

# Health Watch

*For Teachers by Teachers*

A PUBLICATION FOR TEACHERS HEALTH TRUST PARTICIPANTS

SPRING 2010  VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

## **Repeat Offenders:**

Are You at Risk for a Second Heart Attack?

p. 14

### **Fitness in 3D**

2010 WellFit for Life & Best Weigh to Go Kick-off in Review

p. 12

### **\$\$ FREE MONEY \$\$**

With close to \$700 available to you annually, are you cashing in?

p. 16

### **2010 WellFit for Life 5K Walk/Picnic**

Join Us for the Picnic, Exercise & Festivities

p. 22

**Osteoporosis: What Women Should Know, p. 6**

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**HEALTH TRAXX**

*The Teachers Health Trust  
Quarterly News Publication*

*Health Traxx* is published quarterly by the Teachers Health Trust to help participants make life-saving decisions about health care. Although editorial content is based on sound medical information, we ask that you consult a health care professional regarding all medical concerns. We encourage you to keep copies of this news publication for the purpose of building a handy home medical reference guide or to recycle issues to friends and family.

Any opinions expressed by an author/source whose article appears in this publication are solely the opinions of the author/source and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Trust. If you have questions or comments regarding this issue, e-mail the Trust at [wellness@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:wellness@teachershealthtrust.org) or write to:

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**A MESSAGE  
FROM THE CEO**

Spring is in the air and the message is clear: we can get outside, enjoy the weather and pay more attention to our health. There are numerous studies and anecdotal evidence dealing with the benefits of all types of physical activity as a proven method to keep us healthier. With all of the negative news about the economy and the failure of Congress to enact any changes to the existing health care system, it behooves all of us to take care of our own health and to do whatever is necessary to keep us out of the places where medical costs are out of control; i.e., hospitals and the offices of providers of medical care. I think it is a misplaced notion that the government is responsible for our health. The responsibility for our health is as personal as the constitutionally-guaranteed right of free speech and there is so much we can do to maintain a healthy lifestyle without having to depend on others. While we cannot avoid all illnesses by taking better care of ourselves, a sensible program of exercise and proper diet is an inexpensive way to improve your lifestyle and retain more of your hard-earned dollars for things other than medical costs.

Taking control of your health also means being an educated and proactive consumer. Get involved in the Health Trust's fitness programs and schedule periodic physicals and gynecological exams even if you think you do not need them. Early detection of many diseases, such as cancer, heart conditions, high blood pressure and a myriad of other conditions is a key factor in reducing or eliminating serious medical problems later on in life. The Health Trust has a \$600 annual benefit for those who have not been diagnosed with a specific condition but are motivated to stay healthy. This benefit covers a multitude of physical examinations, immunizations, tests and laboratory work. The benefit is there for you to use and I encourage you to do so. There is more information about this benefit inside this edition of *Health Traxx*.

We are all anxiously awaiting the outcome of the legislative special session and the probable changes that may be made to teachers' salaries and/benefits. I have seen these changes coming for some time and our reserves have been increased to buffer the impact of any reasonable funding cuts that may trickle down to the Health Trust. I have worked hard over the last 10 years to fashion a health plan which provides benefits to the greatest number of people within the framework of the funding that is received from CCSD. Your individual premiums have not been increased for 7 years and your co-pay for generic drugs has been zero for several years. I will do whatever I can to maintain this level of benefits, but predicting the future and what the legislature will do with our funding is something beyond my control. In the words of Yogi Berra (one of my childhood heroes), "[I]f the world was perfect, it wouldn't be".

Sincerely,

*Peter Albert*  
Chief Executive Officer  
February 2010

# WHAT'S INSIDE

- Message from the CEO, p. 3
- Trust Tidbits, p. 4
- Osteoporosis: What Women Should Know, p. 6
- For Your Benefit, p. 7
- Important Dates to Mark on Your Calendar, p. 8
- Herpes, Shingles and Chickenpox, Oh My!, p. 10
- 2010 WellFit for Life Kick-off in Review, p. 12
- Repeat Offenders: Are You at Risk for a Second Heart Attack?, p. 14
- Understanding the Health Improvement Benefit, p. 16
- Annual Preventive Care, p. 17
- Kids Korner, p. 18
- Focus on the Facts, p. 19
- Your Fitness Regimen: Helpful Tips from Gold's Gym, p. 20
- Your Nutrition Regimen: Helpful Tips from Nutrition by Joey, p. 20
- H.E.R.O.S.: Jessica Fasulo, p. 21
- 2010 WellFit for Life 5K Walk/Picnic, p. 22
- 5K Vendors and Services, p. 23
- Thank You, WellFit for Life Sponsors, p. 24

# TRUST TIDBITS

## Preventive/Routine Care Benefits

One of the keys to maintaining good health is periodic preventive examinations. The Diamond and Platinum Plans assist you in the payment of expenses incurred for preventive/routine care services by covering a maximum of \$600 per person per calendar year after you have paid all applicable copayment(s). To help you better utilize this benefit in 2010, turn to page 17 of this issue and learn more about the preventive and routine care covered.

## Find Your Subscriber ID#, Win \$25.00

The Teachers Health Trust knows that Health Traxx is an essential tool to assist our participants in making life-saving choices in regard to health care decisions for themselves and their families. Of course, we like to make sure each issue packs a lot of fun inside as well. In order to thank our readers and increase the fun factor, we are now offering one lucky winner the chance to win \$25.00 each issue. For your chance to win, pay close attention to find the Health Traxx \$25 bill. If your subscriber number is on the bill, you win! We have included an example of the bill here, but keep looking because the winning number is somewhere inside. Good luck and thanks for reading. In order to collect your prize, please e-mail the Wellness Department at [www.wellness@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:www.wellness@teachershealthtrust.org)

**On the Cover**

**Repeat Offenders:** Are You at Risk for a Second Heart Attack? p. 14

**Osteoporosis: What Women Should Know, p. 6**

**If you have had a heart attack, you are likely concerned as to whether your current lifestyle will help to ensure there is no recurrence. Turn to page 14 to learn more about how you can help improve your chances of avoiding a repeat offense.**



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# OSTEOPOROSIS: WHAT WOMEN SHOULD KNOW

## Important Information from Medco

Our bones are constantly in a state of building up and breaking down. As we get older, bone loss exceeds bone growth.<sup>1</sup> Osteoporosis is a condition, often with no symptoms, in which the bones weaken and become more likely to break.<sup>2</sup> In addition to advancing age, other factors that can contribute to bone loss include menopause, smoking, poor calcium and vitamin D intake, lack of exercise and certain medications.<sup>1</sup>

In their remaining lifetime, approximately 50 percent of women and 25 percent of men over age 50 may develop a fracture related to osteoporosis, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation. A woman's risk of experiencing a hip fracture is the same as her combined risk of breast, ovarian and uterine cancer.<sup>2</sup>



could double or triple.<sup>1</sup> By 2025, it is estimated that osteoporosis-related fractures will be responsible for approximately \$25.3 billion in costs.<sup>2</sup>

Medications commonly used to treat osteoporosis are known as oral bisphosphonates and include Fosamax (alendronate), Actonel and Boniva. These drugs work by slowing the breakdown of bone and have complicated instructions that must be followed exactly in order

to be effective and reduce the incidence of side effects.

