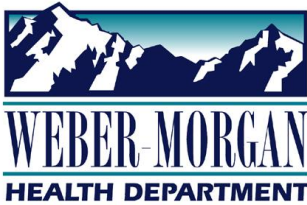




March, 2010

Weber-Morgan Healthy 2010 Newsletter

Supporting the health and wellness of our community



Did you know?

It's estimated that Americans spend a whopping \$35 billion a year on diet products!

Fad Diets and National Nutrition Month®

Did you resolve to eat better or lose weight this year? Easier said than done, right?

Sometimes we all need a little help knowing how to make these changes, and you don't have to look far for it. Diet books, ads and products are almost everywhere we look, and they're all promising quick, easy weight loss without "dieting" or the need to exercise. Too good to be true? You bet. We want to believe that there is a magic solution to all of our problems, and weight loss is no exception. It's hard. It's hard to lose the weight, it's hard to

keep it off and it's hard to change those deeply ingrained behaviors. So, when something promises to bring a solution to our problems, we jump on board. Unfortunately, this often leads well-intentioned people to try unhealthy products and diets that hurt their health more than they help.

March is the American Dietetic Association's National Nutrition Month®. To celebrate, this month's newsletter is all about diets- the fads and the facts. For more information about National Nutrition Month®, visit www.eatright.org.

The Nuts and Bolts of Nutrition



It's no wonder we're so confused about eating healthy when everyone seems to have a different idea of what healthy is. To help sort through all those messages, it's helpful to know a little about how our bodies use the foods we eat.

In the food world, a calorie is the basic unit of measurement for energy. Three things provide calories- carbohydrates, fats, and protein. These are called macronutrients. The prefix "macro" means large, so "macro-nutrients" are nutrients we need in large amounts.

Each macronutrient provides a different number of calories.

- Carbohydrates- 4 calories per gram
- Fats- 9 calories per gram
- Protein- 4 calories per gram.

To run properly, your body needs the right balance of all three macronutrients.

In order to use the food you eat, your body must convert it into glucose- a very basic form of sugar. The cells then use what they need and the rest is converted into glycogen, another form of sugar, and stored in the muscles and liver. If

glucose supplies get low, the body can use its glycogen stores to compensate. The body can only store so much glycogen, however, so the extra glucose that cannot be stored as glycogen is stored for a rainy day as fat.

This was tremendously valuable to our caveman ancestors, who didn't always know when they would get their next meal. Having a body that used calories efficiently and stored the extras meant survival. Those who survived passed on those efficient genes. Thanks to that, our modern bodies are calorie- efficient machines, but we're no longer lacking a reliable, steady food source. It's very easy to eat more than we need, and our bodies do what they're meant to do- they store it. And there you have weight gain. Many popular diets like to point fingers at specific macronutrients, but this is faulty logic. Weight gain is caused by an over consumption of *calories*, no matter where those calories come from!

So next time you hear about a new diet, try to see things from your body's perspective. Your body will thank you for it.

Did you know...

Apples are mostly carbohydrates. They are a great source of fiber- especially soluble fiber- and an average sized apple only has about 60 calories!

Focus on Fiber

Fiber passes through your body undigested. Since it isn't digested, it does not contribute any calories- but it's still extremely important! Fiber helps you feel full longer, which helps your waistline. It can lower cholesterol, reducing your risk for heart disease. It also helps promote regular bowel movements, which decreases your risk for colon cancer. Most Americans do not get enough fiber in their diets. Could you stand to up your fiber intake?

Carbohydrates

The term "carbohydrate" covers all forms of sugars, starches and fiber. Since your body must convert whatever it uses for energy into glucose, and carbohydrates go through very little changes to get there, your body turns to carbs first. Each gram of carbohydrate contains four calories, with the exception of fiber.

There are two basic classifications of carbohydrates: simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are easily broken down by your body and therefore digested quickly. Some simple carbohydrates, like white flour and sugar, have been processed and thus stripped of positive nutritional benefits, like fiber. Complex carbohydrates, on the other hand, are digested at a slower rate. Complex carbs are also high in fiber, and are often high in vitamins, minerals and cancer-preventing antioxidants (think fruits and veggies).

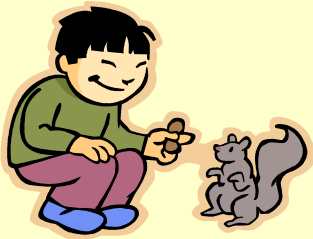
Truth is, carbs are indispensable. Your body needs a diet composed of 40-65% carbohydrates- a huge chunk! It's the

type of carbs we need to be careful about. Americans consume way too much simple carbohydrates- refined sugars and white flours, especially- and not enough complex carbohydrates and fiber. The solution to the problem, therefore, isn't to swear off carbs completely. Instead, choose complex carbohydrates- whole grains, fruits and vegetables- over simple carbohydrates.

