



WELLNESS WORKS

around the state

MAINE MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH TRUST

SUMMER 2011

Trustee Changes “Thank You” and “Welcome”

After serving for more than fourteen years on the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust Board of Trustees, John McNaughton, Finance Director, Town of Falmouth has retired from his municipal position and stepped down from the Trust Board. The Trust’s Selection Committee has appointed Martin Puckett, Town Manager, Mapleton, Chapman and Castle Hill to fill the vacancy on the Board.

The MMEHT Board of Trustees and the MMA staff thank John McNaughton for his fourteen years of dedicated service to the Trust and wish him all the best in his well deserved retirement.



For the past four years John McNaughton has served as the Chairperson of the Trust Board leading the Trust through many plan changes and a rapidly evolving health care insurance market and delivery system. During John’s tenure as Chairperson, the Trust celebrated its 25th anniversary; renewed its partnership with Anthem BC/BS of Maine to be its third party administrator for the medical plans and Unum to administer the Income Protection Plan; added two new medical plans to its mix of offerings; introduced the flexible choice option of medical plans for employers; added a voluntary vision insurance plan to the Trust’s menu of employee benefits; enhanced medical plan benefits and expanded the Wellness Works health education and promotion program.

As a municipal finance director, John took a strong fiduciary role in overseeing the Trust’s annual funding model and rate development processes balancing the need for rate increases with the prudent draw of surplus funds to moderate necessary rate adjustments for participants. John was also a strong supporter of the investment the Trust has made in improving the health status of its participants through the Wellness Works program and the Trust’s active membership in the Maine Health Management Coalition, an organization whose mission is to measure and improve the quality of health care delivered in Maine.

John remarked that it “has been an honor and privilege to serve on the Trust Board and I am thankful for the experience.” He added that “the Trust’s participants and employer groups are well served by the excellent Trustees, Maine Municipal Association (MMA) staff and advisors to the Trust. The Trust is in good hands.”

John McNaughton has served the citizens of the Town of Falmouth for the past 25 years as Finance Director and during a brief stint as Town Planner and Code Enforcement Officer. The University of Maine Public Administration graduate began his municipal career as the Assistant City Manager in Brewer in 1981. John has been an active member of the Maine Government Finance Officers’ Association for many years and served as president of that organization.

The Board of Trustees is also pleased to welcome Martin Puckett to the MMEHT Board. Martin has served as the Town Manager of Mapleton, Chapman and Castle Hill in Aroostook County since 2008 and previously served as Town Manager in Livermore Falls and Sangerville. Martin holds a BA in Public Management and a MA in Public Administration from the University of Maine. Martin is a Certified Dietary Manager and has a passion for cooking and running.

Change is inevitable...except from a vending machine.

Robert C. Gallagher



Summer 2011

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Health Trust Annual Meetings - 2011

Every year in August, the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust offers a series of Annual Meetings at three regional locations around the state. These meetings allow Health Trust staff the privilege to personally connect with members and provide a formal report on program operations, finances and activities. They also provide Health Trust participants an opportunity to raise questions or issues of concern.

The Health Trust 2011 Annual Meetings will be held on the dates and at the locations listed below.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Tuesday August 2, 2011	Aroostook County Presque Isle City Hall Council Chambers	9:30 am
Wednesday, August 3, 2011	Kennebec County Maine Municipal Association Conference Room	9:30 am
Thursday, August 4, 2011	Cumberland County Scarborough Town Office Council Chambers A	9:30 am

To help plan for adequate seating, it would be helpful to contact us to confirm your attendance. Please call the Health Trust at 1-800-852-8300 or e-mail at htservice@memun.org or sign-up directly on our website under "What's New" at www.mmeht.org.

Please note: these meetings are separate from the Health Trust Retiree Workshops. All retirees will be receiving a separate notice mailed to home addresses regarding the Retiree Workshops being scheduled for early Fall.

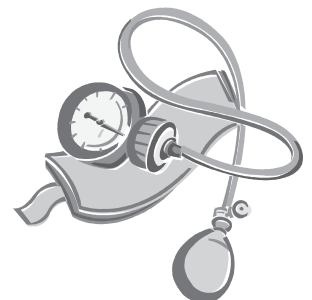
Matters of the Heart

Wouldn't it be nice if the human body came equipped with its own alarm system to let you know when something isn't right? Some potentially deadly medical problems have no symptoms, or ones so mild they slip under the radar of even people who are well attuned to their bodies. Unfortunately, it's impossible to know what's going on inside your body at all times, and if there is a problem that goes undetected, the situation can go downhill quickly. That's why it's a good idea to get informed and remain vigilant, to get regular health screenings, and to monitor what you can when you can. Take blood pressure, for instance. It's relatively easy to keep tabs on, and doing so could save your life. High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a common condition that can lead to serious heart problems such as heart attack and stroke. If you have high blood pressure, you shouldn't rely exclusively on home monitoring in lieu of professional medical care. However, it is a good way to stay in touch with your heart health, keep track of improvements due to healthy lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise, and alert you when you need to consult your doctor.

