



# ***Your Health Matters***

***CCMHG – Your Town, County, District, Authority  
Working together for your health***

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## ***Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Recognizes the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group for Improving the Health of their Workforce and Lowering Health Care Costs***

BCBS announced that the CCMHG is one of the winners of its 6th annual Municipal Blue Innovation Awards. The award was presented, along with a \$5,000 wellness grant, in Sandwich on March 19 at 9 a.m.

“Municipalities choose us because we understand that as one of the largest line items in their budget, the rising cost of health care is an increasing burden. By crafting inventive cost containment measures, customizing worksite wellness programs, and creating innovative health plan designs, significant savings can be achieved,” said Larry Croes, VP of Commercial & Municipal Markets. “Cape Cod is a shining example of the benefits that can result by working cohesively to contain costs.”

The Municipal Blue Innovation Awards highlight the new and inventive cost containment measures, collaborative and customized worksite wellness programs, and innovative health plan designs utilized by municipalities throughout the state.

In 2012, CCMHG restructured their employee offerings to better manage future health care costs. They also redesigned their website to provide clear, concise and comprehensive information for employers, and other users. The group provides wellness consultants on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard, giving their employees greater access to guidance on their health care needs. They also instituted a colonoscopy incentive program, as well as a mammography and biometric screening initiative, which featured prize raffles in an effort to engage employees. The group saw a 24% increase in program participants in 2013 and 9% increases in both the mammography and the colonoscopy programs.

“We are honored to partner with BCBS, they helped us to develop and implement innovative plan designs that will keep costs low for our employees and municipalities, as well as offer a comprehensive wellness program unequalled in the marketplace,” said Noreen Mavro-Flanders, Chair of the Group, “The grant will allow us to continue to promote our wellness initiatives and help our employees lead healthier lifestyles.”

**DELTA DENTAL**

**AVERAGE TOOTH FAIRY GIFT SKYROCKETS IN 2013!**

**TOOTH FAIRY INDEX™**

With a 44.6% rise in her average gift, the Tooth Fairy inspired plenty of (newly gapped) grins last year. According to *The Original Tooth Fairy Poll®*, this boost – from \$2.42 to \$3.50, up to \$4.51 for first teeth – outperformed every major U.S. stock index!

**Tooth Fairy Fun Facts:**

**LAST YEAR:**

- ▶ The Tooth Fairy visited 86% of U.S. homes with children who lost a tooth
- ▶ Cash gifts - 98% (toys and treats the other 2%)
- ▶ \$1 was the most popular amount (42%)
- ▶ The Tooth Fairy was usually abetted by Mom 61% (dads 35%)
- ▶ 54% of children waited for their first tooth to come out on its own – but some couldn't wait – 22% pulled their own tooth, 16% had their parents pull it
- ▶ Best of all, proud parents made oral health fun for their kids – a benefit sure to pay off for years to come. For more Tooth Fairy findings, visit [DeltaDentalMA.com](http://DeltaDentalMA.com).

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**Come see us at any of the Health Benefits Fairs this spring!**



*Attention All HPHC and BCBS members!!*



**Now is the time! Take part in the CCMHG Incentive Program!**

The new cards for this program will be mailed during the month of May and screenings that take (or have taken place) between January 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015 are eligible. Health Screening: Subscribers and spouses who have a cholesterol and blood pressure screening at their doctor's office will be eligible for a chance to win one of 300 - \$50 American Express Gift Cheques. Mammogram: Women subscribers and spouses age 40 and over (or recommended by a physician) who have a mammogram will receive a \$25 American Express Gift Cheque. Colonoscopy: Subscribers and spouses age 50 and over (or recommended by a physician) who have a colonoscopy will receive a \$50 American Express Gift Cheque.

# Wellness News

## Biometric Screenings

Below are the screenings scheduled through June 17<sup>th</sup>:

<b>Provincetown Community Center</b>	May 1st 1:00pm – 4:00pm	Pamela Hudson
<b>Town of Falmouth (Health Fair)</b>	May 7 <sup>th</sup> 11:00am -4:00pm	Kristin Nickerson
<b>Town of Orleans</b>	June 17 <sup>th</sup> 10:00am – 2:00pm	Margie Astles

On Martha's Vineyard: Four screenings were held which resulted in approximately 100 members being screened in the island schools of Edgartown, Tisbury, West Tisbury and the Charter School!! Next year the screenings will be held at the Oak Bluffs School, High School and some of the Town Halls.

