

Living Healthy Newsletter



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March is National Nutrition Month. With your New Year's Resolutions firmly underway, and summer quickly approaching, many of you have taken a vow of dieting to get healthy. Let this month remind you to get the information you need to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits. On the heels of March, April ushers in National Stress Awareness Month. With job stress now being touted as a equally significant health risk as smoking, it's high time to get your stress under control. A healthy diet and regular physical activity will go a long way toward reducing your stress. In this month's newsletter, I share practical tips for eating better, reducing your stress and creating a healthier lifestyle. Happy, Healthy Spring!

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Who? Me? Stressed?!

Americans are known for placing great emphasis on work and career. Working hard, however, should not be confused with overworking at the expense of relationships and physical health. According to a 2007 poll by the American Psychological Association (APA) 75% of Americans list work as a significant source of stress, with over half of those surveyed indicating that their work or productivity suffered due to stress. Job stress is also a concern for employers, costing an estimated \$300 billion per year through absenteeism, diminished productivity, employee turnover and direct medical and insurance fees.



It's no secret that stress can significantly affect physical health. The APA survey found that 75% of people have experienced physical symptoms as a result of stress, such as headaches, fatigue, insomnia and impaired digestion in combination with feelings of irritability, anger, anxiety and lack of

motivation.

Increased stress can lead to using unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, comfort eating, poor diet choices, inactivity and drinking alcohol to manage stress. Reliance on such behaviors however, can lead to long term, serious health problems and generally only serve to make matters worse!

Here are a few strategies for managing stress in the workplace and at home:

- **Know Yourself.** People experience stress in different ways. Be aware of your stress level and know what stresses you out.
- **Recognize How You Deal With Stress.** Do you engage in unhealthy behaviors such as smoking or eating poorly to cope with your stress? Do you lose patience with your children or spouse when you feel overwhelmed by work or home pressures?
- **Turn Off and Tune In.** Communi-

cation technology can take you to productivity heights never imagined, but it can also allow work to creep into family time, dinner time and vacations. Let technology be a tool that works for you, rather than the other way around.

- **Take Short Breaks.** Stay energized and productive by taking a minute or two periodically throughout the day to stand up, stretch, breathe deeply and move around. The productivity you gain will more than make up for the time you spend on break.
- **Take Care of Yourself.** Eat right, get enough sleep, drink plenty of water and engage in regular physical activity. Take regular vacations. No matter how hectic life gets, make time for yourself—even if it's just simple things like reading a good book, listening to your favorite CD or joining a friend for coffee at your favorite café.

Don't wear your stress like a badge of honor. Being aware of barriers that

keep you stuck with stress gives you the chance to find ways around them.



What's on Your Mind?

Have an idea for an article or a question about a health topic? Are you enjoying the newsletter?

[Click here to send me an email](#)

I want to hear from you!

~ Lynise

Breakfast Cookies

Enjoy this gluten free treat as a great on-the-go breakfast or a tasty dessert!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 C Old fashion oats
- 1C unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 t cinnamon
- 1/2 t allspice
- 1/4 C flaxseed meal
- 1 C dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, dates)
- 3 mashed ripe bananas
- 1/4 C cooking oil
- 1 t vanilla



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees
2. Combine oats, meal and coconut
3. Stir in allspice, cinnamon and salt
4. Add fruit and stir until well mixed
5. In a separate bowl, combine oil and mashed bananas. Combine well.
6. Pour wet ingredients over dry ingredients and combine well.
7. Use 1/4 or 1/3 measuring cup to scoop mix, then, roll into a ball
8. Flatten a little and place on a cookie sheet
9. Bake 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned.
10. Cool and store in the refrigerator.

Did You Know...?

- Adequate sleep is one of the most important aspects of your health.
- You can go 60 days without eating, but only 4 days without sleep
- Sleep is necessary for growth, healing and avoiding anxiety.
- Getting adequate sleep prevents and minimizes pain.
- Lack of sleep is linked to weight gain and high blood pressure.



Less Sleep... More Weight!! What the...????

Getting a decent night's sleep apparently does more than provide good rest -- it seems to curb the number of pounds women put on as they age, according to a new study. Although the study didn't show a definite cause-and-effect relationship, there was a significant link between inadequate sleep and weight gain. Women who got only five hours of sleep a night, on average, gained substantially more weight than those who routinely rested for seven hours at a time.



In the study, women who slept five hours a night were 32 percent more likely to experience major weight gain -- defined as an increase of 33 pounds or more -- and 15 percent more likely to become obese, compared with women who slept seven hours. And women who slept for six hours were 12 percent more likely to experience major weight gain and 6 percent more likely to become obese over the study period, compared with women who slept seven hours a night.

