



EMPLOYEE
ASSISTANCE OF
CENTRAL VA

EAP

ALL
POINTS
EAP

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Youth Sports: Prevent Overuse Injuries

Half of all youth sports injuries result from playing the same sport too much and too often.

Competition and specialization in one aspect of a sport increase the risk of “overuse injuries”. These injuries are not always obvious because they are not readily acute, yet there are a million of them per year requiring treatment. The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine wants parents to be mindful of overuse injuries. Ironically, nearly all professional sports players of today report that while growing up they did not play their sport year round. They enjoyed other sports and rest breaks too. Also see the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons website for their “Guide to Safety for Young Athletes” at <http://orthoinfo.aaos.org>.



Need help with a problem?

CALL EAP

Your employer sponsors your employee assistance program (EAP) for personal and job concerns.

Confidential, professional services at **no cost** to you or your immediate family.

434-845-1246

In the Central VA Area

800-645-1246

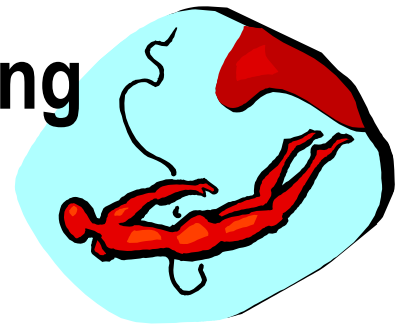
Outside Central VA

Plant a Summer Stress Garden

Start a stress garden and grow your own anti-stress foods in season! Many foods can help you manage stress because of the nutrients they contain. One of these “anti-stress” nutrients is magnesium. Foods high in magnesium include spinach, beets (especially the stems), blackberries, and raspberries. Magnesium plays a role in relaxing muscles, and works in concert with other metabolizing functions of the body that contribute to reduced stress. It also aids sleep and helps to reduce anxiety. Discover more about foods and their contribution to your health at Nutrition.gov.



Teens Taking Risks for Kicks



Summer means new opportunities, places to go, fun events, and, unfortunately, increased risks for teens, who researchers say are more likely to take chances for sheer kicks. Why teenagers participate in more risky behaviors than adults isn't fully understood, but a phenomenon called the “health paradox” defines the problem: It's a period of greatest health, but it corresponds with a statistical peak of mortality. Risk taking, such as drug use, high-risk stunts, unprotected sex, fast driving, and workplace safety violations, are all more common among teens. The riskiest time of all? Age 14. Source: *Cognitive Development*, Volume 25, Issue 2, April-June 2010.

Handling Criticism Like a Pro



No matter what your job or position, you can be certain that you will experience criticism periodically. This inevitability calls for a personal strategy to master its impact so you can make it work for you. Whether you are corrected by peers in a group or criticized during an annual review, consider these four pillars of managing criticism like a pro: 1) Criticism usually stings, and it's often a surprise over which you have little or no control. Accepting this can help you respond to it with a cool head. 2) Recognize that some part of criticism is usually true. Look for that part and be enthusiastic about it. Avoid attacking the criticism, which only diminishes how much you gain from it. 3) Criticism is usually not personal, but simply a part of necessary communication in work organizations. Its importance explains why receptivity to it is often included in performance reviews. 4) Demonstrating receptiveness to criticism makes a strong and positive impact on the one offering it. As a result, you will usually be rewarded with an enhanced reputation for your willingness to accept criticism.

Reducing the Stress of Summer Moves



Summer is a time when people move away, change jobs, change careers, switch schools, and leave old friends. Moving can be surprisingly stressful.

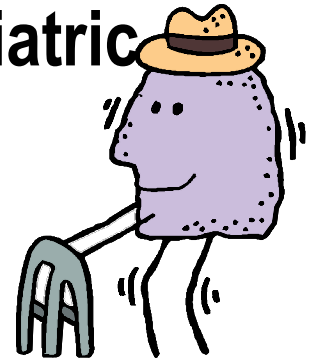
If you're moving, follow a few tips: 1) Do nothing until you make a to-do list, and then allocate the work over a period of weeks until the move. 2) Don't just start packing. Get rid of all the junk and clutter first. 3) Plan a few local trips to favorite places to recall memories and have social get-togethers with old friends to experience closure. Don't "blot it all out" with denial to avoid saying goodbye. 4) If your budget isn't too tight, reduce stress during this period by treating yourself to a couple of meals out. 5) Check out your local library for resources with tips to help you and/or children cope with moving stress (and loss). For a popular resource with great tips and ideas, try *29 Days to a Smooth Move* by Donna Kozik and Tara Maras. A version of it is downloadable at Amazon.com.

Plan Fun and the Work Will Follow



If your workload seems to leave you with no time for fun and leisure, you may need better strategies for balancing work and life. Some pros recommend planning your fun first and obligating yourself to the leisure and recreational pursuits you enjoy, *and then* scheduling your workload. Practicing this strategy toward work-life balance will cause you to work more effectively, help you resist distractions that interfere with timely completion of work, and focus your attention like a laser on that work which is most important. At first, creating "forced" obligations for leisure and social activity will challenge your work schedule and add to your stress. However, in time you will prove to yourself that you can fashion a more balanced work-life arrangement. You will feel more accomplished, less trapped by work, and less resentful of the control you imagine time has over your life.

Are You Geriatric Syndrome -Savvy?



The longer people live, the more likely they will develop medical conditions that lie within a wide range of geriatric syndromes. Vision and hearing problems, confusion in the evening (or when traveling to unfamiliar places), dementia, bladder problems, risk of falls, delirium, malnutrition, and dizziness are only a few of the many geriatric syndromes. Knowing these syndromes, and understanding how they interconnect and trigger other seemingly unrelated geriatric conditions, may help save a life or reduce the frequency of emergencies, hospitalizations, and crisis calls for your assistance. If you have elder-care responsibilities, get savvy about geriatric syndromes by visiting the American Geriatric Society's website. Look for the society's *Guide to Geriatric Syndromes*.