Medco's Women's Health Specialist Pharmacists receive specialized education on the medications used to treat osteoporosis as well as training in managing medication side effects, recommending appropriate over-the-counter calcium

and vitamin D supplements, and offering less expensive prescription alternatives. Medco's Women's Health Specialist Pharmacists contact patients who appear to be non-adherent to their osteoporosis medications to determine possible barriers to compliance and are available as a source of education and guidance to all women.



## Risk Factors

A major part of fighting the onset of osteoporosis is awareness. Below is a list of some of the more common risk factors.

- Insufficient calcium and vitamin D
  - Smoking
- Excessive intake of alcohol
- Insufficient amounts of exercise and activity
- Eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia
- Suffering from other medical conditions that may cause bone loss (diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis)
  - Use of steroid medications such as cortisone, dexamethisonea and prednisone
- Age (risk increases with age)
- Race (risk increases for those of Caucasian and Asian descent)
  - Family history

# FOR YOUR BENEFIT

## 2010 Diabetes Fair

The Teachers Health Trust is proud to announce our partnership with Valley Health Systems to host a diabetes fair this spring. The 2010 Diabetes Fair will be held at Spring Valley Hospital on April 17, 2010.

Join us for this important fair to hear from speakers dedicated to helping you better understand how you can live a long and healthy life with diabetes. In addition, numerous vendors will be on hand to demonstrate services and products targeted at improving the lives of individuals with diabetes and their families.

If you would like to join us for this important event, be sure to visit [www.teachershealthtrust.org](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org) to complete an online RSVP beginning Monday, April 5, 2010. Complimentary lunch shall be served to all registered attendees who complete the online RSVP only. RSVP is mandatory for family and friends as well to ensure an adequate number of lunches are ordered.

## Lifestyle Decisions

The Teachers Health Trust encourages all participants diagnosed with diabetes to join the Trust's free program, *Lifestyle Decisions*®, a disease management program focused on helping you learn to self-manage your condition through a variety of educational resources.

*Lifestyle Decisions*® allows you to partake in a variety of different health activities and offers valuable information and resources for learning more about chronic conditions. Through the program, you can learn how to live a healthy lifestyle and manage your condition effectively.

To join, visit the Wellness page at [www.teachershealthtrust.org](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org) and select *Lifestyle Decisions*®. You will then be able to access diabetes-specific articles, links, tips and free monthly educational seminars provided by a variety of specialists who are all part of the Trust Network.

Being diagnosed with a chronic condition is a difficult and life-changing event. The Trust would like to help ease the difficulty by arming you with as much knowledge as possible regarding your condition. *Lifestyle Decisions*® is focused on helping you make the right decisions according to your specific needs. For more information or to schedule an appointment to obtain your free glucose meter, contact Mary M. White, Health Programs Coordinator, at 702-866-6162 or via e-mail at [maryw@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:maryw@teachershealthtrust.org).

The Teachers Health Trust  
in conjunction with  
Valley Health Systems  
invites our participants and their families to:

# Diabetes Fair 2010

April 17, 2010, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
**Spring Valley Hospital**  
5400 South Rainbow Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89118

Come join us for:

- Free lunch
- Healthy bingo
- Raffle prizes
- Foot screenings
- Vision screenings
- Blood pressure checks
- Bone density screenings
- Free glucose monitors
- Cooking demonstrations (by a certified nutritionist)
- Massages
- Reflexology

The Valley Health System  
Lifestyle Decisions

Do you have unsightly varicose veins?  
Are your legs painful, heavy or swollen?

## Why Suffer?

Before

After

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1. Clinician's Guide to Prevention and Treatment of Osteoporosis – National Osteoporosis Foundation. 2008.  
2. Fast Facts on Osteoporosis. NOF.org. 19 Feb. 2010. <http://www.nof.org/osteoporosisfacts.html>.

# IMPORTANT DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

## March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 - Gold's Gym WellFit Classes. Visit <a href="http://www.wellfit.teachershealth-trust.org">www.wellfit.teachershealth-trust.org</a> for locations and times.
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 - Gold's Gym WellFit Classes./ WellFit for Life 5K Walk/Picnic.
14 - Daylight Savings	15	16	17	18	19	20 - Gold's Gym WellFit Classes.
21	22	23	24	25	26 - WellFit for Life/Best Weigh to Go Weigh-Out. (Event 1)	27 - WellFit for Life/Best Weigh to Go Weigh-Out. (Event 2)
28	29	30	31 - Final day to complete WellFit for Life Data Report Form.	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		

## May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 - Mother's Day	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 - Memorial Day: Trust office closed.					

## April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 - Spring Break, cont.	2 - Spring Break: Trust of- fice closed.	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 - 2010 Diabetes Fair at Spring Val- ley Hospital (see page 7 for details).
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

## June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 - Father's Day	21 - Summer begins.	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

THE TEACHERS HEALTH TRUST WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU AND

# HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY

TO ALL THOSE WHO SERVE, WHO HAVE SERVED, AND THE FAMILIES WHO SUPPORT THEM!

# HERPES, SHINGLES & CHICKENPOX, OH MY!

## Adults Need Shots, Too - Zoster and Varicella.

Once upon a time, only kids needed to get *their shots*, and at that time, the only vaccinations needed for adults were an annual influenza shot and an occasional tetanus shot. Not anymore! There are more and more vaccines targeted for adolescents and adults developed each year... including zoster, varicella and many others.

It is sometimes hard for primary care providers to keep up with the newest changes and even harder for patients to know what they need. What can you do to make sure you are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases? Check out the Department for Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov/vaccines](http://cdc.gov/vaccines) and take the Adolescents & Adult Vaccine Quiz. Take the results and your immunization records with you to your next doctor's visit.

