



Easier, healthier, happier...fitter.

A new 24-hour fitness center adjacent to a Hy-Vee store on Des Moines' south side is the latest effort to broaden the company's focus on customer and employee health.

"Hy-Vee Fitness is another step in our company's commitment to health and wellness," says Andy McCann, senior vice president, retail health. "A facility like this, coupled with Hy-Vee's growing roster of dietitians and an established emphasis on fresh, wholesome food, creates a comprehensive approach to wellness and represents the core of our business."

There are no immediate plans to put gyms at all Hy-Vee locations, but the concept could be ripe for expansion as shoppers become more and more aware of the connection between exercise, nutrition and all-around good health.

"More and more, this is something that people are paying attention to, especially as health care costs increase," says Andrew Salgado, a

certified trainer hired to manage the facility.

Hy-Vee employees are test-driving the 5,500 square feet of elliptical machines, treadmills, stationary bikes and weight lifting equipment, which will eventually be available to the public. Members of the public who have show interest have also been invited in to get a feel for the

Membership packages can include consultations with dietitians and nutrition classes.

“We’re all very excited about it. It’s really cool,” says Kristine Jaeger, HealthMarket manager at the store. “I think it will create lot of venues for (the store’s dietitian, Anne Cundiff) and I.”

A one-time \$25 enrollment fee and monthly membership package opens the door to six ellipticals, five treadmills, four stationary bikes, Star Trac circuit machines, free weights, showers, fitness classes and dietitian consultations. Hy-Vee employees will enjoy half-price single membership rates, which start at \$34.99 per month. Twelve-month and month-to-month memberships are available. Military and senior citizens discounts of \$5 per month apply.

One person already fired up is Salgado, who is certified with the American Council on Exercise and the American College of Sports Medicine.

“We have completely new, state-of-the-art equipment. Some of the machines have LED screen so that you can not only watch TV while you work out, you can use your own iPod and create your own zone,” he says.

Salgado earned a degree in exercise science from the University of Northern Iowa and comes to Hy-Vee from Pioneer Hi-Bred in Johnston, where he was the company’s wellness coordinator.

“I grew up on the south side and shopped at the Fleur Hy-Vee my whole life, so I’m really excited about coming back to my community,” he says.

Salgado envisions a high-energy center that becomes a template for the entire company. Putting the facility right next door, he says, will guarantee that employees benefit.

“When it comes to fitness, convenience is king. So if you can get it done at work, you can go home at night and be a mother, be a father, and get things down around the house,” he says. “It removes the one obstacle that stops a lot of people.”

Trainer and manager Andrew Salgado can be reached at 285-9002 or 1148fitnessmgr@hy-vee.com