Ways to Overcome Sleep Problems

Most of us have trouble sleeping occasionally: We're worried about a test or presentation, we're upset over a fight with our spouse, we've got a new baby at home, we've just gotten laid off, or we're starting a new job. Many of life's events disrupt our sleep, but thankfully they are short-lived and resolve rather quickly. If you're experiencing problems with sleep, here are some general tips on how to get adequate and more restful sleep:

- Set a regular sleep schedule and stick to it. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, including week-ends.
- Avoid foods and drugs with stimulants in them. Watch for hidden caffeine in teas, colas, and chocolate.
- Beware of medications that may contain stimulants. Some over-the-counter drugs for colds, cough, and allergies can disrupt sleep— talk with your doctor if you suspect any of your medications are interfering with your sleep.
- Don't eat a large meal close to bedtime.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages close to bedtime.
- Get moderate amounts of exercise every day.
- Develop a relaxation ritual right before retiring to bed.
- Make sure your bedroom is sleep-friendly – completely dark, no electronics, quiet and clean!
- If you are short on sleep on any given



day, consider taking a brief (30-minute) nap in the afternoon to give yourself a boost.

If your problems don't resolve, keep a sleep diary. Note your eating patterns, alcohol and medication usage, sleeping times, and other behaviors to discern patterns to help pinpoint problem areas. If you are suffering from chronic insomnia, you should be evaluated by your physician or by a health-care professional to help get to the bottom of things.

WHEN DIET IS WRONG, MEDICINE IS OF NO USE.

WHEN DIET IS RIGHT, MEDICINE IS OF NO NEED.
AYURVEDIC PROVERB

Diet Right: Cut Calories, Not Nutrition

Embarking on a weight-loss diet can be a challenge as you exchange old habits for a new eating routine. As you shift your eating patterns, don't let vital nutrients slip through the cracks. Cutting back doesn't have to mean a nutritional nosedive. Here are few tips to help you create a healthy diet.

Don't skimp on fat

Many diets encourage decreasing fat consumption. Fat helps with the absorption of fat-soluble vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin E, and vitamin K. It's also a concentrated source of energy, and the essential fatty acids in some fats are vital for many important body functions. Reach for foods rich in omega-3—an important polyunsaturated fat. Good sources are flax-seed and its oil; walnuts; oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, and tuna; and hemp oil.



Fill up on fiber

To curb hunger between meals, bulk up on high-fiber foods such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains. Fiber gives you a

feeling of fullness and slows digestion. When food moves slowly through the digestive system, blood-sugar levels remain on an even keel.

Vitamins for vigor

Exercise goes hand in hand with dieting and will help you reach your weight-loss goals more quickly. Don't fall prey to low energy levels due to your lower calorie intake. Pack your diet full of B vitamins, which assist in

many bodily functions, from energy production to regulating metabolism to overseeing thyroid and adrenal function. Include the following B-vitamin foods in your diet: whole grains, beans, eggs, yogurt, green leafy vegetables, almonds, avocados, poultry, broccoli, brewer's yeast, organ meats (like liver), nuts, and fish.

Calcium: the powerhouse mineral

Recent studies have linked calcium intake to weight loss. Whether or not further studies bear this out, calcium remains a critical

nutrient, especially for women. Calcium is vital to the formation and growth of the bones and teeth and helps to prevent osteoporosis, among its other roles. Get your calcium from green leafy vegetables, wild caught salmon, and dairy products.

Lesser-known minerals are also hard at work keeping your body healthy and running at top speed. The trace mineral chromium assists in stabilizing blood-sugar levels and is found in brewer's yeast, egg yolks, beef, hard cheeses, liver, and whole-grain breads. Zinc supports protein synthesis and is essential to the formation of insulin. Zinc sources include Brazil nuts, shellfish, eggs, and lean meats. Manganese helps regulate cholesterol metabolism and blood glucose and is found in wheat germ, spinach, split peas, nuts, and oatmeal.

Remember, there are no one size fits all solutions to nutrition and health. Work with a qualified nutritional practitioner to help you find out what your individual dietary needs are and how to develop an eating protocol that's right for you!

CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT



Virginia Union University's Panthers are on the move with their Winter Walking Challenge. Over 60 employees registered for the 8-week challenge that encourages participants to keep moving during these cold winter months. Each registered participant received a free pedometer to help them keep track of their activity. Many also took the American Heart Association's "Sodium Break Up" pledge, promising to curb their salt intake. By taking the pledge on the website, you will receive resources and tips from the American Heart Association via email to help you on the sodium reduction journey.

You can go to SODIUMBREAKUP.HEART.ORG to take the pledge and join the Panthers in getting healthy this winter!

