

Did You Know?

Empowered People Get Better Health Results

People with conditions that require ongoing care who gain skills to manage their illness do much better than people who take a passive approach.

People with arthritis who take a self-management training program, for example, report only half as much pain after six months as people who

don't. People with diabetes who take a training program report lower blood sugars and better quality of life.

These people monitor and manage symptoms and use medications effectively. They know how their daily activities affect their condition, and they act on that knowledge.

If knowledge and skills can help us feel better, why don't we all get educational support to improve our health?

A Matter of Money

Most insurance plans don't pay for patient education. So, most providers' offices aren't staffed to train patients to manage their health.

Providers may point out needed actions during office visits – to quit smoking, lose weight, exercise more or eat better. But it takes time to educate patients on “how” – usually more than the 13 minutes most doctors have to spend with each patient. And some providers may not be skilled in giving self-care guidance or lifestyle coaching.

The Benefit Board's request for proposals for 2006 medical plans

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Calling Some Members

Healthy Worksites Survey

If you get a call in March or April from someone who says, “I'm calling on behalf of the Public Employees' Benefit Board,” please don't hang up! With support from the Department of Human Services' Healthy Worksites program, PEBB is sponsoring a telephone survey of members to get information on employee health and wellness.

You'll be able to schedule the 15-minute survey interview at your convenience. As part of the phone interview, you may be asked about

- Your health risks
- The effects of a chronic condition on your daily activities
- Your awareness of PEBB's wellness program
- Your agency or campus worksite health and wellness activities.

Your responses will be completely confidential. The survey will be conducted by an independent survey firm that, by terms of its contract, will use member phone numbers for this survey, only. It will securely dispose of all individual information when the survey is completed. And it will report results to DHS and PEBB only in the aggregate. No person can be identified through any reported information.

The survey results will help the Board create or modify wellness programs and other activities to meet member needs. Your personal experience matters. So if you get a call, please lend your ear and your experience.

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Approaching Loved Ones about Tobacco Use

More than 45 PEBB members contacted Free & Clear in January to access the Benefit Board's new tobacco cessation pilot program. Did you know this benefit is also available to your dependents?

Family members of tobacco users can play a big part in helping them quit. Knowing how to talk to your loved ones about quitting – without pushing them away – can be hard. Here is some advice for getting the conversation started.

DO:

- Begin any talks on quitting gently.
- Talk one-on-one about your concerns for the person's health.
- Encourage the person to seek help in quitting.
- Be compassionate. Quitting tobacco is very hard.
- Tell them that you believe in them and they can do it!
- Tell the person that you care about them no matter what they decide to do about their tobacco use.
- Ask friends and family to back up your efforts – hearing the same message from more than one person really helps.
- Ask if there's a way you can help them quit.
- Suggest they contact Free & Clear for more information or to enroll.

DON'T:

- ⊘ "Hard sell" or preach at a tobacco user.
- ⊘ Try to scare anyone into quitting.
- ⊘ Verbally or emotionally punish the person.
- ⊘ Use threats.
- ⊘ Tell the person what to do.
- ⊘ Take it personally if they say no, or react negatively.
- ⊘ Lose patience or get angry.
- ⊘ Hide the smoker's cigarettes.
- ⊘ Say that tobacco use is ok. Accepting the person is not the same as accepting the tobacco use.
- ⊘ Accept an excuse that they cannot live without tobacco. It's not true!
- ⊘ Think of their tobacco use as anything less than an addiction.

Call Free & Clear to learn more about how you can help your loved one quit tobacco. Be sure to tell them you're a PEBB member.

What's the Benefit?

This tobacco cessation pilot program includes:

- ✓ Five phone-based treatment sessions scheduled at your convenience and with treatment designed around your quitting goals and challenges
- ✓ Unlimited toll-free access to tobacco treatment specialists for the duration of your treatment
- ✓ Recommendations on type, dose and duration of medication covered by PEBB plans (*if appropriate*)
- ✓ Delivery of free nicotine replacement products, such as the patch or gum, for eight weeks if appropriate
- ✓ A Quit Kit of materials designed to help you quit tobacco through active self-management.

