Go for the Gold inspires faculty and staff to lead healthy lifestyles

Over 18,000 faculty and staff participated in the Go for the Gold program in 2012. Health Plus staff are regularly hearing personal stories of how the program changed a life or helped someone to identify a health risk they were not previously aware of. Each year, before the October 31 deadline you will make the choice to complete the Go for the Gold steps. Take a minute to reflect on the value you place on your health and the personal commitment you have made to have the best health possible. Read why some faculty and staff choose to do Go for the Gold each year.

Pam Schneller, Blair School of Music
Participating in Go for the Gold gives me a personal “yearly checkup” on my health, keeps me motivated in my weekly exercise plans, and inspires me to think about health and fitness in a truly holistic manner. I’ve done it as long as it’s been available and that makes me happy and proud!

Jerry Fife, The Division of Administration
I use Go for the Gold each year as a barometer and reminder of how I’m doing regarding my personal health and what I could do to improve my health.

Kenny Moore, The Peabody Commons Center
Go for the Gold isn’t just a valuable program to faculty and staff. It inspires one to not settle for good, but rather pursue greatness. Just as the Olympians go for gold, we too want to achieve the highest level of performance in our lives. Go for the Gold pushes us and the benefits abound for us and those that care about us.

Cynthia Paschal, Biomedical Engineering
I participate in Go for the Gold for many reasons. One is that I always benefit from reminders about taking better care of myself through better exercise, nutrition, stress management, safety, rest, and more. Knowing what to do doesn’t always translate into doing what I need to do. A little encouragement such as that which I receive through GFTG really helps!

Freddie Easley, Facilities and Operations
I participate in Go for the Gold every year and encourage my staff to do so. It benefits me as a manager because it helps my team to learn more about their health, and the benefit of the financial part is great, too.

Steve Caldwell, Dean of Students Office
With Go for the Gold, the University has provided us the information, the framework to track our progress, and real incentive to live more healthy. It is up to us to flip the switch and make it happen.

Visit http://healthplus.vanderbilt.edu and click the link to Go for the Gold to read Quick Facts about Go for the Gold; or to check your Health Plan Account balance online, log into www.bcbs.com/members/vanderbilt or www.aetna.com.

Q: Dear Counselor,

In the past few weeks, I have been feeling sad and irritable. I am not sleeping well and I feel stressed, but I don’t know of anything that is specifically bothering me. I eat a balanced diet and I work at a desk most of the day. I don’t want to take medication. What could I try to feel better?

Feeling Low?

A: Dear Feeling Low,

You’re describing some symptoms that are related to depression. Depression can have a variety of symptoms such as: sadness, irritability, feelings of hopelessness or helplessness, fatigue, loss of interest, decreased concentration, and changes in sleeping and eating patterns. Chronic stress over a long period can make one vulnerable to depression.

Try exercise. Studies show that people who exercise regularly benefit with a positive boost in mood. Exercise can help your body release endorphins, natural chemicals that can help you feel increased energy and well-being. You can walk, dance, swim, bike, jog, or join a yoga class. You can also combine social activities with exercise like participating in the Heart Walk, Race for the Cure, the Walk to End Alzheimer’s, or countless other worthwhile activities.

Hopefully, this will have a positive impact on your mood. If you would like further recommendations based upon your specific situation, Work/Life Connections-EAP is a free resource for Vanderbilt employees and their spouses and same sex domestic partners. For a confidential appointment just call 936-1327.

Stephanie Dean, LPC, Assistant Manager
Work/Life Connections-EAP Counselor

Back by popular demand! It’s Flulapalooza!

Last year over 14,000 people were vaccinated for influenza at the first annual Flulapalooza event. It was such a huge success that Vanderbilt University and Medical Center faculty, staff, students, and volunteers will once again have the opportunity to be a part of the exciting Flulapalooza event and help us beat last year’s participation! “We initially planned Flulapalooza as a one-time event, but the response was overwhelming. This is the way people want to get their flu shots each year — easy, efficient, and enjoyable. So Flulapalooza is back by popular demand!” explains Melanie Swift, MD, Director of the Occupational Health Clinic.

Where: Tent between Light Hall and VA Acre Building
When: Wednesday, Oct. 17, 2012, 6 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 18, 2012, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Who can attend: Vanderbilt University and Medical Center faculty, staff, students, and volunteers (family members are not included in this event).

For maximum efficiency please wear short sleeves and present your Vanderbilt ID badge. Supervisors, please stagger your staff participation.

Occupational Health will offer a variety of additional locations and times for those faculty and staff that are unable to attend Flulapalooza.

Find details at http://occupationalhealth.vanderbilt.edu.

Remember, the FLU ends with U!

