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Website:
www.healthunit.org



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Health Briefs

Information for a healthy workplace

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit Spring 2008

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THANK YOU!

Health Briefs would like to thank all of the individuals who completed the 'Winter 2007 Newsletter Survey'. A total of 40 completed surveys were received which provides us with valuable information about how workplaces would like to receive **Health Briefs** and how it is currently distributed. Congratulations to Angie Dukelow who was the winner of the draw for a \$50 gift certificate to an Eat Smart! Restaurant of her choice.

We are in the process of completing focus groups to gain feedback about the appearance and content of **Health Briefs** so that we can improve the newsletter. If your workplace is interested in participating in a focus group, please contact Ginny Ferguson at 613-258-5941.

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Are you sick of the snow? Get ready and jump into Summer

Submitted by Melissa Sands, RN, BScN, Public Health Nurse

Summer is just around the corner and it's a great time to get up and get moving! The Summeractive program is a way to involve yourself, your family and your friends in outdoor programs to keep you healthy all season long!

Summeractive is a government initiative that helps Canadians get started with physical activity and make healthier lifestyle choices. Being more physically active, eating healthy and living tobacco-free is better for the body, mind and sometimes even the environment. URL:<http://www.summeractive.ca>

You can start by getting active in your own backyard! Many Tri-County residents don't know about the beautiful trails located in our region. These trails can be used for walking, hiking, canoeing/kayaking, and cycling. If you would like a copy of the trail guide please email trailguide@healthunit.org. It's a great way to get active and see the nature around us. Also, take a look at our "Movin' Around the Tri-County" map to see what other activities each community has to offer you!



Tips to get you more active this summer:

- ✓ Join a team such as soccer, basketball, beach volleyball
- ✓ Go to a local swimming pool or park with water access
- ✓ Have a picnic and go for a walk or hike afterwards
- ✓ Try horseback riding
- ✓ Try cycling or rollerblading to work or school instead of driving your car
- ✓ Start or join a walking group in your community
- ✓ Canoe/kayak with your friends or family for fun
- ✓ Start or join an 'eating healthy' cooking class at a community centre



Summeractive wants you to participate in or organize a physical activity or sport. Go online and register for a chance to win summer fun prizes at <http://www.summeractive.ca> from May 8th to June 20th.

For many more tips on how to be active and eat healthy go to our website at <http://www.healthunit.org> or call 1-800-660-5853.



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Work-life balance benefits everyone!

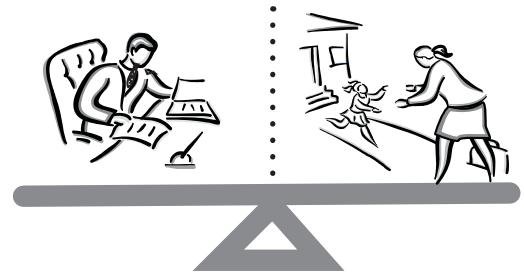
Submitted by Ginny Ferguson, RN, BScN, PHN

In 2002, an Adventis Health Care Survey reported that 51% - 62% of Canadian employees experience moderate to high stress between their work and home life responsibilities¹. This work-life conflict and its level of stress results when our personal time and energy demands by our many roles of employee / employer, spouse, parent, child / elder caregiver, and volunteer collide with one another. This work-life conflict is viewed as “work overload and work [interference] in family life”². In fact, the Conference Board of Canada (2007) stated, “burnout costs Canadian business \$12 billion annually on health claims, lost productivity and absenteeism”³. So how can employers and employees embrace this challenge, and keep themselves healthy, satisfied, creative, motivated, and productive at work?

In response to this challenge, workplaces are adopting strategies that assist employers and employees to achieve work-life balance.

These **strategies** may include creating a **supportive environment** by providing:

- **Flexible working hours**
- **Adequate/flexible break and lunch times**
- **Incentives for manager/employee creativity**
- **Involving employees in decision making**
- **Alternative work arrangements**
- **Posting a suggestion box**



Other strategies include:

- **Policies** around personal leave, appointment time, work load and harassment issues
- **Awareness raising** that “workplace stress” impacts on absenteeism and physical and mental illness
- **Adopting personal skill building techniques** for time and stress management, exercise and healthy eating

Achieving work-life balance can be done. The workplace will benefit and improve the health, morale, creativity, and productivity of its employees and the workplace when:

1. The workplace culture values integrity, respect and excellence as the ‘norm’ for all its staff.
- and**
2. The workplace adopts work-life balance strategies into its culture.

For more information on wellness strategies for your workplace, please visit The Health Communication Unit at thcu@on.ca, or the National Quality Institute at nqi@on.ca. You may also call your local Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit office to speak to a Public Health Nurse from the Health Promotion Workplace Health Adult Team.

