

EAPworks

A newsletter to promote employee health in the workplace.



 UnityPoint Health
Allen Hospital

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What does Allen EAP offer?

Allen Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are a free benefit provided by your employer to help you and your family deal with life's problems and the stress caused by these problems.

You can talk to an EAP counselor about:

- Job stress
- Depression or anxiety
- Family or marital conflicts
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Relationship difficulties
- Grief & loss issues
- Parenting issues
- Other mental health concerns

When should I call Allen EAP?

Does a problem occupy a lot of your time? Does it interfere with your normal activities at work or at home? Have symptoms persisted for more than two weeks? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, it's time to get help.

How do I make an appointment with Allen EAP?

To schedule a confidential appointment, call (319) 235-3550 or toll-free at 1-800-303-9996, Monday - Thursday, 8:00 am to 8:00 pm and 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Friday. Identify yourself as part of your company's Employee Assistance Program. We'll schedule an appointment to meet your needs. Office, phone, and telehealth (virtual) counseling sessions available.

What if it's an Emergency?

If a personal crisis occurs when our office is closed, call (319) 235-3550 or toll-free at 1-800-303-9996. An EAP counselor will contact you within one hour of your call to help you stabilize the situation.

Treating the Aftermath of Trauma



All of us handle stress differently, including traumatic stress—experienced when a severe injury or the threat of severe injury or death occurs, or while witnessing these things affecting others. Believability of the threat and fear are key factors that produce traumatic stress. How you react to traumatic stress does not demonstrate weakness or other personality flaws. However, lingering symptoms may cause you to think, “I should snap out of this.” Caution: Overcoming traumatic stress is not necessarily a do-it-yourself project. This avenue of thought could lead you to avoid the best form of help—counseling with a professional who could help you return to a pre-trauma state. If you

experience sleep disturbances, intrusive thoughts, mood swings, flashbacks, or are easily startled following a traumatic event, talk to a professional counselor, your doctor, or employee assistance professional. Like a cut or other physical injury, traumatic stress left untreated or ignored can fester too. Not with bacteria, of course, but with bothersome symptoms that may cause additional issues if they remain chronic. Proper treatment approaches exist to help you overcome traumatic stress and prevent it from interfering with your life.

Understanding Texting Shorthand for Parents

It is healthy and normal for young people to establish bonds, but texting has added a whole new dimension to this phenomenon—a growing shorthand of acronyms. Texting shorthand can be fun, but it presents challenges for parents wanting to know about their children's activities. If knowing more about texting shorthand is important so your children are not KPC (keeping parents clueless), then visit <http://www.netlingo.com>. It's the one-stop source for texting acronyms. Some may not leave you LOL (laughing out loud), but you will learn what “420” means (marijuana.) Source: <http://www.netlingo.com>



When Employees or Bosses Bully



Research by polling organizations and federal agencies yields different findings, but minor percentages of employees and supervisors bully workers. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reports that about seven percent of bosses themselves are bullied *by employees*. Obviously bullying is a common problem in the workplace. Are you bullied by a boss or coworker? Confronting inappropriate behavior can be disconcerting, but rather than keep your head down or experience health problems as a result, make an attempt to inform the bully in a calm manner what behavior or circumstances produce an adverse effect on you that is unwanted, is offensive, or feels hostile. Request that this behavior stop. If the bullying is covert, ask that the circumstances associated with your unwanted experience be examined or considered so it is curtailed. Bullying often ends when it is confronted.

Having taken these steps, however, you can seek additional help from your organization if the bullying does not stop. If your organization has a policy related to bullying, do follow it. Go to <http://1.usa.gov/bully-help> for more information.

Leftover Pain Medication: Get Rid of It

What should you do with leftover prescription pain pills? Securely dispose of them, says the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and you will reduce risk of misuse, burglary, theft, and illegal redistribution. These are serious problems, especially among youth. Using stored pain pills for a new injury or illness can place you at risk, especially if doing so causes you to avoid seeing your doctor. Check for disposal instructions on medication or ask any pharmacy or medical center for guidance. Discover whether there is an unused prescription “take-back” program in your area. Learn more at www.fda.gov (keyword “disposal”).



Better Stress Management

The best stress management techniques are those that target the anxiety you experience in specific situations. When considering stress management, look at intervention tactics that target the type and degree of stress that you would like to reduce or eliminate in certain situations. Keep track of daily, weekly, or monthly events to spot stress reactions. Then design a personalized stress management program that works for you. Always include exercise in your program. Research consistently shows that no matter what type of stress you experience, exercise will make your emotional and physical response to it more resilient. Do you experience stress before public speaking and when you feel deadline pressures, or lose sleep the night before an important sales meeting? Your stress response is unique. The challenge is to find the intervention that works for you.

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EAPworks is published quarterly by UnityPoint Health – Allen Hospital for Allen EAP clients to provide reliable information on health-related topics. It is not intended to provide medical advice on personal health matters, which should be obtained directly from a physician.