

OD IN PRACTICE: HEALTH AND WELLNESS AT J&J⁴⁷

Johnson & Johnson is a pioneer in employee health promotion. Its programs go back to 1979. J&J's health and wellness services are collectively designed to help employees and their families lead healthy, productive, and balanced lives. The J&J programs fall into four broad areas:

- Employee Assistance (EAP) and LIFEWORKS Programs—help employees address personal issues and achieve balance between work and personal life.
- Proactive Health Assessments—help employees assess their risk for certain health problems and offer assistance to decrease their risk.
- Workplace Health Programs—encourage the health and well-being of employees through programs that help ensure their health and safety.
- Wellness and Fitness Services—offer employees additional opportunities, such as on-site fitness centers, that address their health and wellness needs.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE (EAP) AND LIFEWORKS PROGRAMS

Through these programs employees can receive help in finding and evaluating child and elder care, developing a home budget, writing a will, improving time-management skills, and selecting a realtor. Employees are offered alternative work arrangements, such as flextime, job sharing, and work at home. Time off with pay is available to provide emergency care for a family member. And some company locations provide on-site childcare centers.

PROACTIVE HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

The Health Assessments program includes several levels of services. The first level is a confidential health-screening program consisting of a 19-page questionnaire that becomes part of a health-risk profile. A nurse practitioner goes over the results with the employees, takes their blood pressure, and tests their pulse while they exercise. The second level of the program, if an employee decides to continue with the program, consists of exercise, stress management, blood pressure control, moderation of drinking, diet and weight control, and smoking cessation. The goal is to detect health problems early on, then provide information and potential solutions ranging from regular exercise to behavior modification and counseling.

WORKPLACE HEALTH

Workplace Health programs are designed to prevent work-related illness and injuries. J&J has altered the work environment by establishing a smoke-free corporate headquarters and regional offices, improving nutritional value in company cafeterias, and providing messages about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The goals of the program are basic: stop smoking, eat more fruit and fewer fatty foods, exercise regularly, and buckle your seat belt. Workplace Health programs designed to prevent work-related illness and injuries include improving the ergonomics of the work environment.

WELLNESS AND FITNESS SERVICES

J&J headquarters has a gym on-site. At other company locations, facilities are provided on-site or at a local organization such as the YMCA.

THE RESULTS

A long-term evaluation of the financial and health impact of J&J's health and wellness programs was conducted by an outside consulting organization. The evaluation included a financial analysis of medical insurance claims for Johnson & Johnson employees in the United States who participated in the Health & Wellness Program from 1995 to 1999. The study found that participating employees had significantly lowered medical expenses and achieved overall improvements in several health risk categories, such as high cholesterol, hypertension, and cigarette smoking. The reduction in medical care costs amounted to a savings per employee of \$225 annually. The savings came from fewer hospital admissions and mental health visits, and less use of outpatient services. More than 90 percent of all eligible U.S. employees chose to participate in the wellness, fitness, and health risk assessment portions of the health and wellness program. There were reductions in tobacco use, sedentary lifestyle, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, low dietary fiber intake, and poor motor vehicle safety practices.

The health and wellness services program has been so successful that J&J sells it to other corporations in more than 30 countries and 20 languages. Because of the program's integrated services and longevity, many corporations study it.

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