

FEB/
MARCH
2019

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CITY OF TACOMA

HealthVine



Resolution Revolution Challenge

There are 62 teams and 233 employees registered for this challenge!

Challenge Duration: Jan. 21—Feb. 25

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](#) to learn more about how your activities can add up.

Weekly Drawing Winners:

- Elisabeth Leaf (Jan. 29)
- Salina Fleischer (Feb. 5)
- TaDarryl Hardy (Feb. 12)

Remaining Weekly Draw Dates:

- Feb. 19
- Feb. 28

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

Grand Prize: The winning team will be notified on Feb. 28. Each team member will be awarded a \$100 Visa gift card.



Live a Heart-Healthy Life

“People who are informed and proactive when it comes to lowering their health risks are very likely to avoid heart disease and heart attacks.” — Dr. Richard Stein, chief of the dept. of medicine in the Singer Division at Beth Israel Hospital in New York City, and a spokesperson for the American Heart Association.

Eat a healthful diet. Eating a healthful diet has been proven to reduce the risk for heart disease:

- Eat two cups of fresh fruit and two and a half cups of vegetables every day.
- Limit saturated and trans fats by using olive oil or other vegetable oils instead of butter or margarine.
- Eat more chicken and fish and less red meat.
- Eat six ounces of grains, of which at least three ounces should be from whole-grain bread and cereal.
- Limit or eliminate fast foods, which are often loaded with salt, sugar and fats.
- If you drink alcohol, do so moderately—not more than two drinks a day if you’re a man, one if you’re a woman.
- Limit your salt/sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg a day.
- Get the equivalent of three cups of fat-free or low-fat milk or dairy products.

Exercise more. Regular exercise keeps your heart and the rest of your body in shape:

- Check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.
- Get 30 to 60 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week.
- Do weight training and stretching exercises several times a week.
- Take advantage of your [gym discounts](#) and [Employee Wellness Centers](#).

Stop smoking. Decide to quit and set a quit date. Try again if you fail. Successful quitters have “quit” an average of nine times.

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Heart-Healthy Life Cont.

Stop smoking (cont.). [Kaiser Permanente of Washington](#) offers a free tobacco cessation program for its members. Also, the [RedBrick Health Portal](#) has several tobacco cessation journeys to meet you where you are when it comes to quitting. Our [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP), username: cityoftacoma, also has many resources to assist with tobacco cessation.

Monitor your health. Be proactive when it comes to your health. Work with your healthcare provider to reduce your risk for heart disease by following up with him/her for high blood pressure and high cholesterol level treatment.

“Denial is the number one risk factor for having a heart attack” —Dr. Richard Stein

Learn to relax. Chronic anger and stress can damage your heart. To better cope with life's pressures:

- Try to maintain a positive outlook on life.
- Take 15 to 20 minutes a day to sit quietly and breathe deeply.
- Take time for yourself each day. Read a book, listen to music or enjoy a hobby.

**Adapted from ©The Staywell Company, LLC*



Don't forget that you can watch the recent [Be Heart Healthy webinar](#) to earn 25 points towards your Wellness incentive. You just need to turn in [this form](#).

Meditation: The Health Benefits

Please make sure that you talk to your doctor about the pros and cons of using meditation. Meditation is not a replacement for traditional medical treatment(s), but it may be a useful addition.

Meditation is a mind and body practice that has a long history of use for increasing calmness and physical relaxation, improving psychological balance, coping with illness, and enhancing overall health and wellbeing.

The emotional benefits of meditation can include:

- Building skills to manage your stress
- Increasing self-awareness
- Reducing negative emotions
- Increasing creativity
- Increasing patience and tolerance

Meditation may help manage the symptoms of several conditions such as:

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Menopausal symptoms
- Sleep problems

Here are four of the several different types of meditation:

- Guided meditation: You form mental images of places or situations you find relaxing.
- Mantra meditation: You silently repeat a calming word, thought or phrase to prevent distracting thoughts.
- Mindfulness meditation: This type of meditation is based on being mindful, or having an increased awareness and acceptance of living in the present moment.
- Yoga: You perform a series of postures and controlled breathing exercises to promote a more flexible body and calm mind.

**Information in this section was adapted from the [Mayo Clinic](#).*

EAP Webinar Recommendations

Mindfulness in the Workplace: In the last decade, research supporting the benefits of mindfulness in the workplace has soared.

Mindfulness has been shown to protect us against anxiety, stress and depression. It improves performance and decision making, and it promotes learning, attention and self-control. But how does this all work exactly? How and why should one, in the midst of their extremely busy workday, pause to make time for a seemingly touchy-feely fad like mindfulness?

Join us in this webinar where we learn the science behind this spiritual practice and discover the very practical mindfulness practices that can increase your overall success in the workplace.

Do Your Bucket List: Seven Ways to Up Your Focus on

Things That Matter: Whether it is running an Iron Man, meeting somebody, or losing 10 pounds, we all have that next thing we want to accomplish in life.

