

Corporate Health & Wellness Program Statistics & Growing Trends

Worksite wellness programs are key elements for improving the health of the American employee and family members. With over fifty percent of the U.S. population employed, the worksite can be an effective place to guide and educate people about healthy lifestyles. Some major companies and hospitals in the Puget Sound region have developed successful wellness programs, but many smaller businesses would also benefit from reduced health care costs and absenteeism if their employees participated in workplace wellness activities.

Small companies, such as Lincoln Electric System, have benefited from wellness implementation. An employee committee received advice from a wellness specialist, and in turn, promotes worksite ergonomic safety, health education, behavior change, and risk identification. Wellness committees at the worksite may be the wave of the future; Lincoln Electric System has reduced its health insurance premiums by 20%.

Johnson and Johnson's "Live for Life" program is operated at fifty company sites. The purpose of "Live for Life" is individualized health through personalized counseling, program design, and computerized feedback. Trained wellness specialists work with Johnson and Johnson employees. A two-year study of "live for Life" yielded the following results:

- 22% of smokers had quit
- 20% of women and 30% of men had started exercise programs
- \$313 per employee was saved in sick days
- \$223 per employee was saved in hospital costs
- Total savings per employee exceeded program cost; cost to benefit ratio was 1.7 to 1.0

Tenneco, Inc. offers an employee health and fitness program that includes exercise programs at work, "Lunch and Learn" seminars on health issues, stress management, smoking cessation, and nutritional counseling. How successful was Tenneco's program since its inception in 1981?

- 70% of employees are members of the health and fitness program
- Health care costs have been reduced for exercisers vs. non-exercisers:

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|----------------------|-------|
| male non-exerciser | \$486 |
| male exerciser | \$408 |
| female non-exerciser | \$863 |
| female exerciser | \$243 |

"Without a doubt, RMI (Repetitive-Motion Injury) cases are ballooning; they've increased 13-fold in the past decade. Repetitive stress injuries account for nearly \$20 billion in workers' comp costs annually and an estimated \$100 billion in lost productivity and turnover. Smart businesses aren't waiting for regulations or lawsuits regarding repetitive stress injuries to prompt action.

In a nationwide survey of 1,700 companies, the Washington Business Group on Health found that 32% of the companies with 50 or more employees have a physical fitness program; almost 64% of the companies with 750 or more employees have corporate wellness programs.

Crain's New York Business Magazine

“The evidence pointing to the success of fitness programs improving employee health practices, reducing medical and disability costs, and improving productivity is indisputable.”

*Kenneth R. Peletier, pH.D.
American Journal of Health*

Annual Employee Turnover:

British Columbia Hydroelectric employees revealed a turnover rate of 3.5% for fitness program participants, compared with a company average of 10.3%.

*Benefits of Employee Health Programs,
Cigna, 1991.*

The Canadian Life Assurance Company found turnover among fitness program participants was 32.4% lower over a seven-year period compared with non-participants.

*Canadian Journal of Public Health, Peter Leatt, et.al.,
January/February, 1988.*

Tenneco found that those who participate in its' corporate wellness program were 13% less likely to leave than other employees.

*Business & Health, Kathleen Doherty,
February 1989*



Reduce Employee Absenteeism

Mesa Petroleum's absenteeism was over 50% lower than the national industry average as a result of its' fitness program - 1.6 days per year, compared to the national industry average of 3.4 days per year.

*Reports on Mesa Corporate Health and Fitness Program,
Mesa, Inc., 1990.*

Northern Gas Co. employees who are in the corporate wellness program have 80% fewer sick days than non-exercising employees.

*Health Promotion and Education Programs,
Riverside Occupation Health Services, 1991.*

DuPont showed that blue collar employees in its' corporate wellness program used 14% fewer disability days than non-participants, resulting in a total of 11,726 fewer net disability days for the company.

*American Journal of Health Promotion,
Kenneth R. Pelletier, Editor, March/April 1991.*

The Dallas, Texas Police department reported a 29% decrease in sick leave for its' fitness program participants, while non-participants sick leave increased by 5%.

*Company sponsored Employee Fitness Programs,
The Associations for Fitness in Business, 1991.*

