



IRISH
HEART
FOUNDATION



happy
heart
at work



physical activity



health checks



healthy eating

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

SUPPORTED BY



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Happy Heart at Work provides healthy eating and physical activity programmes, as well as heart health checks for Irish employees with support from Irish employers.

Many Irish employees spend eight hours a day or more at work sitting behind desks, standing at workstations or driving. The combination of an unhealthy diet and a lack of physical activity creates a greater risk of developing heart disease. In fact people who are inactive double their risk of having a heart attack and one third of unhealthy diets cause heart disease. Through Happy Heart at Work, we encourage physical activity and healthier eating for Irish employees, as part of a normal working day.

ABOUT HAPPY HEART AT WORK

Happy Heart at Work offers:

- >> a physical activity programme - **active@work**
- >> a healthy eating programme - **Happy Heart Healthy Eating Award**
- >> and employee heart health checks

Happy Heart at Work caters for companies of all sizes and complements other occupational health initiatives. The programmes are designed to assist individuals with responsibility for health or welfare (e.g. the Human Resource Manager, Occupational Health Nurse or the Health and Safety Officer) enabling them to plan, implement and maintain heart health programmes for employees.

A Co-ordinator Guide is available for both the physical activity and healthy eating programme including a comprehensive plan, time frame, useful fact sheets, a sample employee survey, steps for a company policy and a resource list for further information.

A WIN-WIN FOR EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

Promoting physical activity and healthy eating makes good business sense. In 2007 Irish companies paid in excess of €1.5 billion through days lost to absenteeism. Introducing Happy Heart at Work can help reduce absenteeism. Employees enjoy better health and employers reap the rewards of greater productivity and lower costs - it's a win-win for both sides.

HEALTHY EATING AT WORK

The first step to healthy eating in the workplace is an independent catering audit carried out by an Irish Heart Foundation dietitian in conjunction with a catering manager to assess the company's needs. This includes an assessment of food choices, preparation practices, menu recommendations and employee views. About 8 to 10 weeks after the audit, the dietitian returns to carry out a follow-up review to assist in the implementation.

AWARD

When the recommended healthy eating goals are achieved, the company's restaurant receives a Happy Heart Healthy Eating Award, which certifies that it has met the best practice national standard of the Irish Heart Foundation and is in line with the Department of Health's healthy eating guidelines.



HEALTHY LIVING FOR IRISH EMPLOYEES

An active workforce is a healthy business. Most people find it difficult to make time to get active, which is why promoting physical activity at work can make a big difference. The more options the better and that is why we offer a variety of programmes to encourage employees to be active in their own time, at their own level and without requiring major company time or cost.



> WALKING CHALLENGE

The Walking Challenge is easy to organise and it encourages employees to build up to the recommended 30 minutes or more of physical activity five days of the week in their own time, such as walking during lunch or to and from work. Participants receive a walking diary card to record their minutes of activity and a certificate of achievement on completion of the challenge.



> STEP CHALLENGE

The five-week Step Challenge encourages individuals to achieve and maintain a target of 10,000 steps per day using a step counter. All participants receive a diary sheet to record their steps and a certificate of achievement on completion.

> SLÍ NA SLÁINTE (PATH TO HEALTH)

Create an active environment for employees with our Slí na Sláinte sign-posted walking routes providing times and distances. Motivational posters and maps are also available to encourage walking for health.

active@work



- > **SLÍ NA SLÁINTE TIME OR DISTANCE CHALLENGE**
 Employees have an option to walk either 100km (or 1,000 minutes) or 500km (or 5,000 minutes) in their own time. All participants receive a handy pocket-card to record their activity. A silver or gold pin is awarded on completion of the challenge.
- > **HEART POINT CHALLENGE**
 Employees are encouraged to build up to the recommended 30 minutes or more of physical activity five days a week by earning 15 heart points a week. The Challenge is set over four weeks and employees are encouraged to record their daily activity. All activities must be done at a moderate intensity for 10 minutes or longer to earn one heart point. Employees receive a certificate of achievement on completion of the Challenge.
- > **DESK WORK-OUT**
 Desk Work-Out is a web-based physical activity programme with a series of aerobic, stretching and strengthening activities to encourage movement and activity at the desk. As many employees work at sedentary jobs this programme is a great way of energising and stretching the body during the working day or at home. The programme can be accessed on **www.irishheart.ie**

EMPLOYEE HEART HEALTH CHECKS

The Irish Heart Foundation has been conducting heart health checks in companies for 35 years. A heart health check takes approximately 30 minutes per person and all employees will receive an individual heart health record card with results and recommendations by Irish Heart Foundation trained nurses. Consultations are performed in private and an appropriate room on site is required per nurse.



The heart health check includes:

- Blood pressure check
- Cholesterol check
- Weight measurement which includes Waist Measurement and Body Mass Index
- Overall individual assessment, information and recommendations on healthy eating, alcohol consumption, physical activity and stress
- Carbon monoxide check (for smokers) and advice on quitting smoking
- Personal record card of all results and advice

Additional information

A range of heart health leaflets is available from the Irish Heart Foundation.

- Blood Pressure
- Cholesterol
- Stress
- Losing Weight
- Healthy Eating
- Salt
- Physical Activity
- Smoking

In addition, posters promoting healthy eating and physical activity are available.

SIGN UP FOR HAPPY HEART AT WORK

The physical activity and healthy eating programmes incur a nominal cost. For more information on Happy Heart At Work or to register your interest please visit www.irishheart.ie , telephone 01-6685001 or email info@irishheart.ie . By registering for Happy Heart at Work your company will receive regular updates and further information on relevant topics including free materials for annual Irish Heart Foundation campaigns such as Irish Heart Week, World Heart Day, conferences and workshops.

CORPORATE SUPPORT

The Irish Heart Foundation is a national charity dependent on corporate and public donations. We are actively seeking corporate support to fight against heart disease and stroke. We have opportunities in the following areas:

- sponsorship
- cause-related marketing promotions
- employee volunteering
- corporate donations
- employee giving

For more information contact our Fundraising Department on 01-6685001.





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