The American Heart Association (www.heart.org) offers these 10 tips for controlling hypertension:

1. Know your blood pressure. Have it checked regularly.
2. Know what your weight should be. Keep it at or below that level.
3. Don't use too much salt in cooking or at meals. Avoid salty foods.
4. Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole-grain high-fiber foods according to American Heart Association recommendations.
5. Limit alcohol intake. Don't have more than one drink a day if you're a woman or two a day if you're a man.
6. Take your medicine exactly as prescribed. Don't run out of pills even for a single day.
7. Keep appointments with the doctor.
8. Follow your doctor's advice about physical activity.
9. Make certain the people you care about understand their risks of developing high blood pressure.
10. Know that every step counts in managing your blood pressure.

Source: *Corporate Wellness Advisor*



Eating Well for Better Health

It's no secret that obesity has become an epidemic in Maine. Over the past 17 years obesity rates have doubled across the state, and at current levels nearly 60% of Mainers are considered overweight according to the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

There are a number of factors that add to the astronomical rise in obesity around the state, but one of the largest contributors to the problem is a poor diet. In honor of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, the Maine Health Management Coalition has added an "Eating Healthy" page to the prevention section of their website, getbettermaine.org.

On this site you'll find advice on what to consciously avoid or select to attain a balanced diet, a link to Maine farmer's markets, and a handy adult Body Mass Index calculator. So, how can you make better choices? The things to minimize in a balanced diet include: Salt (sodium); Saturated Fats; Trans Fats (partially hydrogenated oils); and Cholesterol. So, skip the fried foods, crackers, and margarines. The suggestions to enhance your diet include eating more: Fruits; Vegetables; Whole Grains; and Proteins (notably seafood.) So, summer might be the perfect time to try a healthy meal of salmon with colorful peppers from your garden or local farmer's market.

A balanced diet is one of the best things you can do to improve your health. In addition to preventing common health problems like heart disease, stroke and diabetes, research has also shown that eating well can make you happier and more productive. For more information, visit www.getbettermaine.org/eating-healthy.

Choose MyPlate

The federal government recently unveiled a new food icon, *MyPlate*, and website, www.ChooseMyPlate.gov, to help guide consumers in making healthy food choices. The new symbol illustrates the five food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy) using a familiar mealtime visual, a place setting. It is designed to remind Americans to eat healthfully. This new icon replaces the former *MyPyramid* as the governments' primary food symbol yet the new website still includes much of the same consumer and professional information.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said, "*MyPlate* is an uncomplicated symbol to help remind people to think about their food choices in order to lead healthier lifestyles. This effort is about more than just giving information, it is a matter of making people understand there are options and practical ways to apply them in their daily lives."

ChooseMyPlate.gov highlights practical information and tips to help Americans build healthier diets. It features select messages to help consumers focus on key behaviors. Selected messages include:

- **Choose to Balance Calories** – Enjoy your food, but eat less. Avoid oversized portions.
- **Choose Wisely For Better Health** – Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Eat whole grains. Switch to low-fat dairy products. Drink water.

Check out the online resources and tools which may assist you to make healthier food choices for you, your family, and your children.

Lemon Velvet Supreme

Ingredients:

2 Cups vanilla yogurt, fat-free
3 tablespoons instant, lemon pudding mix (sugar free, optional)
8 squares graham crackers, crushed
1 can (4 ounces) mandarin orange slices, drained (or your favorite fruit)

Preparation:

1. Combine vanilla yogurt and pudding mix; gently stir together.
2. Layer bottom of serving dish with crushed graham crackers.
3. Pour pudding mixture over cracker crumbs.
4. Top with mandarin orange slices or your favorite fruit.