Fall Happenings

• The Vanderbilt Community Giving Campaign is October 1 – November 9. Your donations help nonprofit agencies in Middle Tennessee tackle domestic violence, hunger, job training, and more. See www.vanderbilt.edu/vanderbilt-gives.

• Come see us at the Vanderbilt Benefits and Health Fair on October 10 – 11. We will be on hand to answer your Open Enrollment and benefits questions. Medical, dental, vision, retirement, and disability representatives also will be available.

• Open Enrollment for 2013 benefits is October 17 – 31. All benefits-eligible employees need to enroll! See hr.vanderbilt.edu/oe for details and an event calendar.

• Work/Life Connections-EAP
  The Counseling Corner

Vanderbilt University
North Campus Building
Nashville, TN 37235

312-342-7007
supportdesk@vanderbilt.edu

 Lutheran Medical Center
  1400 21st Ave. South
  Nashville, TN 37212

312-342-7867
supportdesk@vanderbilt.edu

For Vanderbilt faculty, staff, students, retirees, and volunteers only.

Human Resources
Keeping it fun and safe

Ask a child his favorite holiday, and chances are Halloween will rank in the top three or four.

And why not? They get to dress up as their favorite character, stay out long after the street lights have come on, and get free candy from as many people as possible. It’s the stuff of legend and unfortunately, a possible precursor to an eventful appointment with the dentist.

“While dental injuries or illnesses do happen on Halloween, we normally catch problems weeks or even months later when children are brought in for their regular check-ups,” said Tony Bare, DMD, and assistant professor of Dentistry at Vanderbilt. “But we can protect their long-term dental health by limiting sugary snacks and encouraging good brushing habits,” he said.

Here are a few other tips to keep Halloween a happy, healthy experience for all:

- Discuss your expectations with your child before trick-or-treating. Lay the ground rules for how much candy can be eaten that night and in succeeding days.
- Keep all candy in the kitchen and out of your child’s bedroom.
- Try to avoid sticky and hard candy that can more easily lead to tooth decay.
- Make sure your child brushes at least twice a day, particularly after eating sugary snacks on Halloween.
- Encourage a life-time of good brushing and flossing habits by serving as a good example in your home.
- See your dentist twice a year for regular cleanings and check-ups.

For more information, call the Vanderbilt Dental Clinic at 615-322-2193.

2011 participants Dominique Herrington (on left) with her daughter Caroline.
Vanderbilt observes American Diabetes Month in November

The American Diabetes Association conducts activities and encourages involvement across the country each November to educate the general public about diabetes and its serious complications. Throughout the month, the Vanderbilt Diabetes Center (VDC) will sponsor activities and partner with Health Plus to increase awareness about the seriousness of diabetes.

Please mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

November 10 — 2012 ADA Step Out Walk to Stop Diabetes at Centennial Park, 8 a.m.

November 14 — 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Diabetes Research Day at Student Life Center.

November 14 — World Diabetes Day
This year’s theme: Diabetes Education & Prevention.

November 12 – 16 — Glucose (Blood Sugar) Screenings for faculty/staff at Hold the Stuffing events.

Diabetes At-A-Glance

Diabetes, or a high level of blood glucose is a serious chronic health problem that can affect children or adults. Type 1 diabetes requires insulin to control the blood sugar because the body cannot produce its own insulin. Type 2 diabetes requires diabetes medications or insulin therapy to control blood sugar. The number of people with Type 2 diabetes is on the rise — fueled largely by the increase in obesity. However, diabetes prevention and management are proven, possible, and powerful.

WARNING SIGNS

• Increased thirst
• Urinating frequently
• Blurry vision
• Feeling tired
• Losing weight without trying
• Sores that are slow to heal
• Losing feeling or tingling in the feet

For additional information contact the Vanderbilt Diabetes Center (http://www.vanderbiltdiabetes.org).

Keep the holiday weight gain on hold with Hold the Stuffing!

Health Plus invites you to control holiday weight gain by joining the yearly Hold the Stuffing challenge to maintain weight from Thanksgiving through the new year. A total of 1,015 people completed the program in 2011 and 982 people lost or maintained their weight, with an average weight loss of 2.94 pounds!

To participate, simply weigh in at one of the Hold the Stuffing weigh-in stations the week before Thanksgiving (November 12 – 17) and the week after New Year’s (January, 2013). If you maintain your weight (Okay, you can gain up to two pounds,) you will be entered into a drawing for great prizes to be given away.

Vanderbilt off-site locations: Call Health Plus at 343-8943 to receive a “Do Your Own Hold the Stuffing” tool kit and stay connected to the fun.

