

## September Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the September issue of the Well Aware eNews! Read on to learn about—

- this month's wellness champion—members of a Well Aware physical activity challenge team who made small changes last year and are seeing big results;
- this month's seminar/webinar from Cigna where you will pick up some quick and easy strategies to help you get organized;
- *Your Race, Your Pace*, the new physical activity challenge for the fall;
- this year's RUN@WORK Day and how to participate;
- new self-paced, monthly resources for those with diabetes; and
- more!



### Wellness Champions' Commitment to Each Other Helps Them Reach Their Goals

**Team "Parkland Goal Diggers," Parkland Middle School**

Last year's physical activity challenge, Small Changes, Big Results, was all about taking small steps in your life to create healthy behaviors. That is precisely what Jose J. "J. J." Rodriguez, a teacher at Parkland Middle School, and members of his team, the Parkland Goal Diggers, accomplished during the challenge.

"I always have worked out, but now I push a little harder," J. J. said. "I am doing more now than a few years back. The wellness challenge gave the staff some alternatives, and that's been very helpful."

Why did the Parkland Goal Diggers get involved in Small Changes, Big Results in the first place? For many reasons, but mostly so they could each live a long healthy life.

"I am most motivated by knowing that I can't stop the aging process, but I am slowing it down by being more active," J. J. said. "There is only one thing that is your Neglect it, and eventually it dies. The difference is, you can always buy another car, but you can't get a new body."

During the challenge, the Parkland Goal Diggers were a great support network for each other. That kept team members committed, accountable, and successful throughout the challenge.

"We have high expectations of each other, and we commit to one another," J. J. said. "We have a goal that is both personal and collective. A team helps you to be more focused. A great athlete is great because he or she has a coach. We coach each other and remind each other to put in the work."

J. J. and his team are excited for the next challenge to begin.

"The challenges provide incentives to make myself better—physically and mentally," J. J. said. "It is empowering to know that I'm also doing my part to help the school get better equipment."

J. J. notes another inducement to healthy living—"The healthier you are, the happier you wake up every morning,"



### Don't Miss It

**This month's free seminar/webinar—**

#### Organizing Your Life: Simple Ways to Find More Time for You

Are you so busy you feel you don't have a minute to yourself? Join Well Aware and Cigna to learn some quick and easy strategies to organize your week so that there is more quality time for your family—and for you.

**Thursday, September 17, 2015**  
4:00–5:00 p.m.  
Webinar

**Monday, September 21, 2015**  
10:00–11:00 a.m.  
West Farm Bus Depot  
11920 Bournefield Way  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

**Tuesday, September 29, 2015**  
10:00–11:00 a.m.  
Shady Grove Bus Depot  
16651 Crabbs Branch Way  
Rockville, Maryland 20855

**Please register** for the webinar by e-mailing **Well Aware**. You will receive a link to it in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder. Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. See the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

**Presented by:**

**Cigna**



### Your Race, Your Pace: Well Aware's Physical Activity Challenge for the Fall

Crossing the finish line is one of the best feelings in the world. Whether you are running or walking a road race, biking, swimming, or meeting another goal you set for yourself, the finish line symbolizes your hard work, determination, and consistency.

This fall, Well Aware is challenging you to spend 10 weeks training for your race in the *Your Race, Your Pace* physical activity challenge. Join your coworkers as a team or train as an individual. [Learn more about the challenge.](#)

### Don't Pay the High Cost: You Can Quit for Good



Smoking is an expensive habit.

When you started smoking, how much did you pay for a pack of cigarettes? In 1970, a smoker paid only about \$.60 for a pack. A decade later, the cost was up to \$1.00 per pack. Today it's a different story. In Maryland, a smoker will pay as much as \$7.75 for a pack of cigarettes; in New York, prices now run as high as \$14 per pack. That's a significant increase in just a few decades.

There are other costs too.

If you are covered by one of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) medical insurance plans and use tobacco, starting in January you will pay a 3 percent surcharge on the total cost of your health insurance.

And that's just the financial part. The cost to your health can be staggering.