### Chickenpox & Shingles

Varicella-zoster virus infection, one of over 20 vaccine-preventable diseases, is responsible for both chickenpox (varicella) and shingles (herpes zoster). The common childhood disease of chickenpox is considered the primary infection and is best known by its itchy rash, usually over the entire body. Though usually mild and self-limiting, chickenpox caused 11,000 hospitalizations per year and approximately 100 deaths per year in the United States before the vaccine was created. Infected infants and adults are at the highest risk of having serious problems, such as pneumonia, brain damage and death.

Once the rash clears, the virus becomes dormant or latent within the sensory dorsal root ganglia (in

the nerves). Later in life, the virus can be reactivated and can cause a secondary infection, commonly known as shingles. Shingles becomes more common the older you are and can be quite painful. The shingles rash is usually only on one side of the face and/or body and has a distinct distribution or pattern.

For one of every five people with shingles, post-herpetic neuralgias, an extremely painful type of nerve pain, remains after the rash clears and can require medication to treat the pain for life. Multiple episodes of shingles are possible. You cannot catch shingles from someone who has shingles, but anyone who is not immune to varicella-zoster virus can catch chickenpox if they come into contact with the shingles rash. Vaccines are the best way to prevent chickenpox and shingles.

### Chickenpox Vaccine

The varicella or chickenpox vaccine has been added to the routine childhood immunization schedules. Children who have never had chickenpox will get a dose at 12-15

months of age and a second dose at 4-6 years of age, sometimes sooner. There is also a make-up schedule for anyone who did not get vaccinated at these ages. Anyone (children, adolescents or adults) who is not immune should receive one or two doses, depending on the person's age, of the varicella vaccine.

**"Though usually mild and self-limiting, chickenpox caused 11,000 hospitalizations and 100 deaths per year in the United States before the vaccine was created."**

To be considered immune, you need to have documentation of two doses of the varicella vaccine, have documentation of having chickenpox (or shingles) from a health care provider, have laboratory evidence of immunity (positive titers) and/or have been born in the United States before 1980. Anyone born in the U.S. before 1980 is assumed to have been exposed to the natural disease and would have made antibodies from the exposure. Health care workers and pregnant women born before 1980 need to have laboratory evidence of immunity and/or receive booster doses to ensure complete immunity to the varicella-zoster



Left: Varicella (chickenpox) rash; Right: Herpes zoster (shingles) rash.

virus. This ensures that they will not spread the infection to newborns and patients that may be at high risk of complications. Are you immune? Ask at your next doctor's visit.

### Shingles Vaccine

The zoster or shingles vaccine was licensed in 2006 and can reduce the risk of shingles by 50%. It is still possible to get shingles even if you get vaccinated, but the pain during the rash and the likelihood of getting post-herpetic neuralgias from it are reduced if you get vaccinated.

A single dose of the zoster vaccine is recommended for adults 60 years of age and older.

Ask your doctor if you are interested in getting vaccinated. Your doctor will check for contraindications and precautions to make sure the vaccine is right for you and should give you a vaccine information sheet (VIS) that covers all the details about the vaccine.



### Vaccine Precautions

Certain people should not get the varicella (chickenpox) or zoster (shingles) vaccine, such as pregnant women, anyone with a highly suppressed immune system and people with certain food or drug

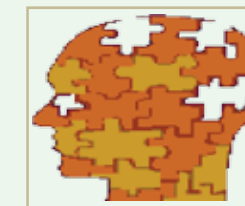
allergies. Neither vaccine can give you the disease it prevents, but some people may get a minor rash that resembles chickenpox or shingles. If this occurs, the rash should be covered loosely. Other side effects and risks are listed on the vaccine information sheet. Make sure to ask questions if you are unsure or need more information.

Further information on these vaccines, other vaccines, vaccine information sheets or vaccine-preventable diseases can be found at the Department for Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov/vaccines](http://cdc.gov/vaccines) or the Immunization Action Coalition at [immunize.org](http://immunize.org).

This article is not intended to replace your doctor's advice. Please consult with him or her for medical care and advice on any health care issues. This article does not represent the official opinions of the U.S. Public Health Service/Indian Health Service or the American Pharmacists Association (APhA).

*CDR Ann Gorman, Pharm D, BCPS  
U.S. Public Health Service,  
Indian Health Service &  
APhA Pharmacy-Based Immunization  
Certificate Trainer*

## MENTAL MUSCLE EXPRESS



Boost your brain power by solving these puzzles. See if you can uncover the meaning in these words, letters, symbols and positions. Each puzzle represents a common word, phrase, expression, person or place.

The example below is "spring break."

**SPR ING**

(1)

**MAN  
MOON**

(2)

**Good YOU  
YOU YOU  
YOU**

(3)

**bo peep**

(4)



(5)

**tuimotherstion**

See answers on page 24.



# TEACHERS HEALTH TRUST WELLFIT FOR LIFE 2010

## Kick-off in Review

WellFit for Life is a 10-week cardiovascular program that encourages CCSD-licensed employees to participate in fitness activities of their choice as they strive to adopt and/or maintain a healthy lifestyle. The best part is that there are valuable gifts, awards and incentives to help motivate participants to give it their all.

The Best Weigh to Go is a component of the WellFit for Life program that encourages participants and their eligible dependents to add a little friendly competition to their daily workouts by forming teams and motivating one another to lose weight. Team weight totals are recorded at the end of the program. The teams that lose the highest percentage of weight are eligible to win both monetary prizes as well as gym memberships with program sponsor Gold's Gym.

### 2010 Kick-off Events

On January 15 and 16, 2010, the Teachers Health Trust got this year's programs going in a manner slightly different than usual. Due to popular demand, this year marked an earlier start date as well as the inclusion of a second kick-off event day. The 2010 WellFit for Life program kick-off events took place at the Trust office, where our participants came ready to rock by the hundreds!

Our first event day opened at 1:00 p.m. and looked like a slow start at first. About an hour into day one, though, it was clear that would not be the case at all as a steady stream of competitors and their families got the 2010 programs started with a bang!

Participants utilized this time to weigh in; take team pictures for the Best Weigh to Go competition; and gather important health, exercise and dietary information from Gold's Gym, Lifesigns and Sweet Tomatoes. This year's sponsored activities included fitness testing, body composition and fitness analysis. In addition, Sweet Tomatoes was on hand with a plethora of healthy snacks, food information and other goodies for all in attendance.

The Teachers Health Trust would like to thank all of our sponsors, participants and their families for helping to make this year's new start time and kick-off events a great success.

