

# No time like the present to get healthy



Read about ANA's "Year of the Healthy Nurse" campaign and other initiatives to promote healthy nurses.

**THIS MONTH**, ANA rolls out a new yearlong initiative focused on helping *every* nurse be a *healthy* nurse. Why? Good health is good for you and helps you to be at your best when providing care.

This initiative, just like our practice, looks at health from a multidimensional perspective. It's not just about an ideal blood pressure or weight. Rather, ANA defines a healthy nurse as one who actively focuses on creating and maintaining a balance and synergy of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, personal, and professional well-being.

As part of our "Year of the Healthy Nurse" campaign, we are developing a range of webinars and other educational activities, as well as assembling new and ongoing resources that promote and support nurses' health. Every month, ANA will take an in-depth look at a specific topic. This month, for example, we are addressing worksite wellness, including an article in this issue's new "ANA on the Frontline" section. In other months, ANA will bring nurses practical, up-to-date information on cardiovascular health, nutrition, combating stress, healthy sleep, and infection prevention and control, to name a few.

The ANA Enterprise, composed of ANA, the American Nurses Foundation, and the American Nurses Credentialing Center, also is planning to launch the Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation™ Grand Challenge in May. This initiative will connect and engage individual RNs, employers, and state and specialty nurse organizations in a social movement to transform the health of the nation by improving the health of the nation's 3.6 million RNs in five domains—physical activity, sleep, nutrition, quality of life, and safety. Please stay tuned for details on the challenge launch and how you can participate and improve your own health.

In yet another effort, ANA is successfully engaging nurses through #FitNurseFriday, in which ANA and nurses nationwide share healthy habits, practices, and

motivational strategies via our Facebook and Twitter sites every Friday. ANA also continues to analyze data from its online HealthyNurse® Health Risk Appraisal, which was a free, confidential tool giving nurses real-time data on their personal and professional health, safety, and wellness.

The Grand Challenge and our dedicated "Year of the Healthy Nurse" are vitally important and much needed, as the evidence shows. In nearly all indicators, nurses' health is worse than that of average Americans. Nurses tend to be overweight, experience greater levels of stress, and fail to get the recommended hours of sleep. And it's a well-known fact that many nurses spend most of their waking hours caring for others—patients, family, and friends—often at the risk of their own health and well-being.

The other important reason for our efforts is this: Patients are influenced by the healthcare professionals they see in front of them. In other words, they view us as role models for health, so it's essential that we embody the image of health. Furthermore, research has shown that nurses and other healthcare professionals are more likely to engage in patient education on healthy choices and behaviors if they themselves, for example, eat balanced meals, exercise, refrain from using tobacco products, and manage their stress effectively.

ANA's work to promote healthy nurses and healthy work environments is not new. Our own *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* states that nurses owe "the same duties to self as to others." It specifically speaks to modeling the health-focused behaviors we teach and research, guarding against sleep-related and compassion fatigue, and fostering professional and personal life balance.

Finally, the beginning of a new year traditionally is a time when many of us commit to healthier choices and behaviors. ANA is making a commitment to all 3.6 million RNs nationwide to support your journey to wellness. And by supporting each other, we can ensure nurses are healthier than ever and are leading the way to a healthier America. ★



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