "hunger center"(Hypothalamus). This is why you are not as hungry on a hot day. Most muscular strength and endurance are developed through good workout habits, which are obtained through proper training and diet.

EMOTIONAL

The emotional component emphasizes an awareness and acceptance of feelings. It includes the capacity to manage feelings and related behaviors; such as, the realistic assessment of limitations, development of autonomy, and ability to cope effectively with stress. People with high self-esteem like themselves and feel proud of who they are. They feel good about their friendships, work relationships, and families. They can let go of situations they cannot control, but they take action if it can help. Employees who feel good about themselves can sometimes influence those who do not. CSRL has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available to employees. On average, over two-thirds of the employees who seek assistance from their agency's EAP are helped. When employees facing difficult personal or family problems get the help they need from effective EAP, the benefits are: improved employee health, reduced absenteeism, improved work quality, and greater job satisfaction. If you have a need for assistance the number is 1-800-937-7770.

INTELLECTUAL

This component encourages creative, stimulating mental activities. Individuals use resources to expand their knowledge and improve their skills, while sharing the information with others. Cultural activities, classroom activities, and games provide a mind stimulating "work out" that research is now finding decreases the chances of senility. An appreciation for learning will lead to an ability to see problems and challenges not as stumbling blocks, but as stepping stones. Pursuing intellectual activities can be a method to reduce the stressors that occur in work and family life. Researchers believe that games provide the means to develop reasoning and problem solving abilities, and enhance creativity and learning. These skills can be applied to various areas, including stress management, by identifying potential problems, and choosing an appropriate course of action. Many people think of stress as tension or pressure. Stress is the way an individual responds to change. Understanding stress and its effects can help you use it to your advantage and turn potential "stressors" into positive challenges. We count on stress to mobilize our bodies during real or potentially life-threatening situations, and for the extra surge we need to master a problem and arrive at a creative solution. An abundance of information is available on coping skills, values clarification, assertiveness, and relaxation techniques. Relaxation techniques can help relieve both the physical and emotional tension that sometime occurs in a routine day.

NUTRITIONAL

Good nutrition encompasses both quantity and quality of the food consumed. A healthy diet keeps your body fit and full of energy. Eating right can make a big difference in your appearance, how often you are sick, how quick you recover, and how long you may live. Good nutrition helps fight infection and prevent disease. Three well-balanced meals a day should be planned, including breakfast, which is probably the most important meal.

Eat fruits, vegetables, proteins, nonfat dairy products, and whole grains each day.

Limit your intake of salt, sugar, fats, cholesterol, and over processed food.

The following lists the six basic nutrients needed and sources of each: Water- Tap or bottled water, juices, soup, nonalcoholic drinks. Protein- Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, dried peas and beans, nuts. Carbohydrates- Whole grain products, potatoes, cereals, pasta. Vegetables and fruits. Fats- Liquid vegetable oils (except palm and coconut oils), some margarine. Vitamins- Fruits, vegetables, dairy products, whole grains Minerals- Dairy products, green vegetables, lean meats, poultry, dried fruits.

Following a set of guidelines can guarantee some improvement to your health and well-being, however, one must keep in mind that there are factors that could interfere, which include heredity, lifestyle, personality traits, mental health, and environment_ Hypertension (high blood pressure) is sometimes called the "silent killer" because there are no specific warning signs. It is important to know your normal blood pressure and have it monitored regularly. Blood pressure can be monitored by local facilities free of charge, i.e., fire departments, blood pressure screening programs, or at your health facility at your expense. Persistent headaches, dizziness, fatigue, tension, and shortness of breath sometimes go with high blood pressure. High blood pressure can be reduced by a low fat and low salt diet, and changes in your lifestyle, such as quitting smoking, losing weight, getting more exercise, and reducing your alcohol intake.

WEIGHT CONTROL

If you are 25 percent overweight, your chances of having a heart attack are about two times greater than normal. An overweight person is forcing the heart to pump nourishment to an abnormal quantity of tissue. The resulting wear and tear on your heart and blood vessels are tremendous, raising the risk of stroke, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and heart disease.