It's so easy to lose focus on personal growth in the rush of daily life. Get inspired and get practical with these seven strategies to increase your focus on that next bucket list item. Life without regrets is possible. You just need to get focused!

Tax Saving Strategies: What is the difference between a tax deduction and a credit? How can I minimize my taxes? Give yourself a raise! Review step-by-step the different sections of the 1040 and how you can maximize savings. Watch this webinar to learn more about smart tax planning.

To view these webinars, go to [firstchoiceeap.com](#) and enter in “cityoftacoma”. Click on the “webinars” link to view 2019's webinars and all archived webinars.

Three Simple Ways to Eat Smarter

March is **National Nutrition Month**, so I wanted to give you some simple tips to navigate the conflicting nutrition and diet advice. Truthfully, healthful eating isn't difficult and you don't have to live on salads, buy expensive supplements, or swear off snacks forever. Small changes can make a big difference over time.

Eat in-season. In-season fruits and veggies are at peak flavor, nutrition and supply. Seasonal eating is typically more affordable and sustainable — and makes it easy and delicious to get more fresh produce onto your plate. You can visit seasonalfoodguide.org or snaped.fns.usda.gov to learn more about in-season produce!

DIY. Cook at home to be the master of your own healthy destiny. By controlling fat, sugar and salt, home cooks tend to eat healthier than people who eat out more often — even when they're not trying to change their eating habits. One of the biggest struggles for home cooking is time. So, consider watching the [Meal Planning Reset webinar](#), which is archived on our [Wellness site](#).

Expand your horizons. Healthful eating doesn't have to be bland. Experiment with herbs and spices for high-impact, low-calorie flavor. Or try nutritious twists on foods you love — like spaghetti with zucchini noodles, or taco lettuce wraps. [Here are some tips for using seasonings and spices.](#)

Utilize Library Resources to Get and Stay Healthy

All City employees qualify for a free physical card from the **Tacoma Public Library (TPL)**. Just go to any TPL branch and present your employee ID or paystub, along with a state ID and proof of address (you do not have to live in Tacoma). Find locations and hours at tacomalibrary.org.

Tacoma residents can get a free eCard. With an email and the internet, you can get and use your eCard immediately.

You can use your TPL card to follow your health and wellness interests in an in-depth fashion at the gym or in your home with virtual and hard-copy magazines. Titles at the library have information for beginners and more experienced health enthusiasts.

Hard-copy magazines check out for three weeks at a time from any library branch. You may have up to 60 items checked out at one time.

You can download magazines like Men's Health, Runners World, Shape or Yoga Journal at the "online library" section of tacomalibrary.org. Choose the "RBdigital Magazines" tab to find the latest issues in full color. Download them on a smart device and keep them as long as you wish.

Upcoming Wellness Trainings

Tax Planning Strategies Webinar: There are a number of ways to save for your retirement. This presentation reviews our income tax brackets and provides an understanding of how diversification of taxable, tax-deferred and tax-free assets can give you more control of your taxes in retirement. **Feb. 26 from 9 to 10 a.m. and noon to 1 p.m.**

LEOFF II Retirement Resources Seminar: This session is for **Tacoma Fire Department and Tacoma Police Department employees**, and their family members. In this seminar, Jim Mendoza from the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems will cover your LEOFF pension plan and benefit options. Human Resources Specialist Diane Peterson will provide an overview of the post-retirement medical and COBRA options and eligibility requirements. Diane will also cover the 457 deferred compensation plans*. VEBA Consultant Brian Riehs from Gallagher will cover the general rules and benefit options of the post-separation account-based health plan for eligible employees. Ashton Alvarez and Suzan Kolb from Benefits Solutions, Inc. will cover the Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP). **Feb. 28 from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) Auditorium.**

**Representatives from ICMA and Nationwide will be available with marketing materials and to answer more in-depth questions.*

STRESSED OUT!: This is a [three-class series](#) on how to cope with stress effectively. The first class of the series will provide an overview of stress physiology and general recommendations on stress on **March 11 from 3 to 4 p.m. in the TPU Auditorium.**



Slash the Cravings Webinar: Gain tips on how to manage food cravings by taking a deeper dive into our evolutionary selves. **March 14 from 10:30 to 11 a.m. [Register today!](#)**

Beneficiary Designations and Required Minimum Distribution Webinar: If you don't designate beneficiaries for your retirement accounts, your loved ones may not receive those assets in the way that you intended. Learn what you should consider when choosing and reviewing your beneficiaries. And Required Minimum Distributions (RMD's) are not just for those 70½ and older anymore. Learn about when you must take RMD's on your own retirement accounts, as well as options you have if you inherit retirement assets from someone else **March 19 from 9 to 10 a.m. and noon to 1 p.m.**

And if you want to "read it and leave it", purchase donated magazines, many of them from the current year, at any branch. They cost just 10 cents each, and purchases support the Summer Reading Program for kids. — *Andy Bartels, TPL*