Public Meetings

The Benefit Board and its subcommittees usually meet monthly. Times and locations are subject to change. For schedules, please check the Meetings section of the PEBB Web site: oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/meetings.shtml.
(Please follow agency policy on use of the Internet at work.)



English: (877) 270-7867
Spanish: (877) 266-3863
TTY: (877) 777-6534

Get a Taste for Nutrition

March is National Nutrition Month. Sponsored annually by the American Dietetic Association (ADA), the event's slogan for 2005 is "Get a Taste for Nutrition." It reinforces the importance of nutrition and physical activity as key components of health. ADA suggestions:

- Be adventurous and expand your horizons. Choose tasty, healthy foods based on flavor, texture and colors. Explore the wide world of nutrition by trying a variety of foods.
- Treat your taste buds. Enjoy your favorite foods; just try eating them in moderate amounts.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Healthy eating and regular physical activity make it easier to achieve lifelong weight management and long-term health!
- Balance food choices with lifestyle. Balance your food choices with your physical activities to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle.
- Be active. Be creative and enjoy a variety of ways to stay active to feel your best. Make a list of physical activities that fit into your lifestyle, and schedule one every day.

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New Benefit Number for VSP

Your benefit confirmation statement, mailed to your home address at the end of February, lists your new Benefit Number. You will need to use the employee's Benefit Number to access benefits through VSP, which provides the routine vision services benefit for

members of the Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon PPO. Please contact your agency or PEBB if you did not receive your confirmation statement and need to know your Benefit Number. Call PEBB at (503) 373-1102 (Salem) or (800) 788-0520.

Do You Suffer from Portion Distortion?

Many of us tend to underestimate the amount of food we eat. And we tend to overestimate the recommended portion sizes for many foods.

For example, try pouring out your usual portion of dry pasta and measure it. Then, compare it to the portion size on the label. Chances are, you're eating two, three, four or even more times the amount on the label.

Relating the portion size of a serving to everyday items is an easy way to visualize what a true portion size looks like.

- Vegetables or fruit – your fist
- Cooked pasta – half a baseball
- Chips or pretzels – rounded handful
- Meat or poultry – palm of your hand (don't count your fingers)
- Dried fruit or nuts – golf ball
- Ice cream – a tennis ball
- Baked potato – computer mouse
- Pancake or waffle – compact disc
- Peanut butter – ping pong ball
- Cheese – four dice
- Fish – checkbook

Eyeball It

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's Web site has a fun, interactive quiz called "Portion Distortion" that shows how servings have "super sized" during the last 20 years. You get to guess how many more calories each modern serving adds and how long it takes to burn them off. Check it out at <http://hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/portion/keep.htm>. *(Please follow agency policy on use of the Internet at work.)*

Start Small Ones with Small Portions, Too

Children need adequate calories to meet their needs for growth. On the other hand, portions that are too large could lead to overeating or seem overwhelming. Serving small portions to young children is often the best way for them to learn to eat only until satisfied, instead of overeating. Start kids off with less, and encourage them to ask for more if they're still hungry.

Source: National Institutes of Health

Get a Taste for Nutrition *(Continued from page 3)*

Explore New Foods

A new world of taste and texture exists when you explore new foods—especially new types of fruits and vegetables. There is a host of intriguing foods out there, and the nutrients they contain make them worth looking at the next time you visit the supermarket.

Fruits:

- Kumquat — both sweet and sour (high in vitamin C and fiber)

- Passion fruit — sweet-tart, lemony (high in vitamin C, vitamin A and fiber)
- Acerola — red outside, yellow inside with a slightly tart flavor (high in vitamin C; good source of vitamin A)
- Pomegranate — hundreds of ruby-red seeds in translucent red pulp, both sweet and tart (seeds a good source of potassium and vitamins C and B6).

Vegetables:

- Kohlrabi — creamy, somewhat sweet interior (high in vitamin C, raw a good source of fiber)
- Bok choy — a mild cabbage

(rich in vitamins A and C and potassium)

- Jicama — crisp, juicy and slightly sweet (high in vitamin C; good source of fiber)
- Parsnip — celery-like fragrance; sweet, slightly peppery flavor (good source of folate, vitamin C and fiber).