### More to Come

As veteran WellFitters know, the kick-off is just the start of the fun and festivities. With Saturday classes, the upcoming 5K walk/picnic, weigh-out events and a slew of prizes and gifts left to look forward to, 2010 is shaping up to be yet another great year for the programs.

The Trust wishes all our participants and their families the best of luck. Additionally, we congratulate and commend you for all of your hard work and enthusiasm going into the second half of the 10-week programs.

We'll see you at the finish line and, hopefully, a few places in between.

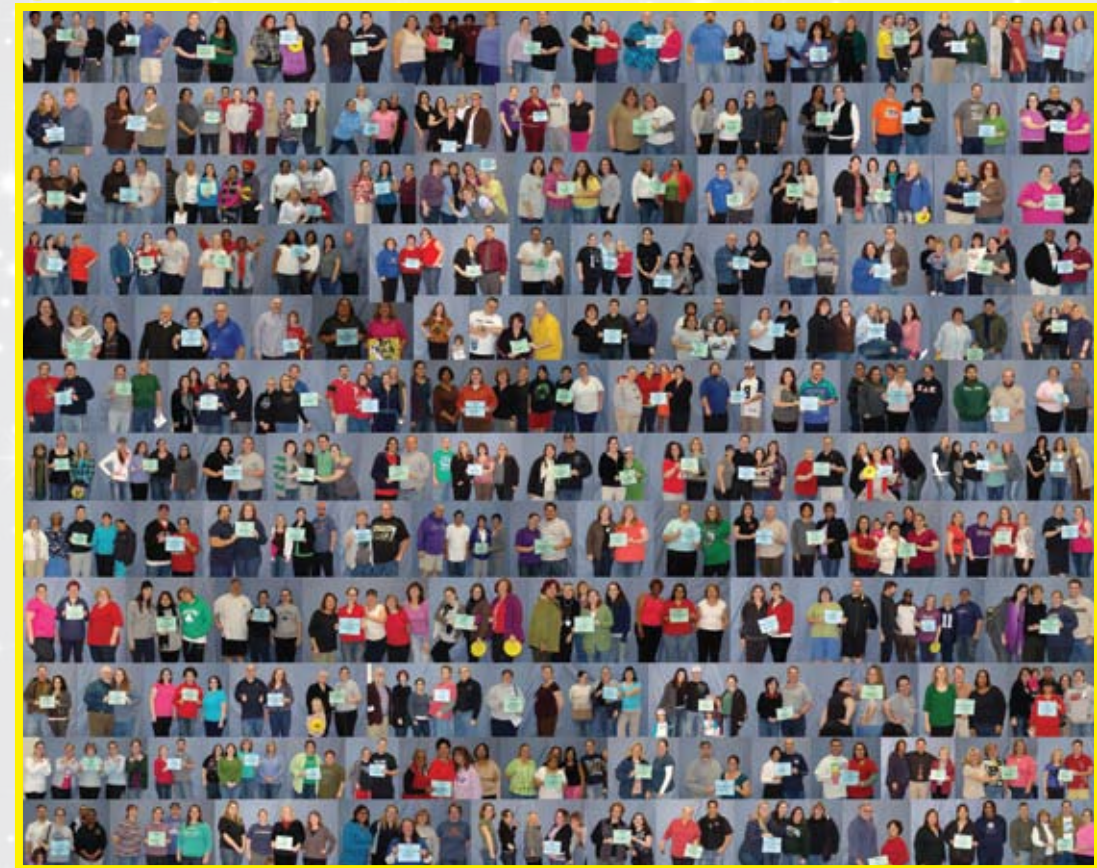


## Best Weigh to Go Update

The Best Weigh to Go component of WellFit for Life is well underway now, and with over 200 teams entered, the competition is sure to be fierce.

For all of those participants competing as members of a registered team this year, keep in mind that we are well over halfway through the 10-week program. Hopefully, you and all your teammates are still going strong with the finish in sight. If not, it's not too late to get going, so don't give up. Remember the goal of a healthier you is still within reach, and you just have to stoke the fire of motivation that you started with.

Never forget the end goal is your good health; the prizes and gifts are just icing on the cake of wellness. Good luck to all those teams out there as we approach the finish line!



### 2010 Best Weigh to Go Weigh-Out Event

#### Weigh-Out Dates

**Friday, March 26, 2010**

**1:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

*(Teams that weighed in at the Friday kick-off must weigh out on this day.)*

**Saturday, March 27, 2010**

**9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

#### Weigh-Out Location

**Teachers Health Trust  
2950 E. Rochelle Avenue  
Las Vegas, NV 89121  
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## Repeat Offenders in the Body: Are You at Risk for a Second Heart Attack?



You have just undergone one of the scariest physical experiences a person can have. What started out as pressure in your chest spread and became pain in your arms, neck and jaw; you then broke out in a cold sweat and began gasping for air. The next thing you remember, you woke up in the hospital. You had a heart attack... but, thankfully, you survived.

Now, however, you have a whole new set of concerns. You most likely did not even realize you were at risk for your first heart attack when your doctor informs you of another grim reality: one-third of all heart attacks occur in people who have suffered at least one before, and the survival rates for second heart attacks are significantly lower than those for first-timers. You now fall into this high-risk group.

Your initial feelings regarding your prognosis may be of hopelessness or powerlessness, but in truth, there are only a few factors contributing to the occurrence of heart attacks that you have no control over. Your age, gender and racial/ethnic heritage are all things you cannot change; the older anyone gets, the greater the possibility of suffering a heart attack, and if you happen to be male and/or African-American, your risk is unfortunately congenitally greater. However, the eight other factors that play major roles – high LDL (the “bad” type of blood cholesterol) levels, smoking, diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure), obesity (particularly in the abdomen), stress/depression, a vegetable/fruit-poor diet and physical inactivity – can all be managed to large degrees or even eliminated entirely.

Once the causes of heart attacks are identified and understood, it is not too difficult to recognize how great an impact you can make with respect to your health by effectively managing or eliminating the aforementioned controllable risk factors. The most typical cause of heart attacks is coronary heart disease, which is characterized by a buildup of fatty deposits (called atherosclerosis) that can narrow arteries, rupture and cause blood clots within arteries, and/or completely block arteries. When the flow of blood through the heart’s arteries is reduced enough or stopped completely, a heart attack occurs. (Heart attacks can also be caused by non-atherosclerosis-related blood clots, weakened arteries and drug-induced

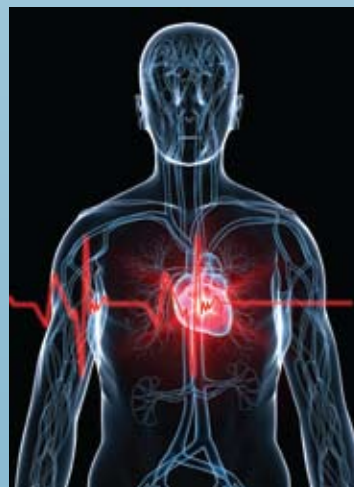
heart spasms.)