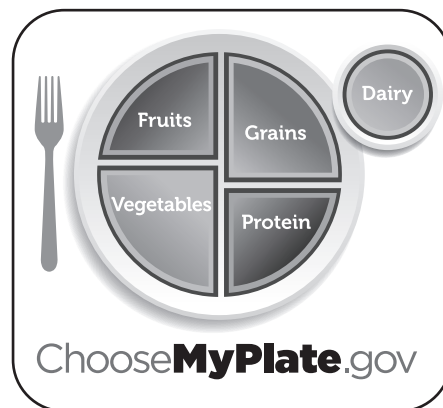
Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe

Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Information/serving: 150 calories, 1 g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 21mg sodium, 5g protein

Equals: ½ oz grains, 0 vegetables, 0 fruits (unless you top with a lot more), ¼ cup dairy, 0 protein

Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for this and other delicious recipes!



July is National Picnic Month

How to keep food safe in hot spots

Summer is for fun but there are some food safety pitfalls that can get in the way. Reference some of these food safety precautions before your next picnic.

- Transport picnic foods in the passenger seat; your trunk can reach temperatures of 150 degrees F.
- If you are grilling, always make sure to keep all of your raw meats separate from your cooked foods. Pack them on the bottom of your coolers so the juice doesn't drip onto your produce.
- Keep foods in coolers or on ice whenever possible, and keep it away from the direct sun and insects. Remember to use clean dishes and utensils when serving the food (not the ones used for food preparation).
- Pack plenty of moist towelettes or hand sanitizers in case you're not near hand washing facilities. Clean your hands frequently during food preparation and before serving. That means you shouldn't touch raw chicken and then serve the salad.

Farmer's markets used to be very casual and relaxed but now that they offer special events with tastings, you need to pay more attention to food safety:

- Sample foods only from booths where there is evidence of clean hands at work. Look for gloves, hand sanitizing gels, or even a bowl of clean water.
- If foods are being cut on site, separate knives should be used for meat and other foods, and they should be cleaned between uses.
- Don't eat samples that are clustered on a plate, allowing passersby to pick up a piece. This is a breeding ground for cross contamination due to dirty hands. Eat samples that require toothpicks.
- Skip samples if flies are buzzing around; they can carry *Campylobacter jejuni*, the leading cause of bacterial diarrhea in the United States.
- Wash before eating. Those grapes you eat on the way home may not be as clean as you think.

Barbeques are a big summer gathering. There are some safety tips you should follow here as well:

- A common mistake is soaking raw meat, shellfish, fish or poultry in marinade before grilling and then returning the cooked food to the same dish or using the soaking marinade for basting. Dispose of all soaking marinades after use.
- Keep an eye on how long food is sitting out on your buffet. It doesn't take long for food to spoil. One suggestion might be to stagger the food instead of bringing it all out at once. Try packing and refrigerating all food that has been sitting out at room temperature within two hours. If it's a hot summer day and you're outside, pack up or toss food after it's been out for an hour.

Enjoy your summer picnics and gatherings but stay safe with making, serving and disposing of food. Reference www.usda.gov for more food safe information.



Telephonic Diabetes Education and Support[®] Program

⇔ *Continued for 2011* ⇐

The Health Trust continues to offer a pilot program where voluntary participants are offered financial incentives (waiver of co-pays for medications and supplies) to complete a 12-month telephonic diabetes self-management program with a local educator (one in-person visit and 12 monthly calls) administered by Medical Care Development in Augusta.

Health Trust participants, early retirees, and adult family members between the ages of 18 and 65, not enrolled in Medicare, being treated for Type 1 Diabetes, Type 2 Diabetes, or Pre-Diabetes are invited to participate. The program is available through 2011 with voluntary rolling admission throughout the year.

For additional information, please contact Health Trust Member Service at 1-800-852-8300 or email to htservice@memun.org or visit our website at www.mmeht.org.

Make It a Family Affair

Having trouble balancing your workout schedule and spending time with your children? How about combining both efforts together? Involving your entire family in your workouts and better eating habits will allow you to communicate with them, spend time together, and helps you all reap the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Try some of these ideas or create your own to inspire your togetherness. Take your family to the park with scooters, bikes, or rollerblades and walk while they ride ahead or beside you. Find an outdoor activity that you could all play a couple nights a week. Try a game of kickball, wiffle ball, Frisbee, or soccer to name a few. Go for a hike and turn it into a nature hunt. See if they can point out different types of trees or birds. If it's raining, try an exercise video that you can all do. If you can make it fun then your children will want to do it too.

Balancing Caregiving and Your Life

No one can do it all. If you are working, taking care of a family and providing care for a loved one, you may feel tugged in different directions. You will need to set priorities. Let go of less important commitments wherever you can. You may have to make hard choices. Be gentle with yourself and remember, your personal needs are as important as those of the person for whom you are caring.

