



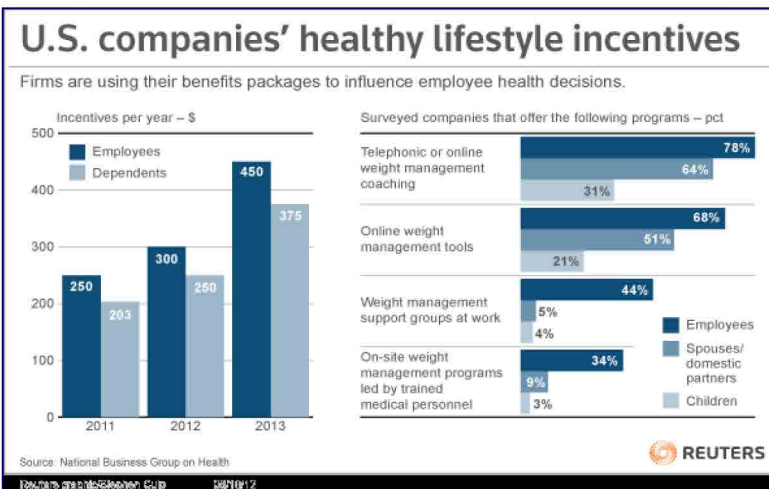
Is Your Boss Watching Your Cholesterol?

It's no wonder that companies are eager to whip their staffers into better physical shape. Employers were expected to spend \$11,664 per employee on healthcare for 2012, according to Towers Watson, up from \$10,982 in 2011. That's expected to rise on average in 2013 by 7 percent, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation survey.

"Companies are struggling to get people more engaged in their health, and financial incentives are an increasingly important piece of that puzzle," says Tom Billet, senior consultant for human resource consulting firm Towers Watson. Indeed, some 61 percent of employers offered wellness-related financial rewards in 2012, up from 54 percent in 2011, according to Towers Watson. *(See Reuters graphic below).*

"One of the outcomes is that you control costs, but then you also reduce absenteeism and get higher productivity," says Mark Schmit, vice president of research for the Alexandria, Virginia-based Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). "For every dollar you invest in wellness, you get a return of \$3 to \$6, so there's definitely a positive effect on the bottom line."

Excerpted from: American Health Holding & Foxnews.com



Seasonal Flu Update for 2012/2013

Each year there seems to be something new to learn about prevention of seasonal flu. Last year, for the 2011/12 flu season, patients were asking if they could skip their annual flu shot since it had the exact same strains as the flu shot for 2010/11. This year, the seasonal flu vaccine includes different strains of the virus.

The influenza strains in the 2012/2013 seasonal flu

vaccine are **not exactly the same as those in the vaccines for 2010/11 and 2011/12.** The H1N1 strain is the same as the past two years, but the other two strains are different. This year's vaccine contains the following components: A/California/7/2009 (H1N1), A/Victoria-/361/2011 (H3N2), and B/Wisconsin/1/2010.

Annual universal vaccination for seasonal flu has been recommended since 2010. This means that **all individuals six months of age and older without a contraindication should get the seasonal flu vaccine every year.**

The best defense, however, is always a good offense. And, though repetitive, reminding employees of the "good health habits" that can prevent flu are worth a pound of cure!

Here are several quick tips to broadcast to your employees **again**:

- ✓ **Avoid close contact...**with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them too.
- ✓ **If possible, stay home...**from work, school and errands when you are sick.
- ✓ **Cover your mouth and nose...**with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- ✓ **Wash your hands often...**to help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ✓ **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth...** because germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated, then touches him/herself.
- ✓ **Practice other good health habits...**clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school; get plenty of sleep; be physically active; manage your stress; drink plenty of fluids; and eat nutritious food.

TPSC thanks Northwest Pharmacy Services for this info! For the full list of recommended prevention habits, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>