

To learn more about our worksite wellness programs, visit [www.ibx.com/worksite\\_wellness](http://www.ibx.com/worksite_wellness)

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2009

## New online tools for Wellness Partners® added to website

The Worksite Wellness section of [ibx.com](http://ibx.com) offers convenient and time-efficient tools that provide important health education information for your staff and coworkers. New content will be added in the near future, so now is a great time to visit [www.ibx.com/worksite\\_wellness](http://www.ibx.com/worksite_wellness) to see what's available.

HealthClips™ is a web-based library of 40 short videos on a variety of topics, including:

- weight control for adults and children;
- making healthy food choices;
- quitting smoking;
- controlling high blood pressure and high cholesterol;
- heart disease risk factors.

Through the use of animation, attractive graphics, and real-life reenactments, these short video clips are a creative means of delivering valuable health information to employees. Video times range from one to three minutes, making these clips easy to fit into even the busiest of schedules.

Online health awareness seminars can help to increase your employees' awareness or interest in a variety of topics. These seminars can be viewed online by employees individually at their workstations or in a group setting. The seminar topics currently available are:

- stress management;
- health care consumerism;
- heart health;
- nutrition;
- getting a good night's sleep.

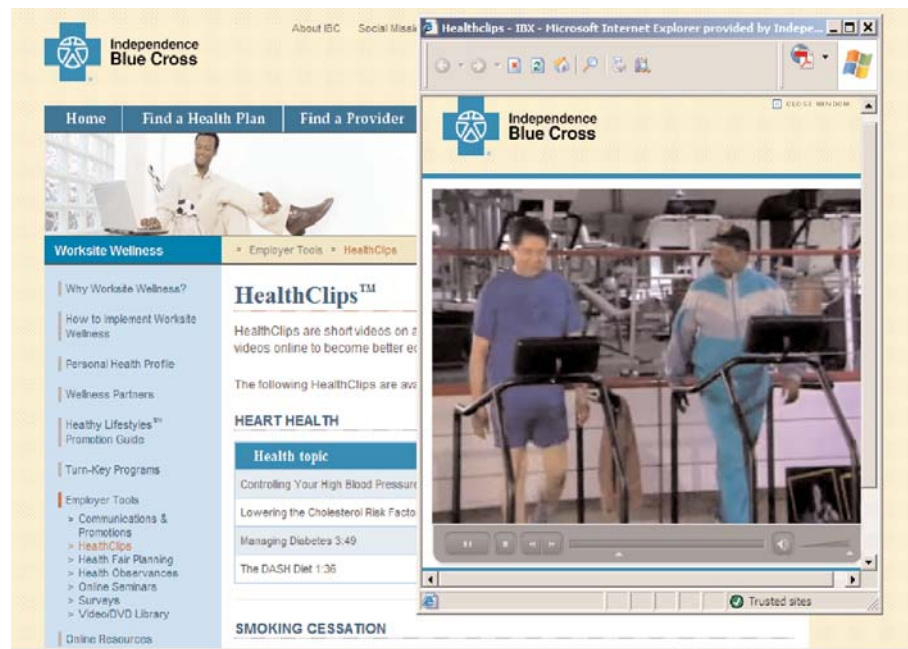
The seminars are available at [www.ibx.com/worksite\\_wellness](http://www.ibx.com/worksite_wellness) and are approximately 30 minutes long.

For more information on the online tools and resources available, contact your Independence Blue Cross health promotion coordinator.

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## Highlight on Health – Lower Merion Township

Lower Merion Township believes that an effective and productive workforce is comprised of happy, healthy, and committed employees. Dating back to 2006, the township demonstrated its commitment to wellness and healthier lifestyles by coordinating a wellness initiative. To achieve the initiative's goal of encouraging township employees and their families to make healthier choices, the township negotiated with its largest union to include mandatory participation in wellness programs during normal business hours. This mandate, which became effective with the 2007 collective bargaining agreement, included participation in educational classes on nutrition, smoking cessation, and exercise. In addition, many other programs were offered on a voluntary basis during normal work hours. In late 2007, Lower Merion Township joined IBC's Wellness Partners® program to provide its employees with greater opportunities to participate in educational programs, targeted screenings, and assessments.

As a local municipal government, the challenge facing Lower Merion Township was a limited budget to implement this initiative. Despite this challenge, the township was committed to instituting an effective wellness program. A wellness committee was formed that included employee volunteers representing a wide cross-section of the township's departments and divisions.

Equally challenging to the township was the question of how to market the program to effectively reach Lower Merion's diverse workforce, including a police department, several libraries, a public works complex that includes many employees who work outdoors, as well as administrative and other professional employees. It was clear that in order to be a success, Lower Merion's wellness program could not take a "one size fits all" approach. Communications about programs were modified to reach the various target audiences of different employee groups. In addition, Township Wellness Coordinator Monica Rudzinski from Human Resources, contributed a regular column to the monthly employee newsletter. The wellness column is a must-read feature, as are Monica's regular email reminders to staff encouraging good health decisions.

