

**Safety Principle # 2**  
**People are the most critical element**

<b>February 2021</b>						
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**February 1, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Trying to keep your New Year's Resolution?

Here are some tips to achieve your New Year's fitness goals:

1. Determine Your Readiness – Make sure you're both physically and mentally ready to start an exercise program. Consult your doctor if needed before beginning a new routine. How likely are you to stick with an exercise program once you begin?
2. Create a Plan – Before beginning, decide when you will exercise, what type of exercise you will do (choose something you enjoy!), and how much time you will spend exercising
3. Recruit a Friend – While we may not be able to work out with a fitness partner these days, still enlist an accountability partner. Update each other on your progress each week
4. Take it Easy – Consider your resolution to be a lifelong health commitment. Take it easy in the beginning and work your way up to build consistency and be successful
5. Be Realistic – Don't set your intentions based on other people. Be realistic with your own lifestyle and build a solid foundation for success.

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**February 2, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

30/30 Rule

Sometimes we get busy and do not realize how long we have been sitting.

Taking frequent posture relief breaks to stretch muscles, joints, spinal discs, arms, and legs helps to combat adverse effects of sitting. Stretching also maintains flexibility to help combat muscle fatigue and the reduction of blood flow to extremities that is prevalent in prolonged office work. A good rule of thumb is the 30/30 rule: For every 30 minutes of constant work, employees should stretch for 30 seconds. Employees should not work more than two hours straight without taking a posture relief break.

Use the RSIGuard program to assist you with not only break reminders, but also tips on how to set up your work station properly.

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**February 3, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Work Out Wednesday

If you decide to join a gym or get involved with an exercise program below are a few tips:

- Listen to your body. Hold off on exercise when you're sick or feeling very fatigued. Cut back if you cannot finish an exercise session, feel faint after exercise or fatigued during the day, or suffer persistent aches and pains in joints after exercising.
- If you stop exercising for a while, drop back to a lower level of exercise initially. If you're doing strength training, for example, lift lighter weights or do fewer reps/sets.
- For most people, simply drinking plenty of water is sufficient. But if you're working out especially hard or doing a marathon or triathlon, choose drinks that replace fluids plus essential electrolytes.

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**February 4, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

February is American Heart Month

During the holidays and colder months, we often do not engage in as much physical activity as we do during the summer months.

If you are getting back into an exercise routine after an extended time away start slowly and work your way back up. Serious injuries can occur due to overexertion during a workout.

What are you doing to strengthen your heart?

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**February 5, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Brain Boost!

We often hear that “brain-boosting” supplements and memory exercises such as puzzles and Sudoku will keep our brains healthy. However, while these activities help you concentrate for an hour or two, they don’t do much to keep an aging brain sharp.

Did you know? Research shows that people who want to preserve good brain function should take the same steps they would to protect their hearts. Heart health risks such as high blood pressure, smoking, obesity, and lack of physical activity are also some of the same things that are bad for your brain.

The American Heart Association recommends focusing on the following factors to lower your risk for heart disease and stroke, and to help prevent or delay at least 40% of dementias:

- Lower blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels
- Getting enough sleep
- Not smoking
- Limiting alcohol intake
- Eating a healthy diet
- Exercising at least 150 minutes per week (total)
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Staying socially active

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Benefits of Stretching

Did you know that stretching before starting your work day and throughout your day can be beneficial?

Stretching allows an individual to gain flexibility in motion which is helpful for activity. Stretching also increases your circulation, which in turn will help keep your body tissues supplied with oxygen. Stretching, it isn't just for athletes.

Don't forget the 30/30 rule!

For every 30 minutes of constant work, employees should stretch for 30 seconds.

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**Office Daily Safety Message**

Too much exercise? Your body will let you know.

Most individuals after returning to an exercise activity will experience delayed muscle soreness 12-24 hours after the activity which will gradually abate. This soreness is normal and often expected. By contrast, persistent or intense muscle pain that starts during a workout or right afterward, or muscle soreness that persists more than one to two weeks, merits a call to your doctor for advice.

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**February 8, 2021**

### **Office Daily Safety Message**

How often do you rotate your workout routine?

In order to prevent injuries while working out, try mixing activities. Cross-training, or varying your workout, allows for you to use different muscles on different days to prevent overuse of one set.

An example would be to run one day, lift weights on the second day, and swim or cycle on the third day, then setting a rotation.

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**February 9, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Winter is still here!

Remember the following when walking on ice and snow.

Due to ice and snow, walk like a penguin when entering and leaving homes and buildings. Winter slips and falls in parking lots are extremely common. To avoid them, walk like a penguin by walking flat footed taking short, slow steps. It's also important to wear sensible footwear and carry only what you can handle.

