

Wellness Program Newsletter

Wellness Matters

All benefit-eligible municipal employees, retirees, and benefit-eligible family members in East Longmeadow, Hampden, HWRSD, Longmeadow, LPVEC and Wilbraham may participate in any of the programs and classes listed. Friends are also invited to participate, however will not be eligible for incentives.

May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month!

Did you know that regular physical activity increases your chances of living a longer, healthier life? It also reduces your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and some types of cancer. Yet in Massachusetts, nearly 44%\* of adults don't get the recommended amount of physical activity.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults:

- Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week. Moderate activity includes things like walking fast, dancing, swimming, and raking leaves.
• Do muscle-strengthening activities – like lifting weights and using exercises bands – at least 2 days a week.

Physical activity is for everyone. No matter what shape you are in, you can find activities that work for you. Together, we can rise to the challenge and get more active during the month of May! See page 2 for our Spring "Walking Works" Program!

\*MA DPH: A Profile of Health Among MA Adults, 2011

Healthfinder.gov, retrieved 4-15-14

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Happy Spring!

With warmer temperatures finally here, it may be easier to get those 30 minutes of activity a day. Our "Walking Works" challenge is starting in May. Last year, we had 84 participants...let's see if we can top that!

Please see page 2 for more information.

Some of our female em-

Visit us on the web!

www.scantichealth.org

ployees completed the R.A.D. Systems of Self Defense that was offered through the Longmeadow Police Department. Participants had lots of great things to say about it, including, "I wish I could tell all women to take this invaluable and potentially life-saving course."

Thank you to Officers

Rex and Van Buskirk for teaching the class. I hope to offer this again in the future; please contact me if you are interested.

So far, over 175 of you have completed the on-line health assessment! Great job! I am glad to hear that many of you used this to kick-start healthy behaviors.

Yours in wellness...Lyn



**Spring into  
fitness with  
walking  
or the activity  
of your choice!**

**Scantic Valley Regional Health Trust Wellness Program  
is launching  
“Spring Strides”  
May 12- June 20**

This 6-week challenge is a great way  
to get moving and have fun at the same time.

- Put together a team and log your activities (number of minutes) over the 6-week period
- Teams can be one person or many
- Monitor your own progress along with your team
- Receive email tips and suggestions to help you along the way
- Don't miss this fun and exciting opportunity to make strides towards better health and fitness! Everyone who completes the challenge will receive an on-the-go salad bowl kit! Prizes will also be given for the two highest number of minutes walked (BC/BS gym bag or walking pack with water bottle).

**[Hurry! Register your team by May 5!!!](#)**

Contact Lyn Hollinger at [Lyn@scantichealth.org](mailto:Lyn@scantichealth.org) to register! Once you choose your team name, registration instructions will be emailed to you.

All employees and their family members are encouraged to participate.

You do not need to be a Blue Cross Blue Shield member.

This is open to all municipal employees, retirees and family, friends in Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Hampden, Wilbraham, HWRSD and LPVEC.

# Upcoming Classes!

## Mindfulness Meditation with Sarah Johnson

Every Monday, 4:45 - 6:00 p.m.

Wilbraham United Church

This class is open to the wider community for a free-will donation. This time allows you to sit comfortably as Sarah guides you in relaxation and mindfulness. Please contact Lyn to join in.

## Zumba with April Marion

Thursdays, starting May 1 through June 19

2:45 - 3:45 pm 6 classes for \$30

Career TEC Gymnasium

174 Brush Hill Ave, West Springfield

Minimum of 10 participants

## Gentle Hatha Yoga with Sarah Johnson

Wednesdays, starting May 28 through July 16

4:45 - 6:00 p.m. 8 classes for \$80

Wilbraham United Church

Minimum of 8, max of 10 participants.

**All employees who work 20+ hours/week are eligible for a 40% discount on classes! Pre-registration is required for all classes. Please contact Lyn to find out how to get the discount.**

**If the minimum number of participants for each class isn't met, the class may need to be cancelled.**

**So invite your friends, grab a co-worker or two, and have great time!**

**Find us on facebook!!**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Scantic-Valley-Regional-Health-Trust-Wellness-Program/104840526249335>

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage can also cause wrinkles and blotches or spots on your skin. The good news is that skin cancer can be prevented, and it can almost always be cured when it's found and treated early.

**SVRHT Wellness Program** is proud to participate in Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month. During the month of May, join us in taking action to prevent skin cancer and reduce the risk of UV damage.

Take simple steps today to protect your skin:

- Stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.
- Cover up with long sleeves and a hat.
- Check your skin regularly for changes.

**Does your face have sun damage? Come to one of the benefits fairs to find out! You will have the chance to use a Dermascan machine and get more information on how to protect yourself from the sun's harmful rays.**

## **BENEFITS FAIRS**

Longmeadow	Wednesday, April 30	12:00 - 4:30	Longmeadow Community House
HWRSD	Wednesday, May 7	2:00 - 4:30	Minnechaug Regional High School
East Longmeadow	Thursday, May 15	11:00 - 5:00	Birchland Park Middle School

# Driving Safety

Driving is one of the most dangerous activities you will do each day. As traffic on the roads increases during the summer months, keep in mind the safety tips below to stay safe when driving for work or pleasure.

## Impaired Driving

Impaired driving simply means a person's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is compromised by alcohol and other drugs that change the function of the brain and body.

- If you plan on drinking, designate a non-drinking driver for the evening
- Never get in the car with an intoxicated driver – take keys away from someone who has been drinking
- If you have been drinking and need to get home, call a friend or taxi or take public transportation

## Safety Belt Use

Safety belts are one of the most effective safety devices in your vehicle. Safety belts can determine who will walk away from a crash and who will not.

- Always wear a safety belt – every trip, every time
- Make sure every passenger is wearing his or her safety belt before you begin your drive
- Children should sit in the back and use the proper child safety seat or booster seat

## Cell Phone Distracted Driving

Cell phone use while driving isn't just a visual and manual distraction, but a cognitive distraction – taking your mind off the primary task of driving. That is why hands-free devices offer no safety benefit as your brain is distracted by the conversation.

When driving:

- Refrain from using your cell phone
- Put your cell phone on silent or in the glove box to avoid temptation
- Safely pull over and put the vehicle in Park to take or make a call
- Change your voicemail message to say you are unavailable when driving

## Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving behaviors can include speeding, frequent and unnecessary lane changes, tailgating and running red or yellow lights.

These behaviors create unsafe situations and can lead to road rage. To avoid aggressive driving:

- Keep your emotions in check and don't take frustrations out on other drivers
- Plan ahead and allow enough time for delays
- Focus on your own driving
- Don't tailgate or flash your lights at another driver
- Use your horn sparingly

## Did you know?

**NSC estimates almost 25% of crashes involve cell phone use while driving.**

(NSC Attributable Risk Estimate)

**Research has shown that children are more likely to wear safety belts or use child safety seats when the parent (adult driver) buckles up.**

**Drivers and front seat passengers who buckle up are 45% more likely to survive motor vehicle crashes and 50% more likely to avoid serious injuries.**

(NHTSA)

**In 2009, 32% of all fatalities in motor vehicle crashes involved a driver under the influence of alcohol. (NHTSA)**

Remember, we all share the roads so take the necessary steps to keep yourself and others safe.