- **Monday, November 12**
  - 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *Light Hall, North Lobby*
  - 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Peabody Library, Room 202

- **Tuesday, November 13**
  - 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Baker Building, Lobby

- **Wednesday, November 14**
  - 7 a.m. – 1 p.m. Courtyard Café, Dining Room
  - 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Godchaux Hall Nursing Annex, Room 165

- **Thursday, November 15**
  - 7 a.m. – noon *Preston Research Building, Lobby*
  - 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Crystal Terrace, Room 201

- **Friday, November 16**
  - 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Monroe-Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt, Room 2104
  - 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. *One Hundred Oaks, Room 26119*

- **Monday – Friday, November 12 – 16**
  - 5 a.m. – 9 p.m. Health Plus, Kensington Garage

- **Saturday, November 17**
  - 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Health Plus, Kensington Garage

*These locations will offer a non-fasting glucose (blood sugar) screening in partnership with the Vanderbilt Diabetes Center.

“*To feel ‘fit as a fiddle,’ you must tone down your middle.”*  
— Unknown
Eating-Well Recipe

**Corn and Potato Chowder**

- 1 medium potato, peeled and diced small (about 2 cups diced)
- 2 ½ cups water
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- ½ cups minced onion
- ¼ tsp. salt (or to taste)
- 1 medium stalk celery, finely minced
- 1 small red bell pepper, finely minced
- 5 cups (approximately 4 to 5 cobs worth) fresh sweet corn or you can use frozen
- pepper to taste
- 1 cup skim milk, at room temperature

Place the potatoes and water in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, lower to a simmer, cover, and cook until the potatoes are tender. Set aside.

Melt butter in a kettle or Dutch oven. Add onion and salt, and cook over medium-low heat, stirring. After 5 minutes, add celery. Five minutes later add the cooked potatoes with all their liquid, the red bell pepper, corn, and a few shakes of pepper. Stir well, cover, and reduce heat. Cook for about 5 minutes longer.

Using a blender or food processor, purée about half the solids (about 2 to 3 cups) in some of the soup’s own liquid. Return this to the pot, and let it rest until serving time. Stir in the milk about 10 minutes before serving time. Don’t cook the soup any further just heat it until it’s hot enough to eat. Serve immediately.

**Tip:** Serve this soup with a piece of crusty whole-grain bread and a small salad and you have a heart-healthy meal in no time.
OUT FROM UNDER DEBT

Getting back on track

If you’re digging out of a difficult situation that left you with sizable debt, emptied your emergency fund, or shrank your savings account, you need to pay off the debt or replenish your rainy-day fund. But how?

1. Write down and tally all expenses so you know how much you spent during the emergency situation.
2. Label the extra expenses as “debt to self.”
3. Take the “debt to self” total and divide by 12 to figure out whether you can pay off the debt (if you used your credit card) or replenish your emergency fund in a year’s time.
4. If you can handle the monthly payment, add it to your budget and begin paying it. If you can pay more, do it.
5. If you can’t pay it back within a year, what monthly payment is realistic? Could you modify your budget to cut expenses in other areas so that you can use that money to pay off the debt or rebuild the fund?

Vanderbilt University Credit Union offers debt consolidation loans up to $10,000, with rates as low as 6.75%, plus the payment can be done through payroll deduction.

Debit Card vs. Credit Card

Debit cards are becoming more widely used as an alternative to credit cards. There are advantages and disadvantages for each card type.

• Debit cards are useful for routine and small purchases, but not so much for major purchases or buying items online.
• Credit cards can be handy for buying things when your bank account balance is low or to take advantage of a no-interest grace period.

Michael Bittle of the Vanderbilt Credit Union points out that “Many people do not realize that debit cards are not the same as a credit card, just attached to your checking account. Debit cards are very difficult to use to rent a car or book a hotel room, and caution must be used with debit cards for online purchases as fraud protection is a concern.”

Reviewed and commented on by:
Michael W Bittle, CEO, Vanderbilt University Credit Union

“When you find yourself stressed, ask yourself one question:

Will this matter five years from now? If yes, then do something about the situation. If no, then let it go.”

— Catherine Pulsifer
Occupational Health Clinic TALK:
AGENCIES ARE SOUNDING THE ALARM ON THE RISKS OF HEALTH CARE WORKER FATIGUE

With Pat Kinman, MSN, RN, CS, Occupational Health Clinic Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Manager

Health care institutions are getting some of the attention previously reserved for the transportation industry regarding the impact of worker fatigue on safety. We can all agree that being alert while providing health care is just as critical as when someone is piloting a plane or driving a commercial truck.

In 2011 the Joint Commission published a sentinel event alert directing institutions to review policies and procedures for addressing health care staff fatigue and its impact on patient safety.

An expert team was brought together at Vanderbilt to review this issue. Several current projects were identified:

- **VandyWorks** scheduling system sends alerts to area managers when certain “over scheduling” criteria are met.
- **SBAR** — The patient handoff communications process provides a structure to reduce the effect of fatigue on safety.
- **The Take a Break Campaign** ensures that staff rest during their shift.