Talk to your family. Enlist the support of other family members. Even children can help in some ways. Tell your family how difficult it is to be torn between responsibilities. Try to protect your most important family times. If other family members can help more, call everyone together to discuss options. Don't wait until you are burned out. Even family members who live far away can help by making regular phone calls, paying bills, or researching ways to get more assistance.

Talk to your employer. Find out if you have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that offers support to caregivers. You may be able to take time off from work under the Family and Medical Leave Act. This federal law allows qualified employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid time off to care for a family member. If need be, consider job sharing or finding out about flextime schedules.

Take care of yourself. Be sure to eat healthy meals, get enough rest and regular exercise. See a health care provider if you are depressed, drinking alcohol more than normal, or using prescription drugs to help you cope. Keep your sense of humor. Try to find humor in difficult situations. Laughter can release chemicals in your body that will help you feel better. Spend time with friends who are fun and make you laugh.

Reference www.eldercare.gov for more information



Lending Library

If you are interested in learning more about exercise, the Lending Library has a wealth of resources ranging from how-to books to exercise dvd's. To borrow materials *free of charge* from the Wellness Works Lending Library contact Amanda Collins at 1-800-452-8786 extension 2283 or via e-mail at acollins@memun.org. To view the entire list of materials that the Lending Library has to offer check out our website at www.mmeht.org. Click on Wellness Works, then click on Lending Library, there you can search for items by subject or see the entire list of the materials in the Lending Library.



Slow Down!

It isn't very often that you hear a wellness professional telling you to slow down, but it is important to start slow if you are new to a walking or other exercise program. If you can't carry on a conversation or if it takes longer than five minutes for your pulse to slow down after a walk, then you are pushing yourself too hard. Feeling faint, having a hard time breathing, or prolonged weakness are other signs that you are working too hard. See your doctor if you've never been physically active or have physical conditions that may affect your ability to exercise. Starting off on the right foot will help ensure that you stick with your new fitness program!

Quarterly Check-up: Sunburn

On-Call is a medical self-care program for members of the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust. It helps individuals to assess a variety of health concerns by answering three basic questions:

- *Is this a medical emergency?*
- *Should I see or call my doctor?*
- *Can I treat myself at home and if so, how?*

The 2011 summer quarter On-Call topic is Sunburn:

By now, most of us know that the sun's ultraviolet rays damage skin, causing it to age prematurely and increasing your risk of skin cancer. Still, millions of people every year suffer sunburns that kill off healthy skin cells and injure blood vessels close the skin's surface. Anyone who experiences one or more blistering sunburns in a lifetime doubles his or her chances of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer that kills more than 8,000 Americans every year. Babies, especially those under 6 months of age, are particularly vulnerable and should be kept out of direct sunlight if possible. If they are to be in the sun, cover them well, as their delicate skin may be more sensitive to some of the ingredients in sunscreen lotions and sprays.

For the rest of us, the best way to avoid the damaging effects of the sun is to avoid sun exposure whenever possible, which, for most active people, isn't always practical. The good news is that adequate sunscreen and protective clothing can act as an effective shield to keep skin healthy. Remember, too, that a tan is no protection against the ill effects of the sun: It's simply another form of damage to delicate tissues that you're better off avoiding all together.

Signs and Symptoms of Sunburn:

- Skin is reddened and warm to touch.
- Minor swelling and itching in affected areas.
- Blistering in more serious burns.

Talk with Your Doctor if:

- You have nausea, fever, chills, or lightheadedness.
- Blistering is extensive and severe.
- You develop a rash or notice patches of purple discoloration.
- Your sunburn seems to worsen or spread 24 hours after exposure.

Medication:

- Take aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen to reduce swelling and relieve pain.
- Apply cool compresses (use water) several times a day.
- Avoid soap or use only a mild soap to wash burned areas; rinse well.

Note Well:

- Apply aloe vera gel or moisturizer to burned areas immediately after bathing.
- Never peel areas of skin where blisters have broken or dried.

Prevention:

- Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 whenever you're outdoors. Reapply often if you swim or sweat. Replace your sunscreen by the expiration date.
- Use sunscreen on infants less than six months of age when adequate clothing and shade are not available.
- Wear loose, light, protective clothing – a hat, long sleeves, etc.
- Avoid exposure when the sun is most intense (between about 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. daylight savings time).
- A wet cotton T-shirt does not provide adequate protection.
- Be aware that certain medications and cosmetics can increase your risk of sunburn. Read labels carefully, and check with your doctor.

