

SCOE Wellness Newsletter

August 2010 Edition



You Could Win a \$100 Gift Card!

The Wellness Committee is using the last of its 2009-10 funds to encourage you to complete our Wellness Survey.

Last year, through the SCOE Health & Safety and Wellness Committees, we stepped up our efforts to support the health and wellness of our employees through several initiatives, including the 10,000 Steps Program, the Report Your Walk contest, yoga classes, the monthly Wellness Newsletter, the gift cards for completing a Total Health Assessment, reimbursement for smoking cessation programs and partial reimbursement for attendance at Weight Watchers classes in the community.

We want to hear from you on what's next. Your input through the Wellness Survey will help us plan for 2010-11 and beyond. **The Wellness Survey forms will be available at the August 16th Back to School Event at the Furth Center and at the Special Education Teaching Assistant Back to School Event on August 17th at the SCOE main office.** Each employee who completes a Wellness Survey will be given a raffle ticket for the gift card drawing.

If you will not be at either of the Back to School events, you can complete a Wellness Survey at Human Resources before August 16th to be entered into the drawing for the \$100 gift cards.

Two gift cards will be awarded. The gift cards must be used for exercise shoes or equipment.



Why Is Fiber Important?

Fiber has many potential health benefits: It helps to lower blood cholesterol levels, aids in a healthy digestive system, helps us to feel full, and may smooth out blood sugar levels.

Q. How much fiber do I need?

A. Healthy adults need **20 to 35 grams of fiber** per day. Many of us only get half that amount. But there is good news: Upping your fiber intake can be a caloric bargain. One cup of cooked, chopped broccoli contains about 4.5 grams of fiber and just 44 calories. Ten medium strawberries provide nearly 3 grams of fiber and only 36 calories. And a 1/2 cup of cooked black beans gives you 7 grams of fiber for 110 calories. Plus, there's the added bonus that fiber-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains contain a wide variety of nutrients.

Q. How do I get more fiber in my diet?

A. Here are some high-fiber tips:

Fruit: Juice is a poor fiber source, so eat fruit instead. A medium orange will give you about 3 grams of fiber, but an 8-ounce glass of orange juice has less than a 1/2 gram of fiber and almost twice the calories of the orange. An apple with its skin on contains about 1.5 grams more fiber than does a peeled one.

- Toss fruit into salads-- mandarin oranges, diced apples & dried cranberries with leafy greens.
- Whip up a smoothie: Blend together the fruit of your choice with yogurt and ice.
- Don't overlook fruit for snacks, such as a bowl of sweet blueberries, plain or topped with yogurt.

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Are You Traveling This Year?

Kaiser suggests you visit the Member Services Department at your [local facility](#) before you travel. Kaiser will review your travel benefits with you and offer tips on what to do if you get sick.

You can also order a Portable Electronic Medical Record for \$5 from your Kaiser facility's Medical Secretary Dept as another preparation for traveling to a location without a Kaiser Permanente facility nearby. **See next column—**

Traveling continued--

The Portable Medical record contains select portions of your personal medical record on a small USB drive, so that your medical information is available to providers wherever you may travel.

If your destination includes exotic locales outside of North America and Europe, call the Kaiser Advice and Appointment Call Center at least four weeks prior to travel to consult with a travel nurse and make sure all your immunizations are up-to-date.

High Fiber continued--

Cereal, bread and grains: Make sure your bread is made from whole grains or whole wheat; not just wheat. The outer coating of the wheat contains the majority of the fiber.

- Be sure to check your cereal box labels for the fiber content. A multi-grain cereal may not give you much fiber unless it's made from whole grains.
- Go for brown rice, and add other new whole grains like barley, couscous, millet and quinoa, which are also loaded with fiber. See our new series on these grains.

Vegetables: Increase your vegetable intake by making a stir-fry or a big pot of veggie soup or by using veggies to fill out wrap sandwiches. Try snacking on raw vegetables and low-fat dip or salsa.

- Use color intensity as a general fiber content guide. Spinach is a much better source of fiber than pale iceberg lettuce, and broccoli delivers a larger fiber dose than celery. Go for a variety of rich colors.
- Use any of the wonderful frozen vegetable mixes on the market that can be tossed into pasta dishes and casseroles, stir-fried or sautéed.

Beans and peas: A cup of cooked, red kidney beans contains about 13 grams of fiber, a cup of low-fat refried black beans has nearly 15 fiber grams and a cup of cooked lentils delivers almost 16.

- Make a bean chili or a bean-based soup.
- White cannellini beans are wonderful tossed into pasta dishes.

(One word of caution: If you do not eat beans on a regular basis, make sure to add them in gradually since they can be tough on your digestive system.)

Compliments of Weight Watchers International

Making Your Home Less Attractive

Most burglars look for unoccupied homes that are easy to enter. The best theft prevention is to make your home unattractive to burglars. Burglars go through neighborhoods looking for uncut lawns and stuffed mailboxes. In the evening, they look for darkened houses or lights that have been left on too long. The following are some suggestions for making your home less attractive to potential thieves:

Make your home look occupied, and make it difficult to break in.

