

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS UPDATE



SFMTA
Municipal
Transportation
Agency

Moving Forward Together *in Health*

June 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



Have a Stress-Free Family Vacation

Planning a vacation that includes family members with a range of ages, personalities and interests can potentially involve a bit of tension. Consider the following strategies on

how to plan a trip that's enjoyable for all.

- **Decide who's paying:** Especially if extended family is involved, talk beforehand about how to handle the bills. Cruises, all-inclusive resorts or a rented house are good choices to help avoid trips likely to have lots of hidden costs.
- **Choose a destination to suit all interests:** There are perennial crowd pleasers, such as Disneyland, Disney World and the national parks. Big cities such as San Diego and Chicago are also great options because they offer zoos, museums and numerous shopping and dining options – something sure to appeal to every traveler.
- **Make it special:** Let every member of the family choose one thing that they'd like to do on your family vacation. This will allow everyone to feel more involved. If you have a tight budget, explain that at the outset and set a dollar figure for how much things can cost.
- **Set a comfortable pace:** Keep in mind each person's preferences for waking hours, activity schedules, dress, dining options, nightlife and needs for sleep. Respect your differences and be willing to bend the rules a bit if needed.
- **Allow for private time:** Everyone needs a break sometimes, even during vacations. Plan a daily respite for around 3 or 4 p.m., when people start to tire.
- **Expect the unexpected:** There may be bumpy moments ahead. If unforeseen events happen, stay flexible and positive. Just take the experience as it comes and go with the flow. Sometimes vacations where things don't go as planned make the best vacation memories of all.

For more tips on how to have a stress-free family vacation, click [here](#) and [here](#).



Get Moving at Work

Experts recommend **150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity weekly for adults**. Seem like a lot? This does not necessarily mean you have to work out or attend exercise classes to get your physical activity. Physical

activity is the movement of the body that uses energy and may include everyday activities such as walking to and from your car or transit stop, gardening, walking the dog, etc.

Even small changes daily can add up to reach the physical activity goal. Plan short fitness breaks (3–5 minutes) during every hour of your work day. This will give you 24–40 minutes of physical activity by the end of each day.

- Walk up and down the stairs in your office or facility
- Practice some [easy stretches](#) or simply move your arms, hands, legs, feet and head in circles
- March in place, bringing up your knees as far as comfortable
- Take a short walk during your break or at lunchtime
- Do some chair squats, jumping jacks or jog in place
- Take advantage of [SFMTA wellness offerings](#)

For additional information, click [here](#).

Snack Healthy, Be Healthy



Whether you're dieting or just trying to be healthy, choosing nutrient-rich snacks can prevent you from overeating during regular meals or making unhealthy food choices.

Healthy snacks are not only delicious, they can also keep you at your ideal weight and reduce risk of cancer, obesity, type 2 diabetes and hypertension. So instead of reaching for candy or a bag of chips, set your sights on tasty snacks that will curb your appetite and keep you energetic:

- Fruit
- Low-fat yogurt
- All-fruit bars
- Raw vegetables such as carrots, bell peppers or broccoli
- Popcorn with no added butter
- Whole-wheat crackers with low-fat cheese
- Nuts, such as almonds and walnuts
- Graham crackers
- Pretzels
- Applesauce

HINT: A good rule of thumb is to avoid foods that are highly processed or contain artificial ingredients. If there's a long list of unidentifiable ingredients on the food label, just pass it up.

Part of eating right is keeping track of portion sizes. Like everything you enjoy in life, always consider moderation when snacking. For more about healthy eating habits, click [here](#).

SAFETY CORNER

First Quarter Maintenance Safety Award



Congratulations to **Potrero Bus Maintenance**, winner of the 2015 First Quarter Maintenance Safety Award. Kudos to **Potrero Division Superintendent David Banbury** and 13-year **Potrero Maintenance Superintendent**

Woon Wong for keeping the rubber on the road and for doing it with a spotless record of zero injuries and zero lost time through the first quarter of 2015.



(L-R): Gerald Williams, Deputy Director of Maintenance Neal Popp, Steve Lin, Woon Wong, Nelson Doon, Jessie Guthrie, Director of Transit John Haley

How did Potrero win the Safety Award?

