Choosing Your Sun Screen

In last month’s issue we covered the importance of using sun screen to protect our skin — not just in the summer months but all year round. But what product is the best to buy? What should we look for when we read the label? Here are three resources that provide information on the best sun screen to use for you and your family.

- Consumer Reports Sun Screen Ratings
- Environmental Working Group’s Sun Screen Ratings
- Skin Cancer.org

Don’t Lose Your Stuff on Vacation

Losing your camera, iPhone, Kindle, or wallet on vacation can be a bummer. Create habits for managing specific items like these to reduce the risk of misplacing or forgetting them. For example, if the safest place for your airline boarding pass is in your wallet, always put it there, not in a shirt or pants pocket where it can intermingle with other items or be dislodged. Mutually agree to quiz your traveling partner to prevent leaving things behind. When leaving a hotel room, dining area, or sitting area, look, point, and say when scanning the area, “Nothing here.” This technique uses three methods—hearing, seeing, and pointing—to catch your overlooked items virtually every time. Of course, keep an eye on your belongings. The most common crime of opportunity during travel is stealing property unguarded by its owner.

Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

Submitted by Pamela Moniz, EAP Committee Member, M/C Representative
Civility or Incivility in the Workplace

“How we treat one another at work matters. Insensitive interactions have a way of whittling away at people’s health, performance and souls.” Christine Porath, associate professor at Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business, makes this statement in her opinion piece titled “No Time to Be Nice at Work” in the June 19, 2015 edition of the New York Times Sunday Review.

Do you think there is no time to be nice at work? If so, what is the result of this? In her article, Porath provides research on this topic and raises important questions about the impact of supervisors/managers/leaders and co-workers who choose to operate in a way that does not foster a respectful, civil workplace environment.

To access the article, go to: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/21/opinion/sunday/is-your-boss-mean.html?_r=1

On the left hand side of the article, be sure to take note of the survey results about rude behaviors in the workplace (“Boors in the Workplace”). Paying attention to our own behavior is an important means of contributing to a healthy, supportive work environment.

Shift Workers and Health Burdens

Getting Quality zzzzzzz’s...

Shift workers have a “metabolic health burden” to manage because their schedules often conflict with their need for proper sleep and eating and the demands of everyday living. This contributes to the tendency for shift workers to be overweight relative to their daytime counterparts. Managing wellness is a skill for shift workers to prevent illnesses like diabetes. Do you feel fine with four to five hours of sleep as a shift worker? This does not indicate that you require less to get by. Talk to your doctor and seek guidance on how to get more sleep.

Source: www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus (search “152606”)

Check the National Sleep Foundation’s list of practical tips for healthy eating and exercising when being a shift worker. Click here.

Suggestions for supervisors of shift workers to support the health and well-being of your employees:

- Print the National Sleep Foundation’s tip sheet identified above and share it with employees at a staff meeting or place it in a break area.
- Request brochures from the EAP office on topics related to shift workers’ health to provide to employees.
- Contact EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson if you would like to request specific resources to educate and support employees’ efforts of managing wellness while doing shift work.

Article Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

Disclaimer: Material presented in this newsletter is intended for educational or informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health professional.
Saying “I Don’t” Versus “I Can’t”

Language is a powerful thing. But does one word really make a difference when talking to someone or to ourselves (in terms of self-talk)? Perhaps it does!

Think about the words “don’t” and “can’t” and what each means. Saying “I don’t” implies that you have made a choice and choose NOT to do something. “I don’t text while driving.” “I don’t eat after 8 pm.” Using “I can’t” implies you are NOT ABLE to do something for some reason because of a restriction. Maybe you have a choice about it and maybe you don’t. “I can’t see close up without my glasses.” “I can’t have cupcakes.”

Why care about these two words? When it comes to setting goals and meeting them, using the word “don’t” can feel more empowering. This word suggests that you have the power to make the choice. Using the word “can’t” might psychologically tap into feeling a sense of restriction or being denied, and who wants to feel that way? Would these feelings inspire us to be successful in meeting our goals or make us feel punished? Recent research by social psychologists explored this very thing. Check out the article titled “The Amazing Power of ‘I Don’t’ Vs. ‘I Can’t’” for more details. Then pay attention to your usage of “don’t” and “can’t” and see if you notice a difference!

Reducing Stress: Structure to the Rescue

Reduce stress and maximize productivity by structuring your day. Drifting mindlessly into work every day can create stress and increase risk of burnout. Start your day with a goal—personal or work-related. Inspire yourself to act on that goal by linking it to a larger overarching plan for your life. Select a couple of tasks matched to this daily goal. You’ll notice a small stir of excitement. That’s the feeling of being back in the driver’s seat of your life! If you fall back into “the routine” days later (a natural occurrence), recall this strategy and begin again. Feel the mental boost again. This approach elevates your life to improve your attitude at work, reduce stress, and build a positive feedback loop as you accomplish things for yourself that link to your happiness.

