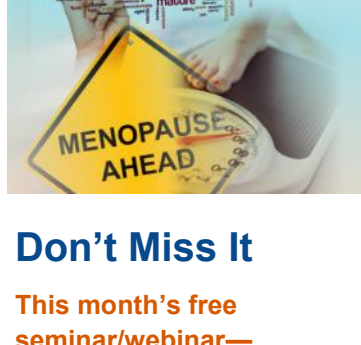


October Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the October issue of the *Well Aware* eNews! Read on to learn about—

- this month's wellness champions—participants in the Well Aware-sponsored spring running challenge who took the concept of fitness to a whole new level;
- this month's seminar/webinar from Cigna on ways women can manage their weight during menopause;
- this fall's physical activity challenge: *Go for the Gold*;
- National Eating Healthy Day;
- a way to show your support for women's health; and
- more!



Don't Miss It

**This month's free seminar/webinar—
Weight Management and Menopause**

Is "middle-age spread" for real, or just a saying? Learn how to manage your weight while going through this life event.

Wednesday, October 5, 2016
10:00–11:00 a.m.
West Farm Bus Depot
11920 Bournefield Way
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

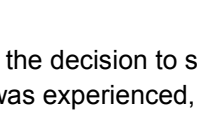
Thursday, October 20, 2016
10:00–11:00 a.m.
Randolph Bus Depot
1800 Randolph Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Thursday, October 20, 2016
4:00–5:00 p.m.
Webinar

Please register for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing **Well Aware** with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will receive a link in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. See the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

Presented by:



Wellness Champions Run to Connect While Getting Fit

Marie Koch, assistant principal, and Angela Stevenson, instructional specialist, James Hubert Blake High School

Angela Stevenson, instructional specialist, and Marie Koch, assistant principal, at James Hubert Blake High School believe in the buddy system when it comes to health and wellness. With busy work and personal lives, they decided that exercise was a great way to kill two birds with one stone.

"We started out walking together because we were struggling to find enough time for exercise and nurturing our friendships," Angela said. "It was a good way to regularly catch up with each other and get fit. Both pursuits had been involved in various health and fitness programs over the years. But about four years ago, when they began working together to get into shape, they had been neglecting their fitness for a while. "We were feeling the results of that," Angela said.

One day, the fitness partners came across a huge snake on the trail they were on and both took off running. When they finally stopped and acknowledged they hadn't collapsed, they decided to give running a try. In the spring of 2016 when Well Aware joined with Cigna and local running coaches to offer a 5K training program, Angela and Marie signed up together. After their get-away-from-the-snake run, they figured that this was something they could accomplish together.

"We had been walking long distances at fast speeds and made the decision to start running," Angela said. "Marie had run track years ago, so she was experienced, but as a sprinter, not a distance runner."

The two followed recommendations from Blake High School running coaches and slowly integrated running into their walks to avoid injury. It helped to have established a foundation of fitness through their walking. They took advantage of the Cigna-sponsored Run Farther & Faster training in the spring, which helped them get on track and progress appropriately.

Angela has some great advice for beginners.

"There are a lot of sofa-to-5K type programs that are helpful, and we've enjoyed completing training programs with our local running organization," Angela said. "There's nothing to be intimidated by. Runners come in all shapes, sizes, and abilities and are the friendliest people. We've never met a runner who wasn't excited to help someone else get started."

Marie and Angela also believe that exercise is exactly what the doctor ordered for MCPS staff.

"Running is a great way to counteract stress," Angela said. "It helps to keep the weight off and the aches and pains from getting older at bay. It also makes it easier to stay healthy when cold and flu season begins. And, it's fun!"

Look out for Marie and Angela on Montgomery County trails.

"We love to see beginners on the trail and Marie has been known to stop running to cheer them on," Angela said.

Go for the Gold: Well Aware's Fall Physical Activity Challenge

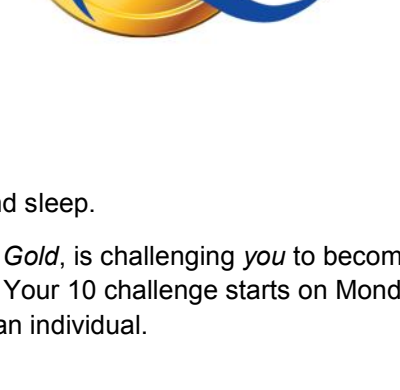
What makes someone an Olympic champion? Is it speed, strength, athleticism? What about commitment? Champions are *committed* to making health and wellness a priority.

They demonstrate that dedication by—

- scheduling time in their day for physical activity,
- carefully planning their meals, and
- prioritizing valuable time for stress management and sleep.

Well Aware's fall physical activity challenge, *Go for the Gold*, is challenging *you* to become a champion and prioritize your health. Gather your team! Your 10 challenge starts on Monday, October 10. Join your coworkers as a team or train as an individual.

Learn more about *Go for the Gold*.



National Eating Healthy Day is November 2

Take the first step to making healthier food choices by taking part in the American Heart Association's National Eating Healthy Day on Wednesday, November 2, 2016.

