

The Connection

February 2009

To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to the employee and the employer

National Heart Month

Have a Hearty Workout

Your heart needs exercise to work efficiently. All it takes is a brisk, 30-minute walk most days of the week.

Warm up

Starting gradually helps avoid injuries and aches and pains afterward. Breathe deeply.

Step it up

Exercise moderately for at least 30 minutes. You should have enough breath to carry on a conversation while you exercise.

Cool down

Allow your body to cool down gradually. Stretching now will help keep you limber.

It's good for your heart and mind

Both your heart and mind benefit from exercise because it helps manage stress.

Stress may affect the heart directly, or it may affect such risk factors as blood pressure, cholesterol levels, smoking and diet.

Cutting down on stress through exercise can make life more enjoyable. It can boost your self-image and help you deal with anxiety and depression.

— Employee Assistance Program

Life Happensafter Open Enrollment

You did all the right things in October. You paid attention to PEBB messages, chose your 2009 benefits and took the appropriate action.

Then, with the start of the new year, life just “happens.”

You have a baby or adopt a child. You get married or divorced. You change to part-time employment or move across the state. Your 19-year-old goes to college, or your 23-year-old moves back home.

Your Benefit Board gives you ways to deal with these and other life changes that happen after Open Enrollment. The Board's rules give you 60 days from the date of an eligible event to make related changes to your benefits.

Here's what you need to do.

1. See Appendix A of the Summary Plan Description on PEBB's Web site to learn what benefit changes you can make with the life change.
2. Download and fill out an update form from the Web site's Forms page. You'll find one for medical and dental benefits and one for life and disability insurance.
3. Send the completed form to your agency's payroll or benefits office. If the change requires a medical history review, complete the company's form and send it to the company.
4. Review your paystub or statement the following month to make sure your changes went into effect. If they require a medical-history review, check for the deduction after the company notifies you.

If you have any questions about how changes in your life may affect your benefits, call your payroll or benefits office. Staff can walk you through the process to make sure it runs smooth.



Weight Watchers Sign-up or Re-up

Have you heard your coworkers talking about Weight Watchers? More than a thousand state employees are attending meetings or participating online.

Each of PEBB's medical plans covers the participation fee for employees who are enrolled as the principal subscriber. If you want to quit dieting and start living with Weight Watchers, you can enroll at no cost. Go to www.mypowwr.com/downloads/PEBB.pdf.

If you're a Weight Watchers member now and nearing the end of your first segment this year, take a minute to learn how to re-enroll and keep that momentum going. Go to www.mypowwr.com/downloads/PEBB.pdf.

Resources

oregon.gov/das/pebb
inquiries.pebb@state.or.us
(503) 373-1102
(800) 788-0520

Medical Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb
Providence Choice providence.org/pebb
Regence BCBSO or.regence.com/pebb
VSP (Vision Service Plan) vsp.com

Mail-order Prescriptions

PPS ppsrx.com
Walgreens walgreenshealth.com

Dental Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb
ODS odscompanies.com/pebb
Willamette Dental willamettedental.com

Optional Plans

The Standard standard.com
UnumProvident unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb

Other Benefits

FSA's orpebb.asiflex.com
EAP cascadecenters.com (800) 433-2320

Success Stories

Members share inspiring achievements

June 24th, 2008. That is the day my husband and I walked into our first Weight Watchers meeting. Both of us needed to look deep within ourselves and decide how important losing all the excess weight was. We worked and shortly saw results.



Within two weeks, we knew we could do it.

December 30th, 2008. I have lost 37 pounds and my husband has lost 34 pounds. We feel better than we have in years and were able to enjoy holidays; we just didn't over eat.

We both have a long way to go but take it one day at a time. I am delighted that for 2009, we will not have to each pay the \$40 monthly fee to participate in Weight Watchers.

I feel fortunate that preventive support for weight loss is now part of our benefits.

— *PEBB Member*

I quit smoking on September 22, 2008, and if I were to measure my success monetarily, I'd estimate that I've saved close to \$1,000 in that amount of time alone.

It really hit home [when I calculated that] after making it one month without smoking, I had not smoked 1,240 cigarettes. To date I have not smoked approximately 3,960 cigarettes.

Although smoking never stopped me from working out, running is **MUCH** easier now. In fact, I will be running my first marathon in the next few weeks.

Here are some things that help:

- Increase your exercise to compensate for potential weight gains. Exercise helps to reduce stress and anxieties too.
- Think about the effort you've made to get this far and how you don't want to start over again. Every day you don't smoke is one more day under your belt.
- Try deep breathing exercises when you get the urge to smoke. Most of the time, the urges pass within a couple minutes.
- If you slip and end up smoking a cigarette—try, try again! Don't give up because you made one mistake. One puff or cigarette is better than going back to a pack-a-day smoker, right?

I wish the very best to all who are currently addicted and fighting the quitting battle. If I can do it, you can do it!

— *PEBB Member*

866-QUIT-4-LIFE (784-8454)