The Science of To-Do Lists

To-do lists improve productivity, but they can add stress if they multiply on Post-It notes, 3x5 cards, and paper scraps. Avoid flipping through this stuff. Instead, keep one master list. Update it, and transfer undone items to a clean sheet as needed. Supercharge a to-do list with five sections: job, family, friends, leisure, and personal/health. Fit everything into one of these categories. Prioritization will be easier, and you’ll reduce time spent on trivial tasks. Anxiety will lessen as you get more done!
Are you finding yourself grappling with any of the following?

- Family, parenting, and relationship issues
- Work stress and conflict
- Substance abuse or dependency
- Elder care
- Mental health concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Legal and/or financial concerns
- Grief and loss
- Or is there anything else related to work or home that is causing you undo stress and affecting your ability to be as productive as you once were?

**You don’t have to deal with it alone.** Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available as an employee benefit.

“One of the greatest discoveries a man makes, one of his greatest surprises, is to find he can do what he was afraid he couldn't.”

~ Henry Ford, American Industrialist
(1863 - 1947)

To schedule an appointment for a confidential Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact:

**Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator**

442-5483  
<mailto:bseckerson@albany.edu>

EAP Website: [http://www.albany.edu/eap](http://www.albany.edu/eap)

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.

**Early intervention is the key! Contact EAP.**
Helping Teens with Relationship Breakups

Sixty percent of high school students plan to break up with their current boyfriend or girlfriend when they leave for college. Clearly a lot of broken hearts are in store this summer. Teens now face additional challenges in relationship breakups—smartphones, chat, Facebook, and texting. These exacerbate and prolong distress, grief, and anxiety, and interfere with thinking about the relationship’s end and experiencing closure. Encourage your teen to talk with you or a trusted friend about his or her experience to deal with the breakup blues. Help him or her see the connection between instant communications, prolonged grief, and disrupted closure. Discourage self-blame for the breakup, exaggerating one’s faults, or other negative self-talk like, “I deserve this.” Remind your child of his or her good qualities and avoid the “I told you so” to reinforce your approachability as a source of reliable support in the future. Encourage sleep, healthy foods, and exercise. Help your teen shift time and energy to positive behaviors—things he or she enjoys. This idea of dual-tracking, or participating in positive behaviors while simultaneously thinking about what happened, will ensure positive change. You are the parent, so trust your gut. If the blues linger or you become worried about your child’s mental health, speak to a professional counselor. Contact UAlbany EAP for referrals for counselors who take your health insurance.

Source: www.stageoflife.com (Click “teen trends”)

E-Cigarettes Less Than Helpful

E-cigarettes (electronic vapor nicotine devices) probably won’t help you quit smoking tobacco, according to a recent study that found e-cigarette users 49 percent less likely to decrease cigarette use and 59 percent less likely to quit smoking compared with tobacco smokers who try to quit. One prediction did come true: Adolescents using e-cigarettes get hooked, and one third of them have never smoked real tobacco. Teen use of e-cigarettes rose 300 percent between 2013 and 2014. (4-16-15; New York Times)

So, have a discussion with your teen about e-cigarettes to help him or her avoid being seduced by the allure of them. Education is vital to prevention! To gain more information about e-cigarettes and the e-liquids that are used in these devices, read this New York Times article dated 3-23-14.

Books on parenting teenagers that are available in the EAP Lending Library:

The Parent’s Guide to Texting, Facebooking and Social Media
Positive Discipline for Teenagers
Rescuing Your Teenager from Depression
Teen Stages
Teen-Proofing
Uncommon Sense for Parents with Teenagers

Source for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Cure Kids’ Boredom Blues

Cooperative Extension and 4-H

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (an agency within U.S. Department of Agriculture) oversees a national program called Cooperative Extension. The mission is huge, but for kids, it includes 4-H clubs and tons of opportunities for highly educational summer fun at more than 3,000 locations. Don’t overlook this resource for keeping children occupied and enabling them to learn great stuff. The scope of programming is mind-boggling—from aeronautics to waterway sports, from ecology studies and leadership training to building birdhouses and even learning public speaking. Find out what’s going on at a center near you. Learn more: 4-h.org (“Find Your Local 4-H”)

Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

My First or Next 5K!