Suggestions for people trying to maintain a diet are: (1) talk with someone who is supportive, (2) tell everyone not to offer you food; (3) never accept food from another person unless you specifically ask for it; (4) request that affection not be shown in terms of food, e.g., chocolate; (5) request that others not criticize your dietetic habits; (6) ask a social support person to praise you for progress; (7) develop a behavioral contract with another person; (8) reduce food topics in your conversations; (9) use a "buddy system" with other overweight friends; (10) praise the efforts of your social support persons; and (11) maintain realistic goals.

FOOD PREPARATION

The following are some suggestions on healthy food preparation: 1. Bake, broil, steam, or stir fry food instead of frying. 2. Cook with vegetable oils or polyunsaturated margarine instead of butter. 3. Use non-stick spray to limit the amount of oil you need. 4. Trim excess fat off meats, and remove skin from chicken before cooking. 5. Skim fat off the top of stews, soups, and sauces. 6. Season with herbs, lemon; and spices to reduce salt usage. 7. Avoid gravy. 8. Select recipes with low fat content.

SOCIAL

Effective communication and interpersonal relationships are central to the social component. Communication patterns differ across cultures, ethnic groups, geographical regions, families, age groups, and gender. To be able to translate these differences, it is important to recognize that through perceptions, we make meaning about whom we are, who others are and how we stand in relation to others.

Perceptions are based on the information we have about ourselves and others. It comes from life experiences, skills, culture, gender, and age; the same areas we try to translate in others. Often we assume that: The other person perceives the situation the way we do. The other person is making the same inferences and assumptions we are. The other person is experiencing, or ought to experience, the same feelings we do. The other person's understanding of the situation ought to be based on our logic. The communication process in a given situation has little or no relation to other events in the situation or to history.

WORK FAMILY LIFE BALANCING

Lifestyle management is one way to balance the competing demands of work and family life. One method to find a balance between work and home is to complete a time management chart. Make a list of everything that must be done and set realistic goals that are challenging. Decide which tasks are important and which ones can be done later. Include breaks or "time out" for yourself. Bring the family together to plan each week's and year's schedule, including vacations and visits from friends or relatives. Schedule time when you will have fun together. Delegate when possible or accept help when offered. Realize you cannot always do it by yourself and, don't forget to build flexibility into your schedule and more importantly, communicate your plans to those who need to know.

If you have any questions regarding the CSRL Wellness Program, please notify the CSRL CDSO at ext. 5210 or the SOHS at ext. 5247.

USDA Wellness Center

Policies and Procedures

Facility Hours	5:00am – 11:00pm
Waiver and Doctor's Release	All participants will be required to sign a waiver stating that their participation is strictly voluntary and will not be considered in the scope and course of employment. This waiver will be signed prior to participating in the Wellness Program. All participants will be required to have a signed physician's consent form prior to using the Wellness Center.
Access to Facility	The USDA Wellness Center is open to employees only. (Employees under 18 years of age must have parental consent.)
Orientations	All individuals will be required to attend an Equipment Orientation before using the Wellness Center equipment. No patron will be permitted to use the equipment without attending an equipment orientation session. Orientations are scheduled when all necessary forms (waiver/doctor's approval) are turned in.
General Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• While using the Wellness Center, employees must use "non duty" (lunch period, and before and after work) time. Employees are encouraged to use flextime, and/or flex-tour to the fullest extent possible.• If you notice any equipment that is not operational or safe, notify the CSRL CDSO (Collateral Duty Safety Officer) at ext. 5210 or the CSRL SOHS (Occupational Safety & Health Specialists) at ext. 5247 immediately.• As a general SAFETY precaution always inform someone that you will be working out, and let them know approximately how long you will be gone.• Sign in and out each time you exercise.
Clothing	Individuals using the Wellness Center will be required to wear appropriate clothing for hygienic and safety reasons, and for the courtesy of the other patrons. Appropriate clothing includes: t-shirt, athletic footwear with socks,

gym shorts, sweat suit, and running suit. Dress shoes, open-toed shoes, and sandals **will not** be acceptable clothing. Shower rooms and lockers will be provided for changing purposes. Each participant will provide their own towels for showering and cleaning equipment.

Food and Tobacco

No food is allowed in the fitness center area. Plastic water bottles or squeeze bottles will be permitted, but not around electronic controls on treadmills, etc. (water only). Glass bottles of any kind are not permitted in the facility. The use of any tobacco product is not permitted anywhere in the facility.

