Be Well. Be Wise.

APRIL 2020

WORKSITE WELLNESS NEWS!

City of Bryan Employee Health Newsletter

Mind Your Mental Health During Uncertain Times

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from other people, and the community you live in. People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19
- Children and teens
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use

Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger. Things you can do to support yourself:

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.

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- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy. Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Sharing the facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful. When you share accurate information about COVID-19 you can help make people feel less stressed and allow you to connect with them. Learn more about taking care of your emotional health.

Other resources:

- Texas Health & Human Services COVID-19 related mental health support 24/7 toll-free hotline 1-833-986-1919
- Deer Oaks EAP 1-866-327-2400

HEALTHY SPRING RISOTTO

This light-tasting, healthy spring risotto is the perfect way to welcome spring! It's made with fresh, seasonal veggies, such as asparagus, zucchini and sweet peas. The nontraditional method of preparing this risotto means it requires less attention (i.e., standing at the stove, constantly stirring) and makes for a lighter, fresher flavor.

Ingredients

- 1/2 medium red onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, halved or finely minced
- 1 medium zucchini, finely sliced
- 1 bunch asparagus (about 2 cups) boiled and chopped into 1-2 inch pieces
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- 1 tbsp capers, finely minced
- 1/2 cup rice cooking water
- 1 tsp. tomato paste (optional)
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter for garnish (optional)
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 tsp dried herb of choice (thyme, rosemary, oregano)
- Parmesan cheese as desired
- 2 cups arborio rice

Directions:

Step 1 Boil the asparagus in a large pot of water for about 5 minutes or until just fork tender. Remove immediately with a slotted spoon and set aside on a plate to cool.

Step 2 Add the rice to the same pot of boiling water and cook for 20-25 minutes until just al dente (cooked on the outside and slightly hard on the inside).

Step 3 In the meantime, heat the oil in a large frying pan on medium heat. Add the garlic, capers, and onions and saute for 5-7 minutes or until translucent.

Step 4 Add the sliced zucchini to the pan with the tomato paste and spices. Cook for 8-10 minutes, stirring every so often. After 10 minutes, add the frozen peas and a 1/2 cup of the rice cooking water and stir to combine.

Step 5 Once the rice is cooked, drain thoroughly in a colander and transfer to the frying pan along with the chopped asparagus.

Step 6 Cook another 2-3 minutes, stirring to combine all the ingredients. Add a dollop of butter if desired. Garnish with freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

Source: https://www.bitesforfoodies.com

BALANCING YOUR HEALTH & YOUR BUDGET

Paying for medical care can be a draining experience-especially for your wallet. Having a health plan certainly helps a lot, but the out-of-pocket costs may still be unpredictable. You might glide along with very few health expenses for six months in a row, and then boom-an emergency room visit costs you thousands of dollars.

One smart strategy is to save enough money to cover the deductible in your health plan. If you anticipate having a lot of health expenses, you might want to save even more. That way you'll have money on hand when it's time to pay for out-of-pocket expenses. Save this money in an account that you've designated for health expenses and avoid dipping into it for other purposes. Even better, grow your savings in a health savings account. In addition, control your costs with these tips:

Check your health plan. Find out what's covered before you need to use it. Also be sure to find doctors in your plan's network, and ask for medications covered on your plan's list of approved drugs. If you are unsure about coverage, call Cigna for more information.

Ask questions in your doctor's office. Learn more before moving forward with tests or treatments. Ask your doctor if a test is necessary or how much treatment will cost. You may also be able to look up cost information using tools on the myCigna website.

Consider urgent care rather than an ER. You can save time and money by choosing the right level of care for your situation. For medical issues that are not life threatening, choose an urgent care facility or make an appointment at your regular doctor's office or clinic. Another cost effective option is the City of Bryan/BISD Employee Health Center.

Source: Cigna Vita Min

Save money on prescription drugs. Ask your doctor about generic or less-expensive forms of the medicines you need. Find out if there's an option to fill your prescription in a 90-day supply rather than a 30-day supply. Also check prices at different pharmacies. You might be surprised by how much prices can vary for the same prescription medication.

Use 24-hour health information services. These services are available to you through Cigna. A consultation over the phone with a nurse advocate can help with guidance on next steps for your care. Or, you can connect with a doctor via phone or video chat. Telehealth options through Cigna include AmWell for Cigna and MD LIVE.

Find out more about the telehealth options available to City of Bryan health plan participants by visiting:

https://cobweb2.cobnet.org/coronavirus-info-for-employees/#cigna

CITY OF BRYAN/BISD
EMPLOYEE HEALTH CENTER

Open Monday-Thursday 7:30 am-5:30 pm (closed Noon-1 pm)
Friday 7:30 am-3:00pm (open Noon-1pm)
Saturday 8 am-Noon (minor acute illnesses only-call for appt.)
Walk-ins have been suspended temporarily.
Call 979-821-7690 for an appointment!
Questions or concerns?
Email CityofBryanHealth@st-joseph.org

If you have wellness related news to share with other City of Bryan employees and would like to have it spotlighted in our next newsletter, please feel free to submit it to:
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lward@bryantx.gov
https://wellness.bryantx.gov/