

NATIONAL PARK EXPLORATION UPDATE

Below are some quick facts about CTFIT's National Park Exploration:

- So far we have walked **5824 miles.**
- There are **6364 more miles left to go**
- There are **new indoor walking maps available on the CTFIT website**
- The last day of walking is **December 16th**
- The **Wrap-up for this walking program is Wednesday December 21st**

Connecticut Department of Public Health Worksite Wellness Program Newsletter ~ December 2005

Commissioner's Corner

The CDC publication "Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report", recently published "Public Health Strategies for Preventing and Controlling Overweight and Obesity in School and Worksite Settings". This article points out that since adults spend substantial amount of time at the workplace, it is an ideal place for intervention. Also, this article points out that opportunity for environmental and policy changes to foster healthy dietary practices and increase activity are readily available at worksites.

The Task Force on Community Preventive Services recommends a combination of nutrition and physical activity programs. There is also an emphasis on providing nutritional information, combined with a structured program to increase physical activity. I am happy to say that at the DPH with our ConnectiFIT worksite Health Promotion program we are one step ahead of the game. We

are offering many of these recommended programs for our employees.

During the Holiday season I encourage everyone to take a look at the ConnectiFIT website, WWW.CONNECTIFIT.UCONN.EDU. The website has undergone many revisions during the past few months. There are new indoor walking maps, as well as maps with walking routes around the DPH. Another new addition to the website is the Healthy Living Seminar Presentations. Information presented in the Healthy Living Seminar is now available. I also urge everyone to take a look at the physical activity page for information on different types of activity and ways to become more physically active during the busy holiday season.

I encourage everyone to take part in all ConnectiFIT has to offer. I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season!

Stay Healthy During the Holiday

Everyone gets busy during the holiday season, but this is no excuse to stop being physically active or to overeat. You can still make healthy choices during the holidays. The Center for Disease Control has compiled some tips to help you remain healthy during the holidays.

Try to stick to your regular exercise routine as much as possible. Remember that fitting physical activity in might take more planning than usual. Mark a time for exercise on your calendar, and think of it as important as any other appointment.

Limit the amount of time your family spends in front of the

television. Also, cut back on the amount of time your children play video and computer games. Instead, start new traditions that incorporate fitness like taking a walk around the neighborhood to look at holiday decorations.

Use physical activity as a way to avoid or alleviate holiday stress.

Dance or exercise to your favorite holiday music.

Don't stand by the buffet table. It leads to the temptation to overeat. Instead mingle with family and friends.

Overindulgence is easy to do during the holidays. Try to pick a few of your favorite foods, and avoid large portion sizes.

Take sugar and butter off the table to avoid extra calories.

Remember calories add up, especially during the holidays when we snack more. For a healthy snack, choose a piece of fresh fruit.

For a great holiday gift, try going to your farmer's market or grocery store and selecting fresh fruits and vegetables. Decorate a basket and fill it with all your tasty treats.

For other holiday tips visit the CDC at WWW.CDC.GOV.

Connecticut Department of Public Health Obesity Prevention Plan Released

On November 18, 2005 the Obesity Program held the Second Connecticut Stakeholders Meeting at the Capitol with over 100 professionals in attendance.

Commissioner Galvin gave opening remarks regarding obesity as a major public health crisis in the State of Connecticut and the nation. At the meeting, Connecticut State Obesity Prevention and Control Plan: Healthy Eating and Active Living-Connecticut's Plan for Health Promotion was released to the public. The mission of the Plan is to promote a stronger social norm for healthy nutrition behaviors and increased physical activity.

The Plan has three goals:

- Develop state infrastructure necessary for obesity prevention and control;

- Develop, implement, and evaluate community and worksite -level model programs that can be replicated in other Connecticut communities and worksites, and;
- Create a mechanism for tracking environmental and policy changes and outcomes related to increased physical activity and improves nutrition practices.