- Cut back shrubbery from beneath windows to eliminate hiding places. If you must have plants beneath your windows, pick something with sharp thorns or spikes.
- Lock all outside doors and windows before you leave the house or go to bed. Even if it is for a short time, lock your doors. May seem obvious, but it is amazing how often thieves enter through unlocked windows and doors.
- Make sure your door hinges are on the inside.
- Leave lights on when you go out. If you are going to be away for a length of time, connect some lamps to automatic timers to turn them on in the evening and off during the day.
- Keep your garage door closed and locked.
- If you can do so, install outdoor lights with motion detectors.

See related article below and more on locks, alarms and other precautions in future newsletters.

Adapted from the Memphis Police Dept Burglary Prevention Tips

Risk of Critical Illness Before Age 65

A 25 year old male non-smoker has a 24% chance of having a critical illness (cancer, heart attack or stroke) prior to turning 65. The same age male who smokes has a 49% chance, according to the National Critical Illness Risk Assessment Study published by the American Assoc. for Critical Illness Insurance. The difference between female non-smokers and smokers is similar, although the overall risk is lower for females.

Want to lower your risk? Both Kaiser and Blue Shield have programs to assist you if you are a smoker and want to become a non-smoker. You can also seek help from the national tobacco quitline: 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or the American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking program at <http://www.ffsonline.org/>

Don't Tempt a Thief

Make your home less attractive to would be thieves.

- Lawn mowers, snow blowers, barbecues and bicycles are best stored out of sight.
- Always lock your garden sheds and garages.
- Use curtains on garage and basement windows.
- Never leave notes on your door such as "Gone shopping."
- Secure outdoor furniture and put away tools, so that they don't "walk away".
- Don't leave an extra set of house keys in your car or hidden outside your home under doormats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other "secret" hiding places -- burglars know where to look for hidden keys. Leave those extra keys with a trusted friend or neighbor who can come to help if you get locked out.

Adapted from the Memphis Police Dept Tips

Rethink Your Drink

It is estimated that Americans typically take in about 100 pounds of sugar each year, much of which is in soft drinks. A UCLA study found that adults who drink one or more sodas per day are 27 percent more likely to be overweight or obese than people who drink fewer sugary drinks. Why not try some unsweetened ice tea or plain water on a hot day? Your body will thank you.

Getting to Know Bulgur

A favorite in the Middle East, bulgur is a type of cracked wheat kernel that has been precooked and dried. The resulting grain is light tan in color, slightly chewy, with a mild flavor that works well with many dishes.

- **Key nutrients:** Bulgur packs a lot of fiber per cup (about 8 grams) and close to 6 grams of protein.
- **How to cook with it:** Bulgur is very versatile. You can pretty much use it in anything. It's a classic for tabbouleh and salad. For a quick, pilaf-type meal, add sautéed onion to bulgur cooked in chicken stock. Or top a green salad with a heaping portion of fluffy bulgur. See below for a great recipe using bulgur.

Compliments of the American Diabetes Assoc.

National Immunization Awareness Month

Why are immunizations important?

We have a higher than normal rate of whooping cough in Sonoma County right now. Immunization is one of the most significant public health achievements of the 20th century. Vaccines have eradicated smallpox, eliminated wild polio virus in the United States, and significantly reduced the number of cases of whooping cough, measles, diphtheria, rubella, pertussis and other diseases. But despite these efforts, people still die from these and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

Vaccines offer safe and effective protection from infectious diseases. By staying up-to-date on the recommended vaccines, individuals can protect themselves, their families and friends and their communities from serious, life-threatening infections.

Who should be immunized?

Getting immunized is a lifelong, life-protecting community effort regardless of age, sex, race, ethnic background or country of origin. Recommended vaccinations begin soon after birth **and continue throughout life**. Being aware of the vaccines that are recommended for infants, children, adolescents, adults of all ages and seniors, and making sure that we receive these immunizations, are critical to protecting ourselves and our communities from disease. Some of the vaccinations you had as a child do not last forever. **Check with your health care provider to make sure booster immunizations for you and your children are up-to-date.**

From the Center for Disease Control

Fresh and Figgy Bulgur Wheat Salad

Yellow pepper, chopped figs, sliced almonds, tomato, parsley, onion, bulgur wheat and a tangy turmeric dressing make this delicious! It's similar to Tabbouleh, only more filling. This is a complete meal that is easy to prepare and very healthy. Serves 2 – 3.

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup Bulgur wheat, uncooked
- 1 ½ cups boiling water
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 3 tablespoons onions, diced
- ¾ cup parsley, diced
- 1 large tomato, diced
- 2 large figs, diced
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- ½ yellow pepper, diced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon turmeric salt and pepper

continued next column--

Directions:

- Bring water, pinch of salt and 1 tsp olive oil to a boil in a medium pot. Add Bulgur wheat and stir, then quickly remove from heat and cover. Let stand for 30 minutes.
- When 15 minutes of time remaining for the Bulgur, prepare other ingredients (except for dressing) and toss in a large bowl.
- When Bulgur wheat has cooked, add to other ingredients and mix well (it's OK if the Bulgur wheat is still warm).
- Combine olive oil, turmeric and salt and pepper in a small bowl. Pour over salad and stir to coat. Serve and enjoy!

Note: Sometimes a bit of diced nectarine makes a nice addition. Fat is a little high, but it is mainly beneficial unsaturated fat.

Nutrition Info.: Calories 414; Fat 29 g, (Sat fat: 3.7g, mono. Fat: 20 g; poly. Fat 4 g, trans fat: 0g); carbs: 37g; protein: 7g; fiber 9g; sugar: 14g. sodium 104 mg