

Fitness Works at
Work

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Fitness Works at Work, Inc. delivers complete health promotion programs, fitness center management and ergonomic solutions. Our integrity and hands-on approach with clients and their employees is the basis of our working philosophy. We are focused on our promise: to start every working man and woman on the balanced path to reap the joys of life by delivering tools they need to sustain a lifelong state of well-being.

“Relatively small doses of exercise should be recommended as an aid to managing cigarette cravings and withdrawal symptoms” from a study published in the journal, *Addiction*

The Cost of Preventable Diseases

Prepared by Linda Vacovec, Fitness Works at Work, Inc. and Angela Crangle, Pinnacle Financial Group

A significant factor in the rise of health care costs is that employers are shouldering the ever-growing burden of paying for medical interventions to diagnose and treat preventable diseases. The focus of employer intervention and health promotion is shifting toward lowering health risks and controlling preventable disease. More and more employers are promoting or offering programs designed to improve these conditions that can be positively impacted with behavioral changes. Employee good health is fundamental to an energized, productive workforce—not only to reduce direct health care costs but also to reduce indirect costs due to presenteeism, a label given to lower job efficiency due to health problems. Since employees spend a good deal of their day at work, it makes sense that the workplace is an appropriate venue for offering programs and information that motivate healthy employees to stay healthy and engage employees with health risks to lower them. Here are some sobering statistics:

- Researchers studied the claims of over 44,000 employees over six years and found that 25% of all outpatient and inpatient health claims were related to seven major health risks -- poor nutrition, lack of exercise, stress, obesity, current or former smoking, depression, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, alcohol use, and blood glucose. ***American Journal of Health Promotion, 2005***
- Obesity is a major contributor to employee health costs, responsible for 2-3% of all medical claims dollars. Of 10 lifestyle health risks, obesity was by far the most costly – accounting for approximately 14% of lifestyle-related health costs for men and 25% for women. ***American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, March 2006***
- American industry loses \$32 billion and 132 million work days a year due to employees' premature deaths associated with cardiovascular disease; lowered productivity due to sickness and disability cost billions more. The ***American Council on Exercise, 2006***
- Medical and pharmacy costs rise steadily for employees with above normal body weight. Starting at a BMI of 25 – the lower end of the overweight range –health care costs rose steadily along with BMI. Adjusted medical costs increased about \$120 (4%) for each one-point increase in BMI. Drug costs increased by \$83 (7%) per one-point increase. For a person with a BMI of 35, medical costs were nearly \$600 higher and drug costs \$413 higher than for a person with a BMI of 30. ***American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, July 2006***
- The total excess cost to a company per smoker per year is \$5,606, including \$1,882 attributable to smoke breaks, \$1,623 for excess medical expenditures and \$341 for missed work days due to sickness. Smokers are absent from work 2.7 days per year more than non-smokers. ***Free and Clear as reported in Employee Benefit News, August 2006***

When the national smokers quit line, 1-800-QUIT-NOW is consistently promoted, there is a 50% increase in the number of smokers who call. *From a study presented in the The American Journal of Health Promotion, July/August 2007*

Has your organization tried Zumba classes? Zumba is a fitness program inspired by Latin dance. It combines Latin rhythms with cardiovascular exercise to create an aerobic routine that is fun and easy to follow. It requires no equipment and can be run in a conference room. Many of FWA's client companies have started Zumba classes and employees are having a ball moving and shaking. Physical activity can be fun!

There is more and more research on the fiscal advantage of providing a corporate wellness program. Employers who invest in worksite health promotion programs can see a return of \$3-\$6 for every dollar invested over a 2-5 year period. Documented savings are observed in medical costs, absenteeism, worker's comp claims, short-term disability and presenteeism as indicated below.

- o 26% reduction in use of the health care benefit
- o 28% reduction in sick leave absenteeism
- o 30% reduced worker's comp claims and disability management
- o Reduced presenteeism losses

Source: Larry Chapman, "Meta-evaluation of Worksite Health Promotion Economic Return Studies", The American Journal of Health Promotion, 2003

It is safe to assume that a well-designed and well-implemented health promotion program will produce more in the way of economic benefit than costs to conduct the program. However, regardless of the size of an organization, investing time and money on the front end to prevent disease and lower health risk factors is fast becoming the model for corporate America.

Fitness Works at Work Corporate Health and Fitness News

Fitness Works at Work Welcomes.....

- ***Copyright Clearance Center*** as a new client in February 2007. *Copyright Clearance, located in Danvers, is a leader in licensing and permission services. FWA manages and provides programming for an onsite health promotion program*
- ***Teradyne*** as a new client in March 2007. *FWA is managing and staffing its on-site employee fitness center located in North Reading. Teradyne designs and manufactures Automatic Test Equipment.*
- ***Avid Technology*** as a new client in August 2007. *FWA will be managing and staffing its on-site fitness center and will be providing an exciting calendar of wellness activities for Avid employees located in the Tewksbury campus. Avid is a leader in digital media creation tools.*

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.