It's easy! Here are a few tips to help you get started:

- ❑ Quit buying "white" or "refined" products- white bread, white flour, white rice, etc.
- ❑ Look for whole grain breads, pastas and flours.
- ❑ Try quick cooking brown rice instead of white rice.
- ❑ When looking for a sweet treat, reach for a piece of fruit.

It may take some getting used to, but it's so worth it! So have your carbs and eat them too!



Ah, nuts!

Nuts are a rich source of protein, healthy fats, and fat-soluble vitamins. Looking for more Omega 3's? Grab some walnuts! Looking for some vitamin E? Grab some almonds. The fat and protein combo can also help you stave off mid-meal hunger! So think like a squirrel and go nuts!

The Skinny on Fat

The fat-free craze of the 90's promised to be the best thing since Velcro. Every food manufacturer jumped on the bandwagon and began making low fat or fat free versions of high fat products, but it didn't solve our nation's weight problem. Why, you ask?

Well, the idea behind it is simple. Fats, no matter what kind, have 9 calories per gram, more than twice the amount in protein and carbohydrates. Cutting fat is, therefore, an easy way to cut calories. So what's the problem?

First of all, fat is essential to our bodies in small amounts. Fat is the delivery method for fat-soluble vitamins such as vitamin E. It also helps us feel full and satisfied from the foods we eat, but moderation is the key. Less than 30% of the calories you eat each day should come from fat. If you have certain health problems, such as heart disease or high

cholesterol, you may need less.

So why isn't "fat-free" the way to go? Not all fat-free or reduced-fat products are created equal. Fat tastes good, so to make up for the flavor lost by reducing the fat content, manufacturers often add in other things our taste buds like- namely sugar and sodium- making them just as high in calories, and just as bad for our health. To make sure you're getting something that's good and good for you, make sure to read the label and compare ingredients before you buy!

The type of fat you eat matters just as much as the amount you eat. Mono and poly-unsaturated fats and Omega 3 Fatty Acids are the "good" fats and are usually found in plant-based foods, olive and canola oil, and fish. Eating a well-rounded diet rich in plant-based foods will usually supply all the fats your body needs.

The Power of Protein

Proteins are actually long chains of amino acids. When we eat protein, our bodies break it down into these separate amino acids, which are then “pooled” for use by the cells to create things like tissues, hormones and antibodies. Thirteen amino acids can be made in our own bodies. These are the “nonessential” amino acids—meaning that it’s not essential to get them from the food we eat. There are nine “essential” amino acids that our bodies can’t make on their own. These must come from food. If any amino acid is lacking, cells cannot build proteins.

Foods are either considered a complete or incomplete source of protein. Animal based foods are considered “complete” because they contain all nine essential amino acids. Plant based foods are another great source of protein, but are

considered “incomplete.” This is nothing to stress over, however, because eating a variety of foods will compensate for this. Eating a grain, for instance, can make up for the amino acids missing from a bean. And, since all amino acids go into a pool for later use, this does not have to be at the same meal.

The average American consumes nearly twice as much protein as they really need! In truth, your body can only handle so much. The human body only needs .8 grams of protein per Kilogram of body weight, or about 15-35% of your daily caloric intake. Amounts beyond what your body needs place a lot of stress on your kidneys to be able to produce enough urine to flush it out.

The Low-Carb Low Down

Low carb diets certainly seem to work, but are they safe? Supporters say “yes,” but experts agree that the answer is “no”.

First, let’s take a look at how they work. Remember that your body will burn carbs first. When you stop eating carbohydrates, the body turns to its glycogen stores. When those are gone, the body turns to fat stores. Through a process called ketosis, your liver converts fat into ketones, which act as a substitute carbohydrate. This process is designed to help you survive through periods of starvation. In addition to burning fat, ketosis also suppresses the appetite and induces nausea, which causes you to want to eat less anyway (which is great, if you’re starving).

The human body is not designed to operate in a constant state of ketosis. Over time, acidic byproducts will build up in the blood stream. This is known as ketoacidosis, and can be life threatening, especially to diabetics. This acidic buildup is why low-carb dieter’s breath smells like nail polish remover. There’s also an initial loss of water weight, which can lead to dehydration.

Despite claims that ketosis burns hundreds of extra calories a day (it’s really only about 45), the real reduction in calories comes from cutting out entire food groups. While most plans will tell you that these are life long diets, few people plan to stay on them for a long period of time. With all the restrictions on what you can and can’t eat, it’s hardly practical! And once the diet stops, the weight returns (see “The Energy Equation, pg. 4).

In the end, the high fat content coupled with the elimination of healthy foods (such as whole-grains, fruits and vegetables), and a too-high protein content, pose more health risks than benefits. Some of the risks include an increased risk for heart disease, cancer, kidney stones, and diabetic coma, just to name a few.

