

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS UPDATE



SFMTA
Municipal
Transportation
Agency

Moving Forward Together *in Health*

August 2015



Welcome to the SFMTA Employee Wellness monthly update. The SFMTA is a recipient of the American Heart Association's (AHA) Gold Level Start! Fit-Friendly Companies Recognition Award since 2011. As an AHA **Start! Fit-Friendly Company** we encourage you to find a class you enjoy at [One South Van Ness \(1SVN\)](#) or at [Civic Center](#) and make the commitment to have fun, improve your stamina and reduce stress.

For the complete Employee Wellness Calendar of scheduled events and for additional wellness information, visit the [SFMTA Wellness Program](#) intranet page. Questions, comments or submissions? Email us at wellness@sfmta.com

The Power of Meditation



Worry, anxiety and stress can be more than distractions. Continually replaying in your mind daily problems and fears can affect your mental and physical health. Meditation provides a way of quieting that chatter.

By bringing your focus to your breath, a mantra or a sound, you give your mind something simple to hold on to as you gradually let go of the world. Meditation also allows you to become more awake and more deliberate about your actions. It teaches you how to respond rather than react to situations in your life.

Various types of meditation can involve different techniques:

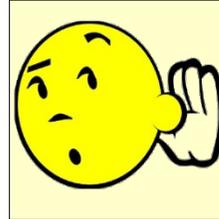
- **Mindfulness** involves focusing on a physical sensation such as the breath. When thoughts intrude, you return your focus to your breathing.
- **Relaxation response** involves progressively relaxing your body and then focusing on a word or sound.
- **Visualization** involves focusing on specific places or situations.

You can also try moving meditation, a form of exercise that combines fitness with meditation.

- **Yoga** focuses on breathing, movement and posture to help you relax and control stress.
- **Tai chi and Qigong** are forms of meditation that combine slow, gentle movements and deep breathing.
- **Walking meditation** has you slow down your walk so that you can focus on the movement of your legs and feet.

Although meditation sounds simple, it takes discipline to remain focused in body and mind, blocking out the world around you and quieting your thoughts. It's important to remember there's no 'right' way to meditate. If you get frustrated with one method, or it's just not working for you, try another technique until you find one that's helpful. For more about meditation, click [here](#).

Employee Wellness Survey



Change Happens!

The SFMTA Wellness Program's mission is to work together with employees to promote and advance an environment of good health and well-being agency-wide. This will in turn enrich and maintain a thriving employee-centric workforce.

We're moving forward and we want to find out how we're doing.

A brief 2-minute Wellness survey is now live online. Let us know if we are communicating wellness initiatives effectively, if you are participating in wellness activities and, if so, your overall level of satisfaction. Take the survey now and help create an improved wellness experience for all at the SFMTA! Click [here](#) or email: wellness@sfmta.com for details.

Peer Assistance Program (PAP) Open House

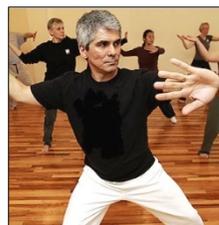


Get to Know PAP!
Wednesday, August 5, 2015
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
949 Presidio, Room #225

Meet your Peers, learn more about PAP services, and discuss the needs of SFMTA employees. Refreshments served!

The Peer Assistance Program ensures that SFMTA employees are provided a voluntary, confidential way to seek assistance with a variety of family, health and substance abuse issues. You can contact PAP 24/7 by phone at **415.923.6346**. To learn more about PAP, click [here](#).

Free 8-Week Qigong Class



Fridays, 12 noon to 1 p.m.
August 7 to September 25, 2015
1SVN, Crissy Field Room #8244

SFMTA Wellness is partnering with HSS and Kaiser Permanente to offer a special **8-week Qigong class** beginning Friday, Aug. 7. Qigong typically involves moving meditation, blending together slow flowing movement, deep rhythmic breathing and a calm meditative state of mind.

Enhance your everyday life and health with this special **free** Qigong program. Learn to develop energy (qi) and balance your mind, body and spirit. Help reduce your stress, pain and symptoms of chronic ailments. People of all ages and fitness levels are welcome to participate. No prior registration required. For more information, email: wellness@sfmta.com.

SAFETY CORNER

Help Prevent Shoulder Injuries



Any worker who has to reach, lift and carry, bend or twist their bodies may be at risk for shoulder injuries. Shoulders are easily injured and, once injured, recovery might be slow, sidelining a worker and creating operational hassles.

