

Employee Health and Wellness

“The groundwork of all happiness is health.”



Your Health is Important

Healthy employees are safe employees because they can focus better on tasks and their surroundings. Maintaining a healthy diet as well as physical and mental health is vital to personal wellness and will allow employees to feel good at work and at home. At Davey Tree health and wellness is important because our people are our family.

“Take care of your body. It’s the only place you have to live.”



Hydration

Once crew members begin to feel thirsty, they are already becoming dehydrated. For baseline hydration, a person needs approximately 50% of their body weight in ounces of clean water per day; try to drink small amounts of water every 15-20 minutes. When working in high heat conditions, or when performing highly physical tasks, you will need to consume even more water to replenish what your body loses in sweat. Just a 2% drop in body water can trigger difficulties with short-term memory and focus.

Caffeinated or highly sweetened drinks can not be considered a substitute for water. These highly caffeinated drinks will dehydrate you faster if you are not drinking an equal or greater amount of water.

Proper hydration will also assist the body's natural cooling system. Your body works hard to get rid of excess heat through perspiration, and this loss of water and minerals needs to be replaced throughout the day. Remember that you are not only replacing water, but also electrolytes and salts. Keep your internal system balanced with salty snacks or sports drinks.

Hydration begins the day before! Being fit for duty involves maintaining proper hydration before you begin your workday. If you are dehydrated at the beginning of your shift, it will be much more difficult to "catch up", and your chances for developing heat illness increase.

Recommendations:

- Take cool-down breaks when working in extreme heat
- Encourage fellow workers to drink water while working together
- Make sure you replenish electrolytes as well as water, whether by drinking sports drinks, eating snacks, or mixing natural electrolyte drinks
- Plan work in high heat conditions to ensure there is access to shade from direct sun
- Damage to the kidneys, liver and brain can occur from dehydration. Know the signs and symptoms of dehydration, such as profuse sweating, moist or clammy skin, dizziness, confusion, rapid heart rate, rapid breathing, lack of energy or irritability
- Please refer to The Davey Safety and Training Manual, Section 4 Worker Wellness for more information on hydration and heat illness prevention, including work planning and acclimatization

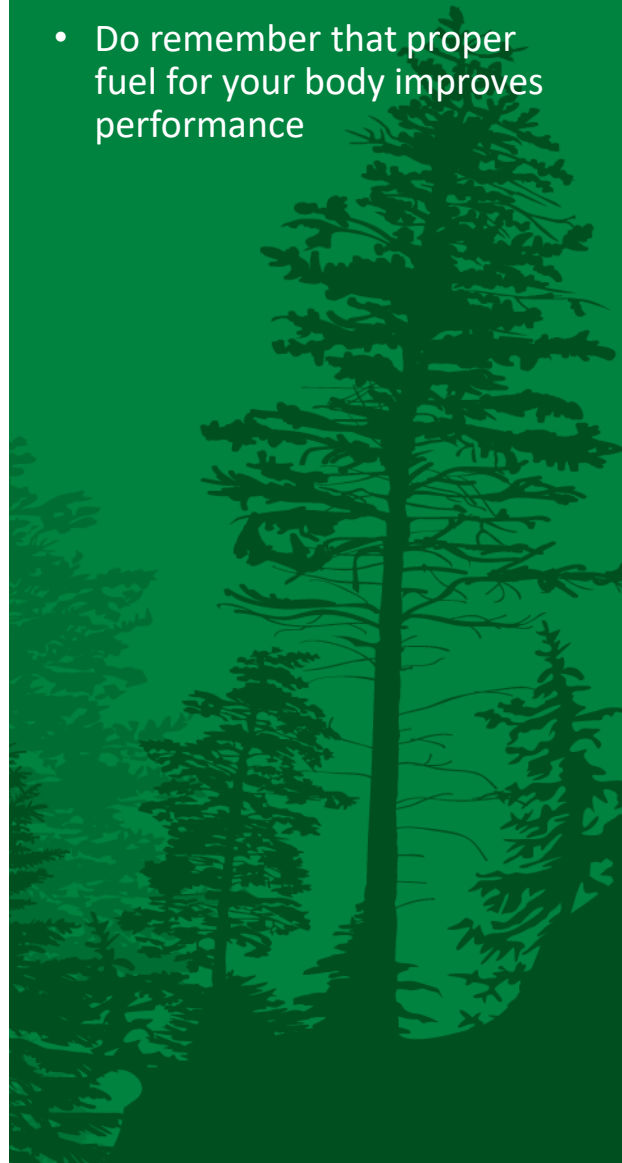
Nutrition

Employees should eat a balanced diet – one that combines the right foods to provide all the vitamins, minerals, and nutrients their bodies need. Vitamins such as B6, B12 and E help to strengthen muscles while also improving immune system and preventing illnesses. Consult with your health care provider to ensure you are getting all the required nutrients from your diet.

