

Health Risk Appraisals or Assessments

Health Risk Appraisals (HRAs), are an assessment tool or questionnaire scientifically designed to identify health risks and outline information to assist individuals in making healthy changes that impact their health and prevent chronic disease.

HRAs have four standard elements in worksite settings:

- A Questionnaire
- A Computerized Program to Evaluate Health Risk
- Confidential Individual Reports
- Group Summary Report

Individuals complete a lifestyle questionnaire that includes for example nutrition practices, height and weight, exercise habits, family history, stress perceptions, smoking history, and work satisfaction. Another important feature to consider is readiness to change questions to determine participation interest. Including health screenings such as cholesterol and blood pressure results increases the benefits of an HRA by providing a more accurate health assessment and therefore improving lifestyle choice decisions and program options. However, it is important to determine if the HRA can be used without including this information.

The questionnaire information is entered into a computer program and an individual confidential report is generated that summarizes health risks as well as information on how to lower risk factors. Individual reports are completely confidential. Depending on the reason for implementing the HRA, it's important to consider the type of report the company will receive as well. A group report summarizing major risk factors and recommendations for programs to implement in order to reduce employee and company risks provides valuable information for your wellness program.

The HRAs can be used to:

- Bring awareness to individual employee's health status
- Motivate employees to make healthier lifestyle changes
- Coach high-risk employees
- Plan health promotion programs based on the identified needs
- Evaluate program success by comparing HRAs completed at set intervals such as yearly.

And you can find an HRA without leaving this website! Just go the Fit Together homepage at www.FitTogetherNC.org and click on "You & Your Family". A Personal Health Assessment will appear.