

## May Health and Wellness Observances

The Health & Well-being Interest Group has reviewed several sources of information on national health-related observances held throughout the year, with the objective of selecting activities of interest to our employer members. These tools, educational resources and other relevant information are shared with our members in advance to support workforce education and communication activities. The spotlighted observances for May appear below and, in the Members Only section at <https://www.gpbch.org/>.

### **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

Mental illnesses are common in the United States. Nearly [one in five](#) U.S. adults live with a mental illness (57.8 million in 2021). Mental illnesses include many different conditions that vary in degree of severity, ranging from mild to moderate, to severe. With 20% of the country's population struggling with a mental illness, it is more important than ever to raise awareness of the mental health issue here in America. Below are resources available to employers to help in this cause.

#### **The Right Direction:**

[Right Direction](#) is a free initiative designed to provide employers with tools and actionable strategies to raise awareness about depression and to improve workplace mental health for a happier, more engaged, and productive workplace. The program features [turnkey and customizable resources and materials](#) to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage help-seeking behaviors. To learn more about this organization, [visit their website](#).



**4Mind4body – Mental Health America:** Join [Mental Health America](#) as they challenge you each day this May to make small changes – both physically and mentally – to create gains for your overall health and well-being. Each day of the week will have a theme for the type of activity they ask you to do.

<https://www.mhanational.org/4mind4body-challenge>



#### **Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA – Educational Materials)**

Education is often the first step to understanding a diagnosis, symptoms and creating your path to wellness. Learn more about the educational materials that [DBSA](#) provides to people living with mood disorders, their friends and family, and mental health professionals. Materials include: [podcasts](#), [videos](#), [webinars](#), [newsletters](#), and more. [Click here](#) to access these resources.

#### **Mental Health First Aid:**

[Mental Health First Aid](#) is a course that teaches you how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The training helps you identify, understand, and respond to signs of addictions and mental illnesses. Why become a Mental Health First Aider?

- Be Prepared** - When a mental health crisis happens, know what to do
- You Can Help** - People with mental illnesses often suffer alone
- Mental illnesses are common** - 1 in 5 adults in any given year
- You Care** - Be there for a friend, family member, or colleague

To learn more about Mental Health First Aid and register for a course, [click here](#).

Additional Resources: [Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration](#), [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#), [National Council for Behavioral Health](#), [National Institute of Mental Health](#), [GPBCH Mental Health Resource Guide](#)

[Click here to access the updated May Spotlighted Observance](#) – Improve Your Mental Health. This document is a ready-to-distribute flyer for your employees and colleagues.

## GLOBAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND FITNESS MONTH

[Global Employee Health & Fitness Month](#) (GEHFM) is an international and national observance of health and fitness in the workplace. The goal of GEHFM is to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle to employers and their employees through worksite health promotion activities and environments. Learn more by visiting their website: <http://www.healthandfitnessmonth.org/>

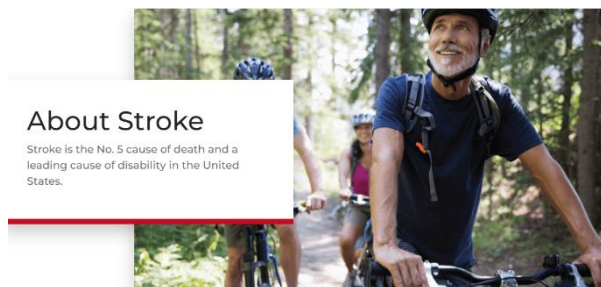
**Exercise is Medicine®** (EIM): The vision of EIM, a global health initiative managed by the [American College of Sports Medicine \(ACSM\)](#), is to make physical activity assessment and promotion a standard in clinical care, connecting health care with evidence-based physical activity resources for people everywhere and of all abilities. <https://exerciseismedicine.org/>

## NATIONAL WOMEN’S HEALTH WEEK 2024 (May 12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>)

National Women's Health Week is an observance led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Office on Women's Health](#) (OWH). OWH coordinates women's health efforts across HHS and addresses critical women's health issues by informing and advancing policies, educating health care professionals and consumers, and supporting innovative programs. Learn more about programs resources available to you by visiting their website: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/about-us>.

Additional Resource: [Center for Disease Control & Prevention](#) and [Women’s Health Observances](#)

## AMERICAN STROKE MONTH



Stroke is preventable, treatable and beatable. It is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States. Up to [80 percent of strokes](#) can be prevented by not smoking, making healthy food choices, getting enough physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight and treating conditions such as high blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure. To learn more about strokes, please visit the American Stroke

Association website: <https://www.strokeassociation.org/>

Additional resources on Stroke Awareness:

- The [Stroke Awareness website](#) provides educational information for patients and caregivers, highlighting the signs & symptoms of stroke so members can recognize when they or a loved one may be having a stroke.
- A [Stroke Urgency Toolkit](#) provides a portal for ordering or downloading free resources that may be used to support an educational stroke awareness campaign.