

# " Health Notes"

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## ***"Worksite Wellness Promotion is Worth the Effort"***

Any small business operator will tell you that they have more than enough to do just keeping their business up and running. Scheduling staff, handling payroll, tracking revenue and expenses, marketing, facilities management, vehicle maintenance-the list is long, and it seems like nothing ever gets crossed off it! As a result, many small businesses don't make much of an effort to promote health and wellness among employees-there just seems to be too much to do already without getting involved in what seems to be a purely personal, private matter of the employees. Health is just the individual's problem, right?

Wrong.

Even if a small business doesn't offer its employees health insurance, there are very good reasons for promoting wellness in the workforce. Reduced absenteeism, improved morale, better staff retention, fewer on the job injuries and improved productivity are all measurable improvements that a worksite wellness program can offer. And for businesses that do offer health coverage, worksite wellness programs usually provide lowered claim frequency and overall reduction in health care costs.

In study after study the conclusion is clear: promoting worksite wellness is good for your bottom line. Making your employees healthier helps you to save money. Whether it's because a key employee has to miss work because they need to see the doctor about their diabetes, or because they injure their backs lifting up a package in the storeroom, your employees' health directly affects your business.

There is good evidence that the return on investment in Worksite Wellness is well worth the effort. Studies of various companies have found an ROI of anywhere from \$1.81-\$6 for every dollar spent on worksite health promotion. You put a dollar into it, and you get the dollar-and often, much more-back again.

It's not too hard to begin to take steps to promote health at your worksite. Even small steps-like changing the selections available in the lunch room vending machine or encouraging employees to quit tobacco can yield good returns. Offering stretch breaks or setting up walking programs are other low budget initiatives that most companies can provide their staffs. Providing incentives for employees to walk or ride their bikes to work can also encourage healthier habits-and free up parking for customers!

Healthy Casco Bay, your local Healthy Maine Partnership, can help you develop some easy, low cost worksite wellness promotion strategies. We have a wealth of information and resources you can use to encourage your employees to get more active, make better nutrition choices, and quit smoking. Our PowerVending program can help you turn your junk food vending machine into a dispenser of healthier snacks. Our experience promoting tobacco free lifestyles can help your employees make the move to quit smoking.

Give us a call at 541-8618, or drop an email to [info@healthycascobay.org](mailto:info@healthycascobay.org) to get more info or to set up a consultation today. (476 words)

Yours in Good Health,

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