Because LDL composes most arterial deposits, making changes in diet and lifestyle will have a profound impact on heart health. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables and low in saturated and trans fats, perhaps supplemented with prescription statins (which are medications that lower LDL levels), will decrease amounts of dangerous cholesterol in your body. Excess weight is also associated with high LDL levels (not to mention hypertension and diabetes), so losing a few pounds through exercise can improve your health considerably as well – and, in this case, the benefits are not confined to your arteries. Regular exercise strengthens the heart while lowering artery-damaging hypertension rates and LDL levels, boosting HDL (the “good” blood cholesterol), warding off depression and relieving stress (which, incidentally, helps lower blood pressure as well). And if you feel less stressed, you may be less likely to participate in harmful nervous activities like overeating and smoking that complicate heart disease.

Speaking of smoking, did you know that cigarette smoke – both firsthand and secondhand – damages arteries, increases the likelihood of developing blood clots, lowers HDL levels and disrupts the heart’s natural rhythm? If that is not enough incentive to kick the habit, consider this perk: a former smoker’s risk of another heart attack returns to that of a nonsmoker’s within two years of quitting.

Your doctor will undoubtedly have recommendations beyond these that are specific to your circumstances, such as using aspirin to prevent blood clots; ACE inhibitors to reduce hypertension and prevent any current heart damage from spreading; and/or beta blockers to increase the heart’s ability to pump blood, lessen hypertension and decrease heart rate. With a medically approved dietary, exercise and drug regimen implemented, your chances of having a heart-healthy future are excellent.

*Raegen Pietrucha,  
Communications Specialist  
Teachers Health Trust*



## Help protect the world we live in... **Go Green with us!**

At CCEA, going green is not just a slogan or trendy phase — we practice it every day by shredding and recycling all paper, plastic, and aluminum products we use in the operation of the Association. And now, we are revving up the effort by taking advantage of the Internet world! But wait, we need your help.

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**THE TRUST WANTS YOU TO JOIN THE WELLNESS LEADERS**

The Teachers Health Trust relies greatly upon the input of its participants in order to achieve excellence in terms of wellness programs and benefits.

One of the primary sources the Trust utilizes for the development of wellness programs and benefits is the Wellness Team Leaders, not to be confused with educators who are coordinators of the Trust's WellFit for Life program in the spring.

The Wellness Team Leaders convenes regularly during the nine-month school year to ensure that the wellness programs and activities of the Trust meet the needs of all Trust participants. Your participation in this group is vital to the success of the Trust and its programs.

The Trust is currently recruiting new Wellness Team Leaders for the 2009-10 school year. To learn more about the Wellness Team Leaders, to find out if your work site has a delegate, or to volunteer for the Wellness Team Leaders, contact the Wellness Division at (702) 794-0272 or via e-mail at [wellness@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:wellness@teachershealthtrust.org).

**JOIN TODAY**



# KNOW YOUR BENEFITS!

## Understanding the Health Improvement Benefit

The Teachers Health Trust knows how important it is for our participants to continuously strive to maintain optimal health. One of the most common mantras heard at the Trust is "Prevention Today for Wellness Tomorrow™." The Teachers Health Trust offers the Health Improvement Benefit to our participants as a way to help you work towards adopting and/or maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

The Health Improvement Benefit is available only to licensed employees covered under the Diamond and Platinum Plans. Dependents are not eligible for this benefit. The plans will pay up to \$50 per calendar year for the following health improvement programs and activities:

- Health Club Memberships
- Personal Training
- Tobacco Prevention Counseling & Education
- Weight Management Support Groups (TOPS, Weight Watchers, etc.)

## Filing a Claim for the Health Improvement Benefit

You must submit a **Health Improvement Reimbursement Form** and itemized receipt to the Teachers Health Trust within one year of receipt date. The form will require inclusion of the following information:

- Your identification and/or Social Security number
- Your name and address
- Your telephone number
- Date of birth
- Service for which reimbursement is requested
- Amount paid for services

Handwritten or non-itemized receipts will not be accepted and will not be eligible for reimbursement under this benefit.

## Exclusions from the Health Improvement Benefit

Please be aware that the following items are not covered under this benefit:

- Medications and supplements
- Fitness and exercise equipment
- Books, magazines or journals
- Videos, compact discs, DVDs or any other electronic media or device
- Entry fees for fitness, exercise or charity events
- Eligible programs' and activities' charges over the \$50 calendar year benefit

This benefit is separate from (and therefore not reimbursed as part of) the \$600 Preventive/Routine Care Benefit. For more information regarding the Health Improvement Benefit, call us at (702) 794-0272 or visit us online at [www.teachershealthtrust.org](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org). To download the **Health Improvement Reimbursement Form**, visit the Trust online Forms page at [www.teachershealthtrust.org/Forms](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org/Forms).

# ANNUAL PREVENTIVE CARE

## Get the Most from Your Routine Care Benefit Throughout the Year



It's a new year, which means it's time for a new you! And what better time than now to take advantage of one of the Teachers Health Trust's Platinum and Diamond Plan benefits by scheduling your annual wellness appointments today? Remember, the Preventive/Routine Care Benefit has increased to \$600 per calendar year (office visit copays may apply). Take advantage of this benefit available to help prevent disease and illness. The following services are covered under the Preventive/Routine Care Benefit maximum when no diagnosis is present:

- Annual Physical**
- Gynecological Exams**
- Pap Smears**
- Mammograms**
- PSA Tests and DREs**
- Comprehensive Lab Work**
- Chest X-rays**
- Flu & Pneumonia Vaccinations**

And don't forget to sign up to participate in WellFit for Life, another program that is free to you as a Trust participant\*. This program helps you to track your exercise as you trim down and shape up. Be sure to visit [www.teachershealthtrust.org](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org) for more information.

\* Consult with your physician before beginning this or any other exercise regimen.

