Ft Irwin Employee Assistance Program

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Ft Irwin EAP Newsletter

Alcohol and Water Safety

ALCOHOL'S EFFECT ON THE BODY

Most states define impairment at .10% Blood Alcohol Content (B.A.C.). However, even lower levels of blood alcohol may affect a person's balance, vision or judgment. This can be especially dangerous when on the water.

BALANCE– Alcohol impacts an individual's sense of balance. A moment of dizziness or even a mis-step may not cause any harm on your patio or in a restaurant, but it can lead to disaster on the water.

VISION– Safe boating requires good vision and too much alcohol can seriously restrict your vision. It can create a "tunnel vision" effect, reducing peripheral vision. It can impair your ability to "focus" on objects and it can reduce your night vision, especially for reds and greens... the color of running lights.

BOATING, ALCOHOL AND SAFETY

Operating a boat is at least as complicated as driving a car and a boating accident can be just as dangerous as an automobile accident. Yet many people who would never drive drunk think it's safe to operate their boat after drinking. It isn't. In fact, 50% of all boating fatalities are alcohol related. Operating a boat while intoxicated is illegal and dangerous.

TIPS FOR BOATING SAFETY

Take a boating safety class offered by your local Red Cross, Coast Guard Auxillary or Power Squadron.

Know your boat's load limit, and don't exceed it. A safe boat is a well-equipped boat. Always carry the necessary safety gear...and know how to use it.

Knowing how to swim just makes good sense if you spend time on the water. If you don't know, LEARN.

Alcohol and Water Safety, cont'd

However, even good swimmers do not always survive the shock or panic of sudden immersion in cold water.

Keep life jackets visible and accessible...and never make someone feel uncomfortable if they choose to wear a life jacket.

Learn "the rules of the road"...and obey them!

Don't overdo your boating fun. In 3 hours of normal boating, the noise, motion, sun, wind and glare can frequently double an individual's reaction time.

Remember, while a drink or two can relax you and make your day more enjoyable, they may also slow your reaction time,

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Special points of interest:

- Employee Annual ASAP Training: 8.7.12, 0830-1030, Bldg 573
- Supervisor Annual ASAP Training: 8.14.12, 0830-1030, Bldg 573
- In accordance with AR 600-85, all civilians will have a minimum of 2 hours of alcohol and other drug awareness training per year.

The Benefits of Laughter

Research has shown that the health benefits of laughter are far-ranging. While more studies need to be done, studies so far have shown that laughter can help relieve pain, bring greater happiness, and even increase immunity. Positive psychology names the propensity for laughter and sense of humor as one of the 24 main signature strengths one can possess, and laughter yoga clubs are springing up across the country. Unfortunately, however, many people don't get enough laughter in their lives. In fact, one study suggests that healthy children may laugh as much as 400 times per day, but adults tend to laugh only 15 times per day. (If you ask me, that is far too little laughter!) Read on for more findings about the health benefits of laughter, and see how to incorporate more humor and fun into your life. **Stress Management Benefits of Laughter:**

Hormones: Laughter reduces the level of stress hormones like cortisol, epinephrine (adrenaline), dopamine and growth hormone. It also increases the level of health-enhancing hormones like endorphins, and neurotransmitters. Laughter increases the number of antibody-producing cells and enhances the effectiveness of T cells. All this means a stronger immune system, as well as fewer physical effects of stress.

Physical Release: Have you ever felt like you "have to laugh or I'll cry"? Have you experienced the cleansed feeling after a good laugh? Laughter provides a physical and emotional release.

Internal Workout: A good belly laugh exercises the diaphragm, contracts the abs and even works out the shoulders, leaving muscles more relaxed afterward. It even provides a good workout for the heart.

The Benefits of Laughter, cont'd

Distraction: Laughter brings the focus away from anger, guilt, stress and negative emotions in a more beneficial way than other mere distractions.

Perspective: Studies show that our response to stressful events can be altered by whether we view something as a 'threat' or a 'challenge'. Humor can give us a more lighthearted perspective and help us view events as 'challenges', thereby making them less threatening and more positive.

Social Benefits of Laughter: Laughter connects us with others. Just as with smiling and kindness, most people find that laughter is contagious, so if you bring more laughter into your life, you can most likely help others around you to laugh more, and realize these benefits as well. By elevating the mood of those around you, you can reduce their stress levels, and perhaps improve the quality of social interaction you experience with them, reducing your stress level even more!

