Stress Awareness Month

Anxiety disorders are a group of disorders that can affect adults, adolescents and children. Anxiety disorders overwhelm people with chronic feelings of anxiety and fear.

Unlike periods of anxiety that everyone feels because they are caused by a stressful event, anxiety disorders are chronic, and if not treated, can disrupt a person’s life.

Fortunately, effective treatments do exist — and early diagnosis may aid early recovery, prevent the disorder from getting worse and possibly prevent accompanying depression. Yet, because many people don’t understand these disorders, only 25% of those suffering from them seek treatment.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
GAD is characterized by at least six months of a constant state of exaggerated tension or worry not related to any particular problem or event. Sometimes the source of worry is evident (work, family, money) and other times it is not.

Physical symptoms often accompany anxiety, including fatigue, headache, muscle ache or tension, trembling, twitching, irritability, nausea, breathlessness and sweating. People with GAD cannot seem to relax.

GAD affects twice as many women as men. It can occur at any age and almost never occurs by itself; a person with GAD often has another anxiety disorder, depression or is a substance abuser.

Panic Disorder
It is twice as common in women than men. People with this problem experience panic attacks—incidents of severe anxiety that occur unpredictably. The attacks can occur any time, even during sleep, according to NIMH. Symptoms of a panic attack include pounding heart, sweating, weakness, dizziness, chest pain, nausea, or a sense of doom, NIMH says. Continued on Page 4.
Tacoma Employee Wellness Program Awards

Your very own Tacoma Employee Wellness Program recently won two awards from the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce for its robust program and commitment to employee health and well-being.

The WorkWell Award is a program designed to recognize Tacoma-Pierce County employers who made a pledge to address workforce health issues and create a work culture that promotes healthy lifestyles among employees. There are three levels for this award: bronze, silver and gold.

The Happy Heart Award acknowledges organizations that demonstrate a broad and long-term commitment to employee wellness.

We aim to earn the Gold Level WorkWell Award next year and we seek your help when it comes to successfully accomplishing these goals:

- **Increased participation in the RedBrick Health Portal.** We find this to be a very feasible goal since we have added even more ways for you to earn the incentive; but it is truly your motivation and dedication that are key.
- **Healthier food options at work.** We will begin tackling this concept sometime in 2019; but we are also looking for employee feedback and support for adopting such changes.
- **Increased offering of onsite exercise and educational sessions.** As we continue to grow the availability of these classes, employee feedback and recommendations are extremely valuable.

Do you have comments or ideas to help us reach the above goals? Please contact your Wellness Coordinator, Shannon Carmody, at wellness@cityoftacoma.org or (253) 591-2002.

### Time is running out!

Our 2020 incentive period runs from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. Your goal is to earn 1,000 points. Excitingly, you now have even more ways to do so!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reward Value</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete the Compass Health Assessment.</td>
<td>400 points</td>
<td>1x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(REQUIRED)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete a stage in a Journey.</td>
<td>10 points</td>
<td>3x / Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a Journey.</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>3x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track your activities. (&gt;300 Wellness Meter)</td>
<td>5 points</td>
<td>120x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sync your device.</td>
<td>10 points</td>
<td>1x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in a RedBrick Challenge.</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>2x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a City of Tacoma webinar or onsite event. *</td>
<td>25 points</td>
<td>4x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete your annual physical. *</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>1x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Weight Management Program *</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>2x / Plan Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* These three options are grouped together as “City of Tacoma Healthy Activities”. In order to receive credit for these specific activities, you may need to submit a Verification Form.

**How to Find and Submit a Verification Form.** You can learn more about the three “City of Tacoma Healthy Activities” by visiting tew.redbrickhealth.com and clicking on “Activities” and then “In-Person”.

![Verification Form](image)

Remember! You can simplify your Track process by syncing a device or app.

**Did You Know?**

There is also a [short video](scheduled_url) (17 minutes) explaining the new and improved 2020 requirement options.
Bike Month Events

Bike to Market Day: Thursday, May 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Broadway Farmers Market (Broadway between South 9th and South 11th streets).

Women Trans Femme Night: Friday, May 3 and May 17 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the 2nd Cycle Community Bike Shop (1205 MLK Jr. Way). This is a great opportunity for women, trans, femme and non-binary folks to hang out in a bike shop and gain access to assisted bicycle repairs from certified mechanics.