- Positive and timely safety communications
- Supervisors and employees adhering to established safety procedures
- Leadership follow-up and response to safety-related issues
- Zero injuries First Quarter
- Zero lost time First Quarter
- Active Division Safety Committee Team Member
- Safety culture change with all team members embracing "Safety First"

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 available to you? Services offered by the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** 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 more detailed SFMTA program aspects, click [here](#).

For **free** and **confidential** assistance, call **1.800.834.3773**. EAP counselors can help develop an action plan and refer you to the appropriate resources. Counselors are available at all times. For more information, visit the Claremont EAP website (www.claremonteap.com).

Peer Assistance Program (PAP)



PAP Tip of the Month: **Deep Breathing**

Breathing and controlling your breath is one of the easiest ways to improve mental and physical health, doctors and psychologists say. Slow, deep and consistent breathing activates a relaxation response and has been shown to have benefits in treating conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, migraines and irritable bowel syndrome.

Most of us by instinct breathe vertically, using our chest, shoulders and neck. However, for deep breathing purposes, individuals should practice abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing. Air is breathed in through the nose, and the exhale should be longer than the inhale.

Breathing through the abdomen encourages the diaphragm to flatten out and the ribs to flare out. Often taught in yoga and meditation classes, this type of breathing can be helpful during stressful or tense times or when it is necessary to focus or concentrate.

Since the breath is so controllable, you don't have to interrupt what you're doing in order to regulate your nervous system. Just breathe a little bit slower and deeper for long-term health benefits, as well as immediate peace of mind. Read more [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](#).



Loss Aversion Can Cost You Money

Loss aversion is a common human tendency where the pain of losing outweighs the pleasure of winning. Here are three ways loss aversion can negatively impact your financial health:

You Throw Good Money After Bad: Think of a casino where the pain of bad bets will cause people to keep on going in hopes of coming out on top. Even if you never gamble, you could still be a victim of your own loss aversion. For example, buying an outfit that isn't quite right and then spending extra money trying to make it wearable. That's throwing good money after bad.

You Hold on Too Long: We can overvalue the "sunk costs" of money and time rather than moving on. If you weren't loss averse, you could make money by selling things you no longer need or want, let go of an investment that isn't going anywhere or donate a car that eats up maintenance costs.

You Buy Too Much: If you walk around a store adding things to your basket, optimistically planning to pare back before you pay, you could end up buying more than you expected. To avoid overspending, only pick up things that are within your budget and on your list of needs *before* you hit that store or website.

For more about how loss aversion costs you money, click [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
Thursday, June 11

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



Cravings

1SVN, Candlestick Room #6052
Tuesday, June 9
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Bring your lunch and join Nutritionist **Kim Verity** for this noontime talk that focuses on the topic of cravings. We all have them...but what can we do about them? Learn to identify triggers and how you can deal with them. Find out what you can do at work and at home to promote mindful eating and portion control.



Orthopedic Assessments

1SVN, E3C Room #6051
Wednesdays, June 10 and June 24
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, June 10 and June 24
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.



Beyond Ergonomics

1SVN, Candlestick Room #6052
Tuesday, June 23
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Even with perfect posture, it is not healthy to sit for long periods of time. In particular, office workers can be especially susceptible to a wide array of computer-related injuries. Join this instructive seminar with **Michael Leary, P.T.** as he teaches effective stretches for your neck, upper and lower back and hands. Learn how to design and improve your home workstation and find out why movement and blood flow is important to maintain when at work and at home. Light lunch provided. To sign up, contact Laura@BackFirst.net.



Healthy Cooking Demo

1SVN, Candlestick Room #6052
Thursday, June 25
12 noon to 1 p.m.

Chef Daniella creates a farm fresh menu featuring locally sourced ingredients from the farmers market. Recipes and samples provided. Yum! **Space is limited.** For reservations, contact Laura@BackFirst.net.



Rockin' Walkin' Club

Meet at 1SVN, E3C Room #6051
Wednesday afternoons
Noon to 1 p.m.

Take your first steps on the Road to Fitness by joining the Rockin' Walkin' Club. You don't need to be an athlete for this one. All you need to do is show up in comfortable shoes and keep coming back.



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 **NEW!!!**
- 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

