

WellnessWatch
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Fit employees
generally:

Have more
energy

Are more self-
confident

Are less likely to
be sick

Have a better
attitude

Are less
stressed

Get the spring off
to a physically fit
start:

Organize an
employee group to
take part in a walk
for a charity.

Fitness Works at Work: A Proven Leader in Corporate Fitness and Wellness Programs

Lowering the Cost of Health Benefits is a Two-Way Street

Do you feel health care costs are going out of control?

Well, you are not alone. According to a survey commissioned by Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, 92 percent of managers at 200 companies in New England believe health care costs are unaffordable and 35 percent of them said that they were considering taking steps to address this situation. There is no easy and immediate answer to the rising health care cost dilemma, but there are measures employers can do to help their employees stay healthy and thus lessen the use of health insurance. Here are some thoughts:

- Encourage your employees to take time for health and fitness activities in the workplace.
- Avoid scheduling meetings during lunch so employees have time to walk, take an on-site fitness class, or take part in another healthy activity.
- Offer a yearly on-site flu vaccine program.
- Check with your insurance provider to see if they offer health promotion programs that your employees can access and then offer incentives for your employees who access them.
- Spend some money on wellness. Solid research has shown that comprehensive health promotion programs may yield a return on investment of \$4 in reduced health care costs for every dollar spent on a health and fitness program within 3-5 years. (Association of Worksite Health Promotion; William M. Mercer, Inc and the US Department of Health and Human Services.)

On the other hand, employees also have a responsibility to lower their health care needs. Prevention of disease and injury is the duty of all of us. If you haven't, start being proactive with your health.

- Get a medical check-up every year and faithfully follow your doctor's advice regarding inoculations and screenings.
- If you are overweight, take steps to get your weight under control. Meet with a nutritionist to map out an eating plan. Start or beef up your exercise program. Don't ever supersize anything! In fact, don't eat junk food.
- Try, try and try again to stop smoking – yes, it is difficult but the health rewards are worth it. Check out free programs like the Try-To-STOP-TOBACCO Resource Center, 1-800-TRY-TO-STOP or www.trytostop.org.

As employers and employees, let's all do what we can to promote healthy living to lower our health care costs!

Fitness Works at Work, Inc. provides quality on-site fitness, wellness and ergonomic services to corporations and organizations in New England. Contact our office at info@fwaw.com, or call 508-653-4135 for further information on FWA's affordable fitness, wellness and ergonomic services.