Isn't it time *you* quit for good?

MCPS and Kaiser Permanente are teaming up again to bring you the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program. The free program is available to employees and their spouses, regardless of whether or not you participate in MCPS employee benefits or if you participate with Kaiser. The next Quit for Good session begins Wednesday October, 14 2015. Meetings occur weekly starting at 4:30 p.m. in the Maple Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville.

The program is course-based and consists of once-a-week classes led by a nurse practitioner with assistance from Kaiser Permanente clinicians and other health experts. Discussions include the skills necessary to successfully live tobacco-free. Discussion topics include risk assessment, stress management techniques, healthy weight management strategies, and more. In addition to the class meetings, participants will receive support through a help line, peer sponsors who understand what it takes to quit, and other resources.

To register, [e-mail Well Aware](#). To learn more about the program, including the week-by-week course content, visit the [Well Aware website](#).

### RUN@WORK Day is Coming!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) estimates that 64 percent of adults in the United States are either overweight (33 percent) or obese (31 percent), which means they have an excess weight of 30 pounds or more.

The rise of overweight and obesity and the resulting health conditions has a dramatic effect on health insurance costs around the country. The CDC estimates that health-related medical costs due to overweight and obesity have reached an all-time high of \$75.8 billion per year.

How can you avoid being in the 64 percent? Here's one idea to help you get started.

The Road Runners Club of America will present the 8th Annual RUN@WORK Day nationwide on September 18, 2015. Well Aware encourages you to plan fun runs and walks around your workplace with your coworkers. To learn more, read the [RUN@WORK fact sheet](#).

The goal of RUN@WORK Day is to encourage adults to get 30 minutes of exercise each day, in accordance with the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, either before work, during lunch, or immediately following work.

To participate, simply make time to run or walk for 30 minutes on September 18, 2015, and bring a co-worker or family member with you. Is your school or office participating? [E-mail Well Aware](#) your story with photos.

### Wellness Survey: Share Your Ideas and Interests With Us!

Be sure to tell Well Aware about any programs, activities, and/or incentives you would like us to consider in the coming year. [Complete our survey](#) so we can offer wellness programming that interests you and meets your needs. Please let us hear from you whether or not you have participated in wellness activities in the past. Your responses will be kept confidential. Help us provide you with the wellness program you most need and want.

*Take the Wellness Initiative  
and save on your health insurance!*

### Wellness Initiatives Deadline is Approaching: Act Now to Save on Your Health Insurance!

Have you completed your biometric health screening and health risk assessment? If not, you could miss your chance to save on your health insurance.

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Wellness Initiatives program provides you with incentives to reduce your health insurance costs for 2016 and beyond. If you are covered by an MCPS-provided medical insurance plan, complete your biometric health screenings and your insurance provider's online health assessment by **October 9, 2015**—and yearly thereafter—to take advantage of the rate reductions, effective January 1, 2016. [Learn more.](#)

### Stress Less This Fall

Unlike a traditional workout, yoga and tai chi focus on precise movements that allow the body to slowly transition from one position to the next. Both practices attempt to coordinate the muscles, bones, heart, and mind with the positive energy that surrounds the body. Join Well Aware and treat your body to a relaxing tai chi or seated yoga class this fall.

#### Seated Yoga

**Wednesdays, September 30–December 9, 2015**

4:30 p.m.

Café 45 (lower level)

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Tai Chi

**Thursdays, September 24–December 10, 2015**

4:30 p.m.

Café 45 (lower level)

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, MD 20850

To register, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

### Diabetes Corner

People are unique and have different needs when it comes to managing diabetes. Starting in October, Well Aware is excited to offer you self-paced, monthly resources with content tailored to where you are in your diabetes journey. Some of the monthly topics that we will explore include healthy eating, active living, diabetes medication, and blood sugar tracking. For more information, or to register to receive the monthly information and booklets, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). To learn more about employee wellness, visit our [website](#). To view this e-mail newsletter as a .pdf document, click [here](#).

Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or [e-mail Well Aware](#).