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# well-being at work

The Danone Springs of Eden newsletter for the promotion of healthy habits at work

Issue 1 · May 2006

## Why companies are starting to care



There is a growing body of evidence that proves that the performance of a company is directly linked to the well-being of its employees. Since most people spend the majority of their waking hours at work, it is only logical that the workplace should be a point of well-being for employees.

Numerous international companies that have implemented workplace health programs can attest to the fact that employee well-being is good for business. Efforts to improve employee well-being have shown the following benefits:

- Lowering employee risk of disease
- Saving the business money by reducing health-related expenses and limiting absence and disability
- Increased worker morale and work relations
- Improved worker productivity
- Improved financial performance of the company

Studies conducted at some of the world's

leading corporations, such as General Motors, Johnson & Johnson, Procter & Gamble, and Chevron have demonstrated that well-being programs can be cost-beneficial –they can save more money than they cost, thus producing a positive return on investment. A recent study that compared the programs of ten Fortune 500 companies found that the median ROI was \$3 in benefits per dollar spent.

Companies have discovered that water coolers are one of the simplest and most cost-effective methods of providing well-being at work. The importance of water to general health is well known, yet many people do not drink enough. Studies show that employees with access to a water cooler significantly increase their consumption, and their health as a result.

### Well-being in action

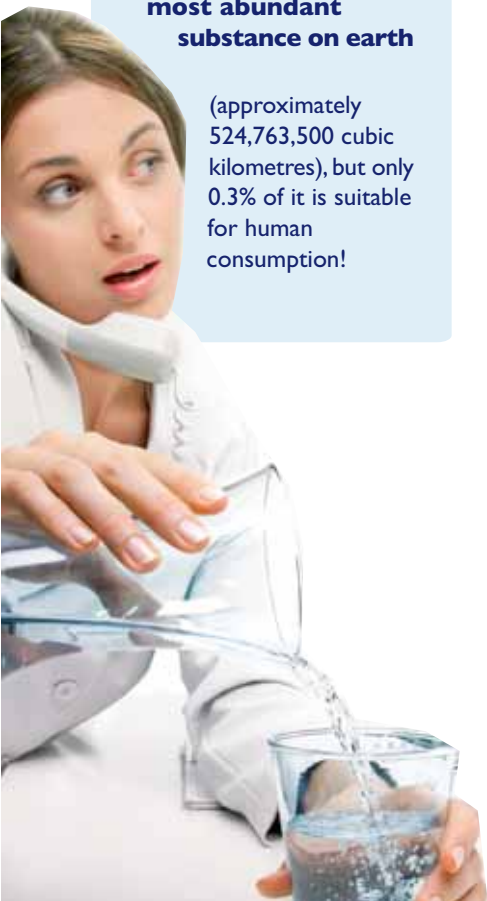
GlaxoWelcom implemented an employee well-being program at one of their manufacturing

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### Did you know...

**...that water is the most abundant substance on earth**

(approximately 524,763,500 cubic kilometres), but only 0.3% of it is suitable for human consumption!



## How much water should I drink?

The body loses fluid every day through normal body functions, such as respiration, perspiration, evaporation and urination. To maintain good health, you need to replace the lost fluid. How much this is varies from person to person as everyone has a different metabolism, diet, activity level, and working environment.

- The average sedentary man requires about 2.9L of fluid a day.



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## Well-being at work,

➔ continued

sites, which included health screening, physical activities, healthier options in the cafeteria, and access to water coolers placed around the complex. The Results: consumption of sugary beverages decreased by 15% and water consumption rose by 50%; annual absenteeism dropped from 3.7 to 1.9 days; employees showed improvement in their cholesterol level and BMI (Body Mass Index), and the company's medical expenses decreased by 13%.

## How much water should I drink?

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- The average sedentary woman requires about 2.2L per day.
- The more we are active, and the warmer or drier the environment, the more water our body needs.

Approximately one-third of your daily water requirement can come from the food you eat, especially if you are eating the right amount of fruit and vegetables. The remainder should come from drinking fluids. Plain water is the simplest and healthiest form: it is cheap, easily processed by the body, and contains no calories or fat.

## Eating at work Helpful hints to improve your nutrition

Studies show that most people have poor eating habits at work, which negatively affects their productivity. According to WHO (World Health Organization) adequate nourishment can raise productivity levels by 20%. To improve your nutrition and performance at work, follow this simple advice:

- Instead of caffeinated or sugary beverages, drink water at work.
- Don't skip meals; working long hours without proper nourishment decreases your productivity and can increase your impulse eating.
- Keep a supply of healthy snacks in your desk to avoid binging on junk food from the vending machine which are full of calories but empty of nutrients; instead, try fruit, nuts, yogurt, muesli, whole grain cereals, etc.



- Drink water with your meals to add digestion.
- To help re-fuel during meeting breaks, avoid high-fat foods like donuts and croissants; try instead fruit and whole grain breads.
- Remind yourself to drink water at regular intervals with a bottle or glass on your desk; you may even set automatic reminders on your computer.



### COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUE

**Coolers in the office - where to put them?**  
Advice from an office designer

**Water & Health:**  
why water is so essential

#### Well-being at Work

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