The Trust's *Lifestyle Decisions*® program would like to remind participants with chronic conditions to take advantage of the Preventive/Routine Care Benefit for all your annual checkup needs. Remember, each year, you should have the following tests and/or exams performed to ensure your best possible health:

### Diabetic Patients

- Annual Physical**
- Lab Work**
- Foot Exam**
- Blood Pressure Check**
- Retinal Exam**
- Dental Exam**

### Cardiac Patients

- Annual Physical**
- Lab Work**
- Foot Exam**
- Blood Pressure Check**
- EKG/ECG or Stress Test**
- Dental Exam**

For more information regarding the Preventive/Routine Care Benefit, contact the Trust's Service Team at 702-794-0272 or via e-mail at [serviceteam@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:serviceteam@teachershealthtrust.org). For more information regarding the *Lifestyle Decisions*® program, please visit the Trust's Web site at [www.teachershealthtrust.org](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org).

Additionally, visit the new *Lifestyle Decisions*® Diabetes Control for Life online resource for diabetic participants at <http://thtlifestyledecisions.diabetescontrolforlife.com>.



*Prevention Today for Wellness Tomorrow™*

# KIDS KORNER

## Family Fitness and Nutrition Nights

Clark County School District, specifically the nine Carol M. White PEP Grant schools, are hosting Family Fitness and Nutrition Nights this spring. These events are held twice a year at the grant schools.

The evening is about getting families to come back to school after hours to exercise together and learn more about positive nutrition and healthy food choices.

Families will be exercising on brand-new fitness equipment purchased by the grant. Some of the equipment includes:

- Trikkes
- Ripstiks
- Industrial-grade cardiovascular equipment
- Nintendo Wii (Dance Dance Revolution)
- GeoFit mats
- BOSU balls
- Stability balls
- Traditional jump ropes.



Various community partners have joined the schools on these evenings in an effort to increase families' awareness of how to make good nutrition choices.

The evenings last about one and half hours and are great fun and a good way for families to establish healthy habits.

The grant is always looking for health professionals to volunteer their time and expertise in making these evenings even better. Getting the word out about good nutrition choices and healthy lifestyles is one of the primary objectives of the grant. To learn more about how you can help, contact Debbie Pope, PEP Grant Project Facilitator for the Curriculum and Professional Development Center, at (702) 855-7081.

"Be Fit, Get Healthy!"

Kids Korner is designed with the health of your students in mind. Do you have an upcoming event focused on kids' health and fitness that you would like to get the word out about? Do you have a program that implements healthy habits at your school that you would like to share with others? Send the details along with your name, school and contact information to Brenda Kelley at [bkelly@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:bkelly@teachershealthtrust.org), and you may see your ideas in the next *Health Traxx* issue!

## Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is a growing epidemic in America, which is why the Trust encourages participants to make family fitness and nutrition part of their daily lives and lifestyles.

If you are concerned that your child's weight may be unhealthy, speak with his or her pediatrician. After assessing your child's age, sex, height, weight and body type, the pediatrician can determine an appropriate target weight range for your child. If the pediatrician determines that a weight problem exists, it is important that it is addressed as a family.

In addition to Family Fitness and Nutrition Nights, try some of the following activities:

- Introduce a daily regimen of 30 minutes of family exercise.
- Take family walks after dinner.
- Walk rather than drive to common locations such as the mall or library when possible.
- Plan weekend activities that involve exercise (hiking, cycling, etc.).
- Limit time spent watching TV, playing video games or sitting at the computer.

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<p>3955 S. Durango Drive, Suite B3                  (Flamingo &amp; Twain)                  Las Vegas, NV 89147                  702.242.6777</p>	<p>5868 S. Pecos Road, Suite 100, Bldg. F                  (Russel &amp; Patrick)                  Las Vegas, NV 89120                  702.796.0009</p>

## FOCUS on the FACTS

**Q:** I am trying to lose weight, and I am worried that working out with weights will make me gain too much muscle, thus causing the number on the scale to not decrease enough. Any advice?

**A:** First and foremost, be aware that weight training is a broad term, as there are many approaches that can have considerably different outcomes. For your inquiry, we will assume that you intend to implement circuit training to your exercise regimen.

It is true that muscle is heavier by volume than fat since it is much more dense and fibrous. If you were to compare samples of muscle and fat that had equal mass, you would find that the muscle weighed nearly twice as much. That being said, it is important to understand how a gain in lean muscle would affect your body.

Initially, provided that a disciplined nutritional and cardiovascular regimen is accompanying your weight training, there may be little movement in your weight. In fact, a very slight increase in weight may be observed. This is rare, though, because it requires the building of muscle mass while simultaneously diminishing fat stores at a rapid rate. Such an increase in weight would usually take place over a brief period of time because muscle requires greater amounts of nutrients and caloric energy to maintain. In short, the more muscle you have, the more calories your body must burn, resulting in an increase to metabolism. The combination of increased lean muscle, metabolic rate, nutritional discipline and cardiovascular activity will result in improved weight loss.

I hope this helps to clarify how weight training will affect your weight. Please remember, though, that every individual is different, and there are many factors that can contribute to how weight training will affect you. I would highly recommend that you meet with a certified fitness professional for an assessment and to determine the best type of weight training regimen for you.

# YOUR WORKOUT REGIMEN

## Helpful Tips from Gold's Gym

Throughout my career in the fitness industry, which spans over 15 years, the list of reasons why the majority of the American population does not take an active role in its health and fitness is extensive. I have heard everything from not having enough time during the busy day, having no fitness knowledge, feeling a sense of intimidation and, above all, simply not having the motivation to change!

Unfortunately, with concerns like heart disease (the silent killer) as an all-too-prevalent cause of death for people of all walks of life, I have always had difficulty understanding what it would take for health and fitness to take its rightful place at the top of the priority list for every person on the planet! Heart disease is as dangerous as it is because the warning signs are often overlooked. While it is not something you can feel, hear or see, it is something you can help reduce your chances of falling victim to and

maybe even prevent. During WellFit for Life and beyond, remember that not only adhering to a nutrition and fitness regimen but also maintaining knowledge of your body fat percentage is key to prevention.

In most cases, people end up paying for their health in a few different ways, whether with medication, surgery or something more severe, but the Well Fit for Life program offers prevention instead. The program is one of the few I have come across that is set up for all participants to have complete success and no failure! This is why we here at Gold's Gym have been excited to play a part in the program. It is not only fun and a joy to be a part of, but it is also the most efficient!

The rule of thumb is that it takes 21 days to make or break a habit, so Gold's Gym is offering a free 30-day membership to all WellFit participants. And since we know intimidation occurs



**Ronny Harris**  
(702-269-0828)

Personal Trainer  
Gold's Gym,  
Henderson

most often in those who are alone in their quest for change, we're hosting free Group Exercise classes each Saturday as well. By attending these classes, you will have a certified instructor to follow and be in the company of others with the same goals. Lastly, we invite you to take advantage of a free consultation with a personal trainer. Together, you will find out more about your body composition and also dispel any myths regarding your health and fitness journey!

