

THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE DIGEST

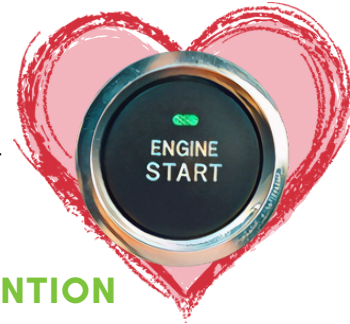
Weekly Wellness & Safety Tips from Work Right NW



START WITH YOUR HEART

BY AMELIA MEIGS, ATC

Industrial athletes work hard every day. Ensuring our heart is in good condition keeps us healthy for the long run. For February, American Heart Month, let's discuss a way to keep our bodies running well so we're not at risk for time away from work or the activities we enjoy with the people we love.



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THE SILENT KILLER

Occupational workers are more likely to have high blood pressure than an average adult, considering factors such as job stress, [noise exposure](#), and shift work. Nearly half of American adults have high blood pressure - often called the **silent killer** because it doesn't show visible effects or signs of sickness.



REGULAR MAINTENANCE

This month, let's think about our body as a car. We wouldn't let our car go 5 years without changing the oil, would we? Regular maintenance keeps our cars in good condition, and regular preventive maintenance can keep our bodies in good condition, too. Let's break that down:

- Our heart is the *engine* to our body - it pumps blood, which supplies our muscles with oxygen and energy (glucose).
- If the *valves* in our body are stiffer, it causes our heart to work harder to get us the blood we need.
- Keep your *engine* running clean by supplying your body with the nutrients it needs to function.
- Use your *engine* regularly by exercising frequently.
- Blood pressure varies throughout the day and typically peaks midafternoon.
- Blood pressure can go up after drinking coffee, smoking, or exercise.

PRINCIPLES OF PREVENTION

How can you be more aware of your blood pressure and regular preventative maintenance on your car's engine? Check out these FAQs.

So what is a good level for my blood pressure?

Less than 120/80 is the gold standard for blood pressure.

How can I get my blood pressure measured?

Your healthcare provider should be your first stop, but ask your injury prevention specialist if they can help!

Am I at risk for heart disease?

Use [this calculator](#) to test your risk for heart disease.

So, what's a plan for high blood pressure prevention?

1. **Exercise:** Walk briskly for 30 minutes, 3 times a week. Add 5 minutes every week until you hit your blood pressure goal!
2. **Diet:** Check your sodium - less than 2000 mg is the goal for those with high blood pressure!
3. **Sleep:** Getting less than 7 hours per night on average or poor quality sleep (sleep apnea) can contribute to high BP, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke risk.
4. **Weight:** Elevated BMI has been shown to correlate with high blood pressure. Weight loss is key to a healthy heart.



Amelia Meigs, MS, ATC || Amelia is a Certified Athletic Trainer in Fremont, CA. She grew up in the Seattle-area and went to school at Marquette University and Saint Louis University for her Master of Athletic Training. She worked for a few years in the secondary school setting, then moved abroad for a year to New Zealand! In her free time she likes to travel, bake, and hike with her wife in San Jose.

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