Source: Wellinformed 2008

Aroostook County Action Program Wellness Initiatives

Our spotlight group this quarter is the Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP). Located near the crown of Maine, ACAP employees have their share of bad weather—well sometimes more than their share! Due to the harsh and long winter months it can be hard to get employees out and moving, yet they have come up with some innovative ways to encourage employees to get outside.

As Susan Deschene, Senior Manager and Wellness Coordinator, states, “We created a program called ‘March into Spring.’ Because ACAP wants our employees to spend time outside during the winter months, we reward those who get outside and move.” In addition, Deschene and other wellness committee members said that October was also “a difficult transition period for most people, due to the decreased amount of sun and transition into winter.” As a way to soften this transition, the ACAP wellness group offered “Hike to Halloween.” This program encourages employees to bike, swim, walk or run. The incentives for both programs were employee-selected gift cards to healthy places.

In addition to their physical activity programs, ACAP has also focused on improving their employees’ nutrition by bringing awareness to label reading. Using the theme of a healthy heart, the wellness committee focused their efforts on “Sodium Awareness” during February, which is National Heart Health Month. Employees were challenged to track their sodium intake for a day to see if they were either meeting or exceeding the sodium requirements recommended by the American Heart Association (www.heart.org). Employees found this challenge to be very eye opening and a great educational tool for stressing the importance of label reading. Previous campaigns have targeted tracking sugar intake. The plan is to tackle fiber intake within the next year.

The “Healthy Snack Bag” is another great example of a wellness activity focused on nutrition. ACAP’s wellness committee sets up an assembly line of healthy snack options, fills the bags and delivers the 180 healthy snack bags to all ACAP employees at multiple locations in the county. ACAP also strives to help their employees become better advocates for their own well-being. After purchasing the “Self Care Essentials” handbook from the Wellness Council of America (www.welcoa.org) for each employee, they came up with a creative way to encourage employees to actually read it: ACAP’s wellness committee created weekly quizzes. Those who answered the quizzes correctly were entered into a raffle for one of five prizes: snowshoes, a 2-day pass to Mars Hill Mountain, a toboggan, a winter basket of goodies, and an iPod.

Congratulations to ACAP for doing a wonderful job and especially keeping your employees motivated to get out and move during those chilly and dark winter months! We applaud your creativity and individual approach to wellness.

A grant from Wellness Works, the health education and promotion program of Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust, provided the necessary funding to help offset the cost of the interventions that ACAP offered. If you would like more information on how to get a Wellness Program started at your worksite, please contact Anne Charles at 1-800-852-8300 or via e-mail at acharles@memun.org.

Stuck Ring Strategies

Removing a ring that’s been stuck on your finger for some time can be a challenge. But if you’re preparing for surgery, ring removal may be an important safety precaution. Hands may swell during surgery due to intravenous fluids and other factors, which could cause tissue damage. Electrical currents from surgical tools may result in burns where metal contacts skin. Contaminants from a dirty ring may result in infection. To remove a stuck ring, try one the following strategies:

Elevation – Raise your arm as high as is comfortable for a few minutes to reduce swelling in the fingers.

Cooling your hand – Rings fit more loosely on a cold hand. Try cooling your hand in a sink or basin of ice- cold water.

Lubrication – Soap and water can be helpful, as can KY jelly or a water-soluble cream or lotion. Common ammonia based window cleaners can help by making skin slippery.

The caterpillar technique – Lubricate the entire finger and ring. Then, exert pressure upward on the ring as you rock the ring’s top portion forward. Release pressure and now press down on the top of the ring and rock the bottom of the ring ahead toward the fingertip. Repeat until the ring slips off.

If all else fails, it may be best to see a jeweler who is trained in how best to remove or have it resized for a better fit.

www.mayoclinic.com



WELLNESS WORKS

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Newsletter Search Contest

Do you want a chance to win a *Wellness Works* gym bag? Take a few minutes and answer the following questions (all answers can be found in articles in this newsletter). Send the answers along with your name, address and phone number to: *Wellness Works*, 60 Community Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330. You can also e-mail your answers to us at: **wellness@memun.org**. Entries must be received by August 1, 2011. One winner will be drawn at random.

Congratulations to Cathy Reim, an employee from the Kennebunk Sewer District, who won the Spring Newsletter Search Contest!

Your name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Employer (or former employer, if you are a retiree): _____

1. What is the name of the new website to help guide consumers in making healthy food choices? _____

2. What percentage of Mainers are considered overweight? _____

3. List three ways to prevent getting a sunburn: _____

4. List three ways to engage your entire family in physical activity: _____