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**February 10, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Work Out Wednesday

To recap thus far; warm up and cool down, gradually increase activity, rest and mix activities, and listen to your body. The next tips are:

- Choose clothes and shoes designed for your type of exercise. Replace shoes every six months as cushioning wears out.
- For strength training, good form is essential. Initially use no weight, or very light weights, when learning the exercises. Never sacrifice good form by hurrying to finish reps/sets.
- Exercising vigorously in hot, humid conditions can lead to serious overheating and dehydration. Slow your pace above 70°F or find a cooler time of day.
- Dress properly for cold-weather workouts to avoid hypothermia. A good strategy is to wear layers so you can peel them off as it warms up.

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**February 11, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Slips, trips, and falls are the leading cause of workplace injuries in the U.S. and cause nearly 700 fatalities per year. Remain cautious of walking surfaces at all times!

One of the most hazardous places for falls: Stairs.

Solution: USE THE HANDRAIL!

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**February 12, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

**Heart Disease: It Can Happen at Any Age**

Heart disease and the conditions that lead to it can happen at any age. High rates of obesity and high blood pressure among younger people (ages 35-64) are putting them at risk for heart disease earlier in life. Half of all Americans have at least one of the top three risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.

The CDC recommends the following four ways to take control of your heart health:

- Don't smoke – Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the US.
- Manage conditions – Work with your health care team to manage conditions such as high blood pressure and cholesterol. This includes taking medications you have been prescribed.
- Make heart-healthy eating changes – Eat food low in trans-fat, saturated fat, added sugar and sodium. Try to fill at least half your plate with vegs and fruits.
- Stay active – Get moving for at least 150 minutes per week. You can even break up the 30 minutes into 10-minute blocks.

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**February 13, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Winter is not over!

We are still in the midst of winter – so slips, trips and falls continue to be at an elevated risk. Even if you feel like you're an 'old pro' when it comes to winter hazards – don't let yourself become overconfident.

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**February 14, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Distracted Driving

Distracted driving continues to be one of the leading causes of vehicle accidents year after year in the U.S., especially among younger drivers.

Anything that takes attention away from driving can be a distraction. Sending a text message, talking on a cell phone, using a navigation system and eating while driving are a few actions that can take your focus off the task at hand and lead to an accident.

Protect yourself, your passengers, and other drivers on the road by keeping your hands on the wheel, your eyes on the road, and your mind on the task when operating a vehicle.

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**February 15, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Feeling tired?

Fatigue is one of the biggest traps we can face and not recognize until it's too late. If you are working overtime, please ensure that sleep and a balanced diet are at the top of your priority list.

Don't let fatigue become your safety enemy!

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**Office Daily Safety Message**

Do you perform a Safety Circle Walk prior to getting into your vehicle every day?

Practice walking around your vehicle before getting in. All it takes is 30 seconds. It takes 21-days to develop a habit. If you make this practice a habit for 21 straight days, it will be your norm. The walk-around will help you identify hazards before you put the vehicle in motion.

Look for hazards such as:

- ✓ Vehicles parked behind, in front of, or on the side of you
- ✓ Children playing
- ✓ Fixed objects such as mail boxes, a ditch or culvert, fire hydrants, landscaping materials, or objects close to the ground
- ✓ Make sure all items on your vehicle are secured, trunk closed, doors closed
- ✓ Check for broken lights
- ✓ Animals

Remember that things can change from the time you park your vehicle to the time you start to leave.

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**February 17, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Work Out Wednesday

It is mistakenly believed that “bouncing” as you stretch helps muscles to stretch further. Sudden overstretching stimulates the stretch reflex causing the muscles to contract even tighter in an attempt to prevent injury.

Bouncing is counterproductive as it can cause small tears to the muscle tissue, which are experienced as muscle soreness or tenderness. Concentrate on slow, sustained stretches holding for 10-20 seconds.

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**February 18, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Feeling a little sluggish?

Fatigue can make everyday tasks, even walking, difficult. When fatigued, we don't want to expend mental energy thinking about mundane tasks.

The only long-term solution for fatigue: restorative sleep. Check your sleep schedule and wind down routine. Try to avoid screens for at least an hour before going to bed. Lower your home's temperature at night. Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day to help keep your body's circadian rhythm on track. Restorative sleep is a necessity; not a luxury!

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**February 19, 2020**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Coronary Heart Disease

Coronary heart disease is often referred to simply as “heart disease,” although it’s not the only type of heart disease. Another term for it is coronary artery disease.

Coronary heart disease occurs when plaque (a combination of fat, cholesterol, calcium, and other substances found in the blood) builds up in your arteries. You may have heard this called clogged arteries or atherosclerosis. The plaque reduces the amount of oxygen-rich blood getting to your heart, which can cause chest pain. Plaque can also lead to blood clots, which block blood flow and are the most common cause of a heart attack.

What can you do to help prevent Coronary heart disease?

- Control your blood pressure, cholesterol, and A1C
- Reduce your sodium intake
- Be physically active
- Control your weight
- Don’t smoke
- Manage stress

What steps will you take to create your own plan to prevent heart disease?

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**February 20, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Home heater safety is important to EVERYONE.

