

A VOIR MAY

NEWSLETTER



BE
AWARE

Written By : L. Mashego

A Month of Prevention, Protection & Purpose

May is one of the most active months in South Africa's health calendar, bringing together themes of prevention, lifestyle risk reduction, chronic disease awareness, and workforce wellbeing. For corporate environments, this month offers a strategic opportunity to reinforce a culture of care, strengthen employee engagement, and support healthier daily habits.

By taking proactive steps this month, employers can contribute to a healthier workforce and a more productive, supportive workplace culture — one breath at a time.



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● No Tobacco Day | 31 May

May is dedicated to reducing tobacco-related harm, leading up to World No Tobacco Day on 31 May. For employers, this month offers a meaningful opportunity to strengthen employee wellbeing and workplace productivity. Tobacco use remains a major driver of preventable illness, absenteeism, and reduced performance, with smokers typically taking more sick days and more frequent breaks. Second-hand smoke also affects colleagues and compromises overall air quality.

Throughout the month, organisations can reinforce smoke-free policies, provide access to cessation support, share weekly myth-busting messages on tobacco and vaping, and host a “Breathe Better” wellness talk with a clinician or respiratory specialist. Small, consistent actions can help create a healthier, more supportive work environment.

Reinforcing Burn-Safety Awareness at Home and at Work

Burn injuries remain common in both household and industrial settings, making May an ideal moment to strengthen safety culture across the workplace. Most burns are preventable through simple, consistent safety practices, and immediate first aid can greatly reduce long-term damage. It's also essential that fire-safety equipment remains visible, functional, and easy to access so employees can respond quickly in an emergency.

This month, employers can refresh fire-drill procedures, share a clear "Burns First Aid" infographic, and encourage staff to revisit their home fire-safety plans. Small reminders go a long way in building a safer environment for everyone.



Burns Awareness 5 – 9 May



International Nurses Day 12 May

The calendar marks **International Nurses Day** on 12 May, a moment to honour the professionals who form the backbone of healthcare delivery.

Companies can mark the day by sharing a heartfelt "Thank You Nurses" message on internal platforms, profiling an occupational health nurse in a short interview, or offering a small wellness hamper to onsite or partner nurses. These gestures reinforce appreciation for a profession that consistently shows compassion, expertise, and resilience.



● International Multiple Sclerosis Month

Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a chronic neurological condition that affects the brain and spinal cord, often impacting mobility, vision, balance, and cognitive function. Because MS frequently develops in working-age adults, it carries important implications for employers and workplace culture. Early diagnosis and supportive accommodations can help employees remain productive and engaged, while broader awareness helps reduce stigma surrounding invisible disabilities.

This month offers an opportunity for organisations to share educational content on early symptoms, reinforce inclusive HR policies for chronic conditions, and highlight employee assistance programmes that support long-term illness management.



World Hand Hygiene Day

5 May

World Hand Hygiene Day on 5 May is a timely reminder that simple hygiene habits remain one of the most effective ways to prevent infections. Clean hands reduce sick-leave linked to flu, stomach bugs, and workplace outbreaks, while reinforcing a shared commitment to a healthier office environment.

Companies can use the day to place hand-sanitiser stations in high-traffic areas, run a brief "Clean Hands, Healthy Teams" micro-campaign, and share a quick 20-second handwashing technique video. These small actions help keep teams healthier and workplaces running smoothly.



● World Hypertension Day | 17 May

World Hypertension Day on 17 May shines a spotlight on one of the most common chronic conditions affecting working adults. High blood pressure is often silent, showing no symptoms while significantly increasing the risk of heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease. Because workplace screenings remain one of the most effective early-detection tools, this observance offers a valuable opportunity for employers to promote proactive health checks.

Companies can support the day by offering onsite blood-pressure screenings, sharing weekly heart-health tips, and encouraging employees to track their numbers through wellness apps. These simple steps help build a culture of prevention and empower employees to take charge of their cardiovascular health.

Prevention remains straightforward and highly effective. Maintaining a balanced diet, staying physically active, managing stress, limiting salt intake, and avoiding tobacco use all play a key role in keeping blood pressure within a healthy range. Encouraging regular monitoring also helps employees understand their numbers and take action early.

World Salt Awareness Week

12 – 18 May

World Salt Awareness Week, observed from 12 to 18 May, highlights the impact of excess salt intake on long-term health. Too much dietary salt is a major contributor to hypertension and cardiovascular disease, making this an important moment for workplaces to promote healthier eating habits and early prevention.

Companies can support the week by partnering with canteen providers to offer low-salt meal options, sharing simple “Swap This for That” tips to help employees make healthier choices, and encouraging teams to read food labels more consciously. Small shifts in daily habits can significantly reduce salt intake and support better heart health across the workforce.



Child Protection Week

25 May – 1 June

Child Protection Week, observed from 25 May to 1 June, is a national campaign dedicated to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children. With many employees also serving as parents or caregivers, this week offers workplaces an important opportunity to support family wellbeing through awareness, education, and accessible resources.

Companies can participate by sharing practical content on online safety for children, offering guidance on recognising early signs of abuse, and highlighting the counselling support available through Employee Assistance Programmes. These actions help create a supportive environment where families feel informed, empowered, and protected.

Avoir is a committed advocate for child safety and actively contributes to the wellbeing of children through its corporate-responsibility initiatives. By championing education, protection, and family support, Avoir reinforces its role as a partner in creating safer communities for the next generation.