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¹ *The Health Communications Unit (2004), Influencing the organizational environment to create healthy workplaces: info pack version 1.0. June 7, 2007.*

² *Duxbury L, (Carleton University, Sprott School of Business, Ottawa, ON), Higgins C, (University of Western Ontario, Ivy School of Business, London, ON). Work-life balance in Ontario: A Status Report, 2001.*

³ *Canadian Mental Health Association, Work-Life Balance: It’s a matter of time, 2007. Sponsored by Desjardins Financial Security.*



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Spring 2008

What YOU can do to PREPARE for a Flu Pandemic

(This message is adapted from materials developed by the Canadian Public Health Association with funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada)

A flu pandemic would test us all. It would push our health system to the limit and disrupt the services we take for granted. Daily life would change. This is the time to think about your daily life and routines. This is the time to plan for how you would cope in a pandemic.

Across Canada, government officials, health care workers, and employers are planning for a flu pandemic. To be prepared, we all need to do our share. There are some simple steps we can take now.

1. Get informed and stay informed.
 - Learn about the risk of a pandemic and what you can do to prepare. Most of us fear the unknown. Learning and taking action can help reduce our fears.
2. Think about your daily routines.
 - What do you do in a normal day? What services do you use? What would you do if they were reduced or had to close? What do you really need to do in a day? Think of a backup plan.
3. Practice now to protect yourself and your family.
 - Get the flu shot every fall. You'll reduce your chance of catching the flu. Contact your doctor or health unit for clinic hours at www.healthunit.org.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water. It takes only 20 seconds to wash your hands properly and get rid of the germs. Keep an alcohol-based sanitizer (with 60-90% alcohol) at work, home and in the car. The flu virus can live for up to 48 hours on objects we touch everyday, like door handles, faucets, and light switches.
 - Cover your sneeze and cough. The flu is spread by coughing and sneezing. When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve. Throw your used tissue in the garbage and remember to wash your hands.
 - Stay home if you're sick. This will help your body to fight the flu. It will also mean you don't pass it on to others.
 - Prepare a supply of water, food and medicine at home. This will help you if food stores and drug stores have low supplies during a flu pandemic. It will also help if you or someone in your house gets sick. You'll have the supplies you need to get through the sickness.
4. Keep useful phone numbers and health information handy.
 - During a pandemic you might need to call for medical advice or help. Make a list of useful phone numbers. Fill out a health sheet for your household. That way you'll have everything you need if you have to call for advice or help.
5. Share your ideas.
 - Talk to your family, friends, neighbours, and people at work about pandemic flu and how to prepare for it. Share ideas, make plans, and find ways to help each other out.

No one knows when the next flu pandemic will be. By being informed, planning ahead, and practicing now, we can prepare for a pandemic. These steps will help us cope in other emergencies too. For more information and useful tools, go to www.pandemic.cpha.ca or call 1-800-454-8302.

Call Michele de Jonge, RN, BScN, Public Health Nurse @ 613 283-2740 ext 4237 for local pandemic information, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit.



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RABIES CLINICS

Submitted by Joan Mays, B.A.A.(EH), C.P.H.I.(C), Manager of Health Protection

Rabies is an infectious and contagious disease of the central nervous system caused by a virus that is carried in the saliva of infected warm-blooded mammals. Rabies can be transmitted to mammals (including humans) through the bite or scratch of an infected animal. Since the virus is found in the central nervous system of an infected animal, the virus may also be transmitted through an open cut or through mucus membranes such as the eyes, nose and mouth.

Human cases of rabies are preventable. The most effective way of preventing human cases of rabies is to have your pets vaccinated against rabies. **In Leeds, Grenville and Lanark all cats and dogs must be vaccinated against rabies. The Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit assisted by local veterinarians and municipalities will be hosting annual vaccination clinics. The clinics will be held on Wednesday, May 14 and May 21, 2008 from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM. The cost this year will be \$15.00 (cash) per animal.**

LANARK COUNTY

- Almonte Veterinary Services, 10 Industrial Dr., ALMONTE
- Carleton Place Veterinary Hospital, 120 Coleman St., CARLETON PLACE
- Valley Veterinary Clinic, 339 Townline Rd. E, CARLETON PLACE
- North Lanark Veterinary Services, 1095 Sheridan Rapids Rd., LANARK
- Mississippi Veterinary Services, 2809 Highway 29 S., PAKENHAM
- Perth Veterinary Clinic, Sunset Blvd., PERTH
- Lanark Veterinary Clinic, 88D Cornelia Street West, SMITHS FALLS
- Smiths Falls Veterinary Services, 455 Highway 29, SMITHS FALLS

