

CLAIMS COMPANION™



Chesapeake Disability Management, Inc
Reclaiming Lives, Improving Outcomes.

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Upcoming Events!

BCA Meeting September 3, 2009.
Speaker: Commissioner Sfekas
5:30 pm. Crowne Plaza. Timonium, MD

MWCEA Educational Conference.
September 20-23, 2009.
Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel

National Workers' Compensation
Conference November 18-20, 2009,
Exp Only November 18-19, 2009
McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

Work Place Wellness

Wellness in the workplace is gaining attention as we face soaring health care costs and debates over costs to employers providing healthcare. Many employers have implemented wellness programs to help decrease expenses for employer paid healthcare and to promote healthier life styles. In this article we will discuss screening, prevention, education, making changes, and support for employees. Some of the health care challenges facing American workers today include: cardio vascular disease, obesity, cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Work environments have become more sedentary and therefore have added to the increase in cardio vascular disease, obesity, and neck and back strain due to poor posture while sedentary at a desk. The first step employers can take is to offer health screenings for each employee. Included in these health screenings would be blood pressure, eye exams, posture screening/spinal analysis, blood sugar check, fitness testing, depression testing, and body mass index screening.

Prevention education is a key element in decreasing health care costs and workers compensation claims. Employers can prevent back injuries by teaching the proper ways to lift, offer education on ergonomics, for example to design each desk space to fit the employee. Evaluate the five aspects of ergonomics in a each work space these include: safety, comfort, ease of use, productivity/performance, and aesthetics. Teach employees stretches that can be performed at their desk. Taking a stretch brake helps the employee to relax and refocus while also decreasing the strain of sitting in the same position for a prolonger period. Prevention also includes fire safety, hand tool safety, and education on risky behavior that cause detriment to your health.

Employers can help lower costs and increase productivity by helping employees avoid or postpone serious heath conditions. This can be done by educating employees about the effects of smoking, lack of exercise, suboptimal nutrition, substance abuse, and stress. This allows the employer to use the screening information to develop a program that meets the needs of the employees. Americans spend so much of their time at work it is the ideal setting to focus on the main risk factors. The obesity epidemic in the United States has increased greatly over the last thirty years and many are not following the recommended amount of exercise for heart health and calorie burning. Being considered overweight or obese is a result of eating too many calories and not getting enough physical...

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Mild Traumatic Brain Injuries

Traumatic Brain injuries (TBI) can occur during a vehicle accident, fall, blow to the head, sport and recreational injury, aneurysms, illness, infections, tumor, alcohol or drug use, or lack of oxygen to the brain. Traumatic Brain injuries range from mild to severe for the purposes of this article we will be discussing mild traumatic brain injuries because they are the most frequent and often misdiagnosed.

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) “approximately 1.5 million Americans sustain traumatic brain injuries, ranging from mild to severe” ... “230,000 people are hospitalized due to TBI and survive, 80,000 to 90,000 Americans experience onset of long-term disability from TBI’s”.

In sports medicine the term “concussion” is broadly used to describe a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI) though a concussion is thought to not have long-term affects it is still a mild traumatic brain injury. The CDC defines a case of MTBI “as the occurrence of injury to the head arising from blunt trauma or acceleration or deceleration forces with one of the following Any period of observed or self reported: Transient confusion, disorientation, or impaired consciousness; Dysfunction of memory around the time of injury or loss of consciousness lasting less than 30 minutes. Measuring the severity: as mentioned before TBI’s can be classified as mild, moderate, and severe. The Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) is the universal system for classification. The scale grades a person’s level of consciousness on a scale of 3-15 based on verbal and motor ability, and eye opening. Mild is a GCS of 13 and above, 9-12 moderate and 8 or below is severe. (*Chesapeake Disability Management, Inc. offers a free Glasgow Coma Scale, please email amills@chesapeakedisability.com if you are interested in receiving a GCS.*)

Misdiagnosis of MTBI’s is frequent because the symptoms and signs are subtle to either the patient or the family. Failing to share information with the doctor leads to misdiagnosis. Someone experiencing symptoms or results of a MTBI may have lower concentration, frequent or constant headaches, trouble reading, mental slowness, sleep disruption such as wanting to sleep more or interrupted sleep, mood changes, changes in vision, and loss of memory or follow through. Some of these systems are sometimes diagnosed as mental illness, nervous disorders, and/or natural memory loss with age.

In regards to workers compensation and liability insurance proper training and equipment can decrease the chance of and the severity of a MTBI accidents and claims. Simple things like wearing your seat belt while riding or driving in a motor vehicle, wearing a hard hat, avoid falls by using proper sized step stools, grab bars, and hand rails and remove tripping hazards in an office setting or construction site.

Treatment; there is not a standard for treatment of MTBI’s though with time some if not all of the symptoms will decrease or improve. Long-term problems may still occur and may include headaches, confusion, pain, and mood changes. Those living with long-term problems may find it helpful to rely on external memory devices such as a memory book. They may find it helpful to work puzzles, attend speech therapy, or join support groups for those experiencing the same symptoms for encouragement on the potential for recovery.