The Connecticut Stakeholders meeting was well received by all that attended. Ninety-two percent of the professionals that attended responded that the agenda was relevant and beneficial to their work and resources and material provided were useful.

Read on for ConnectiFIT's involvement in the Connecticut Stakeholders Meeting

Presenting the ConnectiFIT Program at the Obesity Meeting

During the Obesity Program's second annual Connecticut Stakeholders Meeting Dr. Pouran Faghri, ConnectiFIT's Project Director, presented on the role of worksite health promotion programs to reduce overweight and obesity. Dr. Faghri indicated that based on recent statistics more than 50% of adult Americans are overweight or obese and are at high risk for many physical and psychological conditions, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and depression. Also based on the recent statistics 65% of the adults in United States are employed, this would make worksite a natural oppor-

tunity to reach those at high risk for overweight and obesity. She mentioned that people consume one or more meals daily at work and substantial proportion of daily calories are consumed during the working hours. Furthermore, people also spend a substantial amount of time at work. Therefore worksite health promotion programs could provide ample opportunities for nutrition and physical activity interventions, as well as providing health-related information, health screenings, preventive services, and gain the social support often needed for health behavior changes. Participation in a

worksite health promotion program will eventually increase employee morale and reduces stress and potentially reduce obesity and overweight in addition to providing other benefits.

Dr. Faghri also spoke on the goals of ConnectiFIT program at the DPH, and presented the data that have been collected from participants in different program activities offered by the ConnectiFIT. She presented the plan to expand the ConnectiFIT worksite health promotion programs to other state agencies.

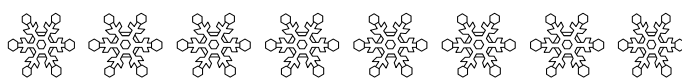
ConnectiFIT's Healthy Living Seminars

December 15,
12:00-1:00 PM
Bridget Sullivan, RD
"Healthy Eating during the Holidays"
470 Conference Room A/B

January 12, 2006
12:00-1:00 PM
Jodi Petrozak
"What the YMCA can offer You"
470 Conference Room C

February 7, 2006
12:00-1:00 PM
"Risks of Stroke and Heart Disease"
DPH LAB

More Information About ConnectiFIT and it's Programs, go to
www.ConnectiFIT.uconn.edu or email ConnectiFIT@po.state.ct.us



Try a New Activity this Holiday Season!



Look below for new physical activity ideas and winter activity ideas (as well as the calories used for the activity).

- X-Country Skiing (light effort)-493 calories
- Downhill Skiing (light effort)- 352 calories
- Snow shoeing- 563 calories
- Ice Skating- 493 calories
- Water Aerobics- 281 calories
- Racquetball (non-competitive)- 493 calories
- Kickboxing-704 calories
- Yoga-281 calories

* Calories based on one hour of activity for a 155 lb person



Battling Stress this Holiday Season

The holidays are a happy time of year for many, but also can be a stressful time of year. Here are some tips for battling stress this holiday season:

- **Plan ahead-** Set aside time for shopping, baking, visiting friends and family. Also, allow extra time for travel due to holiday traffic.
- **Learn to say no-** Do not take on more than you can handle during the holidays. People will understand if you cannot do a project or activity. Make sure you say yes only to projects that you

really want to do, else you will spend your time resentful and overwhelmed.

- **Take a breather-** taking just 15 minutes to yourself can make a world of difference. Do something quiet and relaxing with your time, like take a walk, or listen to relaxing music.
- **Rethink resolutions-** Set resolutions that are both realistic and attainable. Set goals and timelines to help you stay on track with your resolutions.
- **Be realistic-** Families grow and change fre-

quently. Try to hang on to traditions that you enjoy, but understand when they may not be feasible any longer. Take the opportunity to start new traditions to carry on in the years to come.

These tips have been compiled from an article found in the National Institute of Health's Medline Plus. For more information on relieving stress go to <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/stress.html> or take a look at the November Health Living Seminar presented by Tami Hodges, found on the ConnectiFIT website.