



# CROSSROADS

A CCCSIG Health & Safety Publication for CCC Member School Districts

• December 2016 •

CCCSIG promotes a safe and healthy working environment for Contra Costa County school district employees.

## Holiday Health Spotlight: Desk Exercises!

If you work at a desk or computer for long stretches of time, you might place excessive stress on certain muscles. As a result, you're likely to get stiff and sore — unless you take frequent breaks for physical activity, which is important for strength, flexibility, balance, coordination, and bone density.



Each day this week, take a 3-5 minute break to follow a series of desk stretches in the form of short videos that can all be done right from your desk.

Click on the following video links:

[Neck](#)  
[Forearms](#)  
[Upper Body](#)  
[Lower Back](#)  
[Standing](#)

Stretching at  
Work? Yes!

If you would like more exercises or are unable to access the videos, here is a [humorous list of desk exercises with visuals](#). If you're reading a hard copy of Crossroads and would like the links emailed to you, email [dschreiner@cccsig.org](mailto:dschreiner@cccsig.org) request.

### Don't Forget!

[Slip Trip Fall Prevention Student Poster Contest](#) Deadline is **March 3, 2017!**



## Be Slip and Fall-Free! (Especially When Wet and Rainy!)

Although many of us may dream of a white Christmas, it will most likely be green...and possibly RAINY which often leads to painful slip, trip, fall injuries throughout Contra Costa County school districts. *Please take a moment to review the following tips to avoid becoming a slip, trip and fall statistic on your school campus:*

- **Report slip hazards** to supervisors immediately.
- **Slow down** and shuffle your feet on wet, slippery surfaces; avoid turning sharply.
- **Hold onto railings** when using stairways.
- **Use a cart** or dolly when carrying items to and from your car; ask for help.
- **Wipe your feet** when entering a building to prevent slipping on indoor flooring.
- **Wear sensible, slip-resistant footwear**
- Supervisors: be sure **door mats are placed in all entryways**.
- **Display wet floor signs** and have them readily available.



If you have ideas for preventing slip, trip and fall injuries on school campuses, please email them to [Denise Schreiner](mailto:Denise Schreiner).



## Wellness Tip of the Month: *Commit to One Healthy, Stress-Relieving Activity per Day!*

Choose an activity you find relaxing, commit to it, and you may soon notice improvements in your well-being. Find some examples [here](#).

### Carrot & Apple Soup

This fall soup is full of deep orange carrots and bright red apples, colorful



representations of the changing season ahead. Both foods contain cancer-fighting fiber and other potent protective compounds like beta-carotene and quercetin. It is decadent and creamy without a lot of calories.

#### Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium leek, white part only, rinsed well and chopped
- 1 pound carrots, peeled and cut
- 1 tart apple, peeled, cored, chopped
- 3 cups fat-free, reduced-sodium chicken broth
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 Tbsp. minced fresh mint leaves

#### Directions

- In a Dutch oven or large, heavy pan, heat canola oil over medium-high heat until hot. Add the onion and leek and sauté for about 4 minutes, until the onion is translucent.
- Mix in the carrots and apple. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often. Add broth, cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for about 30 minutes, until carrots are soft. Remove pot from heat and set the soup aside to cool slightly.
- Puree soup until smooth. Return to pan and heat. If soup is too thick, add more broth, as desired. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve, garnishing with mint.

Source: [www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org). Reprinted with permission.

### How to Choose Gratitude this Holiday Season

It seems as if the holiday season—that time-honored mixed bag of pleasure and pain—starts earlier and earlier each year, bringing with it a flood of emotional baggage many of us would prefer to leave behind. If you harbor memories of holiday celebrations filled with disappointments and dread, you are not alone.

If you experience excessive anxiety and foreboding at the first sight of holiday paraphernalia in the stores, consider relaxing your expectations and shifting your mindset. These changes help make it possible to survive—and even thrive—during the stress-filled weeks from late November until early January.

#### **Letting Go of Expectations**

Your holiday may not be everything you want it to be. By choosing not to set your expectations unrealistically high, but instead allowing events to unfold however they do, you can help to eliminate the pain of disappointment from your holiday season. Bonus points if you can cultivate a sense of humor and learn to laugh off all the missteps.

#### **Shifting Your Mindset**

Each time you find yourself overwhelmed by stress, gently guide your focus back to one (or all) of the things for which you feel grateful. If it helps, write down your gratitudes and display them prominently. The more you practice this simple habit, the more you will start to notice a shift in your thinking.

Source: [www.greatist.com](http://www.greatist.com). Reprinted with permission.

### Advice for Holiday Cooks

Whether you're an experienced cook or preparing to host your first holiday gathering, a little food safety can go a long way.



**A Job Too Well Done?** Cooking to proper internal temperatures ensures the safety of your holiday meat and its taste. To make sure your holiday turkey is both safe and delicious, use a food thermometer.

**Tick Tock, Swap.** Many holiday meals are buffet or potluck, so be sure to set your timer. After two hours, it can spoil and make you and your guests sick.

**Insider Info.** Many people cook stuffing inside the turkey but don't realize it also has to reach the proper temperature—it's safest to cook stuffing separately.

**Fa La-La-La Leftovers.** Eating leftovers is sometimes as traditional as the meal itself, but its important to make sure the food is both safe and delicious. Always reheat to 165° F and make sure food is not left out for more than two hours.

**Festive Twist.** A festive holiday drink may not be complete without a colorful garnish of lime but make sure you wash the fruit first. Washing the skin can help to eliminate harmful bacteria that can spread during peeling or cutting.

Follow our **Kitchen Safety Checklist** to ensure your kitchen is ready with the tools you need!

Source: [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org). Reprinted with permission.