Resources:

About Brain Injuries. Brain Injury Association of America. http://www.biausa.org/elements/aboutbi/factsheets/factsaboutbi_2008.pdf

Concussion. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mild_traumatic_brain_injury

Facts for Physicians about Mild Traumatic Brain Injuries. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/tbi_toolkit/physicians/mtbi/mtbi.pdf

Mild Brain Injury. Brain Injury Association of Minnesota. www.braininjurymn.org

Tortellini Pasta Salad

Courtesy of Janet Burgess, Chef, Culinary Adventures, San Diego, CA. Email: cooksrule2@yahoo.com

8 Servings

Salad ingredients:

1 ½ pounds of cooked tri-color tortellini

Olive oil

1 cup jarred Pesto Sauce

2 large tomatoes, ½ inch dice

¼ cup fresh basil cut in thin strips

2 ounces provolone cheese, ½ inch dice

4 tablespoons red peppers, ½ inch dice

For the salad:

Toss the cooked tortellini lightly in olive oil and let cool on a sheet pan.

In a large bowl, toss cooled tortellini, Pesto Sauce, and remaining ingredients.

Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve at room temperature.

Work Place Wellness

activity to burn those calories. Behavior and environment play a large role in causing people to be overweight and these are the easiest to treat and prevent. By screening for body mass index (BMI) you can get an indication of where you stand. Body Mass Index is a measurement of your body fat based on your height and weight. Normal is a BMI between 18.5-24.9, overweight is 25-29.9, and obese is 30-34.9. To calculate your BMI take your weight divided by your height in inches squared multiplied by 703. For example someone who weighs 152 divided by the height in inches squared (68 X 68) 4624 multiplied by 703 = 23.10. (152/4624 X 703 = 23.10). The recommended amount of exercise for adults is intense cardio for 30 minutes a day for five days a week or vigorously intense cardio for 20 minutes a day for 3 days a week and two days a week for strength training. Cardio exercises can include walking, running, cycling, or swimming.

Employers can educate their employees about substance abuse and smoking focusing on the fact that both lead to serious health problems. Additionally, some health insurances will pay for a short rehabilitation in patient stay. Working with your local health department can help educate and decrease smoking. The Lung Association also offers smoking cessation information.

Stress can affect health and some employers have found it effective to bring in a massage therapist, require that employees take frequent breaks, and provide times for employees to constructively address concerns with management through informal chat sessions.

Some large employers have built fitness centers and created “play rooms” for break time. For the smaller employer just adding one treadmill, one elliptical, and a small weight set available for use before or after work can help significantly. For the employer with limited resources, team up with a local gym to get a reduced rate based on volume and also have the fees deducted from paychecks for interested employees. Changing the food offered in cafeterias can include offering healthier choices in the vending machines. Remove vending machines with the high caloric food. Start a newsletter about nutrition, health recipes and portion control. Offer brown bag lunches in a class room setting during lunch time offering information in diet and nutrition.

The benefits to employers who offer wellness programs is a healthier employee with less lost time due to illnesses, increased productivity, decrease in short term disability claims, and reduced stress in the office setting.

There is additional information offered on the Centers for Disease Control website and on the internet to help get a program started, also insurance carriers or EPA programs can assist in program development. It is in the best interest of the employer to offer such services as it is for the employee to take advantage of a wellness program.

Resources:

Body Mass Index. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/>

Calculate Body Mass Index. <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>

Overweight & Obesity. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Data & Statistics. <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/index.html>.

Workplace Wellness. Fit Together. <http://www.fittogethernc.org/WorkplaceWellnessAbout.aspx>

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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Chesapeake Disability Management, Inc. offers a unique approach to complex catastrophic and vocational case management. We have designed our services to empower individuals to succeed in their own rehabilitation and proactively reclaim their lives. We believe that our focus on maximizing the individual's role in functioning more independently—at home, in the community, and at work or school—can significantly reduce the emotional, economic, societal and legal costs for all parties involved throughout the treatment.

**Specialized Catastrophic Injury and Disease
Management Team:**

Carole Stolte-Upman, a registered nurse with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, founded CDM in 1991. She has first-hand experience with the most complex, chronic and catastrophic cases, and has carefully selected a team of credentialed case managers, all with hands-on experience with catastrophic injury and vocational case management. They understand the importance of immediate treatment planning and rehabilitation activities to assist the individual in returning to a productive life. They also know that the careful management of this process will reduce emotional, economic, societal and legal costs, and they work hard to make this a reality for every stakeholder involved throughout the case process, while ensuring the best possible outcomes.

Word Search

back	posture	E	S	A	R	R	I	N	S	U	R	A	N	C	E	K
body	prevention	A	E	I	N	T	I	S	I	S	H	R	T	D	C	E
brain	safety	W	E	L	L	N	E	S	S	E	T	E	B	A	I	D
cardio	screening	T	V	S	R	E	K	R	O	W	L	E	B	X	I	T
compensation	strain	S	O	C	O	M	P	E	N	S	A	T	I	O	N	D
concussion	tortellini	E	I	R	N	T	E	K	G	M	E	C	I	E	D	E
diabetes	treatment	T	E	E	T	A	C	E	A	O	H	O	M	R	E	Y
environment	wellness	P	R	E	V	E	N	T	I	O	N	N	U	G	X	E
ergonomic	workers	N	U	N	N	R	L	D	D	M	O	C	D	O	D	L
health		A	T	I	I	T	R	L	S	R	A	U	E	N	O	T
index		C	S	N	I	A	R	B	I	I	N	S	M	O	A	B
insurance		O	O	G	C	M	R	V	M	N	P	S	S	M	E	D
mass		N	P	E	N	E	N	T	A	C	I	I	K	I	E	K
misdiagnosis		K	I	Y	T	E	F	A	S	N	N	O	C	C	N	A
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This Newsletter is published by Chesapeake Disability Management, Inc. as a service to its clients and friends. It is not intended as a substitute for professional advice and we suggest that it be used in conjunction with professional consultation. Please send all comments and questions to amills@chesapeakedisability.com.