Start your day with protein rich foods to support your energy levels. Positions that require higher levels of physical performance, such as climbing arborists, will also require a higher level of attention to diet and nutrition. Make sure you choose whole foods that are nutrient-dense with enough protein to support muscle breakdown and repair. Bring a lunch and snacks each day and avoid processed foods when possible by choosing fresh fruits and vegetables instead. Eating healthy meals and snacks regularly throughout the day to replenish your body's energy levels is essential.

Nutrition Tips:

- Do eat a balanced diet with plenty of both protein and other nutrients
- Do eat several meals and snacks throughout the day
- Do try to avoid eating a lot of processed and pre-packaged foods
- Do make fresh fruits and vegetables a go to snack
- Do remember that proper fuel for your body improves performance



Physical Health

In addition to diet, exercise is the other major ingredient necessary for good physical health. Exercise boosts energy levels and mental capacity while reducing stress and the risk of disease. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity each week; physical activity during work hours counts towards this healthy exercise goal.

In addition, it is helpful to maintain physical fitness in off periods when employees are not performing their highly physical work. Walking, running, biking or other cardio based activities will raise your heart rate as well as release mental and physical stress. Physical jobs often require repetitive motion, which can be counter-balanced through a variety of cross-training movements outside of work.

Adequate stretching goes a long way in preventing musculoskeletal disorders, sprains, strains, or other more serious injuries. Stretching techniques that should be used daily include static and dynamic stretching; static stretching involves holding the stretch, while dynamic stretching involves slow, controlled movement. We continue to focus on maintaining flexibility and improving range of motion. Please refer to The Davey Safety and Training Manual, Section 4 Worker Wellness, for information on the Davey Warm-up/Flexibility Exercises that are to be utilized daily by you and your fellow employees.

Guidelines for Stretching:

- Do not bounce; hold for a static stretch or use slow controlled movement for dynamic stretching
- Breathe comfortably; exhalation relaxes the muscles
- Hold isolated muscle stretches for 30 seconds
- Repeat each isolated stretch 2x-4x to improve mobility
- Avoid stretching to the point of pain
- Avoid stretching if there is excessive or unstable range of motion

Mental Wellness


Mental and emotional stress can contribute to difficulties focusing on work tasks, increased risk of errors and injuries, and difficulty interacting with others in the workforce. The CDC estimates that 60-80 percent of all doctor visits are related to stress. While staying physically active can relieve stress, it is also important to mentally disconnect from areas in your life that create stress through meditation, rest, and recovery. Engaging in hobbies outside of work is another positive way to eliminate stress.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends the following relaxation techniques to reduce stress and improve sleep:

- Relaxation breathing – concentrate on your breathing while releasing tension in muscles and relaxing your body.
- Imagery – visualize yourself in a peaceful setting.
- Meditation – focus on a sound, visualization, or your breath to increase awareness of the present moment and take your mind off more stressful thoughts.
- Progressive muscle relaxation – try following recorded instructions that guide you through a process of tensing and relaxing muscle groups from head to toe, one at a time.

Repeated use of the techniques will improve relaxation effect over time.

Effects of Stress on the Human Body:

- Elevated heart rate
 - Elevated blood pressure
 - Elevated blood sugar (glucose) with suppressed ability to burn fat
 - Suppressed healing
 - Reduced immune activity
 - Slowed digestion
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Rest and Recovery

For our mind and body to perform at the optimal level, it requires us to allow enough time to rest and recover from physical and mental activity. Sleep is important for energy and a key factor in the repair of the body. Studies have shown that at night, the brain detoxifies and long-term memories are registered. Muscles and soft tissues are rebuilt and repaired during sleep as well.

Not getting a minimum of 7-8 hours of sleep can result in physical and mental decline; decreased coordination, agility, judgment, and reaction times; reduced problem-solving skills; difficulty concentrating, impaired motor skills and increased risk of incidents. This cognitive impairment can lead to accidents on the road as well as work-related incidents and injuries. Being well-rested is an important factor in being fit for duty.

You can improve your sleep habits by committing to a set number of hours of sleep every night. Create a routine, including turning off electronic devices and doing something relaxing for 15-30 minutes before going to sleep. Sticking to a routine will help your body and mind recognize when it is time to go to sleep.

Good Sleep Tips:

- Set up a regular sleep routine, including on weekends; you will be able to fall asleep and wake up more easily
- Avoid using electronic devices close to bedtime and place them farther away from you at night
- Allow 15-30 minutes to relax and mentally disengage before bed
- Allow enough time for a minimum of 7-8 hours of sleep a night
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol close to bedtime
- Relaxing exercise, like stretching or yoga, can help promote good sleep