

“Courage is knowing what to fear.”
—Plato



Public Safety Medical Services

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Public Safety Medical Services

Public Safety Health and Wellness

By the numbers...

29

Weight of the bones (in pounds) in an average 160 pound body

100,000

Average number of times your heart beats every 24 hours

49

The number of feet an average person's hair will grow in a lifetime

60

Percentage of our bodies which are comprised of

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Featured Department

Richmond Fire Chief Puts Health and Well-Being First

by Christopher M. Costlow, M.S.

Richmond, Indiana -

When Mike Allen became chief of the Richmond Fire Department in January of 1996, one of his goals was to steadily improve the level of medical testing his department was receiving. Over the years, testing for the department's 81 firefighters has progressed from a simple physical and pulmonary function test every other year, to currently providing thorough physicals annually. What's more, all of the exams were performed at their central fire station this year. "Centralizing the examinations made it very convenient for our personnel," states Allen. "We were able to do one shift per day (25 personnel) and it worked very smoothly." Having the firefighters in their own facility kept them available to respond to emergencies as well. The examinations included the respirator clearance process, a heart health questionnaire, vital signs, a tuberculosis and pulmonary function test, and a physical assessment.

firefighters. "A firefighter's job exposes him to people and situations where there are risks of contracting diseases. We want to provide all of the preventive ability we can and detect any disease in its earliest



Fire Chief Mike Allen

stages" says Allen. As a result, the chief added a prostate cancer blood test (PSA) for personnel aged 50 and up. He also evaluated the effectiveness of the hepatitis B vaccine, and tested for hepatitis C, HIV, and venereal diseases in his firefighters. Next year, he hopes to implement a physical fitness program and continue to expand his wellness services.

Firefighters Are Ultimate Winners

Chief Allen has been impressed by the response of his firefighters to the testing. There were a large amount of favorable comments regarding the

thoroughness of the assessment. In the past, he hasn't been without his detractors, however. "Generally, there has been reluctance to having annual physicals" states Allen. "But, having it done is part of their obligation. Ultimately, it will pay off in regards to curtailing disease. A firefighter's demands are tremendous and they should be concerned about their well-being." Though the outcomes of the examinations are still being evaluated, Chief Allen believes that they "will ultimately be winners" in the battle for healthy lifestyles. As current president of the Indiana Fire Chief's Association, Chief Allen is devoted to helping other chiefs with the development of policy and other important matters of their departments.

Fast Facts on the Richmond Fire Dept.

- Population served:** 38,500
- # of stations:** 6
- # of firefighters:** 81
- # of runs in 2001:** 2734
- Area protected:** 62 sq. mi.
- Apparatus:**
 - ◆ 5 engine companies
 - ◆ 1 engine/ladder combination
 - ◆ 1 rescue
 - ◆ 1 100' aerial platform truck
 - ◆ 2 grass fire units
 - ◆ 2 standby engines
 - ◆ 1 water rescue unit
 - ◆ 1 special operations trailer

Our Mission

Public Safety Medical Services seeks to provide public safety agencies and municipalities with expert medical, psychological, and fitness evaluations.

We inspire healthier and more productive lives through innovative programs delivered with pride, integrity, and dedication.

Public Safety Health and Wellness is a bi-monthly publication of Public Safety Medical Services committed to enhancing the well-being of public safety professionals.



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What's Happening Public Safety Calendar of Events

April 2-3

Management Institute for Fire Marshals
Location: Oakland Community College, Auburn Hills, MI
Contact: James Shank at 248.232.4580 or visit online at www.nfpa.org.

April 28-May 2

Fire Department Instructors Conference **West**
Location: Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento, CA
Contact: Call 888.299.8016 or visit online at www.pennwell.com.

May 13-16

National Police Week
Location: Washington, D.C.
Contact: Call 202.737.3400 or visit online at www.nleomf.org.

May 19-23

NFPA World Safety Conference and Exposition
Location: Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, MN
Contact: Call NFPA at 617.770.3000 or visit online at www.nfpa.org.

April 8-13

Fire Department Instructors Conference
Location: Indiana Convention Center and RCA Dome, Indianapolis, IN
Contact: Call 888.299.8016 or visit online at www.pennwell.com.

May 6-8

Fire-Rescue Med 2002
Location: Las Vegas, NV
Contact: Call IAFC at 703.273.0911 or visit online at www.iafc.org.

Visit us online at
www.publicsafetymed.com!

Public Safety Psychology News The Purpose for Promotion Testing

by Jeffrey C. Savitsky, Ph.D., JD

“Informal judgments by administrators and formal test results serve to validate each other”.

The use of formal tests to establish a promotion eligibility list is often a demanding process particularly for those individuals who are promotion candidates. Given all of the "hassle," one wonders if the use of tests to make promotions is any real improvement over the use of a less formal "seat of the pants" methods of making promotions.

Predictors of Success

The ultimate reason for implementing a promotion testing process is to select the right people for advancement. There is good evidence that promotion testing, particularly assessment center exercises, are good predictors of subsequent job success. However, it is very common for police department administrators to

notice that promotion testing has selected the very same people that would have been selected by less formal methods.

Tests Validate Observations

It should come as no surprise that the same people are often selected for promotion by both informal observations and formal testing procedures. This occurs because the same qualities that cause a potential promotion candidate to be identified by department administrators as a high-quality person will also enable this candidate to excel during a promotion testing process. In essence, informal judgments by administrators and formal test results serve to validate each other.

But the question remains -- why bother with a formal testing

process if test results often yield the same conclusions as informal observations? There are many benefits, aside from selecting the right people for promotion, that result from a promotion process. For instance, the use of formal testing serves to legitimize the promotion decisions that are made by a department's management.