Consider ergonomic assessments. Ask for a [Safety Analyst](#), if needed, to identify shoulder injury risk factors in your workplace. Then take these simple steps to help prevent any future problems:

- **Minimize lifting and repetitive motion:** Provide mechanical assists, such as jacks, to raise objects and hold them in place. Put materials as close as practical to the area where they will be used.
- **Lighten the load:** When lifting cannot be eliminated, or when objects (such as tools) must be held at arm's length, ensure that items being lifted are as light as possible.
- **Control motion:** One of the most dangerous situations is a "save" — when a load shifts, or slips, and a worker attempts to prevent a fall. Minimizing the possibility of shifting or falling loads can help prevent these situations.
- **Improve your grip:** Lifting requires more force, and is more likely to cause injury, when there's no easy way to grip an object. Removable suction handles can be applied to flat surfaces in some cases.
- **Encourage rest and stretching:** Minimize damage from jobs that put stress on the shoulder joints by taking frequent very short breaks (15-20 seconds) and gently stretching to relieve tension in shoulder muscles and ligaments.

To read more on shoulder injury prevention, click [here](#).

For more information about SFMTA Safety Programs, contact:
[Gerald D. Williams, CSP](#)
[Industrial Safety and Environmental Compliance Unit](#)



Get *FREE* Help for Personal Concerns

Do you know about the range of **free** personal assistance offered by the **SFMTA CARE Program**? With services provided by **Claremont EAP**, offerings include **counseling visits** for

personal issues (e.g., marital issues, parenting concerns, depression, anxiety, stress, substance abuse); **work/life referrals** (e.g., childcare, elder care, school and college assistance); **legal consultation**; and **financial consultation**.

For **free** and **confidential** assistance, call **1.800.834.3773**. Counselors can help develop an action plan and refer you to the appropriate resources. Counselors are available at all times. For additional program details, click [here](#) or visit the Claremont EAP website (www.claremonteap.com).



Staying on Budget

Learning how to **budget your money** may be pretty straightforward, but following it can be a bigger challenge. If you're having trouble making your spending plan work, these budgeting tips can help keep you on track:

- **Keep tabs on spending:** Writing down that \$3 cup of coffee or the \$10 you spent on lunch may seem tedious at first but it can be a real eye-opener. You could be nickel and diming yourself into the red if you're not careful.
- **Define your goals:** Whether you're trying to pay off high-interest credit cards or saving up for a down payment on a home, your budget plan should reflect your end goals and be designed to maximize the odds of success.
- **Avoid budget burnout:** Setting aside a little something for fun each month can help you avoid feeling deprived and keep your finances on course.
- **Periodically review your finances:** A decrease in income or an increase in your bills could leave you coming up short if you're not paying attention. Making the most of your budget is all about keeping an eye on the big picture while paying attention to the details.

For more tricks on how to stick to your budget, click [here](#).

Peer Assistance Program (PAP)



PAP Tip of the Month: Short-Term Goal Setting

Too often it is only the big dreams that we focus on. However, as we keep our eyes on a prize, it is important to remember that any big success is always a result of many small successes. Whatever you strive for, properly set and executed short-term goals can help you do that.

When setting short-term goals, consider the following:

- **Set a specific time frame:** Short-term goals can range from simple tasks that you can accomplish in just a few minutes to more serious objectives that last up to one year.
- **Aim for a specific result:** Don't confuse short-term goals with ongoing resolutions. That way you will not feel like you failed if you skipped one day of a workout or had a chocolate chip cookie while being on a diet.
- **Use short-term goals as stepping stones to a larger, long term dream:** Long-term goals can often be chunked-down into even smaller tasks and objectives that take only a few days or even a few hours to complete.

Short-term goals are simple and easy to accomplish, they do not require long-term commitment and they guarantee something we all love – quick results! For more about short-term goal setting, click [here](#).



The Peer Assistance Program offers SFMTA employees confidential peer support for substance abuse issues and critical incident/trauma response, as well as regular Recovery Support Groups. PAP also provides referral services for a variety of personal and family issues. You can contact Peer Assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by phone at 415.923.6346. Read more [here](#).

