

# CLAREMONT EAP

## IMPACT

Employee Newsletter

April—June 2006

### Did you know?

- Free “Simple Will” Kits are available from Claremont EAP
- A free credit report is available once per year
- Claremont EAP provides legal referrals for family law, consumer issues, traffic violations, and personal injury
- Referrals are available for child care, adult/eldercare, adoption assistance, school/college selection, and pet care

**Claremont EAP**

**800.834.3773**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Healthy Lifestyle* 1

*Safety Attitude* 2

*Signals of Stress* 3

*Improve Your Coping Skills* 4

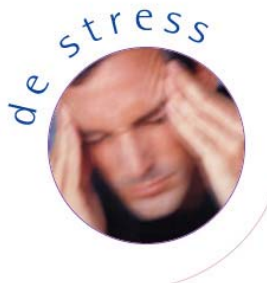
We're on the web  
[www.claremonteap.com](http://www.claremonteap.com)

## Healthy Lifestyle *Elements of Living Well*

*It takes more than “an apple a day” to live well in today’s hectic world. A healthy lifestyle requires that the body, the mind, and the spirit work together. If one part is sick or stressed, the other parts suffer, often without our knowing it. Below are some of the things to consider when trying to bring your life back into balance.*

### Control Stress

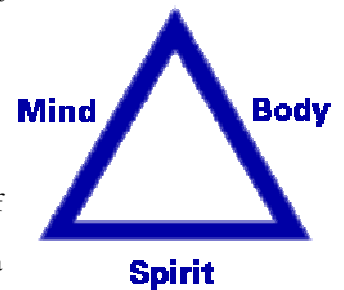
A moderate amount of stress can be good for you. It keeps you alert and engaged in the world. But too much stress can be overwhelming, can cloud thinking, and can interfere with relaxation. Taking time for yourself regularly can help you approach situations with more control and get more enjoyment out of life.



activity. Although there are different types of exercise to achieve different goals (such as aerobic exercise for heart health), you don’t have to take up running or power walking to reap the benefits of some physical activity. A day spent gardening or an evening with friends at the bowling alley can provide other benefits if you find the activities relaxing.

### Rest Your Mind and Spirit

Don’t forget that your mind and spirit need a balanced diet and exercise as much as your body does. If you find yourself constantly worrying about a problem, talk about it with a friend or trusted advisor. Going for a walk, reading a book, or enjoying a hobby can also help you relax mentally. All work and no play not only make Jack a dull boy but also a sick one.



### Eat Right

Eat sensible amounts of nutritious food. Eating right can help you feel your best and control your weight. Too much of any one kind of food or beverage can take your body out of balance. Too much caffeine can make you tense or sleepless. Too much alcohol can cloud your thinking. A balanced diet and alcohol in moderation can do wonders to help you feel fit.



### Exercise Regularly

Participate regularly in some enjoyable physical

### Get Variety in Life

Variety is essential in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. If you’re in a rut, overstressed, not eating well, or not getting any exercise, vary your routine. Regularly implement just one small change in your routine and it can make a world of difference.

## SAFETY ATTITUDE

### Safety and Security at Home

Make sure your doors and windows have adequate locks and use them—always.

Don't leave extra keys outdoors in obvious places, such as under the doormat.

Don't block any exit in such a way that you won't be able to get out quickly and easily in a fire.

If you consider barring your windows, check with your local fire department for their recommendation of safe systems. Have a plan and alternate routes for home evacuation and practice them.

Know what to do in a natural disaster such as a tornado or an earthquake. Take extra precautions if there is a disabled or elderly person in the house.

Use smoke alarms even if they are not required in your community. Check the smoke alarm battery every six months.



Any firearms should be unloaded and stored away from ammunition. All should be locked away.

Keep toxic products, such as household cleaners, paint thinners, insect sprays, and medications out of reach of children and pets.

### Safety and Security on the Street

Use a buddy system when walking on the street or in a parking lot and plan your route in advance.

Stick to well-lit and well-traveled places and teach your children to do the same, even if it means a longer walk.

Stay alert when walking. Stand straight and look around. If an area feels unsafe, don't pass through it.

Avoid using automated bank teller machines at night, especially in deserted areas.

If you are accosted on the street, yell "fire" instead of "help".

If possible, make a scene the moment you feel physically threatened by someone and teach your children to do the same.

### Safety and Security in the Car

In the car, always use seat belts. For small children, use safety seats. Pets should travel in a crate or pet carrier. Neither people nor uncrated pets should travel in the bed of a pickup truck. Never leave children unsupervised in a car, even with other children. Always keep car doors locked and teach children to stay away from the door handles.

## Daily Awareness of Safety and Security

It is impossible to predict any accident or crime, but the consistent practice of good safety and security habits by you and your family can reduce the possibility of being a victim. To make sure you've covered all the basics, you might want to review these checklists for safety and security.