LEEDS AND GRENVILLE COUNTIES

- Athens Municipal Works Garage, 44 Elgin St. North, ATHENS
- Brockville Memorial Centre, Magedoma Dr., BROCKVILLE
- Brockville Area** - Public Works Garage, 7509 New Dublin Rd., ELIZABETHTOWN-KITLEY
- Public Works Department, 665 Charles Street North, GANANOQUE
- North Grenville Public Works Garage, Concession Rd., KEMPTVILLE
- Merrickville Fire Hall, MERRICKVILLE
- Prescott Works Garage, Sophia St., N., PRESCOTT

ONE DAY ONLY

MAY 14, 2008, 2:00 - 6:00 P.M.

- Bastard and South Burgess Ward Garage, 1439 County Rd 8., CHANTRY
- Westport Fire Hall, 33 Spring Street, WESTPORT

MAY 21, 2008, 2:00 – 6:00 P.M.

- South Crosby Ward Garage, Davis Locks Rd., ELGIN
- Dr. R. D. Fish, 10 Harris Street, PERTH



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Energy Drinks: Consume with Caution

Submitted by Carole Chang, Registered Dietitian

Many people looking for a quick blast of energy are gulping the latest beverages - energy drinks. Energy drinks, such as Red Bull®, Red Rave®, and SoBe Adrenaline Rush®, may sound like a great answer to early mornings or late-night parties; however there are health risks associated with energy drinks and they should be used with caution.

What are energy drinks?

Energy drinks promise improved mental and physical performance for a short period of time. They usually contain sugar, caffeine and guarana (a South American plant that contains caffeine). Energy drinks should not be confused with sport drinks, such as Gatorade® and Powerade®, which do not contain caffeine and re-hydrate the body.

Caffeine Content of Selected Beverages

Product	Milligrams of caffeine
Red Bull® (250 ml can)	80
Coffee, brewed (237 ml)	135
Tea, leaf or bag (237ml)	50
Cola, regular (355ml can)	36-46
Cola, diet (355ml can)	39-50

Are energy drinks safe?

Caffeine affects each person differently. The **effects of caffeine** depend on how much is consumed, your age, body size and your overall health. For some people, caffeine may cause a short-term increase in heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature and breathing rate. Caffeine may also cause headaches, tremors, nervousness, irritability and sleeping problems. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding are more sensitive to the effects of caffeine; therefore energy drinks are **not** recommended for pregnant and breastfeeding women. Health Canada recommends a maximum of 400-500mg of caffeine per day for adults and 300mg for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Energy drinks can **dehydrate**. The caffeine in energy drinks has a diuretic effect, which causes you to urinate more often and may cause your body to lose too much water. For this reason, energy drinks should not be used during or after exercise when you need to re-hydrate.

Energy drinks **should not be mixed with alcohol**. The effects of mixing a stimulant (caffeine) with a depressant (alcohol) are not yet known. There is also concern caffeine may hide the effects of alcohol. As a result of this effect, people may not realize their inability to perform tasks that require alertness, such as driving a car. Caffeine does not reduce the amount of alcohol in the blood stream and does not sober you up.

Health Canada is investigating some **serious medical reactions** linked with energy drinks including dizziness, nausea and vomiting, stomach pain, electrolyte imbalances and heart irregularities. These effects have been reported after too many energy drinks were consumed or when mixed with alcohol.

Continued on page 6

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Energy Drinks: Consume with Caution *continued from page 6*

Energy drinks and kids

Energy drinks are **not** recommended for children because they are high in sugar, calories and caffeine. For example, one 250ml can of Red Bull® contains almost 7 teaspoons of sugar, 110 calories and 80mg of caffeine. The sugar and calories in energy drinks may lead to tooth decay and weight gain.

Recommended maximum caffeine intakes for children

Age	Maximum amount of caffeine per day
0-3 years	0mg
4-6 years	45mg
7-9 years	62.5mg
10-12 years	85mg

Children are more sensitive to caffeine than adults. They can become restless, irritable and have problems sleeping if they have too much caffeine. Drinking too much caffeine can cause calcium to be lost from the body; therefore calcium is not available to build strong bones and teeth. Also, if energy drinks replace calcium-rich drinks, such as milk, growing bodies and bones suffer even more.

If you choose to consume energy drinks, follow the instructions on the label - do not have large amounts or mix with alcohol. Also be sure to drink plenty of other fluids, such as water and milk, to stay hydrated.

For more information about energy drinks and other beverages, please contact the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853 (or 613-345-5685) and ask to speak with a Registered Dietitian.