ROAD TO FITNESS



Road to Fitness is a component of the SFMTA wellness health initiative available to all agency staff, with an exciting rewards program acknowledging healthy lifestyles. For more information, email: wellness@sfmta.com

Road to Fitness is now available on your favorite social media app! Search for "**Road to Fitness SF**" on **Facebook** and **Twitter** to get up-to-date notices, dates, pictures and more.

Private Personal Training Sessions



1SVN, E3C Room #6051
Wednesday, Aug. 5

Sign up for your 20-minute personal training session at 1SVN's on-site exercise area, E³C (Room #6051). Learn an interval training workout that you can

do at lunch or on a break. Your workout will be tailored to your fitness goals and a good time is guaranteed. To schedule an appointment, contact Laura@BackFirst.net



Orthopedic Assessments

1SVN, E3C Room #6051
Wednesdays, Aug. 5 and Aug. 19
9 to 11 a.m.

Low back pain? Sore neck? Learn what to do about orthopedic issues that are impacting you at work and at home: back or neck pain, wrist pain or knee pain. You'll learn effective strategies and exercises that will get you moving in the right direction. To schedule an appointment, contact Laura@BackFirst.net.



HRA = Chair Massage

1SVN, E3C Room #6051
Wednesdays, Aug. 5 and Aug. 19
1 to 3 p.m.

Get your free and confidential health risk assessment (HRA). The HRA takes less than 15 minutes and provides glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure readings, your resting heart rate and body mass index. After your HRA, you can schedule a chair massage for the following week (a guaranteed stress reducer and pretty nice, too). To sign up for an HRA, contact Laura@BackFirst.net.



8-Week Qigong Class

1SVN, Crissy Field Room #8244
Friday afternoons, Aug. 7 to Sept. 25
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Enhance your everyday life and health with this free 8-week Qigong moving meditation program. Learn to develop energy (qi) and balance your mind, body and spirit. Help reduce your stress, pain and symptoms of chronic ailments. People of all ages and fitness levels are welcome to participate. No prior registration required. Drop-ins are encouraged. For additional information, email: wellness@sfmta.com.



Healthy Cooking Demo

1SVN, Candlestick Room #6052
Wednesday, Aug. 12
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Chef Daniella creates a farm fresh menu featuring seasonal summer picks with locally sourced ingredients from the farmers market. Not only will you learn a new healthy way to cook, but someone will go home with all the ingredients they need to make the recipe for dinner that night. Will you be the lucky winner? Recipes and samples provided. Yum! **Space is limited.** For reservations, contact Laura@BackFirst.net.

Health Benefits of Tai Chi Chuan



1SVN, Candlestick Room #6052
Tuesday, Aug. 18
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Tai Chi or Tai Chi Chuan is one of the world's most widely practiced forms of exercise. Join **Dr. Joseph Acquah** LAc, OMD to explore some of the conventional and scientific reasons that contribute to its effect and popularity, as well as for a chance to try Tai Chi yourself. Dr. Acquah is an expert in Tai Chi Chuan, having studied the art of Tai Chi Chuan for 30 years.

A specialist in Asian medicine, Dr. Acquah is a founding clinical staff member of the UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine. He has also taught Traditional Chinese Medicine nationally and at the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in San Francisco. To sign up for this informative seminar, contact Laura@BackFirst.net. Light lunch provided.



E³C: Employee Exercise and Education Center

On the 6th floor of 1SVN, E³C is a haven for self-paced exercise, stretching, cardio rejuvenation, ergo breaks, and stress reduction.

Studies show that even small amounts of exercise—as little as 10 minutes—two to three times a day can produce impressive results. Benefits include increased blood flow, increased energy, decreased mental and eye fatigue, and decreased stress.

E³C is open all day for drop-in use, offering you use of:

- Treadmill
- Recumbent stationary bike
- Stretch unit for low back, shoulders and legs
- Wall-mounted strengthening system
- Exercise mats and rigid foam rollers
- Swiss exercise balls
- Theracane and Wristwand
- Omron blood pressure monitor
- Digital platform weight scale

Whether it's stretching, strengthening or just de-stressing, take an ergo break from your computer today.

We want to know how you use E³C and welcome your feedback. If you have maintenance concerns, questions, suggestions, etc. please email: wellness@sfmta.com

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE: 1SVN

The Wellness Program makes an effort to have the most complete up-to-date schedule available online. For last minute changes/cancellations, be sure to check the [online calendar](#).

