

**ConnectiFIT  
points of interest:**

- There are 47 employees participating in the National Parks Exploration 2006!
- For weekly motivational messages go to [www.connectifit.uconn.edu](http://www.connectifit.uconn.edu) and look under the National Parks Exploration 2006 webpage.
- The ConnectiFIT email campaign is coming soon to your inbox. Be on the lookout for health and wellness tips delivered directly to you.
- The Spirit Team Recently hosted a recipe contest that could only be made from ingredients found at the Farmer's Market. Nine participants and three judges took part in the event. Inside the newsletter you can find the winning recipe!

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**Connecticut Department of Public Health**

**Worksite Wellness Program**

Newsletter

October -November 2006

**Commissioner's Corner**

Studies have shown that many of the chronic diseases we face today are associated essentially with persistent sedentary lifestyle. Physical inactivity has been associated with increased risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, psychological ailments and some cancers. The American College of Sports Medicine recommend that adults should accumulate 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise (brisk walking) on most or preferably all days of the week. Walking is a very easy exercise to do. It requires no skills, training, special preparation, or facility. Worksite interventions such as the ConnectiFIT program could provide you with necessary tools and skills to increase your physical activity and knowledge of how to modify your lifestyle behaviors. Behavior modification interventions such as Health Risk Appraisals done

by the ConnectiFIT program and physical activity interventions such as pedometer walking programs are successful in helping people lose weight, increase physical activity, and decrease their risk for chronic diseases.

As Commissioner, I would like to say how proud I am to see so many of our employees participate in programs offered by ConnectiFIT. I want you all to know how I feel when I see groups walking at lunch or picking up some freshly picked produce at the Farmers' Market. To further demonstrate my commitment, I will be serving as a member of the DPH ConnectiFIT Advisory Board. My intent is to see that more of my employees take advantage of this wonderful program.

Robert Galvin, MD, MPH    Commissionaire

**Do you know your ConnectiFIT Advisory Committee Members?**

The ConnectiFIT programs mission is to provide the necessary support, resources and coordination in health promotion programs for all the employees of CTDPH. The creation of an Advisory Committee was one of the first steps in the conception of the ConnectiFIT Wellness Program. The governing body for ConnectiFIT is its Advisory Committee. The committee members encourage participation in wellness program activities and assist with meeting ConnectiFIT's goals while fostering ConnectiFIT's mission to ensure a sustainable worksite wellness program.

The Advisory members are selected based on their representation from all levels of employment at the DPH. These individuals volunteer their time by being actively involved with the promotion of the ConnectiFIT program, participation in ConnectiFIT events and assistance in many levels of programming. The Advisory Committee meets regularly on a bimonthly basis. The next meeting for the committee is scheduled for December 6, 2006. If you wish to discuss issues, concerns, ideas or volunteer for any of the ConnectiFIT programs, please talk to one of your advisory members. Here is the list of the 2006/2007 ConnectiFIT Advisory Committee members:

Pouran Faghri, (Co-chair, Principal Investigator of ConnectiFIT, Professor, University of Connecticut)

Christine Parker, (Co-chair, Director Obesity Program, DPH)

Eugene Nichols, (Coordinator of the ConnectiFIT program, DPH)

Sara Gustavesen (Graduate Assistant, University of Connecticut)

Erika Blozie (Graduate Assistant, University of Connecticut)

Dr. Robert Galvin (The Commissionaire)

Ann Andrews, Kevin Brown, Cindy Chaves, Renee Coleman-Mitchell, Sharon Dunning, Dick Edmonds, Mary Emerling, Pamela Gardon, William Gerrish, Vivian Henry, Betty Jung, Catherine Kennelly, Cindy Kozak, Irving Moy, Deborah Pease, Barbara Pickett, Michael Purcaro, Debbye Rosen, Lawanda Scott, Sarju Shah, Charlie Slaughter, Gary St.Amand, Kevin Sullivan, Nancy Wheeler, Warren Wollshlager and Doug Yeager

If you have ideas that you think other employees would enjoy or have any questions about how to become more involved in ConnectiFIT programs you can contact any member of the advisory committee.

## The Relationship between Obesity and Cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, obesity and being overweight account for 14-20% of cancer deaths in men and women respectively. In a study published by the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), several forms of cancer including stomach, liver, pancreas, prostate, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, multiple myeloma, cervical and ovarian are linked to an unhealthy body weight. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) reported that there is enough evidence on the relationship between cancer and the preventive effect of maintaining a healthy weight for cancers of the colon, breast (in postmenopausal women), endometrium, kidney (renal cell carcinoma), and esophagus (adenocarcinoma). The risk of pancreatic cancer in both men and women almost doubles in those who are obese.

