



A Newsletter for Employees | September 2024
By the Sutter Health Employee Assistance Program

Step Up Your Steps

The “World’s Largest Study,” published in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*, reinforces a well-known fact: Walking regularly is good for your health. Bonus: You gain measurable health benefits by adding a mere 500 steps to your day, and with every 1,000 steps, health outcomes improve in all areas (dementia, heart disease, cancer, etc.).

Walk and Talk

The next time you need to discuss a challenging topic with a colleague or connect with a family member, try taking a walk together. Walking side-by-side fosters easy conversation and a free flow of thoughts — excellent ways to problem solve and strengthen relationships — and it’s less confrontational than talking face-to-face.

Research has shown that walking and talking with someone reduces stress. This could be in part due to nature’s calming effect combined with walking’s rhythmic motion.

Join a Walk for a Cause

Many nonprofit organizations plan walks to raise awareness. This month, consider joining an “Out of the Darkness Walk” for suicide prevention. Visit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at [afsp.org](https://www.afsp.org) to find a walk near you.

Sutter EAP offers many resources to support your wellbeing. Call 800-477-2258 for a confidential conversation or visit sutterhealth.org/eap.

Walk Your Way to Wellness

Increase Your Pace.

On some of your walks, try going faster. Increasing your pace is associated with improved mental and physical health.

Walk With Wonder.

In an interesting study, participants experienced an emotional boost when they took a 15-minute walk outside and made a point of seeing the world “through the eyes of a child.” Shift your attention away from yourself and feel stress melt away.

Take a Walking Weekend.

Devote an entire weekend to exploring regional trails or a new town on foot. See how you feel afterward; chances are, you’ll want to schedule another walking weekend soon!

Straight Talk About Suicide

Suicide and mental illness continue to carry a stigma. Many people are reluctant to talk about either, which may make you feel more alone and unsure about where to turn when you or your loved ones need help.

The truth is that suicidal thoughts are a lot more common than many realize. In 2022, an estimated 13.2 million adults seriously thought about suicide. This September, in honor of National Suicide Prevention Month, take some time to learn more about preventing suicide in your community.

Spot the Signs

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, some behaviors that may signal suicide risk, especially when related to a painful event, include:

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs.
- Searching online for a way to end life.
- Withdrawing from activities.
- Isolating from family and friends.
- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye.
- Giving away prized possessions.

If you suspect someone you know may be having thoughts of suicide, seek help immediately. A false alarm is always better than a missed opportunity to save a life.

Using 988

In an emergency, call 911. But another number can save lives, too: 988.

988 is the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Using 988 is free. Call or text for entirely confidential, judgment-free care.



Visit [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org) to learn more or start a conversation.

What is the EAP?

Sutter Health EAP provides referrals to licensed therapists who can help with personal problems that may impact your job, relationships or overall well-being. EAP is:

- Confidential.
- Open to all employees and eligible family members.
- No charge to you.

**Call 800-477-2258 or
visit [sutterhealth.org/eap](https://www.sutterhealth.org/eap).**

