

Smart Living

for a healthy workplace

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Working Long Hours is Risky Business for Your Heart

Almost 15 million Americans work either evening, night, rotating shift, or other employee arranged irregular work hours. Moreover, the number of workers working long hours in the United States now exceeds Japan and western Europe.¹

Dr. Marla Shapiro reported results from a current 12 year study of 7000 workers (using age - 39-62 years, sex, cholesterol, blood pressure, and smoking history with no prior history of heart disease) that 54% of workers worked 7-8 hours per day, and 10.4% worked 10 hours a day or more. The 10 hour a day workers showed a 46% increase risk of coronary disease. The workers who worked over 11 hours per day showed an increase risk of 67%. This study showed a consistent positive association that working long hours leads to increased risk of heart attack and death from heart disease.²

How can workers who work shift work or long hours stay as healthy as possible?

Try to live a healthy lifestyle every day by:

- Eating healthy foods.
- Limiting caffeine and alcohol intake.
- Being physically active 30-60 minutes 3-7 times a week.
- De-stressing – relaxing, laughing.
- Stopping smoking.
- Sleeping 7-8 hours sleep daily.
- Having regular medical and dental checkups.
- Enjoying living your life.

For recommendations on maintaining a healthy lifestyle while working shifts, talk to your employer or union about alternate work options, or visit at: www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/ergonomics/workday.html

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Work Schedules: Shift work and long work hours." www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/workshchedules/ (30 March 2011).

² Shapiro, Marla. "Working long hours? Watch out for your heart problems." www.healthblog.ctv.ca/post/Working-long-hours-Watch-out-for-your-heart-2808e-problems.aspx (8 April 2011).



Get out those Bicycles, pump up the wheels, and take the family cycling

For information on safe cycling, please visit the following websites:

- **Safe Kids Canada** at: www.safekidscanada.ca has many resources for families.
 - **Got Wheels Get a Helmet** at: www.safekidscanada.ca/enStore/tabid/59/List/1/CategoryID/31/Level/a/Language/en-CA/Default.aspx
 - **Ride Safe information**
 - **Frequently asked questions** by parents such as "at what age can my child safely ride in traffic?" or "should I use a second-hand helmet?"
- **Can-Bike Programs** at: www.canbike.net/ccca_pages/tips-default.htm will guide you on riding skills, safety tips for vehicle drivers and cyclists.
- **Ministry of Transportation for Cycling Skills and Traffic** at: www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/pubs/cycling-guide/index.shtml

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for FREE**

If you would like to receive the **Smart Living** workplace newsletter either in hard copy or by email, please contact Lynda Earl at 1-613-345-5685 ext. 2215 or email: lynda.earl@healthunit.org



Eat Local *and* Grow Your Own

Many local vegetables and fruits are available in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties. Buying and eating locally benefits your health and your community.

Where to Find Local Food



Farmers' Markets are found in Brockville, Prescott, Gananoque, Lansdowne, Kemptville, Westport, Smiths Falls, Perth and Almonte.

These two websites tell you where to find farmers' markets and growers in the Tri-County area: www.localflavours.org and www.lanarklocalflavour.ca

Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) is a way for consumers to cooperate with farmers by buying local, seasonal food directly from them. For locations of CSA operations in your area, please visit: www.csafarms.ca

Good Food Box Programs buy bulk amounts of fresh produce at wholesale prices. You can join these programs and receive a box of fresh produce towards the end of the month. For a listing of these programs, please visit: www.healthunit.org/nutrition/foodsecurity/foodaccess.htm

Grow Your Own

Community gardens are plots of land available for people to share gardening space for a small fee. The Health Unit has a directory of where Community Gardens can be found.



Grow an extra row or two and donate your harvest to your local food bank. Most food banks accept fresh vegetables and fruits because many food bank users may otherwise not have access to these items.