The single most important part of taking a journey on a new path is the beginning, so I hope to see you all at the starting line. Good luck!

*Ronny Harris*  
Personal Trainer, Gold's Gym

# YOUR NUTRITION REGIMEN

## Helpful Tips from Nutrition by Joey

By now you may have tried a new nutrition plan, but it may not be working or you may be looking for some new ideas. If so, here are some ideas to help spice up your nutrition plan.

One idea for portion control and eating fewer calories is to divide your plate up into three sections. All of your plates should be nine inches; if not, you may want to treat yourself and your family to a new set of dishes. According to Dr. Wayne Anderson, cofounder of Take Shape for Life Health Management Program, in his best-selling book, *Dr. A's Habits of Health*, vegetables and

fruits should fill 50% of the plate; 25% should come from lean, low-fat protein; and low-glycemic, high-fiber starches should make up the remaining 25%. Maintaining proper proportions not only provides your body with much-needed vitamins, minerals and fiber, but it may also promote weight loss.

If you think fruits and vegetables do not have much taste, try organic produce. It is amazing how much flavor organic produce has. If the cost of organics is not favorable to your family budget, try buying organic fruit one week and organic vegetables the next. You may

discover that the extra cost is worth the extra taste and health benefits.

Another idea for your healthy eating plan is to try some spice blends to liven up your taste buds. I found this blend at [www.getfittn.com](http://www.getfittn.com).

*Spicy Low-Country Blend can be used on chicken, beef and pork. Combine all the following ingredients in a shaker bottle and enjoy!*

- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon ground red pepper
- ¾ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

I challenge you to try one idea in this article. Whether it be trying organic foods or just spicing up some of your foods, as long as you are making progress, you will succeed!

*Joey Sjostrom, Nutritionist*  
Owner, Nutrition by Joey



Nutrition by Joey, LLC specializes in weight loss and health management programs. She currently has two offices with evening and weekend appointments available. She can be reached at 702-878-Joey (5639) and [www.nutritionbyjoey.com](http://www.nutritionbyjoey.com).

# H.E.R.O.S.

*Healthy Employees Representing Our Schools*



**Jessica Fasulo**

**Cimmaron Memorial H.S.**

As the WellFit for Life program rolls on and a national consciousness of the childhood obesity issue grows, many in our community are taking greater stock of their health and fitness. Fortunately, the students and staff of Cimmaron Memorial H.S. looking to adopt and/or maintain a healthy lifestyle always know that they need not look beyond their own walls for an excellent role model of their cause. For the last three years, they have been able to turn to Jessica Fasulo in their Physical Education Department for inspiration, motivation and knowledge.

It is little surprise to those who know her that Jessica has been a long-standing foundation of health and fitness motivation to those around her. She joined the CCSD after completing an undergraduate degree in sociology and an MA in School Health Education. While completing her graduate work at Adelphi University, located in her hometown of Long Island, New York, she ardously trained for and completed iron woman competitions as well as the Boston Marathon.

It was during the frigid months of training for marathons and iron woman events that she realized she was ready to go West. Luckily for us, that decision

led her to Las Vegas, where she now serves as a physical and health education teacher and coach for Cimmaron's boys' cross country team. In addition to continuing her training (*as the images to the right can contend*) during her time in Las Vegas, she has devoted herself to educating, inspiring and motivating her students and colleagues to take a greater role in ensuring their long-term health.

Of course, Jessica will be the first to admit that this quest comes with challenges and obstacles that must be addressed. For herself, she had to learn to keep pushing forward despite battling skin cancer, something that would likely deflate the motivation of most. When it comes to the motivation of her students, it can be difficult to get them to think about their health years down the road when they are often in the peak of their healthiest years. She finds the best way to overcome such challenges is to "keep up enthusiasm about the material so that your energy can be used in education. The kids feel and feed off that energy, which can help keep them attentive and interested in the information you are providing."

Her colleagues, who nominated her for this issue's H.E.R.O.S., know that Jessica's energy and devotion has and continues to set the standard for healthy living at Cimmaron. Nonetheless, she continues to set goals for improvement of health education. In the coming years, she is looking for ways to improve parental involvement in health and fitness, make physical education a bigger part of the curriculum and create after-school programs that appeal to students either uninterested in or intimidated by athletic competition.

To close my discussion with Jessica, I asked her to provide some advice for her CCSD colleagues currently participating in the WellFit for Life program. She offers the following advice: "Keep the end goal in mind, or you will become complacent. Some days will be harder than the others, and it is on those days that you have to remember the desired end result, the reason why you are doing what you're doing, so you stay motivated."

*Philip A. DiGiacomo, Contributor*  
Teachers Health Trust



*"Some days will be harder than the others, and it is on those days that you have to remember the desired end result."*

**Jessica Fasulo**



H.E.R.O.S. highlights outstanding CCSD-licensed employees or employee groups who have achieved excellence by being healthy educators. Healthy educator(s) can be a person or group who has won a competition; led a non-profit local or national health organization; developed a healthy policy, curriculum, program or wellness initiative at a worksite or in the community; achieved a drug-free nutrition or weight loss goal with before-and-after results; or made health-related strides in spite of a health condition. To nominate a licensed employee or group for H.E.R.O.S., contact Brenda Kelley at [bkelly@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:bkelly@teachershealthtrust.org).



**A Teachers Health Trust official WellFit for Life event:  
2010 WellFit for Life 5K Picnic  
Halfway Through: Good for You!!**

The 2010 WellFit for Life and Best Weigh to Go programs are now entering into the final stretch, and the Trust recognizes all your hard work and effort in adopting and/or maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It has taken dedication, determination and discipline to make it this far. That is why the Trust invites you, your family and friends to join us at Sunset Park in Las Vegas on March 13, 2010, for a 5K walk and picnic celebrating the fact that you are halfway through, which is so good for you! This 5K walk/picnic is being hosted in your honor, so come and be a part of the fun and festivities.

As an added bonus, those participants currently registered for the 2010 WellFit for Life program will receive bonus miles for attending the picnic and taking part in the 5K walk/run.

