

LIFESTYLE BENEFITS

MAY 2018

Take Care of YOU

Health & Wellness

Preventing Workplace Violence

Roughly 2 million Americans are victims of workplace violence every year. According to the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), workplace violence is “any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site.”

It doesn't have to be a coworker; a violent act can be committed by a spouse, a client, or even someone not connected to the company. It's good to have an office program that encourages conversation and teaches behavioral signs to look for.

You can help identify warning signs before incidents occur.

- ❖ Emotional outbursts
- ❖ Ongoing negativity
- ❖ Change in behavior
- ❖ Decreased quality of job performance

In any situation where you need immediate help, call 9-1-1. For any less urgent incidents, talk to your supervisor and/or HR department.



If you ever feel like your employer is not handling an incident of workplace violence properly, you can contact OSHA at 800-321-OSHA (6742).

Mental Health Awareness Month

When things are busy, it can be tough to take care of yourself, and tricky to notice the symptoms when your mental health suffers.

Approximately 1 out of every 5 adults in the U.S. experiences a mental illness each year. Mental Health America started Mental Health Awareness Month in 1949. May is about encouraging open discussions about mental health and sharing resources.

Make your mental health a priority. Reach out if you're experiencing symptoms or need someone to talk to. Check your company's benefit offerings to see if an Employee Assistance Program is available.

Learn how to help others. Study resources that can help you talk to a loved one who is suffering.

Spread the word. If you've found successful ways to cope with a mental illness, encourage others by telling your story.

While taking care of your mental health should be a priority all year long, Mental Health Awareness Month is the perfect time to make a positive lifestyle change.

Probiotics

While a burger and fries might taste good, deep down we all know we should choose options with vitamins and minerals. But have you considered probiotics? Probiotics are live bacteria that support digestive health — and some say they have positive effects on the heart and brain. Here are some foods rich in the gut-healthy bacteria:



Yogurt is a commonly recommended source of probiotics, but check the label: not all types have the same amount.



A soda alternative, **kombucha** is made with green or black tea and a culture of bacteria and yeast. Be sure to watch the sugar content, though.



Pickles and pickled veggies, which are low calorie and high in vitamin K, are also a good source of probiotics.



Kefir, a cultured milk drink, isn't found in most American fridges, but give it a try to add tanginess to your morning smoothie.



The fermentation process used in **sourdough bread** involves yeast and probiotics.

When all else fails, probiotic supplements are another option. Note that because research hasn't yet proven how effective live probiotics are once they've been consumed, the FDA has not officially approved the use of probiotics for treating any health issues.

Benefit Spotlight

Mental Health Benefits

A recent study found that mental illness is likely to affect most of us in our lifetime. For some, the issue may be short-lived, but for others it can be a lifelong struggle.

Most health insurance plans are now required to provide coverage comparable to physical health services for mental health services. You can expect to have coverage for any inpatient services for mental/behavioral health, along with psychotherapy and counseling sessions. Additionally, for anyone with Medicare or Medicaid, several mental health services have been made available.



Consider, however, that not all providers accept insurance, which can limit your options and/or result in high out-of-pocket expenses at out-of-network providers.

Coverage varies per plan, so compare your options before making your benefit elections. To learn more about the services offered by your insurance, review your plan information documents or call your carrier.



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