For more information, call the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685, or visit the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's nutrition website at: www.healthunit.org/nutrition

A Quit Smoking Plan for Couples

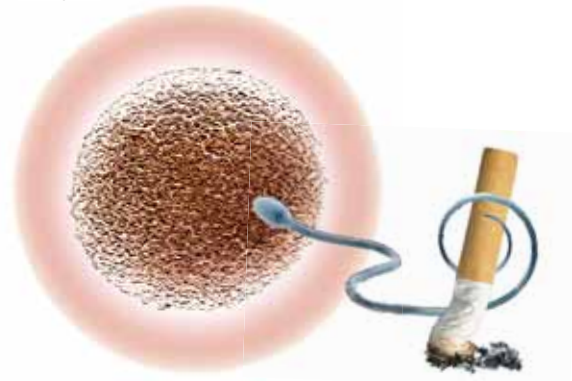
Be Healthy Before Pregnancy

Being healthy before pregnancy will improve your present health, your chances of getting pregnant, and your future baby's health. Practice a lifestyle of healthy eating, daily exercise, stress management, relaxation, no or low alcohol intake, and no smoking.

*Why not quit smoking as a couple?
... and clear the air for the baby in your future.*

Because smoking may:

- Cause impotence, erectile dysfunction, and low sperm count.
- Reduce your chances of becoming pregnant.
- Increase the possibility of miscarriage and low birth weight.
- Lead to labour and delivery complications for mother and baby.
- Increase the odds of your baby having colic, infections, asthma and allergies.



Quitting smoking may take several attempts before success is achieved.

To stop smoking now, follow these steps to successful quitting:

1. Make your home smoke-free. Restrict your smoking to outside.
2. Quitting has several steps. Thinking about quitting is the first step. Keep going.
3. Decide to quit, and select a quit date.
4. Your friends, family, and health care professional can help you quit.
5. If you or your partner slips, re-focus on quitting, and then try again.

For information on Health Before Pregnancy Planning, go to:
www.beststart.org/resources/preconception/pdf/BSpre_bro_rev3.pdf
www.healthbeforepregnancy.ca/smoking.htm



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

We all hope it will never happen to us but emergencies, whether natural weather events or man-made, do touch our lives and may not be predictable. Being personally prepared can help reduce the impact of the disaster on you and your family. Although each municipality plans to respond to emergencies, each family needs to have enough supplies on hand to manage for 72 hours without assistance. Responders will need to focus their initial attention on those who are in the greatest need.

You can be prepared by planning and putting together an emergency kit before disaster strikes.

- ❑ Ensure your kit includes the special needs for the very young, the old and infirm in your family, and don't forget your pets.
- ❑ A basic kit should include a flashlight, blankets, portable radio, first aid supplies, food, water and clothing.
- ❑ When assembling your kit, remember that during many disasters, the power may go out, so ensure you have foods put aside that do not require cooking, and have a manual can opener included in your kit.
- ❑ Be sure to rotate food supplies every six months to keep food fresh. You may experience interruptions in the water supply, so be sure to have a safe supply of water in clean, sealed containers.
- ❑ Keep an emergency supply of cash available, and know where important documents are kept such as I.D. so that you can quickly access them.
- ❑ Keep the fuel in your car topped up, as fuel supplies may be disrupted during an emergency.
- ❑ A separate emergency kit for your vehicle is also useful.
- ❑ Know how to turn off the gas, water, and power to your home. Label the shut offs and the direction that "off" is so that they are readily visible. Knowing that your water is turned off properly will prevent a flood if the water comes back on when you aren't home.
- ❑ Learn how to protect yourself during specific disasters such as earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, etc. ahead of time. Make sure your family knows what to do if any of these disasters should strike.
- ❑ Have a prearranged meeting place for your family. Have a relative or friend who lives outside the area be the contact person for family to call if family members get separated.



As the saying goes:

"It is always better to be prepared than scared"

For more information on Emergency Preparedness, visit our website at:
www.healthunit.org



For Employers:

Creating Mentally Healthy Workplaces

In 2002, Jean-Pierre Brun and his Laval University associates workplace research team found that the top five organization factors most harmful to employee mental health were:

- ▶ Work overload,
- ▶ Lack of recognition by peers,
- ▶ Poor relationship with one's supervisor,
- ▶ Lack of participation in decision-making – individual or organizational, and
- ▶ Lack of information.¹

Workplaces need to improve or address workplace mental health issues by creating a safe and supportive workplace culture and environment. By using the right supports and culture in the workplace, Canadian workplaces can be mentally safe and healthy places to work.²

The Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University developed *The Guarding Minds at Work Program (2009)* to meet current and emerging legal requirements. These requirements protect employee mental health, and promote civility and respect at work. This program easily allows employers to assess and address the psychosocial risk factors that impact organizational health, employee health, and the financial bottom line.

