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CommonHealth Compass

Watch the Waistline – Holiday Eating Tips

It's that time of year when extra calories lurk everywhere – cookies at the office, candy for Hanukkah or chocolates in your stocking.

All those extra snacks add up, and according to researchers at the National Institutes of Health, most Americans never lose the weight gained during the winter holidays. The pounds add up year after year, making holiday weight gain an important aspect of lifelong obesity.

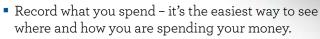
Here are some tips to help you avoid overindulging and gaining all that weight that never goes away.

- Never Arrive Hungry Have a nutritious snack beforehand. If you do arrive hungry, you might over eat.
- Divert Your Attention There's more to a holiday party than food. Focus on conversation - or the football game in the corner.
- Limit Alcohol Avoid drinking too much alcohol at holiday parties. Drink club soda instead.
- Bring Your Own Treats Consider bringing a low-calorie
 treat such as fruit and share
 with the crowd.
- Walk It Off Start a new tradition: the family walk.
 Besides burning some extra calories, everyone will benefit from the quality time.

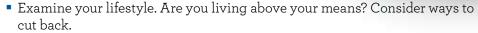
\$tressing Over MoneyDuring Times Like These

Today's economic climate is causing anxiety about money, from having enough to spend to investing and planning for retirement. The state's Employee Assistance Program offers several tips for coping with financial stress:

 Take charge of your finances. Control your finances rather than having your finances control you. Start with a simple plan.



 Set spending priorities, and once your have created a budget, stick to it!



 Set goals for paying off debts, look at your budget and decide where the money will come from, then create and abide by a payment schedule.

If your stress over finances continues, try to determine what causes it and how to control it. Talking with a professional counselor, spiritual advisor or friend might help.

For more information on the Employee Assistance Program, visit www.dhrm.virginia.gov/genlbenefits/employeeassistance.html or call

COVA Care 1-866-725-0602

COVA HDHP 1-800-346-5484 Kaiser Permanente HMO 1-866-517-7042

Are Germs Lurking In Your Office?



With cold and flu season upon us, you may want to stay in your office to avoid under-the-weather co-workers. But office phones, keyboards and fax machines harbor viruses that can cause colds and the flu. In fact, the typical workspace has hundreds of times more bacteria than a toilet seat!

Germ Warfare, this quarter's CommonHealth program, will remind you of simple ways to prevent the spread of germs in the office and make it less likely that you will get sick. Included are an anti microbial pen and spray hand sanitizer.

Watch for the program in your agency or visit the CommonHealth Web site **www.commonhealth.virginia.gov** to learn more.

Great American Smokeout on Nov. 20

Looking for a date when you want to positively, absolutely, without a doubt quit smoking?

Then think about Nov. 20, the date of the annual Great American Smokeout®, and how the Quit For Life™ smoking cessation program can help.

Quitting smoking is not easy. It takes practice and a plan. Quit For Life's "quit coaches" are a phone call away to help break your dependence on tobacco. Your way.

The coaches will help you develop a personalized quit plan that is right for you. If nicotine patches or gum is part of your plan, your Quit Coach can arrange for delivery to your home in time for the Great American Smokeout.

There are few better ways to prepare for the first day of your tobacco-free life. Call the Quit For Life Program today. 1-866-QUIT-4-LIFE (1-866-784-8454).





CommonHealt

The Best Birthday Present Is... Another Birthday!

If a cancer screening is not on your birthday gift list, maybe it should be. Getting these tests, such as a colonoscopy, a mammogram for women or a PSA (prostate) test for men, may be critical in detecting common cancers and also other diseases. And the cost for state health plan members is zero!

All state health plans cover these preventive care benefits: a colorectal exam, including colonoscopy; mammogram; prostate exam and PSA test; and a gynecological exam and Pap smear. This plan year, the state health benefits program has removed age limits for getting these screenings.

Special reminder birthday cards are being mailed to three different groups:

- Women in their 40s to schedule an annual mammogram screening;
- Women 50 and older with the same message, plus a reminder to schedule an annual colorectal cancer screening;
 - Men 50 and older about having a colorectal cancer screening as well.

So make a birthday gift to yourself this year to get a screening.