The wellness committee began by surveying employees about their interest in particular health topics. After analyzing the results, the team coordinated with IBC's senior health promotion coordinator, Kristin Forlenza, to help maximize resources offered through IBC Wellness Partners. Over the past year, this partnership has enabled the township to offer health screenings, such as blood pressure, body composition, and DermaScan skin analysis, as well as health awareness programs, like Fitness Made Easy, and programs from IBC's online employer toolkit, such as Maintain Don't Gain and The Great American Smokeout. These programs were a great starting point and generated employee participation in the wellness program. The township took part in National Walk at Lunch Day and held another walk on National Employee Health & Fitness Day. Both of these no-cost events encouraged employees to engage in physical activity and promoted camaraderie among various departments.

In addition to IBC's resources, Kristin recommended local nonprofit agencies that offered free education programs and screenings. The Alzheimer's Association, the Wellness Connection, and the Montgomery County Health Department enthusiastically presented voluntary educational programs on Alzheimer's disease, cancer, smoking cessation, and even free health screenings.

Lower Merion also worked with its employee assistance provider, Human Management Services, to conduct mandatory programs to encourage wellness. The township hosted "Creating a Healthier You" for its employees, covering food and nutrition, smoking cessation, health and exercise, and managing stress and overeating.

As interest in the township's wellness program continued to grow, so did input from its workforce. Employee

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suggestions led to the formation of a weight loss program that began in September 2008. Weight Watchers® at Work came to Lower Merion for an initial 10-week program, which included 29 participants who collectively lost more than 200 pounds.

As Lower Merion Township celebrates the first anniversary of its wellness program, it has proven that promoting good health does not require a large budget. The township continues to utilize the resources that IBC's Wellness Partner program provides, including quarterly newsletters, the monthly Wellness Tips emails, and various promotional materials such as Healthy Lifestyles<sup>SM</sup> reimbursements. Resources from local non-profits will also continue to be utilized to offer programs such as risk assessment, health education, health screenings, fitness tips, and more.

"The most gratifying aspect of this program's success is the improved health of our workforce," remarked Roseann McGrath, director of human resources. "Giving our employees the knowledge they need to make good decisions and watching our organizational culture become one where health is a priority is an end result that exceeded our expectations."

® Weight Watchers is a registered mark of Weight Watchers International, Inc.

### Welcome to our newest Wellness Partners

Advanta Corporation  
American Association for Cancer Research  
Community Interactions, Inc.  
Cozen O'Connor  
eResearch Technology  
Norristown School District

Penn Mututal Life Insurance Corporation  
Pennridge School District  
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### How to tell the difference between a cold and the flu

Since a cold and the flu can cause similar symptoms, it may be hard to tell the difference between the two. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers the following information to help you tell the difference between the two.

*"What are the symptoms of the flu versus the symptoms of a cold?"*

In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder than the flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations."

If you think you have the flu, call your doctor. While most people who have the flu will get better in a week or two, people at increased risk may develop complications, such as bacterial pneumonia and ear or sinus infections. People at increased risk include pregnant women, young children, the elderly, anyone with a chronic condition like asthma or a heart condition, people living in a nursing home, as well as health care workers.

And remember, it's not too late to get a flu shot this season. Call your doctor if you have not yet received an annual flu vaccination.

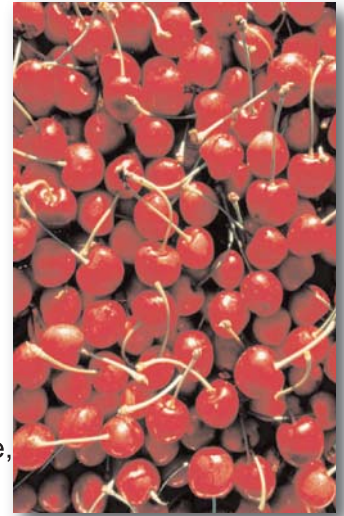
From [www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm)

## Cherry Oatmeal Bake

Oats and cherries pack a dietary punch in this yummy breakfast or brunch dish. Makes 4 servings.

1/2 cup dried tart cherries  
1/2 cup quick oats, uncooked  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
2 cups skim milk  
1/4 cup egg substitute  
1/2 teaspoon almond extract

Combine cherries, oats, sugar, and salt in a medium bowl. Stir in milk, egg substitute, and almond extract. Spray four 10-ounce custard cups with nonstick cooking spray. Divide mixture evenly among custard cups. Place filled cups on baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 30 to 40 minutes, or until centers are still slightly soft. Serve warm.



Used with permission from The Cherry Marketing Institute, [www.choosecherries.com](http://www.choosecherries.com).

### **Nutrition Facts**

*Serving size: about 1 cup*

Calories: 197	Total carbohydrates: 39 g	Total fat: 1 g
Sodium: 158 mg	Fiber: 2 g	Saturated fat: 0g
Protein: 8 g		Cholesterol: 2 mg

## How to copy and paste an article from the Wellness Partners newsletter

The articles in the Wellness Partners newsletters are designed to be used in your company's newsletters, on your intranet, or posted in a common area.

To copy and paste an article from this newsletter:

1. In Adobe, click on the Select tool, which looks like the letter I with a triangle next to it, located in the top toolbar.
2. Select or highlight the text you want to copy.
3. Once the text is highlighted, right-click your mouse, and select Copy to Clipboard.
4. You can now paste the text into an open Word document or an email by right clicking and selecting Paste, or by holding down the Control key and the letter V.

If you have any questions or if you need help with an article, please contact Sarah Matthews at 215-640-7549 or [sarah.matthews@ibx.com](mailto:sarah.matthews@ibx.com).

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