Tests Provide Legal Defense

Still another reason for using formal testing procedures to establish a promotion list is that it provides a department with a powerful legal defense against any subsequent claims of bias or favoritism. A review of the legal literature suggests that a few simple steps almost guarantee that a promotion testing process can withstand a subsequent legal challenge.

Your Health and Fitness

Today's Choices, Tomorrow's Health

by Becky Schneider, RD, CD



Start Today for a Healthy Tomorrow. This is the theme for National Nutrition Month®, March 2002, sponsored by the American Dietetic Association. It's all about taking things one step at a time, and gradually adding healthier foods and activities to your daily lifestyle. Instead of spending energy on eliminating "bad" habits, focus on adding healthier behaviors to your lifestyle. This way you will naturally nudge out those less desirable habits and will feel less like you are "giving up" something you enjoy.

5 Principles to Staying Healthy

First Principle

Fuel your body today and everyday with wholesome and healthy foods. The body requires a ready supply of energy during times of physical stress. Meals should be regular and well balanced, and

have something from each food group. Choices should focus on complex carbohydrates, lean proteins, and moderate use of fats.

Second Principle

Drink fluids everyday to keep the body hydrated and working at maximum capacity. Performance and mental ability can be affected by as little as a 1-2% loss of body weight due to sweating. Drink 6-8 cups of fluid daily as a baseline, and more during times of physical activity. Water, fruit juices, non-caffeinated beverages, and low-fat milk are all good choices.

Third Principle

Be active today and everyday to maintain the physical condition necessary to meet the demands of your job. Incorporate small activities into your daily life such as taking the stairs instead of elevator, or taking walks around the outside of your building for 10

minutes 2-3 times a day. Schedule 30-40 minutes 3-4 times a week to do some aerobic and strength activities.

Fourth Principle

Personalize your plan. Make changes that fit your current lifestyle. Don't squeeze yourself into a plan designed for someone else.

Fifth Principle

Healthy eating and physical activity work hand in hand to keep your body in good working order. Eating better allows you to be more active, and as you become more active, you will want to eat the foods that provide you with the nutrition your active body needs. **Remember,** tomorrow's health and ability to withstand the stresses of your job depend on the choices you make today.

For more information call Public Safety Medical Services or e-mail Becky at nutrichief@earthlink.net.

“The ability to withstand the stresses of your job depend on the lifestyle choices you make today”.

Public Safety Medical News

Obesity and the Role of Public Safety Professionals

by Steven M. Moffatt, M.D.

Over the past 30 years, despite all of the efforts by our healthcare system, America has continued to grow heavier. An estimated 61 percent of U.S. adults are either overweight or obese. Additionally, since the early 70's, the percentage of children and adolescents who are defined as overweight has more than doubled.

Obesity Defined

Obesity is defined as having an excessively high amount of body fat in relation to lean body mass. A Body Mass Index (BMI) value of ≥ 30.0 is considered obese. BMI is a common measure expressing the relationship of one's weight to one's height. It is determined by taking one's weight in kilograms and dividing it by the square of his or her height in meters (see chart). Being overweight is different from obesity.

Overweight refers to increased body weight in relation to height, when compared to a standard of acceptable weights. It may or may not be due to increases in body fat. Individuals with a BMI of 25 to 29.9 are considered overweight. A healthy BMI for adults is between 18.5 and 24.9.

Public Safety Personnel Can Make a Difference

Many now consider obesity to be an epidemic in our country and a substantial threat to our future health as individuals and prosperity as a nation. Public safety holds a position of influence within all of our communities. Your departments serve and protect our

communities and country as a whole. In light of 9/11, many now understand more completely the risk and responsibility our public safety professionals experience in their careers. Therefore, you are positioned uniquely to provide great influence and leadership in the battle against obesity within each community you serve.

Your professions have greater visibility, giving the opportunity to carry a message of healthy living and exercise to help reverse this alarming cultural trend.

For more Info

Future articles in this column will explore this topic, its effects on our society and how you can be involved. For further information on obesity visit the **Centers for Disease Control** Web site at www.cdc.gov.

Body Mass Index (BMI) Table

BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Height	Weight in Pounds												
5'1"	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164
5'2"	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169
5'3"	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175
5'4"	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180
5'5"	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186
5'6"	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192
5'7"	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198
5'8"	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203
5'9"	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209
5'10"	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216
5'11"	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222
6'0"	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228
6'1"	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235

Odds and Ends

Create Your Own Public Safety Web site

Over 35% of the world's population is currently online. Fire, police and sheriff departments can re-connect to their community and to their departments in a whole new way through a department Web site.

You can showcase departmental information, announce new hires, programs or services and communicate with your community through e-mail among other benefits.

A Web site With You in Mind

Public Safety Medical Services has created a Web site development service that will enable you to customize your site with the information you want to display. You will have access to a one-of-a-kind Web site template making the design process a breeze and the investment **unbelievably inexpensive.**

Check Out These Features

- ◆ Links to public safety news, departments and more!
- ◆ Pre-assigned public safety-oriented Web pages
- ◆ 16 customizable pages
- ◆ Message boards
- ◆ Chat rooms
- ◆ A guest book
- ◆ Printable calendars
- ◆ E-mail distribution lists
- ◆ Optional banner advertising

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Internet Factoids

- ◆ As of September 2001, 54% of Americans are online
- ◆ The number of new users is growing at a rate of 2 million per month
- ◆ 90% of children ages 5-17 use computers at home or school

Source: U.S. Secretary of Commerce

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For more details, visit us online at www.publicsafetymed.com