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**AMERICANS ARE MORE STRESSED-OUT THAN EVER AND CRAVE TIME OFF, BUT WORK WOES KEEP MAJORITY FROM TAKING ALL THEIR VACATION DAYS, SAYS NEW SURVEY BY WESTIN HOTELS**

*Nearly 70% Feel Healthier and 60% Feel Less Stressed after Vacation Though 75% Too Busy to Take Much-Needed Time Off*

*Westin Launches Campaign to Highlight Benefits of Taking Time Off, Giving Away Hundreds of Free Vacations to People Who Pledge to Take Their Vacation Days*

WHITE PLAINS, NY (September 14, 2010) – Use it or lose it, companies say. But with jobs at risk and economic woes lingering, more than half of American workers are too worried and busy to take all their vacation days, according to a survey released today by Westin Hotels & Resorts\*.

According to the Westin Hotels “*Wellness in Travel*” study of 1,500 Americans, more than half of workers fail to take all their vacation days. Just how desperately is America in need of some time off? More than half (58%) of respondents feel they are in more need of vacation than last year and 64% have canceled vacation due to work worries. The cancellations come even as respondents pine for the benefits of time away from their desks. More than 67% feel healthier on vacation, while 64% sleep better while taking some time off. Married folks take note - rest and relaxation can also contribute to wedded bliss. More than half of those surveyed feel taking vacation contributes to a stronger marriage.

**Use it, Don't Lose it – Westin Giving Away Hundreds of Free Vacations and Free Nights**

As a result of the findings Starwood Hotel's wellness brand has developed a campaign to educate consumers on the health benefits of taking vacation and encourage them to take some much needed time off. The campaign highlights the importance of taking time off for stress relief, productivity and health and gives consumers the chance to win a free vacation. Beginning on September 15<sup>th</sup> consumers can visit [www.travelandbewell.com](http://www.travelandbewell.com) to learn more about the health benefits of vacation, travel tips and sign an online pledge promising to take their remaining vacation days before the end of the year. To encourage consumers to take care of themselves by

enjoying vacation days they have earned, each person who pledges to take time off will be entered to win one of 200 four-day vacations at any Westin Hotel in North America. And for those consumers who try their luck but don't win, the Westin brand wants to make it easier than ever for them to get away. Available through the end of the year, Westin guests will receive a free night when they stay three nights or more. Consumers can visit [www.westin.com/weekends](http://www.westin.com/weekends) to book.

### **A Hot Health Topic: Taking Time off is Good for Health and Well-being**

The "Wellness in Travel" survey is not the only recent research to highlight the health and wellness benefits of vacation. Recent clinical research has proven the clear link between vacation and health.

- According to the Framingham Heart Study (2000) men who take regular vacations are 32% less likely to die of heart attacks than those who do not; women who do not take vacations are up to eight times more likely to suffer from heart disease than women who take two vacation breaks a year.<sup>1</sup>
- Women who take a holiday once a year or more are almost twice as apt to be satisfied with their marriage as those who escape less often, researchers at the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation in Wisconsin say.<sup>2</sup>
- The more often people engage in leisure activities, including going on vacation, the more likely they are to have a low body-mass index, a study in the journal *Psychosomatic Medicine* reports.<sup>3</sup>

### **Americans Desperate for Time Off**

The survey revealed just how dire America's need for rest and relaxation is:

- 48% of those surveyed are happier and more positive in their workplaces and personal lives after taking a vacation.
- More than three-fifths of the respondents had cancelled or postponed a vacation this year (64%).
- On vacation, over 30% of respondents check in with their work every other day, followed by 25% of respondents who check in every hour.
- More than two-fifths of the respondents usually require three to four days to unwind on a vacation (41%).

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<sup>1</sup> VacationBetter.org. "Just What the Doctor Ordered: Vacation for Your Health."  
<http://www.vacationbetter.org/content1208>

<sup>2</sup> Self. "Five excuses to skip town." Last modified April 2010 for print issue.  
<http://www.self.com/health/2010/04/five-excuses-to-skip-town>.

<sup>3</sup> Self. "Five excuses to skip town." Last modified April 2010 for print issue.  
<http://www.self.com/health/2010/04/five-excuses-to-skip-town>.

- More than half of the respondents felt that compared to last year they were more in need of a vacation now (58%).

For more information about the benefits of a vacation and to participate in the Travel and Wellness pledge and be eligible to win a free vacation, visit at [www.travelandbewell.com](http://www.travelandbewell.com).

For more information about Westin Hotels & Resorts, go to [www.Westin.com](http://www.Westin.com).

#### **\*Study Methodology**

Commissioned by Westin Hotels & Resorts, this study is based on a survey conducted by STUDYLOGIC LLC via telephone of approximately 1,500 American adults who are professionally employed. Respondents were divided into two categories based on gender: 747 males and 711 females; two categories based on household income: 594 executives with annual household income under \$50,000 and 864 executives with household income of \$50,000 or greater; and two categories based on employment: 963 executives who are employed by others and 333 executives who are self-employed. A series of complete cross-category breakdowns is available at the end of this summary report. The survey consisted of nineteen questions. Interviews we conducted between August 1<sup>st</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The survey averaged 18 minutes in length and contains a margin of error in the totals of +/-3%.

#### **About Westin Hotels & Resorts**

Westin Hotels & Resorts makes the healthiest choices irresistibly appealing, so guests leave feeling better than when they arrived. With over 170 hotels and resorts in over 36 countries and territories, Westin is owned by Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. Starwood Hotels is one of the leading hotel and leisure companies in the world with 1000 properties in nearly 100 countries and territories with 145,000 employees at its owned and managed properties. Starwood Hotels is a fully integrated owner, operator and franchisor of hotels, resorts and residences with the following internationally renowned brands: St. Regis®, The Luxury Collection®, W®, Westin®, Le Méridien®, Sheraton®, Four Points® by Sheraton, and the recently launched Aloft®, and Element<sup>SM</sup>. Starwood Hotels also owns Starwood Vacation Ownership, Inc., one of the premier developers and operators of high quality vacation interval ownership resorts. For more information, please visit [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com).