NOTE: We encourage all attendees to be mindful of their physical limitations and safety during all classes. Please inform the instructor if a class is too difficult for you, or if for any reason you are not physically comfortable with the movements. Consult with your doctor if you have questions about which type of exercise is best for you.



Soul Line Dancing Classes

Soul Line Dancing is a fun cardio workout, featuring choreographed steps danced to contemporary, R&B/Soul, gospel and oldies but goodies! More like a party than an exercise class, it's a really fun way to "sneak in a workout."

1SVN, Candlestick Room, 6th floor #6052

**Monday afternoons
Noon to 1 p.m.**



Yoga Classes

Yoga emphasizes balance and alignment while developing strength, stamina, flexibility and balance. Learn how to use your body to reduce physical and mental tension by creating greater awareness in your breath and movements.

1SVN, Crissy Field Room, 8th floor #8244

Noon to 1 p.m.

- ▶ **Mondays: Ashtanga Yoga ***
- ▶ **Tuesdays: Gentle Yoga**
- ▶ **Wednesdays: Vinyasa Yoga**
- ▶ **Thursdays: Hatha Yoga**

*** The Ashtanga Yoga class is cancelled on Aug. 24**



Zumba®

Zumba classes feature easy dance moves set to Latin music. This high-energy workout ends with a 15-minute abs workout and cool down. **Zumba Toning** on Tuesdays includes light weights (1-2 lb. weights required, not provided) for extra emphasis on muscle toning and sculpting.

1SVN, Crissy Field Room, 8th floor #8244

5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

- ▶ **Tuesdays: Zumba Toning**
- ▶ **Thursdays: Zumba**

Class size is limited (25)

Attendance is on a first come, first served basis



Body Sculpting

Gain greater strength and tone your body. Safe and effective, body sculpting helps retain lean muscle tissue as it boosts your metabolism. Any fitness level can participate.

1SVN, E3C Room, 6th floor #6051

**Thursday afternoons
Noon to 1 p.m.**

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE: DIVISIONS



Zumba® at Woods

**Woods Division
Wednesday afternoons
1 to 2 p.m.**

Join our new weekly Zumba sessions offered free to SFMTA employees. Each Zumba class is designed to bring people together and take the "work" out of workout, by mixing low-intensity and high-intensity moves for an interval-style, calorie-burning, super fun fitness party. No dance experience (or any experience) required. First timers welcome.



HealthStrong Bus

The HealthStrong Bus is our mobile fitness and wellness unit that provides a variety of services, including orthopedic assessments, weight control and smoking cessation, personal training, blood pressure readings, glucose and cholesterol screenings, nutritional counseling, and more!

HealthStrong Bus: Division Schedule

Cable Car: Tuesdays 2 – 4 p.m.

Potrero: Thursdays 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Flynn: Tuesdays 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Presidio: Mondays 12 noon – 2:30 p.m.

Green: Mondays 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Thursdays 9 – 11 a.m.

Kirkland: Fridays 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Woods: Wednesdays 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Personal Training: Division Schedule

Cable Car: Tuesdays 2 – 4 p.m.

Presidio: Mondays 12 noon – 2:30 p.m.

Flynn: Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 12 noon

Thursdays 9 – 11 a.m.

Potrero: Thursdays 11 a.m. – 12 noon

Woods: Wednesdays 12:15 – 1:15 p.m.



Chair Massage: Division Schedule

Green: Monday, Aug. 17, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Flynn: Tuesday, Aug. 18, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Woods: Wednesday, Aug. 19, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Potrero: Thursday, Aug. 20, 12 noon to 3 p.m.

Kirkland: Friday, Aug. 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

WELLNESS WORKSHOPS



Employee Wellness is available to help coordinate wellness classes and workshops for SFMTA staff. When scheduling, keep in mind that some advance notice is necessary. [Class offerings](#) include:

- **Stress Management and Resiliency:** Get "in sync" with your emotions, intellect, physical health and performance
- **Dealing with Difficult People:** Recognize warning signs and ways to use verbal and nonverbal techniques to prevent escalation of conflict and confrontation
- **Healthy Sleep:** Learn about healthy sleep and strategies you can practice to help get your best night's sleep
- **Smoking Cessation:** The nature of addiction, resources to help stop smoking and strategies to prevent relapse

Wellness can also arrange informational sessions about the [Peer Assistance Program](#) and the [SFMTA CARE Program](#). For a full list of offerings, click [here](#). To schedule a workshop or get more information, please email: wellness@sfmta.com