## Couch to 5k

The C25K program was a hot topic this spring!! We began with a little glitch called a Snowstorm but that didn't deter this determined group of 19!! If you're in the area of Peter Homer Park on a Tuesday or Thursday night drop in to check out this super impressive group of new runners. It's pretty awesome! They are on their way to 3.1 miles! **Our next program will begin in Mashpee on July 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:45pm meeting at Town Hall.** If you are interested in taking part in this fabulous program please contact me as soon as possible at [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com) or 508-631-7263. Space is limited and is on a first come basis – the Yarmouth program had a wait list 15 people long! *As with all physical fitness programs: You must discuss this program with your doctor prior to start!*

## Healthy Me Program

Our two programs are going strong!! We have 17 members that are tightening, toning, and losing inches and weight!! Are you ready to take the steps towards a healthier lifestyle? Do you need to cut back on calories? Lose a few pounds? Learn some healthier recipes? Exercise more? This 8 week program is geared to motivate individuals to take charge of their lives and become healthier! We will meet 2x/week for the 8 weeks and during these meetings we will work to achieve your health goals by trying out new recipes, working on strength and endurance, discussing our weight loss/health concerns, and participating in weekly weigh-ins! Members will also meet for 10 monthly follow-up support meetings (with weigh-ins and healthy recipes to sample). Members cost for this program is \$10.00 per person. This money will be collected and held to be awarded to the participant that attains the greatest percentage of weight loss at the end of this year long program! If you are interested in taking part in this program, please have your employer contact me as soon as possible at [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com) or 508-631-7263 to schedule.



## 5k Walk It Off

Our Walk If Off Program began on April 7<sup>th</sup> in Hyannis with 16 members beginning this journey! We meet for 6 weeks and the program eases members towards a goal of 3.1 miles beginning with a ½ mile walk and gradually increasing – this is a beginner program but all levels are welcome. If you would like to join us please contact me as soon as possible at [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com) or 508-631-7263. If you would like to host this program, please let me know! *As with all physical fitness programs: You must discuss this program with your doctor prior to start!*

# and a little more...

## Spring Walking Challenge

The Spring Walking Challenge is off to a great success with 255 registered users. We had a few glitches and extended our enrollment a bit but we are onto smooth sailing now!!! Our weekly walks have begun and we've already trekked through Yarmouth Port and Harwich! Next we will be heading to Fort Hill in Eastham on the 24<sup>th</sup> at noon time. Since it is school vacation, please bring the kids along!! This is a great walk! Don't forget to log your miles, minutes, or steps when you have the opportunity. Some do it daily, others once per week. Either way counts to keep you in the running for our prize drawing at the end of the eight weeks! Good luck everyone!!!!

## Martha's Vineyard Public Safety Fitness Challenge



**Attention Martha's Vineyard EMS, Fire and Police!!** All public safety on island will have the opportunity to work with a nutritionist and personal trainers to help better their health. Everyone who participates will be partnered with someone to keep each other motivated. The program will be 6-8 weeks with prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.

## Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge

Over the Thanksgiving to New Year's period this past year Martha's Vineyard ran a successful program to promote a weight gain of less than 2 pounds. It was a great success with over 17 participants who actively stayed motivated throughout the entire challenge. Every week the participant had a different challenge to tackle and overcome. I was very impressed with the amount of self-control and discipline every participant had. We will definitely be bringing this challenge back this year! A similar program will be offered throughout the Cape this upcoming holiday season as well – stay tuned!



## FREE Diabetes Medications/Supplies!

### Take Charge of your Diabetes!

We offer a simple diabetes management program that allows you to receive covered diabetes medications and supplies with \$0 co-pays/co-insurance!

That means NO cost to you!

Participation is **FREE** and absolutely **confidential** and voluntary.

To find out more, register on the *Good Health Gateway* website developed specifically for you at:

[www.GoodHealthGateway.com](http://www.GoodHealthGateway.com) or call our HelpLine Advocates at 800-643-8028.

# Hot Topics

## 4 times

The amount of space a pound of fat tissue takes up in the body compared with a pound of muscle. While muscle has greater density than fat (which means the scale could inch up as you tone up), you'll look better in all those more revealing summer items after you stick with a strength-training regime.

Source: *Fitness Magazine*

## **Deaths from drug overdose have been rising steadily over the past two decades and have become the leading cause of injury death in the US**

Every day in the US, 105 people die as a result of drug overdose, and another 6,748 are treated in emergency departments for the misuse or abuse of drugs. Among people 25 to 64 years, drug overdose caused more deaths than motor vehicle traffic crashes. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, more people died as a direct result of drug use in 2009, than motor vehicle accidents and firearms combined! The 13.9 per 100,000 rate of drug-induced deaths in Massachusetts is well above the national per capita rate of 12.8. We are in the middle of an epidemic!