The committee continues to develop plans to enhance measures we have and create others. One product coming soon is a new online training about worker fatigue designed by Work/Life Connections-EAP.

Here are a few evidenced-based ideas for things that individuals can do:

- **After a night shift, wear sunglasses** to avoid the sun so you can go to sleep more easily when you get home.
- **Keep the same sleep schedule** even when not at work and aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night.
- **If you don’t go to sleep after 20 minutes** of lying in bed, get up and try yoga, a bath, or reading.
- **Be aware of impending sleepiness.**
- **Develop strategies** to immediately counteract that sleepy feeling.
  - Use caffeine 30 minutes before a shift, or just during a drowsy period.
  - Spend a few minutes in a well-lit room.
  - Engage someone in a conversation or do some physical activity, such as stretching.

I hope that you are ready to answer the alarm and take steps to help us fight fatigue in the workplace. The benefits we will see are increased safety and health for ourselves and our patients.

Being there for someone with breast cancer

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Here are a few dos and don’ts to keep in mind if you’d like to help a co-worker, friend, or loved one who is battling the disease.

**DO**

- Admit you might not know just what to say. Let the person know you’re there for her or him nonetheless. Say you’re willing to do anything needed, even if it’s just listening.
- Ask about family and activities — anything that brings the person joy.
- **Invite the person to lunch**, a funny movie, or to go shopping.
- **Talk about the cancer with her or him** (if the person wants). Follow the person’s lead. You’ll be able to tell in no time what she or he needs by simply listening.

**DON’T**

- Tell the person you know someone who just died or recently had a scare.
- Drop out of sight or stay away.
- Say you know how she or he feels (unless you’ve also gone through a similar experience).

Social worker Cindy Tinker points out that “Everyone’s support system is different and we approach it on a case-by-case basis. Some may need an advocate at medical appointments, some may need transportation, and others may need a professional to talk with for emotional and mental support. Needs will be different for each person, and can also change from day to day. It takes a team approach to access what each person dealing with a cancer diagnosis needs in order to help them.”

Reviewed and commented on by:
Cindy Tinker, LMSW, Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center Clinical Social Worker
**upcoming events**

**Babies and You**

Health Plus offers this workplace prenatal health promotion program to full-time Vanderbilt employees, spouses, and dependents. The program encourages early and consistent prenatal care and provides monthly educational opportunities. An incentive is offered to those who register in their first trimester, attend at least three of the monthly classes, and go to all prenatal provider visits.

**UPCOMING CLASSES FOR BABIES AND YOU:**

**October 18, noon to 1 p.m.**
**Men Have Babies, Too**
A panel discussion with experienced Dads
Location: Light Hall, Room 415

**November 15, noon to 1 p.m.**
**Breastfeeding, A Positive Choice**
Carol Huber, RN, BS, IBCLC,
Lactation Consultant, NICU
Location: Light Hall, Room 415

For more information or to register online, visit [http://healthplus.vanderbilt.edu](http://healthplus.vanderbilt.edu).

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**Health Plus Group Fitness News to Know...**

- **Enjoy the fall weather with Walking Wednesdays** — Join Health Plus Group Fitness Coordinator Lori Cowan as she leads a 30-minute walk every Wednesday through November 7. Meet Lori at the Medical Center North shuttle drop off at noon – 12:30 p.m., rain or shine (if it rains we walk in the tunnels).

- **Check out the new fall quarter group fitness schedule** on the Health Plus Website at [http://healthplus.vanderbilt.edu](http://healthplus.vanderbilt.edu), or pick up a copy at Health Plus.

All classes are available at no charge to Vanderbilt part-time and full-time faculty and staff that complete their Health Risk Assessment annually. Unless otherwise indicated, all classes are held at Health Plus and there is no need to sign up for classes except for the Wednesday 5:15 p.m. Zumba class. For this class ONLY, participants must call 343-8943 to sign up for a spot.

For details, call Group Fitness Coordinator Lori Cowan at 343-8943, or contact her at lori.l.cowan@vanderbilt.edu.

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**The Life Phase Series**

The Health Plus Life Phase Series is a monthly lunch and learn that provides faculty and staff with a variety of interesting topics that help support life outside of work. The class is offered the third Thursday of each month from noon – 1 p.m. Feel free to bring your lunch.

**October 18**
**Raising Responsible Teens**
Medical Center East, Room 8380B
Presenter: Rebekah Walker, LCSW, therapist and licensed clinical social worker

**November 15**
**Better-for-You Holiday Desserts**
Light Hall, Room 431
Presenter: Stacey Kendrick, MS, health educator and Health Plus Coordinator of Health Promotion