To access this free, evidence-based, effective program, please go to: www.guardingmindsatwork.ca

¹ Brun, Jean-Pierre, C. Biron, J. Martel, and H. Ivers. *Chair of Occupational Health and Safety Management, Laval University, Quebec. Booklet 2: A Series Mental Health at Work ... From Defining to Solving the Problem What causes the problem? The Sources of Workplace Stress, page 4, 2002. ISBN 2-9807808-3-9, Legal deposit – National Library of Canada, 2005.*

² Baynton, Mary Ann. "The Downstream Approach: Dealing with Mental Health in the Workplace." *Presentation, Healthy Minds Matter: Taking Action Conference, Toronto, March 3, 2010.*



Did you know.....

Sexually Transmitted Infections are Not Just for Kids?



Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are not just a problem of the young. Older adults also suffer from STIs, such as Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HPV, and HIV — and don't even know it.

In Canada, there has been a significant increase in the rates of sexually transmitted infections in all adults over the age of 25. For example, in 2008 the Public Health Agency of Canada documented the following numbers of lab confirmed Chlamydia in these age ranges:

Age 25-29	14,929
Age 30-39	10,175
Age 40+	4,190

These numbers are triple the number of cases than a decade ago.¹

Middle aged and older adults may actually be in more danger than young people from sexually transmitted infections because they are less likely to get a STI check-up. Infections will go undetected and untreated for longer periods of time which often leads to serious complications.

So what can an adult do to protect themselves? The answers are similar **no matter what your age**:

- ✓ Know your partner,
- ✓ Get tested, and
- ✓ Use a condom.

For more information, go to: www.areyousafe.ca or www.sexualityandu.ca

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada. "Reported cases and rates of Chlamydia by age group and sex, 1991 to 2008." http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/std-mts/sti-its_tab/chlamydia1991-08-eng.php (22 October 2010).

Be Active: Develop a Family Physical Activity Plan

In order for your family to become more active, it is important to plan ahead. A sensible and well thought out plan will better your chance of success. Here are some points to consider as you prepare your family physical activity plan.

- 👉 Look at what your family is currently doing.
- 👉 Identify when you like to be active — daytime/evening, weekday/weekend.
- 👉 Identify what activities you enjoy doing.
- 👉 Keep your activities varied to ensure muscle/bone strength, flexibility/coordination, and endurance.
- 👉 Support and encourage each other to be more physically active.
- 👉 Have a back up plan for poor weather or scheduling conflicts.
- 👉 Keep it real, and keep it small.
- 👉 Keep things positive including how you see yourself and your family members.

Physical activity is an important part of your family's health plan. Also consider developing a healthy eating plan.

For more family health information, and view our healthy eating plan, visit: www.healthunit.org/physact/home/family-physical_activity_plan.htm



Post Pandemic – What Does This Mean for Workplaces?

In August 2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the H1N1 Pandemic to be over. Currently, the world is in the Post Pandemic Phase. This does not mean that the H1N1 flu virus has disappeared: it simply means that it will act in ways, similar to the regular seasonal influenza virus. The H1N1 virus has been circulating in several regions in Ontario. It continues to pose a higher risk to the following individuals: young children, pregnant women, and those with respiratory or chronic diseases.

What does this mean for workplaces?

Employers and employees are encouraged to get a seasonal flu shot every fall. Employers and employees should continue

to encourage frequent use of hand sanitizer or hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve, and staying home from work when they are ill because influenza is contagious for five days following the beginning of symptoms.

It is now time to discuss what worked well and what did not during the H1N1 Pandemic. Make the required changes to your pandemic plan so that your workplace will be better prepared for an influenza outbreak.

Please visit www.healthunit.org under the Workplace section for more information on business continuity plans and pandemic planning toolkits.