



WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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National Nutrition Month

March is National Nutrition Month. Eating well can decrease the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and cancer. Eating well means eating a variety of healthy and nutritious foods in order to get the right amount of nutrients in your body to maintain good health and to function properly. There are different foods that provide different kinds of nutrients our bodies need.

-Proteins (lean meats, eggs, beans, nuts) help build muscle and a strong immune system.



-Carbohydrates (starches, sugar, and whole grains that also provide fiber) give you energy.

-Fats that are used sparingly provide essential fatty acids and extra energy.

-Vitamins and Minerals (commonly available in fruits, vegetables and whole grains) help regulate the body processes, enhance cell function and growth and also help build a strong immune system.

-Water gives cells shape and acts as a medium where the body processes can occur.

Including a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins into our meals will help ensure our bodies are getting the right amount of essential nutrients. Eating too many saturated fats and sugars can lead to excess weight gain and chronic diseases to occur.

Remember processed foods tend to lose many of their vitamins and other healthy nutrients during the manufacturing process and often have less healthy ingredients added such as corn syrup and trans fats. The term empty calories is often used to describe foods like soda and potato chips.

The following are tips on how to practice good nutrition this month and every month:



*Eat smaller meals including a vegetable as the center of the plate, with smaller meat and starch portions. Include at least one serving of fruit and vegetable with your meals.

*Drink more water between meals; try vegetables or a handful of nuts for a snack and fresh fruit for something sweet.

*Reduce you intake of deep fried foods and trans fats found in processed foods and baked goods.

*Read food labels and reduce the amount of added sugar, corn syrup and salt in the diet. Use fresh herbs and spices to season food instead.

Take Care of Your Kidneys

March is also National Kidney Month. Each year a half a million Americans suffer from the pain of kidney stones. Many people compare the pain to that of childbirth. Stones develop most often between the ages of 30 and 50 with men being afflicted four times as often as women. What causes stones? The tendency for stones can be inherited, but diet and occupation are among other factors. Stones occur most often in people with sedentary jobs and during the summer months. One of the most important ways to prevent stones is to drink plenty of water.

Besides kidney stones there is the risk of chronic kidney disease. Kidneys filter your blood removing wastes and extra water. When the kidneys are diseased, they stop doing these jobs and wastes build up, damaging the body. Symptoms to watch for are

- lack of energy,
- poor appetite,
- trouble sleeping,
- dry, itchy skin,
- muscle cramping at night,
- swollen feet and ankles,
- puffiness around eyes,
- need to urinate often

Here are some ways you can prevent kidney disease:

- Control your blood pressure by exercising, eating a low-salt diet, using prescribed medications
- Stop smoking
- Keep your weight within a healthy amount for your body size and type
- Have your blood pressure checked regularly

Nighttime Leg Cramps

Do you wake up at night with leg cramps? If you do here are four tips for preventing leg cramps before they happen:

1. Drink plenty of water. Dehydration causes cramps.
2. Wear good shoes during the day.
3. Stretch calf muscles before going to bed to loosen those muscles.
4. Loosen the covers. Tight covers can press feet down and tighten muscles in the calf and the bottom of the foot.

Self-Control Skills

The difference between making healthy choices and making choices that can harm you physically, mentally and emotionally is your self-control. Self-control is the ability to make positive choices about how you behave and act.

Self control can motivate you to go for a walk when you want to sit in front of the TV. It can help you stop eating when you feel full and not stuff yourself. Self control will allow you to follow your doctor's recommendations for better health. It can help you go to bed so you get enough rest.

Lack of self control can lead to weight gain, fatigue, addictions, eating disorders, and poor health, the next time you're faced with a decision, take a minute to think about your choices before you act.

Protection From Poisons

When it comes to poisoning, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The National Safe Kids campaign says being prepared and taking precautions to eliminate potential poison hazards can keep poison exposure from turning into tragedy for you and your family. What can you do?

- Know which items in your cupboards are harmful or poisonous
- Purchase items that have child-resistant packaging
- Read labels and follow the exact directions for usage and storage

- Store products out of sight and reach of children
- Know which plants are poisonous
- Post the toll-free poison control hotline at your telephone: 1-800-222-1222

Healthy Recipe of the Month

Chicken Vegetable Salad Makes 6 servings

- 1 ¼ lbs skinless chicken breasts, cooked & cubed
- 1/3 cup chopped zucchini
- 1/3 cup chopped carrots
- 1 tablespoon chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1/3 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup fat-free sour cream
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- Lettuce leaves
- 3 tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 1/4 cup sliced, toasted almonds

1. Combine chicken, zucchini, carrot, onion and parsley in large bowl.
2. Combine mayonnaise, sour cream, salt, and pepper in small bowl. Add to chicken mixture; mix well. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours.
3. Line plates with lettuce leaves. Divide salad evenly among plates. Surround with tomato wedges; sprinkle with almonds.

Nutritional information
178 calories
4 grams fat

Recipe from *Weight Loss Bible*
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