Find Information Online

Download *Finding Your Way to a Healthier You* at

www.nutrition.gov. Based on the new 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, this brochure explains how you can make smart food choices for a healthier life.

Know Your BMI

Overweight and obesity are at the core of many chronic diseases, including diabetes and heart disease. This means your body mass index (BMI) is good health indicator.

Here's the BMI range:

- 18.5 and 24.9 = healthy weight
- 25 to 29.9 = overweight
- 30 or higher = obese.

To calculate your BMI, multiply your weight in pounds by 705, divide by your height in inches, then divide again by your height in inches. Or use an online BMI calculator:

- Kaiser Permanente <http://members.kaiserpermanente.org/kpweb/healthcalc/bmi.do>
- Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon www.netreturns.biz/etools/bmicalc.html
- The National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm.

PEBB Resources

Access PEBB, insurance companies and other benefit resources using the contact information below. The insurance company Web sites include provider directories. You can also link to insurance company Web sites from the PEBB Web site.

PEBB

Phone: (503) 373-1102, (800) 788-0520
Fax: (503) 373-1654
Web: oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB
E-mail: inquiries.pebb@state.or.us

PEBB Health Center

Phone: (503) 362-1111, (800) 701-1333
Web: www.pebbhealth.org

BestChoice Administrators (BCA)

(Healthcare and Dependent Care FSAs)
Phone: (800) 556-2230
Web site: www.bestchoiceadmin.com

Kaiser Permanente

(HMO & Dental Plans)
Phone: (503) 813-2000, (800) 813-2000
Web site: my.kp.org/nw/pebb

The ODS Companies

(Dental Plans)
Phone: (800) 452-1058
Web site: www.odscompanies.com/pebb

Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon

(PPO Plans)
Phone: (800) 826-9813 (outside Portland); (503) 220-3849 (Portland)
Web site: www.or.regence.com/pebb

The Standard Insurance Company

(Life and Disability Plans)
Phone: (800) 842-1707;
Disability (800) 242-1888
Web site: www.standard.com

UnumProvident

(Long-Term Care Plan)
Phone: (800) 227-4165
Web site: www.unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb

VSP

(Vision Service Plan)
Phone: (800) 877-7195
Web site: www.vsp.com

Willamette Dental Insurance

(Dental Plan)
Phone: (800) 460-7644
Web site: www.willamettedental.com

Did You Know?

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emphasizes PEBB's desire for plans that support member education about their health and conditions.

Currently, PEBB's wellness programs try to help members learn to manage their health and conditions. And PEBB's carriers offer specific programs for asthma, diabetes and heart disease. But many PEBB members dealing with existing or potential conditions aren't active participants. They're just not "there" yet.

A Matter of Mind

When it comes to managing our health, most of us are on a mental pathway. It starts with knowing our role in managing our own health, then gaining knowledge and skills, on to taking action, and finally to having confidence in our abilities to maintain new behaviors.

What Can You Do?

If you're not sure if you should be concerned about your health, take the first step by completing the health risk assessment at The State of Health Online at www.wellmed.com/stateofhealth.

Once you know your health risks, learn what you can do to lower them — a healthy diet and regular exercise are good starting points. Have the tests and screenings that are right for people of your sex and age. Ask your provider to explain the results and what you can do to make them better.

If you have a condition that requires ongoing care, ask your provider or carrier what programs are available (see Resources, page 4). Or call the PEBB Health

Center for a free phone consultation with a nurse practitioner or health educator. Contact your local hospital or county public health department to find out what types of assistance — including support groups — are available in your community.

Resources at Your Fingertips

The PEBB Health Center's free lending library offers hundreds of books, videos and other materials that can help you manage or avoid a chronic condition. Search the whole collection online at www.pebbhealth.org/Librarylookup.cfm.

Other great online resources for those who have chronic illnesses or want to know how to avoid them:

- The American Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.org
- The American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org
- The American Lung Association
www.lungusa.org
- The Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org
- The National Diabetes Clearing House
www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov
- The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/
- The National Institute of Mental Health site on depression in those who have chronic illnesses
www.nimh.nih.gov/HealthInformation/cooccurmenu.cfm.

