



liveWELL: A Better Choice



It's as easy as
A-B-C!

WELCOME!

Beginning July 2, 2007, University Merit Staff can access their Health Risk Assessment!



Complete your confidential Health Risk Assessment from your Self-Service website at <http://hris.uiowa.edu>.



If this is your first time taking the HRA, you will receive a \$30 annual award. Your second year, you receive \$50. All participants are eligible for monthly drawings of \$500.



Based on your results, you may be eligible for the **Health Coach Service** and other resources.

University of Iowa Snapshot: Exercise

It is recommended that adults get 30-60 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise 5-7 days per week. A lifestyle lacking in regular physical activity has been associated with an increased risk for cardiovascular illness, cancer, osteoporosis, and other chronic conditions. Despite the risks, a large percentage of people remain inactive.

State of Iowa

... In 2005, 46% of Iowans reported getting an adequate amount of exercise.¹



The University of Iowa

... Health Risk Assessment data reveals that 66% of UI Faculty and Staff get an adequate amount of exercise.

- ... Of the 44% who are not regular exercisers:
 - 54% plan to start in the next 30 days
 - 34% plan to start in the next 6 months

¹ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Iowa Dept. Public Health

What participants have to say about their Health Coach experience...

After taking your Health Risk Assessment and giving consent to be contacted, you may be eligible for the one-on-one Health Coach Service. Nearly 350 Faculty and Staff have successfully completed the Health Coach Service.



"Most beneficial. I lost over 18 pounds and dropped two pants sizes and one blouse size. I have gotten into a routine of regular exercise (swimming)."

"My Health Coach did a great job of helping me find my own motivation. I have lost 15 pounds and lowered my cholesterol 37 points; it is now under 200 for the first time in many years."

"My Coach was very helpful and listened well. It was and is challenging for me to be in Des Moines and not on campus, but having this service available is very helpful. It may seem trivial for some, but having someone to check in with and ask you how things are going is a motivation in itself."

"Very positive experience. My Health Coach exposed me to resources within The University, some of which I didn't even know existed; for example, Elder Care and Child Care Resources, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction class, and Career Counseling Service."

For personal success stories, visit
<http://www.uiowa.edu/livewell/personal.html>





Low Back Pain: What can you do?

What Is Back Pain?

We've all experienced back problems from time to time, a pain in the lower back, or strain of the neck from sitting in front of the computer too long. In fact, back problems are the most common physical complaints among American adults. Back pain is one of the top three chronic conditions reported on the Health Risk Assessment - 13% of University of Iowa respondents identify that they suffer from back pain.

What Causes It?

Most of our back troubles happen because of bad habits, generally developed over a long period of time. These include poor posture, overexertion in work and play, sitting incorrectly at the desk or at the steering wheel, pushing, pulling, and lifting things carelessly.

How Can You Prevent Back Pain?

The most important preventive measure is practicing good posture. To analyze your posture, stand with your heels against a wall. Your calves, buttocks, shoulders, and the back of your head should touch the wall. You should be able to slip your hand behind the small of your back. Now step forward and stand normally. If your posture changes, correct it right away.

At Your Workstation:

- ... A good chair seat supports your hips comfortably but doesn't touch the backs of your knees.
- ... Your chair back should be set at an angle of about 10 degrees and should cradle the small of your back comfortably.
- ... Your feet should rest flat on the floor.
- ... Your forearms should rest on your desk or work surface with your elbows almost at a right angle.
- ... If you stand for long periods at work, wear flat shoes with good arch support, and get a box about six inches high to rest one foot on periodically.

Article adapted from WebMD at www.wellmark.com.

10 Ways to Maintain a Healthy Back

- Maintain a Healthy Weight
- Strengthen Core Muscles
- Lift Items Properly
- Strengthen Leg Muscles
- Stay Flexible
- Maintain Good Posture
- Buy a Comfortable Mattress
- Reduce Stress
- Warm Up Before Activity
- Support Lower Back when Sitting

American Council on Exercise
www.acefitness.org

Ask your doctor or health professional if you have prolonged or severe back pain; they can assist you in finding back strengthening exercises. Your Health Coach can assist you in maintaining a healthy weight, reducing stress, and developing a physical activity routine.

Monthly \$500 Winner for April 2007 and Health Coach Client

Each month, all who have taken their **liveWELL** Health Risk Assessment have an opportunity to win \$500—in addition to the \$30 or \$50 incentive that everyone receives each year. This monthly drawing is to encourage participation in the HRA. The winner for April, Brenda Scott of Information Technology Service, was already familiar with **liveWELL** resources as she was working with a Health Coach.



**Brenda Scott, ITS
April \$500 Winner**

"Taking the HRA reinforced my awareness of the need to make some lifestyle changes. I met with a wonderful health coach who was very knowledgeable and supportive. She really helped get me on my way to better health by helping me find ways to improve my eating habits and exercise plan. It's a great service and I'd recommend it to anyone interested in pursuing a more healthy lifestyle."



To view other University of Iowa colleagues who have won \$500, visit the **liveWELL** website. It could be you! Have you taken your HRA?



Remarkable Partners Focus on: Mindfulness Meditation

Overview of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is for people with stress, chronic pain or illness, anxiety or mild/situational depression. It involves learning how to have moment-to-moment awareness of the present, helping individuals avoid being on “automatic pilot,” focused on the past, or anxiously awaiting the future. This awareness of the present can enable people to respond skillfully rather than react to situations and to create a greater sense of well-being.

University of Iowa Experience

Between 2002-2006, 287 University of Iowa faculty and staff members participated in the MBSR program through a UI Wellness/UI Benefits Pilot Program. A Health Status Survey was administered to participants before and after an 8-week MBSR class. A significant improvement was shown for most of the subscales including ones related to pain, physical, social, mental, and emotional health. These improvements were maintained after one year of completion.

Stress management and behavioral interventions are indicated in many evidence-based practice guidelines, including those for chronic pain, cancer, obesity, and heart disease. There is a growing body of research that specifically indicates MBSR is effective in reducing:

- * Anxiety
- * High Blood Pressure
- * Insomnia
- * Mood Disturbance
- * Stress
- * Chronic Pain
- * Stress Symptoms

Plus, increased activity in the part of the brain associated with positive emotions and increased immune response to an influenza vaccine has been shown.

The next session of MBSR will begin in September. It is offered on Tuesdays from 5:30-7:30pm and Wednesdays from 10:00am-12:00pm. For more information about MBSR, visit www.uihealthcare.com/mindfulness.

To work with a UI Wellness Health Coach or to learn more about liveWELL and its partnership with the MBSR program, visit www.uiowa.edu/livewell or call 353-2973.

On Mindfulness: In their own words...

“MBSR is based on an ancient meditation practice but it is not about becoming a great meditator. It is about being awake and present in our lives, whatever they hold, and living them as fully and skillfully as possible.” - Bev Klug, the director of the University’s Mindfulness-Based programs, was trained by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of MBSR.

“I feel better able to deal with painful emotions, and feel more confident I won’t get forever ‘stuck’ in the emotion.” - Participant

“I cope better with pain. I don’t physically fight it as much.” - Participant

liveWELL

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We welcome you!

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this program, please contact UI Wellness at 319-353-2314.

