

## 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
- Financial Problems

### 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 a.m. to 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. 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 (800) 303-9996. An EAP counselor will contact you within one hour of your call to help you stabilize the situation.

## Beating Workplace Fatigue

**Workplace fatigue** has contributed to some of the world's greatest disasters, including Chernobyl, the Challenger explosion, and the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Fatigue typically happens after prolonged mental and physical activity. In today's always-on, technology-driven world, its frequency and impact on health and productivity are gaining attention. Recognize the signs of fatigue and take action to protect your health. Symptoms include difficulty concentrating, slowed reaction time, irritability, persistent drowsiness, and reduced motivation. You may also experience frequent yawning, headaches, forgetfulness, blurry vision, and increased mistakes. If fatigue continues, see a medical doctor to discover its underlying cause, and if your lifestyle creates fatigue, talk to the EAP. On the job, take a break. Walk, stretch, hydrate, do breathing exercises, and get fresh air. If your fatigue is severe, let someone know to reduce the risk of injury or prevent a calamity.



## Don't Get Your Phone Hacked

**Phone hacking is** on the rise with more people relying on these devices for an increasing number of life tasks. Unfortunately, there is a misconception that a phone is less vulnerable than a desktop computer. Not true. There is a new cyber risk called a "zero-click exploit." This can attack a phone without trickery, clicks, or any interaction by the phone user. Smartphone companies are staying ahead, but if you don't stay on top of security updates in a timely way, you increase the risk of being attacked silently and invisibly. Periodically turn off your phone entirely, maintain updates properly, and install apps only from official and reputable sources.



## Avoid Passive-Aggressive Communication at Work

**Passive-aggressive communication** is distressing and contributes to poor morale, higher turnover, and lower productivity. Recognizing its impact and avoiding it can create a more positive workplace, reduce stress and decrease burnout. Do you participate in passive-aggressive communication? Common behaviors include sending emails to a coworker but copying it to their supervisor; withholding information; using the silent treatment; leaving notes that create distress (e.g., "See me" or "We need to talk"); giving a compliment containing a hidden insult (e.g., "Wow, good work for a newbie."); using an insincere tone (e.g., "Yeah, sure, I'll get that done pronto."); and undermining a positive relationship between two coworkers with gossip or falsehoods.



# Alcohol Use and Breast Cancer Prevention

According to the World Health Organization, breast cancer is the most common type of cancer linked to alcohol consumption in women. One drink per day raises risk by 15%. A new report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine reviews scientific evidence on the latest-understood relationship between moderate alcohol consumption and health outcomes. The report concluded “with moderate certainty that consuming a moderate amount of alcohol (one drink/5 oz. of wine) per day is associated with a higher risk of female breast cancer compared to never consuming alcohol.” It also concluded with low certainty that higher amounts of moderate alcohol consumption are associated with a higher risk of breast cancer. Is alcohol use a concern for you or someone you care about? Learn more about how to get help or how to help another person by contacting your employee assistance program.



# Alcohol Use and Breast Cancer Prevention

Do you have enough time to do the things you want—and need—to do? Answering yes means you are “time affluent.” It is a key to feeling happy and satisfied with life. The opposite would be feeling constantly under pressure, harried, and “without a second to breathe.” That feeling of being in control of your time isn’t necessarily acquired by having money—financial affluence—but instead by appreciating time as an irreplaceable commodity and applying skills that give you more control over it. To gain time affluence, consider seven skills: 1) Learn to prioritize to prevent less-important tasks from consuming time. 2) Practice doing key tasks in “chunks of time.” This increases focus and speed and gives you more life balance. 3) Learn to say no; this requires learning when and what to say no to while staying proficient at it. 4) Delegate more—a cost-free example might be delegating household chores to other family members. 5) Reduce/avoid social media/technology use. 6) Change your perception. Put time gaps between chores to enjoy a break rather than stitching them together all day and feeling harried. 7) Discover the art of mindfulness and utilize this life skill to appreciate the present moment.



## Avoid Lifestyle Habits That Harm Kidneys

Don’t harm your kidneys with lifestyle behaviors that place stress on their ability to function. Kidneys filter blood at the rate of about 200 quarts per day. They remove waste products, selectively reabsorb or excrete water, control blood pressure, produce hormones, and maintain electrolyte levels. The following put stress on kidneys: 1) Late-night eating and bedtime snacking interrupt your circadian rhythm and adversely affect metabolism, causing stress on kidneys. 2) Skipping breakfast is linked to poor metabolic control, specifically increasing the risk of protein in urine, a sign of unhealthy kidney function. This can also increase hypertension. 3) Poor hydration reduces blood flow to the kidneys, making them work harder. Stay hydrated by drinking water during the day to help your kidneys do their job. 4) Oversalting your food can increase blood pressure. Avoiding these behaviors can help prevent inflammation, poor hydration, and disturbances of your metabolism—all enemies of your kidneys’ health. Learn more:[pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28385348/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28385348/)



## Fifteen Benefits of Walking

Knowing the benefits of walking 30 minutes a day five days a week may well increase your motivation for doing it. Do you see in the following list any benefits that excite you? Decreased risk of cardiovascular disease; decreased risk of cerebrovascular disease; decreased risk of type 2 diabetes; decreased risk of cognitive impairment and dementia; improved mental well-being; improved sleep; increased lifespan; reduced risk of cancer; increased effectiveness of immune function; greater calorie expenditure during and after the walk; reduced effects of stress; improved self-esteem and positive self-talk from achieving walking goals; improved overall endurance; improved insulin sensitivity and glucose control; and alone time to reflect on thoughts, feelings, and goals for improved self-awareness and personal growth. Talk to your doctor about your exercise plans. Note that incorporating short, intense bursts of walking fast or jogging for, say, 20 seconds periodically can help you achieve greater health benefits *in less time* compared to a moderate walking pace alone!



## Stop the Doomscrolling

Excessive consumption of negative news online is called “doomscrolling.” With thousands of competing news sources, there are dramatic increases in competition for the attention of viewers. Research studies show that humans are inclined to pay more attention to negative news than to positive news because our brains naturally pay attention to what threatens us. Negative news grabs attention—not just in newspapers but also online. If you find yourself drawn to social media or news sites, repeatedly searching for more details about the latest negative story, and if that starts consuming excessive time, interfering with your work or social life, or causing ongoing anxiety and stress, consider seeking support through your employee assistance program.



To schedule a confidential appointment with EAP, call (319) 235-3550 or toll-free at 1-800-303-9996, Monday - Thursday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday.

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.