



News Release (*New & Updated*)

For Immediate Release:
April 24, 2008

Contact:
Bev Carlson
402-548-4328
bev.carlson@bcbsne.com

New coverage opportunities:

11:45 am Governor Dave Heineman signs proclamation declaring April 30, 2008 "National Walk at Lunch Day" in Nebraska (Room 2316); he then leads walk around Capitol

11:30 am Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey leads walk from City Hall with his staff members

11:30 am – 1:00 pm Hundreds of Blue Cross employees walk the Omaha campus at 72nd and Mercy. *Contact Bev for interviews*

Thousands of Nebraskans Walking for Wellness

*Governor will lead the way on **National Walk @ Lunch Day**SM April 30*

[Omaha] – Thousands of Nebraskans, including Governor Dave Heineman and Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey, will soon be lacing up their sneakers over their lunch break. Wednesday, April 30 is "National Walk at Lunch Day". Before leading a 30-minute Lincoln walk, Governor Heineman will sign a proclamation declaring April 30, 2008 "National Walk at Lunch Day" in Nebraska.

The heart of Nebraska's walk will be at the Omaha headquarters of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska at 72nd and Mercy Streets, where as many as 500 employees will be stepping out.

Among the many other Nebraska businesses committed to walking Wednesday:

- OPPD
- Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- Douglas County Health Department
- The Nebraska Medical Center
- Tenaska
- HunTel, Blair
- Behlen Manufacturing, Columbus
- University of Nebraska Administration
- VNA Omaha
- Metro-Area YMCA's
- Central States Insurance
- Kawasaki Motors, Lincoln

- Members of the Nebraska Banking Association (across Nebraska)
- City of Bellevue
- Nebraska Arbor Day Foundation
- United Way of the Midlands
- DMSi (*and many more...*)

National Walk @ Lunch Day is a workplace walking program which encourages people to take time during their lunch breaks to start walking toward better health. Most American schedules are built around the workday, so **National Walk @ Lunch Day** is designed to fit into – not compete with – the daily routine. More information and promotional materials are available online at www.bcbsne.com.

“Census data in Nebraska shows the leading causes of death in our state are directly related to obesity and lack of physical activity,” says Lee Handke, vice president, Health Network and Wellness Services at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. “As a customer-first, wellness-focused company, we see the National Walk @ Lunch event as a tremendous opportunity to kick off employee walking programs and bring the message home of just how simple it can be to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine.”

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that the cost to treat illness and chronic disease caused by inactive lifestyles is nearly \$1,000 for every family in America, every year. Simply getting 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, such as a brisk walk, at least five times a week has significant health benefits, such as lowering the risk of developing or dying from cardiovascular disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes and improving the health of muscles, bones and joints. *[Source: Physical Activity and Health, A Report of the Surgeon General, 1996]*

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, insures or provides benefit administration to more than 717,000 people. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is a mutual insurance company committed to delivering the health and wellness solutions that people value most.

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