New York State/SUNY employees and family members are invited to complete their First or Next 5K in 2015 between May and October. Participate in one or more 5Ks and receive a car magnet and certificate commemo-rating your achievement and be recognized by WellNYS Everyday.

This is...

My First 5K
I’ve never participated in a 5K, but have watched them. This year I want to walk or run a 5K, complete it and cross it off my bucket list!

My Next 5K
I’ve participated in a 5K before. I like the anticipation on the starting line and the excitement of walking or running 3.1 miles. And the best part is crossing the finish line. I want to do another one!

After you complete your First or Next 5K in 2015, go online and register your name and event.
http://www.worklife.ny.gov/wellNYSeveryday/5k.cfm

WellNYS Everyday is a Work-Life Service’s Employee Assistance Program wellness initiative dedicated to educating, engaging, and empowering New York State employees and their families, by encouraging participation in healthy behaviors.
Making the choice to follow a plant-based eating plan is a great way to support better health and reduce the risks of chronic disease. Unlike the average American diet laden with saturated fats and sugar, the plant-based diet is higher in unsaturated fats and fiber, more vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients, and filled with a variety of flavors and textures – all which support good health. Know that following this diet plan isn’t about becoming a vegetarian or a vegan, it’s about being mindful of eating more vegetables and fruit and less meat. Great examples of plant-based eating plans are the Mediterranean and the DASH diets.

By now, many of you interested in a healthy eating plan have heard of the Paleo diet. This trendy diet, in many ways, is similar to a vegan diet. Each of these diets has been touted to be ‘the healthiest’ diets to follow. However, without going into detail on either of them, one thing is certain – they are both difficult to follow due to their restrictions of vital macronutrients thus making them almost impossible to stick to. So, what’s a person to do?

Welcome the Pegan diet. This hybrid diet combines the best of the popular paleo and vegan concepts while reducing their restrictions, ultimately making this plan user-friendly and sustainable for the average person. Overall, this diet can be described as a very clean, modified paleo diet.

In general, the Pegan diet is comprised of 75 percent vegetables and fruits and 25 percent animal protein. Although the suggestion is for the meat to be organic, the key take-away is that it should be lean. Using high-quality oils, such as olive oil, and plenty of healthy grains like quinoa and brown rice while limiting intakes of dairy, soy and sugar are encouraged.

Keep in mind that plant-based is not “all or nothing.” It’s about eating more vegetables and less meat. Keep the focus on adding. Start your meal with a broth based soup or a salad. Try adding veggies to one of your favorite recipes to boost the nutrition. To get you going, pick one day a week and keep the focus on plant-based meals.

To find out more about how to eat a plant-based diet contact UAlbany Dining’s campus dietitian, Donna Duffy at Nutritional-Services@albany.edu.

Don’t have a meal plan? Contact the SUNYCard office today for information on how you can get one. http://www.albany.edu/uas/sunycard_services.php Your Voice Matters! We want to hear from you. Please contact us with your questions and/or suggestions on how we can improve our dining offerings. https://ualbanydining.com/people/feedback.html

“Make a Great Plate” Recipe from Personal Best.

Add lean protein-rich toppings to turn a salad into a meal. Check it out!

http://www.personalbest.com/extras/BUDWC/Images/CC4July15h.jpg

Wellness tip compliments of Personal Best Publications, the same company that produces the EAP wellness calendars.
Please join Museum Director Janet Riker for a talk and tour featuring the 2015 Artists of the Mohawk Hudson Region Exhibit

This current exhibit includes artists from around the region who share their influences in unconventional formats. Charles Geiger, Colin Chase, and Angela Dufresne, highlighted below, are just some examples -- be sure not to miss it!

Presenting UAlbany EAP’s Lunchtime Art Break

Wednesday, August 5, 2015
12:00 pm – 12:45 pm
University Art Museum

Please Register by August 3, 2015

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu  442-5483

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.
TED Talk

Ideas Worth Spreading

Harvard psychologist Dan Gilbert gives a thought-provoking talk (6:49) titled The Psychology of Your Future Self. As described on the TED Talk website, Gilbert “shares recent research on a phenomenon he calls the ‘end of history illusion,’ where we somehow imagine that the person we are right now is the person we’ll be for the rest of time. Hint: that’s not the case.”

On one of your work breaks or from home, check out this brief talk to get you thinking about time, change, and who we think we are at any given time! https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_you_are_always_changing

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
442-5483 bseckerson@albany.edu EAP Website: http://www.albany.edu/eap


Photo: Brenda Seckerson

“Confidence, like art, never comes from having all the answers; it comes from being open to all the questions.”

~ Diogenes Laertius
Greek Philosopher, 3rd Century B.C.