“Patients’ knowledge about their health conditions is an important part of being the healthiest one can be.

Preventive health care and care of chronic medical conditions (like diabetes or asthma) is a partnership of the physician and the patient. The more a patient contributes to that partnership through understanding their condition and its treatment, the more likely the best possible outcome will result.”

– Thomas Turek, M.D.

Fitness Options for PEBB Members

If you're thinking about joining a fitness club, you may want to check the PEBB Health Center's Web site first. At <http://www.pebbhealth.org/FitnessLookup.cfm> you can search for fitness clubs in your area.

Some offer discounts to state employees, so it's worth a look.

Regence BlueCross Blue Shield of Oregon members who live in the Portland-Vancouver have an additional discount option. The Regence GlobalFit program offers month-to-month memberships at discounts of up to 60 percent at more than 20 clubs in the area. Learn more about the GlobalFit program at www.globalfit.com/RegenceOregon.

PEBB Health Center Update

775 Court St. NE • Salem, OR 97301

(800) 701-1333 • www.pebbhealth.org • (503) 362-1111 • pebbhealth@oregonwellness.com

Programs at the PEBB Health Center

Registration required. Handouts may be available if you are unable to attend. Check the Health Center website at www.pebbhealth.org for updates. (*Please follow agency rules on use of the Internet at work.*) Feel free to bring lunch or snacks to any of these noon classes.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome-Me and my Aching Stomach (IBS)

Presenter: Jeanine Olson, ANP

Date: Thursday, March 10

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Identify symptoms and learn to manage IBS; learn about “abdominal migraine” and helpful dietary measures.

Asthma: *I Feel Like a Fish Out of Water*

Presenter: Carolyn Buel, ANP

Date: Tuesday, March 15

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Learn what causes asthma, along with treatments and medications; receive a peak flow meter.

Eat to Beat Disease

Presenter: Judy Forest, RD

Date: Thursday, March 17

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

What is known about nutrition’s role in reducing risk and slowing progression of heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes.

Oh my Runny Nose-Spring Allergies

Presenter: Liz Marik, FNP

Date: Tuesday, March 29

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

The differences between allergies and asthma; how to treat allergies with lifestyle changes and medications.

Time Management-Are you Spending it Wisely?

Presenter: EAP

Date: Thursday, March 31

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Tips on how to make every minute count, while reducing stress.

Need More Stability in Your Life?

Presenter: Stacy Revay, Health & Wellness Coordinator

Date: Tues., April 5

Time: 5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

Learn to use an oversized exercise ball to improve flexibility and strength. Wear comfortable clothes. (Bringing a ball is optional.)

A Healthy Balanced Diet: The Diet & Insulin Connection

First in a series of five monthly classes on nutrition and lifestyle changes to help your health

Presenter: Linda Spaulding, Certified Nutrition Consultant & Educator

Dates: Thursdays; April 7, May 5, June 2, July 7, Aug. 4

Fees: \$15 for printed guidebook (*optional*)

Time: 5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

Get information on diet and the insulin connection and insulin resistance. Understand fat, protein and carbohydrates. Additional classes discuss supplements, exercise, stress and bringing it all together.

Call the Health Center if you are outside the Salem area and see a class your agency is interested in hosting or if your agency would like to schedule an on-site health screening.

Getting Active, Staying Active

Presenter: Jeanine Olson, ANP

Date: Tues., April 12

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Learn how to create a more physically active life – the options are limitless!

Cancer Cues

Presenter: Carolyn Buel, ANP

Date: Thurs., April 14

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Learn risks, definitions, warning signs and important screening tests – the earlier the diagnosis, the greater the survival rate.

Preparing for Pregnancy

Presenter: Liz Marik, FNP

Date: Wed., April 20

Time: 5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

Get ready for a healthy pregnancy with proper nutrition and lifestyle changes. Dads-to-be welcome.



The PEBB Health Center’s lending library has materials related to these topics and more. Call or e-mail for a library card so you can take advantage of the resources available to all PEBB members.

PEBB Mission

To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to both the employee and the state.