Bike Month Proclamation: Tuesday, May 7 at 5 p.m. in the Tacoma Municipal Building Council Chambers (747 Market St., 1st floor).

Art Bike Ride: Thursday, May 16 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Tacoma Art Museum (1701 Pacific Ave.). This is an approximately 6-mile ride.

Bike to Work Day: Friday, May 17 from 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. at Honey at Alma Mater (1322 Fawcett Ave). Celebrate with coffee and treats!

Go here to view the other fun Bike Month events!

City of Tacoma Fleet Bikes

Fleet e-bikes are coming soon! They will be available for reservation online and for use this spring at Center for Urban Waters and this summer at TMB in conjunction with completion of a new bike depot, which will be secure, and have easy access and bike racks for commuting employees. You can find more info at Stewardship at Work on the Gnet.
Stress Awareness Month, Cont.

Panic disorder, cont. As with GAD, a panic disorder usually does not occur by itself. Another serious condition, such as depression, substance abuse or alcoholism, often is present, as well. People with panic disorder often try to avoid places or situations that may trigger a panic attack.

Panic disorders can be treated with medications or well-targeted psychotherapy.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD involves exposure to a trauma, during which a person experiences intense fear, helplessness and horror. The event that triggers PTSD may be something that threatened the person's life or the life of someone close to him or her, or it could be something the person witnessed. Someone with PTSD often suffers from nightmares, mentally re-experiences the traumatic event, feels numb emotionally and startles easily. Women are more likely than are men to develop PTSD. People with PTSD often have other mental health conditions such as depression, another anxiety disorder, or substance abuse.

PTSD is diagnosed if symptoms last more than a month. The disorder can be treated with medications or psychotherapy.

Diagnosis

To diagnose an anxiety disorder, doctors first rule out other medical conditions. Anxiety attacks can mimic or accompany endocrine gland problems, or acute disorders of the heart or lungs, including heart attacks and asthma.

The second step involves a series of tests or questions used to assess a person’s mental state and determine if he or she is suffering from an anxiety disorder and, if so, which one.

Helpful Mindfulness Apps

Mindfulness has been shown to help with anxiety disorders and stress. It is defined as a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique. Below are some recommended mindfulness apps.

Calm. Free offerings include basic mindfulness practices. These free meditations, about 25 in total, come in different lengths, from a quick 3-minute meditation to a half-hour sit.

Insight Timer. Free and huge library of content: nearly 13,000 guided meditations from over 2,600 teachers on topics like stress, relationships, creativity, and more.

Stop, Breathe & Think. This app features 34 free sessions. Each day you open the app, you're invited to check in with yourself — to rate your mind and body on a scale of “rough” to “great”, and note up to five emotions that you're feeling. Then, the app will recommend meditations, yoga videos, and acupressure videos tailored to how you feel.
Summer's coming! Look and feel better as you get ready to reveal a summer-ready you. Track your healthy habits to vie for points, prizes, and bragging rights.

**Registration:** May 27 — June 24, 2019

**Team(s):** Employees create their own teams, which can have anywhere between two and six members.

**Challenge Duration:** June 3 — July 8, 2019

**Rules:** You can earn points on a daily basis (up to a maximum of 1,500) as you begin to move more, eat better, and live well. Please refer to the activity points table on the right to learn more about how your activities can add up.

**Weekly Prize Draws:** There will be weekly drawings for employees who earn at least 300 points each day throughout the week:

- June 11 (for tracking June 3 — 9)
- June 18 (for tracking June 10 — 16)
- June 25 (for tracking June 17 — 23)
- July 2 (for tracking June 24 — 30)
- July 11 (for tracking July 1 — 7)

The weekly drawing winners will receive a **Fitbit Charge 3**, which is a heart rate and fitness wristband that tracks activity, exercise, and sleep.

**Did You Know?** Fitbits are one of several wearable devices that you can sync directly with RedBrick to simplify your experience. Once synced, your steps and physical activity minutes will automatically upload to accumulate towards your incentive requirements.

**Extra Bonus!** Employees who reach an average of 300 on their daily wellness meter for at least 15 days of the challenge will be awarded 50 points towards their Wellness Incentive.