

The Finnish Line

June 2005

The official newsletter of



The Wellness Center
★ Mountain States Health Alliance

Consumer Buying Tips for Health Clubs

Lesson #1 - Don't get locked into a long-term contract:

Many commercial health clubs are known for their aggressive sales tactics! One of these is a "come-on" in which they promise **free** or **highly discounted** membership dues. In exchange, the member is **locked** into a contract for a long period of time and with inflated rates at the end. Eventually, they get that discounted amount back... **and more!** What is worse is that often, these long-term contracts are sold to a financial firm, much as used car loans are sold (or "factored"). Once that happens, the members are locked into paying for the length of the contract. Even if you stop using the facility, you pay!!! And pay!!!!

That's why we are converting to a month-to-month agreement. Since our goal is to earn your business every month, shouldn't the decision be yours as to whether or not we achieve that goal? Unlike the fixed contract situation, as part of Mountain States Health Alliance, we CARE about your health, your fitness and your total experience. We want to provide value for hard-earned dollars! Remember the old adage, "there is no free lunch!"



We listened to you and we heard you!

Because of feedback from our members, we have decided to rescind the monthly \$5 administrative fee for monthly billing. Our intent in making this change is to keep costs down and be more efficient. In addition, by using electronic billing, we can be more accurate. Our objective is to keep members' dues DOWN and convenience UP! In the future, those who convert to the month-to-month agreement, and all new members, will be on electronic funds transfer (EFT) from a credit card or bank account. If you have questions about the safety and security of EFT, please ask a staff member for a Fact Sheet.

New equipment is here!

Have you noticed the addition of three new total body elliptical trainers and new dumbbell racks at the Wayfield location? What about the two new treadmills, three recumbent bikes and two Schwinn Airdyne bikes at Market Street? We're excited about these arrivals and judging from their usage, you are too.

Summer Group Exercise calendar: Have you checked out the new summer group exercise calendar? Take a look at the variety offered in strength, cardiovascular, core conditioning, Pilates and more!

Welcome to our new Membership Services Director:

We are excited to announce the hiring of Terry Ayers as our new Membership Services Director. Terry has an extensive marketing and sales background, having worked for Lotus Biochemical Corporation (a pharmaceutical company in Bristol) and Media General in Bristol as a regional classified ads supervisor. As each of you did when I arrived, please make her welcome! Terry will be leading our sales, marketing and retention programs in the existing centers and helping to facilitate the transition to the new Center.



Progress on the new Center at MedTech Park:

Building footers should be poured during the first weeks of June followed by steel starting to rise on the hill. If you haven't taken a look at the new posters in the entrance of the Market Street and Wayfield Drive locations lately, take a peek at the cross-sectional view with people exercising. You might see yourself inside working out. We are on a timeline of an April 2006 opening but hope it will be sooner; stay tuned for very special member-only sneak previews coming up!

CSI Member Management System:

As part of our journey to the new Wellness Center at MedTech Park, we are pleased to announce a major service upgrade! Beginning July 1, we will begin using a new member management system that will:

- ✓ improve the confidentiality and security of your personal information
- ✓ make the payment process more convenient using electronic funds transfer
- ✓ accelerate the check-in system

Under our new system, members have been issued a personal ID card that contains a simple bar code that will take the place of keying in member number. We also took the opportunity to ask for your email address so that we can keep you updated on current events and send important information on a more timely basis. In the future, we'll be able to let you know of class changes and other issues on a "real time basis."

Did you know that very few Americans are living a healthy lifestyle?

Even though everyone seems to have a good idea of what a healthy lifestyle is, very few actually live it, a new study suggests. Most people know what to do but few people do what they know! People who do not smoke, eat five servings of fruits and vegetables daily, exercise regularly and maintain a normal weight account for only 3 percent of the adult population in the United States, according to the report in the April 25 issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine. In its study, the group of researchers from Michigan State University wanted to see the proportion of adults who met their definition for a healthy lifestyle. The published results came from 153,805 adults from all over the country who were part of the 2000 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), which is an annual survey of the nation's health.

The researchers found that 76 percent of the people surveyed were nonsmokers, 40.1 percent maintained a healthy weight, 23.3 percent said they ate at least five fruits and vegetables daily, and only 22.2 percent said they exercised at least five times a week. "When we look at the combination of all four factors, we found that only 3 percent of adults meet our criteria of a healthy lifestyle," the senior researcher said. "This data shows the extraordinarily low level of adults living a healthy lifestyle." There is substantial data showing the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle. Those who choose to live a healthy lifestyle live longer and have reduced disease risks, including risk for heart disease, musculoskeletal disease, cancer and diabetes. They also have reduced medical expenditures and an overall better quality of life.

Many experts think it's the job of health professionals to get the message out to people that living a healthy lifestyle is important. Though this is certainly a responsibility of health professionals, a quick survey of the majority of the population would conclude that most people can cite one or more things they could do to begin living a healthier lifestyle. In other words, they already know what to do to get started! Most people know they should exercise, yet they still have difficulty starting on a program. So here are a few suggestions to increase your level of physical activity and get started down the path toward a healthier you!

Practical Ways to Increase Physical Activity

- Park your car farther from your destination
- Walk briskly to and from your destination
- Take the stairs
- Take a longer route when you walk somewhere
- Walk to deliver memos and messages at work
- Play games with your kids
- Clean your house with purpose!
- Hand-wash your car
- Rake leaves
- Take the dog(s) for a walk
- Walk inside or outside during breaks
- Create accountability: have a friend join the Wellness Center and exercise with you