In the same study conducted by NEJM, results revealed that being overweight or obese is associated with the risk of death from all cancers and with death from cancers at many specific sites. They estimated that 90,000 deaths due to cancer could be prevented each year in the United States if men and women could maintain normal weight. NEJM states that *"It is unlikely that this goal can be achieved without concerted effort and substantial investment on the part of policymakers, educators, clinicians, employers and schools to promote physical activity and healthful dietary practices as a cultural norm."* At CTDPH we are trying to address these issues through programs offered by your ConnectiFIT wellness program. If you are overweight or obese, please take advantage of the walking programs offered by your ConnectiFIT program.

Schmooze with your coworkers, get to know them and have a nice conversation while taking a walk at Bushnell Park. Burn extra calories during your breaks by participating in the ConnectiFIT walking programs where your co-workers reported significant weight loss by walking during their breaks.

Increase your knowledge regarding healthy eating and learn the behavioral skills necessary to modify your lifestyle by participating in ConnectiFIT healthy living seminars.

Be an active member of your DPH community. If you have ideas about potential programs you would like to see as a part of your ConnectiFIT program, let one of your ConnectiFIT Advisory committee members know. Their names and contact information are on the second page of this newsletter.

For more information on how obesity is linked with higher prevalence of cancers or for statistics on obesity and their relationship to other cancers please visit <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Risk/obesity>.

If you would like to read the entire article published in the New England Journal of Medicine here is the link:

<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/reprint/348/17/1625.pdf>

### NOVEMBER 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 	17	18
19	20	21	22	23  Thanksgiving	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### Schedule of Events

November 16-  
American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout

November 23rd-  
Thanksgiving Day

The Manchester Road Race is ran in Downtown Manchester on Thanksgiving Day

See page 3 for other information on holiday eating



You'll find pumpkins everywhere this season! Did you know that the inside of a pumpkin that is often tossed away is rich in beta carotene?

Research has shown that beta-carotene in combination with other nutrients from fruits and vegetables produces an anti-carcinogenic (or "cancer-fighting") effect. Studies have also shown that a diet high in beta carotene may help reduce the risk of cancers, including breast cancer. Beta carotene in carrots, sweet potatoes, squash, kale, cantaloupe, peaches, apricots and papaya can also be added to your diet. The National Food Guide Pyramid recommends that you consume at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. So, this weekend be sure not to throw away the valuable and nutritious content within that Jack-O'-Lantern. Let that Jack-O'-Lantern scare your cancer cells and your trick-or-treaters away!

Have you made your Jack-O'-Lanterns yet? If you haven't there is still time to reap the benefits of the anti-carcinogenic insides of the pumpkin. Enjoy some pumpkin pancakes as a holiday special by adding ½ cup of pumpkin to your pancake mix or try one of the "award-

winning" recipes from the DPH's own Farmer's Market Recipe Contest:

**Peach Soup**

- 4 cups peaches*
- 1.5 cups water*
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice*
- 1 cup yogurt*
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon*
- 1 teaspoon vanilla*

*Puree 3 cups peaches with other ingredients. Add one cup of chopped peaches to puree and chill for at least 2 hours.*

References:

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/antioxidantsprevention>

[http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/beta-carotene/NS\\_patient-betacarotene](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/beta-carotene/NS_patient-betacarotene)

[www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

**How much will it take to burn that Thanksgiving meal ?**

The average Thanksgiving meal is more than 3,000 calories and has up to 229 grams of fat. No, this is not a typo! This includes your roasted turkey, gravy, stuffing, candied sweet potatoes, buttered steamed green beans, rolls with butter, cranberry sauce, wine and pecan pie. That is only the main meal. If you add other snacks you might have throughout the Thanksgiving day you could easily consume 4,500 calories.

To burn off those excess calories from the Thanksgiving meal, a person who weighs 160 pounds would need to run at a moderate pace for 4 hours, swim for 5 hours or walk for 30 miles! You might want to think of going for at least a family walk on Thanksgiving Day.

Visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) to see how many

calories you should be consuming per day. A person who weighs 160 pounds might be allowed 2,000 calories a day to maintain a healthy weight depending upon their activity level and age. Thanksgiving Day could more than double one's recommended calorie consumption.

Holidays can result in significant weight gain within a short amount of time. It is estimated that the average person consumes an extra 17,500 calories between Thanksgiving and New Year's day. This could accumulate to 5-7 lbs gained!

As quoted by Benjamin Franklin: "Eat not to dullness, drink not to elevation." Enjoy the Holidays! Practice portion control and be active!!!