



# FIRST CHOICE HEALTH

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### Quarterly Newsletter

Bringing Balance to Work, Home & Life

<http://www.FirstChoiceEap.com>

## Client Care & Customer Service, Our Top Priorities



1-800-777-4114

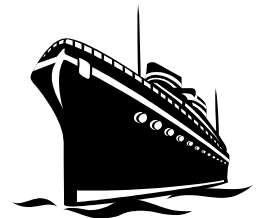
The First Choice Health Employee Assistance Program welcomes you to a menu of world-class resources. In the months ahead you'll be hearing more about the range of services offered through the EAP. This is the maiden voyage of our Quarterly Newsletter, offering ideas and information for balancing the demands of work, home & life.

In the words of Tom Maschhoff, Vice President of EAP Services: "With the largest provider network in the Pacific Northwest, and firsthand knowledge of the needs & preferences of local businesses, employees and families, First Choice Health is proud to offer an Employee Assistance Program dedicated to excellence in client care & customer service."

Welcome Aboard!

The First Choice Health Employee As-

sistance Program is a no-cost benefit provided by your organization to employees and immediate family members. Our team of Professional Counselors understands that there are few "One-Size-Fits-All" solutions to the conflicts and demands of contemporary life. We've designed the EAP to be an individualized, confidential & easy to use resource for preventing or resolving problems that interfere with work, relationships or family life. The Employee Assistance Program offers a strictly confidential setting for assessment, consultation, and solution-focused discussion about issues that distract you or a family member from being effective at work, at school, in rest or at play.



### Special points of interest:

- EAP Services are confidential
- Available 24-hours per day, 7-days per week
- We take your privacy & preferences as seriously as we take our own
- There is no cost to use the resources & services of the EAP

## Have You Watered Your Heart Today?

Research at Loma Linda University suggests that drinking five 8-ounce glasses of water per day lowers your risk of death from a heart attack, compared to people consuming 16 ounces or less. A study of 20,000 adults showed women were 41% and men

54% less likely to die after a heart attack if their lifestyles included 40 ounces of water per day. This benefit was not associated with tea, coffee, juices, milk or other liquids. Blood-thinning properties unique to water appear to increase the odds of survival from a cardiac event.

## The History of Employee Assistance

In the mid 1940's the very first EAP was established by The Du Pont Corporation, with the goal of assisting employees in confronting and dealing with alcohol abuse in the workplace. Although this early version of EAP proved successful, it did not grow in popularity, and was not replicated by many other employers.

By the early 1980's, illegal substance abuse by employees had increased in scope, and drug screening and testing was introduced to the workplace. EAP's quickly became a very popular and necessary resource for large and small companies, helping to in retain valued employees who were experiencing substance related problems.

By the 1990's businesses and industries were confronted with new problems affecting the workplace. By the mid-nineties, emotional and family problems were causing significant impact

on absenteeism production, accidents and employee turnover. EAP's again offered a solution through voluntary, and at times, mandatory, referrals of troubled workers.

Employees in today's workforce are experiencing ever-evolving problems. Balancing the demands of work and home has become more difficult. Providing care for an elder relative, arranging day care, dealing with children's school problems—even the daily commute—can negatively influence a person's productivity, satisfaction, and sense of well-being.

Solutions to personal and work-related concerns can be discovered through the First Choice Health Employee Assistance Program. Your EAP is an easy to use, confidential, free-of-charge resource, available 24-hours per day, 7-days per week.

## Take A Hike

- ❑ Although spring may be bad for allergies, it is also the perfect time to catch up on what's been going on with nature.
- ❑ Vary your terrain, seek out new walking trails, try a higher elevation or bring a camera.
- ❑ Look for interesting fauna, birds or natural wonders.
- ❑ Forget about the pace, don't set a goal beyond your endurance. Work up to more difficult hikes and don't start with a hike that is beyond your training or endurance.

The important thing about your hike is simply getting out and enjoying your self. There are many local groups that organize out door activi-

ties. Check local newspapers for schedules of outdoor events you might be interested in. Remember, drink water and be prepared for unforeseen injuries. Basic First Aid Kits are available at most sporting goods stores. Finally, never walk in an unfamiliar area without a good topographical map and compass.



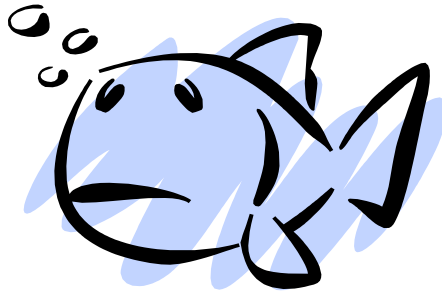
## Fish Anyone?

### Fish is Brain Food

As reported recently in a Press Release from the American Heart Association, researchers have discovered that a “fish-rich diet” could be an important long-term strategy for maintaining dietary lifestyle changes and managing weight – especially for individuals prone to carrying excess pounds.

Research suggests that moderate consumption of fish in the diet lowers the level of the hormone leptin, which, at higher levels, appears to interfere with the brain’s ability to recognize that appetite – or the need for caloric intake – has been satisfied.

In human studies, higher levels of leptin were



associated with increased risk for being overweight or obese. The findings suggest that leptin’s potential to override the brain’s caloric monitoring system leads to overeating, excess weight, and increased health risks.

The researchers suggest that regular consumption of fish, defined as being at least twice per week, even in comparison to a vegetarian diet, may prove beneficial in lowering leptin levels, improving the brain’s regulation of the “off-on” hunger switch, and successfully maintaining a healthy weight. Additional information about health and your heart is available at <http://www.americanheart.org>.

## Elder CARE

What should you do when your father becomes more and more forgetful? He can’t remember if he took his medication and frequently forgets to eat.

Your widowed mother had a stroke and she now requires round-the-clock care. You know she may need to be moved to a nursing home, but how do you find a good one? Is a nursing home your only option?

The average American woman spends 18 years caring for aging parents. One out of three people in the workplace are providing 8 or more hours a week in care to a loved one or parent. With the population of those aged 85 and older increasing three times faster than other age groups, sooner or later most of us will face the challenge of caring for aging loved ones.

First Choice Health EAP recognizes the importance of providing consultation about Elder Care, to assist employee families in finding the right resources for loved ones. You can contact us anytime to ask questions, to seek assistance in arranging care, or to identify resources that may be helpful in your efforts.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Elder Care services available through the EAP.

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#### QUALITY, CONVENIENCE, & RELIABILITY

With an established network of more than 1600 Behavioral Healthcare Specialists (psychiatrists, psychologists and licensed mental health counselors), the First Choice Health Employee Assistance Program will respond quickly, consistently and reliably to your concerns – and those of your family members.

Problem areas often addressed through the EAP include: Relationship Distress, Step-Family Conflict, Single-Parent Pressures, Workload & Workplace Stress, Addiction & Substance Abuse, Grief & Loss, Extended Sadness or Agitation, Feelings of Emptiness, Depression & Anxiety, Legal & Financial Matters, or Childcare

& Eldercare.

The EAP is an individualized, easy to use, and confidential resource for you and your family members.

The information in the First Choice Health EAP Quarterly Newsletter is not meant to replace the advice or expertise of your physician or healthcare provider. If you are experiencing health problems, or are contemplating lifestyle changes such as diet or exercise, to ensure your well-being, consult your healthcare provider ahead of time.

**First Choice Health EAP**  
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