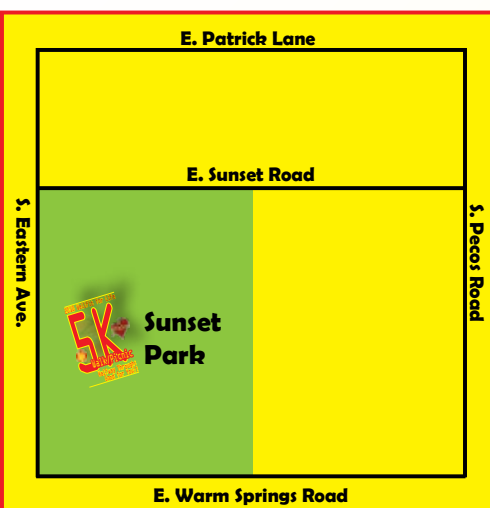
Of course, it just would not be a proper Trust event without the inclusion of gifts, prizes and food for the whole family. Be sure to enter your name in the raffle while enjoying some healthy snacks.

The best part of all is that you do not have to be registered for the WellFit for Life or Best Weigh to Go programs to join in on the fun. The picnic is open to all Teachers Health Trust participants, their families and friends.

For more information on the 2010 WellFit for Life 5K Walk/Picnic, visit [www.teachershealthtrust.org](http://www.teachershealthtrust.org) or e-mail us at [wellness@teachershealthtrust.org](mailto:wellness@teachershealthtrust.org).

**Sat., March 13, 2010  
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**Sunset Park  
2681 East Sunset Road  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
89120**



**WellFit for Life 5K Walk/Picnic  
Vendors & Services Provided**

Be sure to join us for the fun of the 2010 WellFit for Life 5K Walk/Picnic and, while you are there, enjoy the services of these great sponsors.

**Gold's Gym**  
In a continuing mission to aid the educational community in their walk to good health, Gold's Gym will be on hand at the 5K walk/picnic to help you keep your program on the right track. Pay them a visit at the picnic for fitness information as well as a free body composition evaluation.

**Lifesigns**  
Pay Lifesigns a visit to receive a free blood pressure check, body fat screening and to schedule your annual physical examination.

**Absolute Foot Care**  
We know that all that cardiovascular activity can take a toll on your feet. Fortunately, Absolute Foot Care will be attending this year's event to provide free foot care advice for our participants. In addition, the first 25 visitors to complete the walk will receive a free foot care kit.

**Human Behavior Institute**  
The road to a healthy lifestyle can often be fraught with emotional and psychological obstacles. No one knows this better than the folks at HBI. They will be on hand to help you overcome these obstacles so that you can meet your full wellness potential.

**Abbott Laboratories**  
For those participants diagnosed with diabetes, Abbott will be on hand to offer information about glucose monitors and to answer questions regarding healthy living with diabetes.

**MetLife**  
Learn more about your life insurance benefits as a participant with representatives from MetLife. In addition, they will be conducting life insurance needs assessments and providing quotes.

**Nevada Imaging Centers**  
Nevada Imaging Centers will be providing important information regarding mammograms and osteoporosis.

**Healthy Snacks**  
We all live busy lives and do not always have time to sit down for a proper meal. Fortunately, grabbing a snack on the go does not mean you have to resort to chips and candy. Be sure to enjoy healthy snacks provided by Atkins, Golden Spoon, Sunflower Market, Tropical Smoothie and Winder Farms to help you maintain your dietary needs, even when on the run.

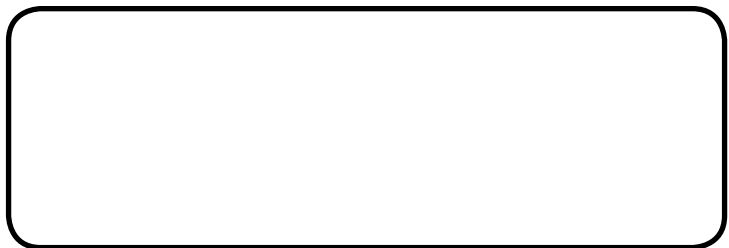


**WELLFIT FOR LIFE  
CLASSES COURTESY  
OF GOLD'S GYM**

Don't forget that WellFit for Life and Best Weigh to Go participants may attend free classes hosted by Gold's Gym each Saturday during the programs. You can earn additional miles and learn techniques to improve your overall health by participating in these classes. Gold's Gym is dedicated to assisting the participants of the Teachers Health Trust and Retiree Health Trust as well as their families in adopting and/or maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

These classes are designed to boost your fitness program and allow you to make up a day when you may not have met the four-day-per-week WellFit requirement.

Class Information	
<b>Spin (12:00 - 1:00 p.m.)</b>	This class offers energizing, cycling-inspired rides that combine sound training principles, expert coaching, inspirational music and a unique mind/body philosophy.
<b>Summerlin</b> 7501 W. Lake Mead Blvd. Las Vegas, NV	
<b>Body Pump (10:00 - 11:00 a.m.)</b>	Total body workout combining free-weight training to tighten and tone those problem areas.
<b>Las Vegas East</b> 3750 E. Flamingo Road Las Vegas, NV	
<b>Body Combat (10:00 - 11:00 a.m.)</b>	Jab, kick and kata your way to cardiovascular endurance using a multitude of martial arts including kick boxing, tae kwon do and karate.
<b>Centennial Hills</b> 6564 Losee Road North Las Vegas, NV	



**MENTAL MUSCLE ANSWERS**  
 1. Man on the moon; 2. Good for you;  
 3. Little Bo Peep; 4. A broken heart;  
 5. Mother's intuition

## Thank You, WellFit for Life Sponsors & Vendors

# HEALTH TRAXX: SPRING 2010

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Submitted courtesy of Medco Health Solutions

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by Ann Gorman, Pharm D, BCPS U.S. Public Health Service

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by Philip DiGiacomo, Teachers Health Trust

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by Raegen Pietrucha, Teachers Health Trust

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### KIDS KORNER: FAMILY FITNESS AND NUTRITION NIGHTS

by Debbie Pope, Professional Development Center

### YOUR WORKOUT REGIMEN, HELPFUL TIPS FROM GOLD'S GYM

by Ronny Harris, Certified Fitness Professional, Gold's Gym

### YOUR NUTRITION REGIMEN, HELPFUL TIPS FROM NUTRITION BY JOEY

by Joey Sjostrom, Nutritionist, Nutrition by Joey

### H.E.R.O.S.: JESSICA FASULO

by Philip DiGiacomo, Teachers Health Trust

1. Jessica Fasulo (Personal Interview conducted February, 2010).
2. Images courtesy of Jessica Fasulo.

### 2010 WELLFIT FOR LIFE PICNIC, HALFWAY THROUGH: GOOD FOR YOU!!

by Philip DiGiacomo, Teachers Health Trust