Here are a few safety tips for homes that have space heaters:

- Turn portable heaters off when leaving the room, going to bed, or leaving the home
- Always use the right type of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters
- Keep anything and everything that can burn at least three feet away from ALL heating equipment
- Always place a space heater on a solid, flat surface
- Plug power cords directly into outlets and never into an extension cord or surge protector
- Inspect for cracked or damaged, broken plugs, or loose connections. If damaged make sure to replace before using

Don't forget to check on friends and family during the cold winter months to make sure their home heating is safe.

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**February 21, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal tunnel syndrome affects the nerves of the carpal tunnel which can lead to pain, tingling and/or numbing sensations. There are devices that you can purchase to help minimize exposure such as ergonomic keyboards, computer mouse, desks, and chairs.

One thing to consider, which may be surprising, is that your posture while remaining stationary can amplify the symptoms of carpal tunnel. Simply practicing a positive ergonomic posture can potentially help minimize/eliminate symptoms of carpal tunnel.

How is your posture while sitting? Standing? Remember your 30/30 practice to keep yourself from sitting in uncomfortable, potentially harmful positions during the workday. Set your timer to remind yourself to take breaks to stand, stretch, and reset!

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**February 22, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Take a moment to look down at your feet ...

Shoes we wear can play a big part in preventing falls. The slickness of the soles and the type of heels worn need to be evaluated to avoid slips, trips and falls. Shoelaces need to be tied correctly.

Whenever a fall-related injury is investigated, the footwear needs to be evaluated to see if it contributed to the incident. Employees are expected to wear footwear appropriate for the duties of their work task.

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**February 23, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Are you stressed?

Stress is how the brain and body respond to a demand, and stress can have long term affects on your health. Here are five things you should know about stress:

1. Stress affects everyone. Everyone experiences stress from time to time, and all types of stress can carry physical and mental health risks. Some stressors are one-time or short-term, while others happen repeatedly over time (called chronic stress). Everyone deals with different stressors in their own way.
2. Not all stress is bad. Some stress signals your body into fight-or-flight mode, and your physiological response is aimed at survival. Other stressors can serve as motivators, such as taking a test or interviewing for a job.
3. Long-term stress can harm your health. Chronic stress can disturb immune, digestive, cardiovascular, sleep, and reproductive systems, and can lead to larger problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, or anxiety.
4. You can manage your stress. How? Recognize your body's response to stress, talk to a healthcare provider, get regular exercise, set goals and priorities, and stay connected with others.
5. If your stress is overwhelming, ask for help from a health professional. Mental health is health, and there is no shame in taking care of your mind as you would your body.

How stressed are you? Take the workplace stress survey below if you need somewhere to start:

<https://www.stress.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Workplace-Stress-Survey.pdf>

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**February 24, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Work Out Wednesday

Many exercises require a form or motion to be executed for the exercise to be considered effective. It is important that you work on learning the form/motion and concentrating on that rather than trying to do as many repetitions as possible. According to the Army “proper form is more important than sloppy execution.”

What does your form look like?

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**February 25, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Do you walk around your house or yard during the day, walk for exercise, or walk to lunch?

The National Safety Council has the following suggestions that could help keep you safe while walking:

- Do not walk, talk and/or text.
- Do not cross or walk in the street while using an electronic device.
- Do not walk with headphones in your ears.
- Be aware of your surroundings, especially in congested areas.

Remember, walking is working. Even when you are not at work, being mindful of your actions and surroundings while walking can help keep you safe.

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**February 26, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Move More Making Physical Activity Routine

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. The good news is that you can lower your risk of getting it or having a stroke by simply moving more. Many types of activity can help your heart, going on a hike or taking the stairs, or biking to the store or around the block. Figure out what works best for you.

Why move more? Being active can:

- Protect your heart (even if you have heart disease)
- Improve blood flow
- Lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- Give you more stamina and ability to cope with stress

Make physical activity routine part of your 2021 lifestyle!

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**February 27, 2021**

**Office Daily Safety Message**

Overexertion

Have you ever felt so tired or sore that you thought you might collapse? You might be suffering from overexertion. Overexertion is a common state faced by many after a strenuous workout, a long workday, or any hours long sports activities. Everyday activities such as playing with your kids, a new exercise routine, or a job that requires repetitive movements or manual labor can all overwork your muscles, causing overexertion. Overexertion is more intense than exhaustion!

Overexertion can happen to anyone. You might not notice any symptoms until your body has been pushed well beyond its limits. Pay attention to your body and know when to slow down and take a break.

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**February 28, 2021**

### **Office Daily Safety Message**

#### Changing Tasks to Avoid Muscle Strain

Employees should change tasks periodically to avoid using the same muscle group over an extended period.

Stand up frequently, stretch your fingers and hands, roll your shoulders back and forth, and stretch your back muscles, these are just a few that can be done right at your desk.

Share with your team other ways to avoid muscle strains.