**On April 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm the Boys & Girls Club in Mashpee will be hosting a Substance Abuse Wellness Night to learn more about this terrible epidemic and what resources are available to help its victims and their families. It is open to the public at no charge.**

## **Kick the Energy Can**

Warning: The energy drinks that get you to the gym when you're dragging may be dangerous pick-me-ups for your ticker. The beverages, which are high in caffeine, sugar and taurine, significantly increase the heart's contraction rate for an hour after consumption, a German study found! Fuel up with 6oz. of chocolate milk instead - the chocolate and carbs fight fatigue and raise endorphin levels! Source: *Fitness Magazine*

**Go to sleep already! Your brain on Z's** In a full night's rest, you'll go through four stages of sleep, which make up a full sleep cycle that lasts 90 to 110 minutes. Adults usually go through four to six cycles of these stages each night. N3 and REM sleep play the biggest role in helping your body recover and repair itself, says Lev Grinman, MD a NJ based sleep expert. It's ideal to get through your first full cycle of all four stages uninterrupted – a reason you shouldn't drift off on the couch and then move to bed mid-cycle. And why parents with restless little ones might have an extra challenge feeling recovered. Source: *Runners World*

**N1:** Very light sleep (about 5% of your night) This occurs when you first fall asleep and again after each interruption.

**N2:** Light sleep (about 50% of your night) Breathing and heart rate relax. It's more difficult to wake you up.

**N3:** Deep sleep (about 20% of your night) The most restorative rest, this stage lasts for 20-40 minutes during the first cycle but decreases in length as the night wears on. Your body secretes human growth hormone, and it's difficult or nearly impossible to wake up.

**REM:** Rapid eye movement sleep (about 25% of your night) Your eyes, face, arms, and legs twitch, and your brain waves speed up again. Most dreams occur during this stage, and your muscles are paralyzed so you can't act them out.

## **The Secret to Looking Years Younger??**

Here's a new reason to eat more oily fish, fruits, and vegetables to keep your heart healthy: it may help you look younger. A recent study found **women around 60 years of age with the lowest risk of cardiovascular disease looked more than 2 years younger compared to women with a higher risk.** The key may be your systolic blood pressure (the top number). Researchers think that higher blood pressure may impede the skin's microvascular system, which delivers nutrients and oxygen, thus diminishing that youthful glow. Stress and lack of exercise can also be detrimental to your blood pressure and, in turn, your skin.

Source: *Eating Well*



## Food for thought...

### 7 Reasons to Eat More Eggs

*It's time to get reacquainted with the egg, a great food whether you're on a diet or just looking to manage your weight.*



1. The egg is a low-calorie powerhouse. "The egg is a great source of nutrition and especially brain food," says Susan B. Roberts, PhD, author of *The Instinct Diet*, "With only 80 calories per large egg and a useful 6 grams of protein, it can be scrambled or even fried with just a dab of butter and still come in at under 100 calories."

2. Eggs have vitamins and other nutrients. Besides providing protein (making you feel full longer), an egg supplies many essential nutrients including vitamin A, the B vitamins B-12, riboflavin, and folacin, and the minerals iron, phosphorus, and zinc, along with choline and DHA, essential nutrients for brain health.

3. The egg has less cholesterol than we thought. It turns out early tests measured falsely high for the amount of cholesterol in an egg. According to recent research from the USDA one large egg has 213 milligrams of cholesterol. Testing is also under way in the egg industry to see if that amount can be further reduced.



4. Egg whites can be part of your daily menu. It's best to eat no more than three or four whole eggs per week, but egg whites have only 15 calories per egg, no cholesterol, and no saturated fat, so dieters can eat as many as they want.

5. Eggs make a great weekend breakfast. "One great role eggs can play is in making weekend food seem special without overdosing on calories," says Dr. Roberts. "For example, scrambled eggs and whole-wheat toast or a fried egg and Canadian bacon on Sunday morning can become a special weekend breakfast without adding anything to calories beyond a regular weekday cereal meal."

6. Eggs are an inexpensive protein source.

7. Eggs aren't only for breakfast. "Think like the French and don't dismiss eggs as a great dinner food," says Roberts. "It takes a mere couple of minutes to whip up an omelet, so you can keep eggs in the fridge for quick dinners when you get home and are too tired to cook or go out. A two-egg omelet with a slice of whole-wheat toast and an apple or orange is a great weight control meal." *Source: [everydayHEALTH](http://everydayHEALTH)*

## Summer Cake

### Ingredients:

- 1 package Angel Food Cake Mix
- 2 containers Cool Whip fat-free topping
- 1 cup non-fat milk
- 1 package sugar free instant vanilla pudding mix
- 6 kiwis
- 2 cups halved fresh strawberries
- 6 small blackberries



### Instructions:

1. Prepare cake mix and add to 9" round cake pans and bake for 25 minutes. Let cool.
2. Peel and cut kiwi lengthwise and across.
3. Remove stems from strawberries and cut in half.
4. Beat pudding mix and cold milk with whisk for 2 minutes. Stir in Cool Whip. Let stand 5 minutes
5. Assemble by placing one cake on bottom, add pudding mixture to middle, add top cake and frost with remaining Cool Whip. Add strawberries to middle and arrange remaining fruit on top of cake.