Equipment Use Limit

Limit use of all treadmills to 30 minutes if other employees are waiting.

Proper Equipment Use

Individuals are expected to use all equipment properly. Abusing the equipment will only lead to breakage and downtime, resulting in loss of exercise time for everyone. Employees must report any broken equipment to the CDSO immediately at ext. 5210.

Cleaning Equipment

Each piece of equipment in contact with sweat must be cleaned by the participant. Participant will use their towel and the provided cleaning solution to clean the equipment.

Injury

Individuals injured while exercising will be required to report the injury/accident to the CDSO. Remember, participation is strictly voluntary and will not be considered in the scope and course of employment, therefore injuries sustained while exercising will not be considered worker's compensation injuries.

Lockers

For storage of personal items during workout time only.

This agreement represents the entire understanding between the participants and the USDA-ARS, Wellness Center.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature (CDSO or SOHS) _____ Date: _____

Wellness Program Waiver Form:

In consideration for being permitted to participate in the Wellness Program; I, my family heirs, executors, representatives, administrators, and assigns do hereby waive, release, and forever discharge USDA-ARS and their officers, directors, employees, and agents from any and all responsibilities, liabilities, and lawsuits, present or future whether foreseen or unforeseen, arising out of directly or indirectly, to my participation in the program, including but not limited to such claims that may result from any injury, illness, or death, accidental or otherwise, during or arising in any way from my participation in the wellness program, or utilizing any of the facilities and equipment of the CSRL or the USDA regardless of fault. The undersigned participant further agrees that any injury which may be sustained by the said employee arising out of the participation in the Wellness Program is not compensable under The Workers Compensation Law.

Signature

Date

Witness

Date

**CSRL WELLNESS PROGRAM
PRENATAL CLEARANCE FORM**

Dear Doctor _____,

Your patient, _____, has expressed interest in engaging in regular exercise during the term of her pregnancy. In the interest of her health, we require clearance from you indicating your medical approval or disapproval, including any contraindications or limitations your patient may have as a result of her pregnancy.

For your information, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist's exercise recommendations for pregnant and postpartum women, include:

- Maternal heart rate should not exceed 140 beats per minute
- Strenuous activities should not exceed 15 minutes in duration
- No exercise should be performed in the supine position after the fourth month of gestation is completed
- Exercises that employ the Valsalva maneuver should be avoided
- Caloric intake should be adequate to meet not only the extra energy needs of pregnancy, but also the exercise performed
- Water intake should be increased to prevent dehydration

Please read and sign the appropriate statement and give us full instructions on any limitations your patient may have. Thank you for your cooperation and concern for your patient's fitness.

_____ Your patient is currently inactive, but is interested in starting a regular program.

_____ Your patient is exercising regularly, and is interested in continuing her regular exercise program.

My patient is pregnant and is approximately due on _____.

_____ She is **able** to participate in a modified exercise program 3-5 times weekly. Her limitations, if any, are:

_____ She is **not able** to participate in a regular exercise program. Please delay her participation until her delivery date.

Name, Address (Please use stamp) Date: _____

USDA Wellness Program

Orientation Checklist for Participants

Name: _____

The following must be on file with the SOHS.

_____ Reviewed and signed Policies and Procedures Form

_____ Reviewed and signed Wellness Program Waiver Form.

_____ Signed Physician's Consent Form.

_____ Orientation Attended.

_____ (CDSO or SOHS)
(Sign & Date)

PHYSICIAN'S CONSENT FORM

Name: (last, first, M.I.):	Sex: M / F	Date of Birth: / / (mm/dd/yy)	Date: / /
Emergency Contact:	Relation to Member:	Daytime Phone Contact: ()	Home Phone Contact ()

Based on my physical exam, my patient, _____
(Choose one or choose all that apply)

is able to participate in a regular exercise program at our wellness center.

is able to exercise with the following limitations:

is able to start a regular exercise program with the following recommendations and/or limitations.

is unable to participate in a regular exercise program for the following reasons:

Please include any other pertinent information you feel we should know about your patient:

Physician's Signature: _____ Date: _____

NAME: _____ (please use stamp)

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

Wellness Center
3810 4th Street
Lubbock, Texas 79415
(806)723-5272 -- fax