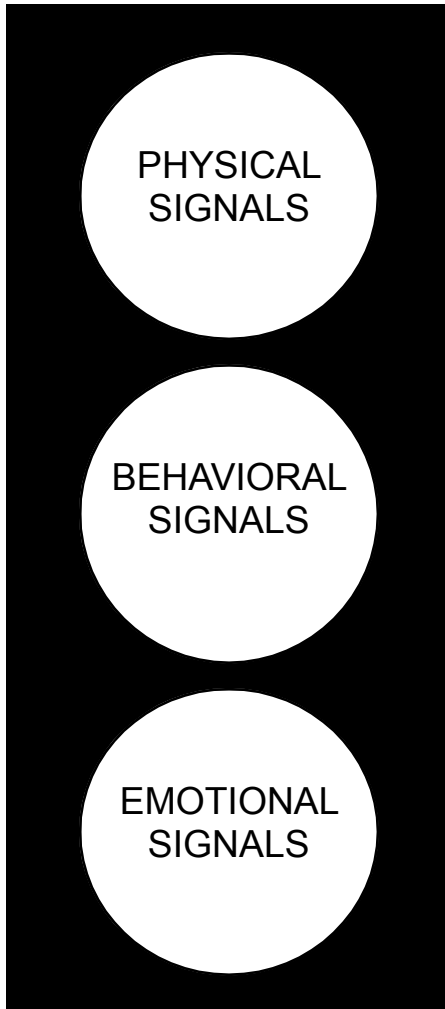
800.834.3773  
www.ClaremontEAP.com

# CLAREMONT EAP

*Claremont distributes this newsletter to provide employees with general behavioral health information. If you have concerns about these or other behavioral health issues, you can call Claremont to arrange for assistance. You will be directed to an appropriate, experienced professional who can offer guidance in a variety of work and family matters.*

## Signals of Distress

Are you suffering from stress? The answer depends not on how much stress is in your life, but on how you react to it. Take a moment to look at this checklist of “distress signals”, the body’s way of telling you that you’re feeling stressed.



- muscle tension (headaches, neck and back pain, chest pain)
  - high blood pressure
  - insomnia
  - loss of appetite
  - lower resistance to infection
  - diarrhea or constipation
  - shortness of breath
  - trembling
  - upset stomach
  - nervous tics
  - teeth grinding
  - cold or sweaty hands
  - sweating
  - rashes
- 
- insomnia or too much sleep
  - appetite changes
  - unexplained crying
  - overuse of alcohol or drugs
  - fidgeting
  - forgetfulness
- 
- depression
  - irritability
  - anxiety
  - apathy
  - impatience

If you checked several of these, you may be suffering from stress. Common sources of stress are difficulties at home or work that you don’t know how to resolve, too much change in your life or life-changing events such as a death in the family, divorce, or even positive changes such as a new job or spouse/partner.

You may want to explore some strategies for reducing stress in your life and coping with the stress that you can’t eliminate. Find a stress management program in your area that can teach you proven coping skills and relaxation techniques. Ask your doctor, local hospital, employee assistance program, or community mental health services for a referral.

# IMPROVE YOUR COPING SKILLS

## Simple Steps for Reducing Stress

You can reduce stress and enjoy life more by using this worksheet to identify the skills you'd like to develop. Then practice until good coping skills are everyday habits.

### Stress Management

People who feel in control of their lives are able to manage their stresses.

I feel in control of these parts of my life: \_\_\_\_\_

Two people I know who seem in control of their lives are: \_\_\_\_\_

Four things they do which I can try: \_\_\_\_\_

Other things I can do to gain control over my own life: \_\_\_\_\_

### Commitment

When you're committed to your own life, stresses are easier to take.

I'm committed to and enjoy these parts of my life: \_\_\_\_\_

Two people I know who seem to enjoy their lives are: \_\_\_\_\_

Four things they do which I can try: \_\_\_\_\_

Other things I can do to help make my life more meaningful: \_\_\_\_\_

### Risk

When you're willing to take risks, life becomes more satisfying. Risks include everything from traveling overseas to getting married.

Three things I'd like to try: \_\_\_\_\_

Things which would help me try them: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to try these two new things this month: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to try these two new things this year: \_\_\_\_\_

### Specific Skills

Use this list to help you identify and develop your coping skills. Check those skills you practice regularly. Each month check one to two skills you'll improve.

#### Physical skills

- eat three meals daily
- exercise at least three times weekly
- avoid smoking
- drink alcohol no more than three times per week

#### People skills

- ask for help when I need it
- say how I feel
- give and receive love
- say "no" if I need to

#### Personal management skills

- plan my time well
- be on time
- take "time out" to get perspective
- know how to laugh at life

#### Action skills

- have hobbies
- feel good about what I do
- let people count on me
- try new things