On this day, Americans are encouraged to make healthy changes to their diets and help raise awareness of the importance of good nutrition. Celebrating National Eating Healthy Day is fun and easy! The American Heart Association provides **excellent resources** to help you get started.

Eating healthy is more than just eating the right things, it's about eating the proper portions. **Learn more about proper portion size. Learn to make a favorite heart healthy fall treat.**

Quit for Good!

TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM
Quit for Good!

Stop Paying the High Cost. Quit for Good.

Tobacco use is costly. There is the high price of cigarettes and other tobacco products. There is the 3 percent surcharge on your health insurance costs if you use tobacco and are covered by an MCPS-provided medical plan. And, there is the serious toll that tobacco use takes on your health.

Isn't it time you quit for good? We can help you do it.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Kaiser Permanente are teaming up again to bring you the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program. The free program is available to employees and their spouses, regardless of whether or not you participate in MCPS employee benefits or if you have medical coverage with Kaiser.

The program is course-based and consists of once-a-week classes led by a nurse practitioner with assistance from Kaiser Permanente clinicians and health experts. Classes include discussions about the skills necessary to successfully live tobacco-free. Topics include risk assessment, stress management techniques, healthy weight management strategies, and more. In addition to the class meetings, participants will receive support through a help line, peer sponsors who understand what it takes to quit, and other resources.

The next session of Quit for Good begins on Wednesday, October 19, 2016, from 4:30–5:30 p.m. in the Aspen Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. To register, **e-mail Well Aware**. To learn more about the program, including the week-by-week course content, visit the **Well Aware website**.

Remember: MCPS will impose a 3 percent surcharge on your health insurance costs if you—or your spouse—use tobacco within the 12 months prior to the calendar year in which you will be covered by an MCPS-provided medical plan. You must attest to your and your spouse's 2016 tobacco use during Open Enrollment this fall, which will alert MCPS to whether or not to impose the surcharge in 2017. If you or your spouse used tobacco in 2016, it is too late to avoid the surcharge effective January 1, 2017. You can avoid the surcharge in 2018, however, by quitting before January 1, 2017.*

Let Quit for Good help you give up tobacco—for good.

* If you reach tobacco-free status outside of Open Enrollment, you can re-attest online via the **Employee Self-Service web page** to have the surcharge removed.

Doctors: Breast Cancer Early Detection Plans Save Lives

Do you have an early detection plan?

Most doctors believe that tests for early detection of breast cancer save thousands of lives each year. Moreover, they think that many more lives could be saved if more women took advantage of these tests.

The goal of screening exams for detecting breast cancer in its early stages is to find the disease before it causes symptoms. Following the American Cancer Society's guidelines for the early detection of breast cancer improves the chances that the disease will be diagnosed at an early stage and treated successfully.

One way to fight breast cancer is to have a plan that helps you detect the disease in its early stages. **Create your Early Detection Plan** to receive reminders to do breast self-exams and schedule your clinical breast exams and mammograms based on your age and health history.

Wear Pink on October 21 to Increase Breast Cancer Awareness

Join Well Aware and show your support for women's health by wearing pink on National Mammography Day, held each year on the first Friday in October (Friday against breast cancer is early detection). This day serves as a reminder to all women that the best defense against breast cancer is early detection. A mammogram can often detect a problem before there is any outward physical sign. Make sure you get your regular checkups.

Wear pink and share the pictures of your pink staff members **with Well Aware**.

Stress Less This Fall

Stress is a normal psychological and physical reaction to the ever-increasing demands of life. Surveys show that many Americans experience challenges with stress at some point during each year.

Your brain has an alarm system for your protection. When your brain perceives a threat, it signals your body to release a burst of hormones to fuel your capacity for a response. This has been labeled the "fight-or-flight" response.

Once the threat is gone, your body is meant to return to a normal relaxed state. Unfortunately, the nonstop stress of modern life means that your alarm system rarely shuts off.

That is why it is so important to find and use an effective method for managing stress. Stress management gives you a range of tools to reset your alarm system. Without stress management, all too often your body is always on high alert. Over time, high levels of stress lead to serious health problems.

Don't wait until stress has a negative impact on your health, relationships, or quality of life. Start practicing a range of stress management techniques today. Here are a few classes to get you started:

Meditation

Monday through October 24, 2016

5:00–5:45 p.m.

Maple Conference Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Seated Yoga

Wednesdays through December 7, 2016

4:30 p.m.

Café 45 (Lower Level)

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Tai Chi

Thursdays through December 8, 2016

4:30 p.m.

Café 45 (Lower Level)

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

To register, **e-mail Well Aware**.

Sleep Solutions

Depression and Sleep Disorders Often Go Hand in Hand

There is a relationship between sleep disorders and depressive illness, and the relationship is multifaceted. Depression may cause sleep problems and sleep problems may cause or contribute to depression.

According to the National Sleep Foundation, doctors and researchers have established this link between sleep and mood. They know that those with insomnia are more likely to be depressed than those who sleep normally. They have found that a person is 10 times more likely to be depressed if he/she suffers from insomnia.

Learn more about the relationship between sleep and depression.

The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). To learn more about employee wellness, visit our **website**. To view this e-mail newsletter as a .pdf document, click **here**. Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or **e-mail Well Aware**.