Elizabeth Scott, M.S.,, Stress Management Guide
www. Stress.about.com

"Laughter is a tranquilizer with no side effects."

— Arnold Glasow

Annual Physical Exam

Whether it's the reassurance of being healthy or a safety net used to catch health problems before they get worse, an annual physical exam/ examination continues to be valued tradition among doctors and patients today. Although there have been some debate about whether an annual physical exam is necessary or not, the "what if's" tend to keep people coming in year after year to make sure they are in tip top shape. For those who stay healthy by exercising frequently, eating well, and staying away from smoking, an annual physical exam may not be necessary. You may only need to come in if you start to feel sick or develop symptoms that suggest you may need medical attention. Remember, however, you won't always have symptoms or notice when something is wrong; so even if you are healthy and follow all the necessary protocol, it may still be worth it to have annual examinations just in case .

www.lanieradultmedicine.com

"Life is not merely being alive, but being well."

— Marcus Valerius Martialis

Vaccine Information for Adults

August is typically recognized as National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). This awareness month highlights the need for improving national immunization coverage levels and encourages all people to protect their health by being immunized against infectious diseases.
While CDC does not sponsor this month, CDC does support and encourage the efforts of state and local health departments and other immunization partners to celebrate NIAM and use this month to promote back to school immunizations, remind college students to catch up immunizations before they move into dormitories, and remind everyone that the influenza season is only a few months away. It's a great reminder to our nation that people of all ages require timely immunization to protect their health. CDC has developed immunization materials for year-round use by our immunization partners. These materials and resources target groups throughout the lifespan and can be used by immunization partners to support local outreach and education efforts during NIAM and beyond. You never outgrow the need for vaccines. The specific immunizations you need as an adult are determined by factors such as your age, lifestyle, high-risk conditions, type and locations of travel, and previous immunizations. Throughout your adult life, you need immunizations to get and maintain protection against: flu, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, shingles, pneumococcal, HPV, etc.

www.cdc.gov/

This and That

Civilian and Supervisor Annual Training

In accordance with AR 600-85, all civilians will have a minimum of 2 hours of alcohol and other drug awareness training per year. The Army Substance Abuse Program offers 2 classes per month at bldg 573, one for employees and one for supervisors. Please check the Ft Irwin Portal for class times and dates, or call 380-9092. Copies of the annual schedule are also available by request. As a convenience, the classes are now available on-line. Visit the ASAP webpage for the Employee and Supervisor Annual online training. Please follow the instructions. In order to get a certificate of training, you must read the slides and take a short test. Once the test is completed, you must forward it to Valencia R. Barnes, EAPC. Tests can be faxed or emailed. Fax test to 760.380.3403 attn: V. Barnes.

Email: valencia,r.barnes.civ@mail.mil

When the test is received, the certificate of completion will be sent to you. If you have any questions, please call 760.380-9092.

Ft Irwin Employee Assistance Program

Basic EAP services include free, voluntary, short term counseling and referral for various issues affecting employee mental and emotional well-being , such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief and family problems, and psychological disorders. EAP counselors also work in a consultative role with managers and supervisors to help address employee and organizational challenges and needs. EAP services are available to DA Civilians including NAF/AF and their family members, military dependents, military retirees and their family members.

Bldg 573 Third Street

Phone: 760-380-9092
Fax: 760-380-3403
Email: valencia.r.barnes.civ@mail.mil

Valencia R. Barnes, EAPC

Alcohol and Water Safety, cont'd

reduce your coordination, and increase your susceptibility to hypothermia.

ALCOHOL FACTS

Moderation and common sense should dictate how much alcohol is consumed on your boat. Limit your consumption to one drink (or less) per hour. The best policy is to wait until you are anchored for the day before enjoying alcoholic beverages aboard.

Ideally, the helmsman should not drink. A responsible boat owner will never allow a person under the influence to operate the boat.

Alcohol affects your judgment. It makes you think you can function better than when you are sober. But in fact, alcohol slows your reaction time considerably.

Hard liquor may hit a little harder or faster than beer or wine-especially if it is not diluted...but too much beer or wine can be just as bad as too much liquor.

Know how much you are drinking. Even moderate drinkers may be drinking more than they think if they aren't measuring their drinks. If you're serving mixed drinks keep a jigger handy...and use it.

Images can be deceiving. Some drinks can be stronger than you think. A daiquiri can have more than twice the alcohol than beer or whiskey and soda. Know what you're drinking...and know when to say when.

www.boatingsafety.com

A standard drink

All of the above drinks contain the same amount of alcohol.