



# Healthy Focus



## Don't Fry Day

With the rising number of skin cancer cases in the United States, the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention has made May 22nd "Don't Fry Day"™ to raise awareness. Some tips to protect yourself from skin cancer are:

- **Let your accessories work for you.** Wear protective clothing, ANSI labeled sunglasses and wide brimmed hats.
- **Properly use sunscreen.** Be sure to check the expiration date, put it on before makeup or insect repellent, apply generously and know when to reapply.
- **Find shade.** Protect yourself before you need relief from the sun and during the peak hours, between 10a.m. to 4p.m.

You may think that you're invulnerable to skin cancer, but studies show that even spending a brief amount of time in the sun could add up to major skin damage. You don't have to avoid the sun completely, but consider these recommendations to help protect both you and your family when you are outdoors. Keep these tips in mind while in a car, as some of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can pass through windows.

*Sources: The American Cancer Society and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*



Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.

## Asthma & Allergies

At its core, asthma involves inflamed airways in the lungs causing coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and tightness of the chest. It can be caused by different things for different people. It can be triggered by tobacco smoke, exercise, medications, anxiety and exposure to cold, dry air. The most common trigger of asthma is allergies.

### Identify

Today, asthma remains under-diagnosed and under-treated. Those that continue to suffer without proper diagnosis may find themselves restricted in their daily activities. Don't let this be you! If your family has a history of allergies or asthma, you should consider meeting with an allergist.

### Treatment

Asthma is a chronic lung disease that requires ongoing treatment. By doing so, asthma sufferers are able to take control of their condition and improve their quality of life. There are two general classes of medications to treat asthma, and they may be used in combination. These are quick relief and long-term controller medications.

### Prevent

Many people wrongfully assume avoiding the pollen and spores from outdoors will prevent their allergic asthma attacks. But by remaining indoors, they are still exposed. To reduce your indoor air pollution, follow the EPA's strategies below:

- **Control the source.** Keep surfaces clean of dust and animal dander, and vacuum weekly.
- **Ventilate adequately.** Reduce moisture in damp areas of your house by using a dehumidifier.
- **Clean indoor air.** Use a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, and change them often.
- **Control cockroaches.** Cover all trash and use techniques such as baits and boric acid to rid cockroaches to halt some asthma attacks.

There is no cure for asthma at this point. Consult with your physician to determine which treatments are right for your needs.

*Sources: The Mayo Clinic, World Health Organization, American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America*

## Did You Know?

We inhale approximately 10 cubic meters of air per day, with each one containing around 100,000 pollen grains per cubic meter. That means we take in a million pollen grains every day!

## + Employee Health and Fitness Month

A study by the Department of Health found that physical activity and a healthy diet are important in counteracting the development of chronic diseases. Yet, in today's fast paced world, people feel they don't have enough time in their day to exercise or cook a healthy meal. Do you too find yourself using excuses to get out of eating healthier or exercising each day? More often than not, it's changing your habits that is the hardest part.

### Get the Whole Team on Board

Organizations have discovered that employees are better able to achieve healthy lifestyles when the entire group shares a common goal. With the whole team committed to a healthier lifestyle, work performance is boosted and their stress levels reduced. This means employees experience less anxiety at work, are able to appreciate their work's successes better and return to their personal lives more relaxed and happier.

### Bigger Picture

Not only are employees feeling better from an increased amount of activity and healthier diets, the organization benefits as well. The World Health Organization researched many studies and concluded that lower amounts of exercise associates with higher rates of annual absenteeism. Living an unfit and unhealthy lifestyle also makes one more susceptible to cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity. These diseases impair work performance and raise healthcare costs.

### The Time is Now

The National Association for Health and Fitness and ACTIVE Life are leading a global observance this month as the Employee Health & Fitness Month (EHFM). Throughout the month, participants are encouraged to log activities on the EHFM website, allowing organizations and employees to track, share, and promote their progression.

Activities EHFM wants participants to log include:

- Healthy Moments such as healthy meals, physical activity, quitting smoking and going to a doctor.
- Healthy Groups which are formed by a group of people with similar health interests
- Culminating Project such as company or community wide events or the implementation of a health inspired standard or policy for employees.

For more information on this initiative, visit <http://healthandfitnessmonth.com>. As always, speak with your physician before starting an exercise or dieting program.

*Sources: National Association of Health and Fitness, National Employee Wellness Month, and World Health Organization*

## Safety Corner: Bike Safety

The weather is warming up and what could be more fun than getting outdoors and riding a bike? Before pulling your bike out of the garage, be aware the laws to keep you safe while bike riding?

### Q: Can you ride a bike on a sidewalk?

A: There is no state law prohibiting bike riding on sidewalks; however, local ordinances could prohibit it. Be aware of posted signs.

### Q: Are you required to wear a helmet?

A: Did you know that in the event of a crash, wearing a bike helmet reduces the risk of brain and head injury by as much as 85 to 89%? You are not required by law to wear a helmet, but wearing one saves lives.

### Q: Are bikes required to obey the same traffic laws as a car?

A: Yes, bicycles have all the same rights and responsibilities as a motor

vehicle. Bicycles must yield to pedestrians, stop for stop signs and travel with the flow of traffic.

### Q: What distance should be provided when a car passes you?

A: A driver should provide at least three feet between you and his or her car.

### Here are a few top mistakes that bicyclists make:

- Bicyclists ride out into the street from a driveway, alley, or from between parked cars without stopping or looking. Drivers do not expect bicyclists to enter the road in the middle of the block. The driver has the right of way and expects all entering traffic to yield. Be sure to look both left and right before entering the road.
- Bicyclists turn and swerve suddenly into the path of a vehicle. Ride in straight, predictable lines. Look over your shoulder for traffic and use hand signals before changing lanes.
- Bicyclists ride through stop signs or red lights without stopping. Follow the same rules of the road as motorists.
- Bicyclists ride in the wrong direction, approaching cars head-on. This type of crash is often deadly. Drivers do not expect traffic to come from the wrong direction. Ride with the flow of traffic, never against it.

*Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*