**Nutritional Information:** Serves 8; 166 calories; 0 fat; 0 cholesterol; 84mg sodium; 34g carbs; 2g fiber; 15g sugars; 2g protein

## *Sitting All Day: Worse For You Than You Might Think*



### *The Last Word*

Yes, exercise is good for you. This we know. Heaps of evidence point to the countless benefits of regular physical activity. Federal health officials recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise, like brisk walking, every day.

### *Fighting That 'Chained To The Desk' Feeling*

People who regularly break up their sedentary time with movement as small as taking one step had healthier waist circumference, body mass index, and triglycerides than people who didn't take breaks during long periods of sitting. That's what Australian researchers found in a 2008 study. But how to make a habit out of taking breaks? Toni Yancey's *Instant Recess* book offers the following suggestions for people who feel chained to their office desks:

- Take a 10-minute activity break at a scheduled time every day.
- Park farther away from the places where you work, shop, play, study and worship
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Put printers a short walking distance away from your work space instead of right next to it.
- Replace desk chairs with stability balls — or use a standing desk to get rid of the chair entirely — to burn more calories while working.
- Fidget, stand up and stretch at intervals during meetings.

Studies show that when you adhere to an exercise regimen, you can improve your cardiovascular health, lower blood pressure and improve metabolism and levels of cholesterol and triglycerides. You can reduce diabetes risk and the risk of certain cancers. And, finally, exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight, which can boost all of these benefits even more.

But now, researchers are beginning to suspect that even if you engage in regular exercise daily, it may not be enough to counteract the effects of too much sitting during the rest of the day. Epidemiologist Steven Blair, a professor of public health at the University of South Carolina, has spent 40 years investigating physical activity and health. "Let's say you do 30 minutes of walking five days a week (as recommended by federal health officials), and let's say you sleep for eight hours," Blair says. "Well, that still leaves 15.5 hours in the day.

Many of us, he points out, have sedentary jobs and engage in sedentary activities after work, like watching television or sitting around a dinner table talking. When you add it all up, Blair says, "It's a lot more sitting than moving."

Blair recently headed a study at the University of South Carolina that looked at adult men and their risk of dying from heart disease. He calculated how much time the men spent sitting — in their cars, at their desks, in front of the TV. "Those who were sitting more were substantially more likely to die," Blair says.

Specifically, he found that men who reported more than 23 hours a week of sedentary activity had a 64 percent greater risk of dying from heart disease than those who

reported less than 11 hours a week of sedentary activity and many of these men routinely exercised. Blair says scientists are just beginning to learn about the risks of a mostly sedentary day.

"If you're sitting, your muscles are not contracting, perhaps except to type. But the big muscles, like in your legs and back, are sitting there pretty quietly," Blair says. And because the major muscles aren't moving, metabolism slows down.

"We're finding that people who sit more have less desirable levels" of cholesterol, blood sugar, triglycerides and even waist size, he says, which increases the risk of diabetes, heart disease and a number of health problems.

Dr. Toni Yancey, a professor in the health services department and co-director of the Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity at the University of California, Los Angeles, has worked for years on developing programs to motivate people to get up and move.

"We just aren't really structured to be sitting for such long periods of time, and when we do that, our body just kind of goes into shutdown," Yancey says.



She recommends routine breaks during a full day of sitting. But even if your work site doesn't engage in routine hourly breaks, there are things individuals can do at their desks to break up a day of inactivity and get moving, even if just for a few minutes. Yancey recommends a few minutes of movement every hour and she suggests sitting on an exercise ball instead of a desk chair, adding that it helps strengthen the core while improving balance and flexibility. It also requires more energy, so a few calories will be burned.

It may not sound like much, but an Australian study found that these types of mini-breaks, just one minute long throughout the day, can actually make a difference. You can simply stand up, dance about, wiggle around, take a few steps back and forth, or march in place. These simple movements can help lower blood sugar, triglycerides, cholesterol and waist size.

"If there's a fountain of youth, it is probably physical activity," says Yancey, noting that research has shown benefits to every organ system in the body. "So the problem isn't whether it's a good idea," she says. **"The problem is how to get people to do more of it."** Source: [npr.org](http://npr.org)

***Your Health Matters is a quarterly publication for municipal employees and family members of the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group.***

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