There is no magic bullet for weight loss. While it’s not glamorous, a well-rounded diet and regular physical activity is the true secret! By choosing a healthier lifestyle over a fad, your health will be rewarded in the end.



Brain Drain!

The brain needs a minimum of 120 grams of carbohydrates a day. Low-carb diets don't come close to this amount. The popular Atkins diet, for instance, starts people out at only 20!

Spotting Fad Diets

- A diet is a fad if it:
- Promises miracle or magic foods burn fat
 - Requires you to eat unusual amounts of certain foods
 - Requires rigid menus with a limited selection of foods to be eaten at a certain time of day
 - Requires you to eat certain combinations of food
 - Promises rapid weight loss of more than 2 pounds per week
 - Has no warning to seek medical attention (especially for diabetics or high blood pressure)
 - Does not include physical activity as a component of the diet.

Source: American Heart Association

Finding a Healthy Diet

The American Dietetic Association recommends asking yourself the following questions to make sure that a diet is right for you. Does it include:

- Foods from all five food groups?
- The right number of servings from each food group?
- Foods you will enjoy eating for the rest of your life? (Remember- this shouldn't be a temporary thing.)
- Foods you can buy at the supermarket?
- Some of your favorite foods (the occasional treat included)? Any food can fit into a healthy diet.
- Foods that fit your budget and lifestyle?
- Regular physical activity?

It's also crucial to use a little common sense. If the diet sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Need some good examples?

If you're looking for something basic, the **My Pyramid Plan** may be for you.

The My Pyramid Plan was created by the US Department of Agriculture and can be found online at www.mypyramid.gov. The plan teaches you how much of each food group your body actually needs based on the information you provide online. It also stresses balancing food intake with physical activity and choosing healthier options from each food group.

Need something a little more structured? **The American Heart Association's No Fad Diet** is a non-traditional diet book that shows you how to change your eating and exercise habits for your overall health- not just your weight. There are three basic tenets- think smart, eat well and move more- that help you focus on the big picture while giving you the tools you need for success. The book also comes complete with recipes and tips. For more information or to order the book, visit www.americanheart.org.



Weight loss in a bottle?

Many weight loss aids are sold as "dietary supplements" and are not monitored by the FDA in the same way as medications. Make sure to do your homework before taking anything- your health is worth it!

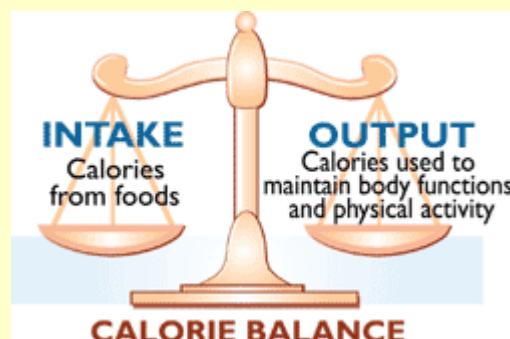
The Energy Equation

In the end, weight loss comes down to one thing- calories in vs. calories out (see side bar). Fad diets create this imbalance through the use of a gimmick, so while there may be "no calorie counting," you're still cutting calories. While this may work for a short time, these types of diets are ineffective in the long run.

Fad diets are usually only intended to be followed for a short period of time. Once you go back to normal, you gain the weight right back. There are two big reasons for this. For one, you never actually learned how to change the habits that got you into this mess in the first place. The eating and exercise patterns you had before the diet will be exactly the same after the diet. Second, remember that our bodies are calorie-efficient machines. If you drastically reduce your caloric intake for an extended period of time, your body will go into conservation mode. It adapts and learns to lower its needs. In the mean time, it relies on your body's fat stores to make up for it. When you go off your diet, you'll gain the weight back because your body has lowered its

caloric needs and will try to restock its fat stores in case you try to starve it again. See the problem?

A much better way to swing the scales is to balance reducing calories with increasing physical activity. Experts recommend cutting back your food intake by 250 calories while increasing your physical activity by 250 calories. This should produce a slow and steady weight loss of 1-2 pounds a week. Since this is less drastic than severely cutting calories, and only cutting calories, it will help prevent your body from trying to compensate.



The Equation:

One pound of fat equals 3,500 calories. If you take in 3,500 more calories than your body burns, you'll gain a pound of fat. If you burn 3,500 more calories than you're taking in, you'll lose a pound of fat. Weight is maintained when your food intake is equal to the amount your body burns.

Fruit and Veggie Of The Month

With warmer days right around the corner, popcorn will soon be popping on those apricot trees! **Apricots** are loaded with vitamin A (just one contains 18% percent of the recommended daily allowance!), vitamin C, iron and potassium. They are also high in fiber. Apricots are so nutritious that NASA has included them as part of the astronauts' diet on several space missions! A very versatile fruit, apricots can be eaten fresh, used in savory dishes, made into jams and sauces, or dried. Feeling adventurous? Try chopping apricots with jalapenos, lime juice, onions and cumin for a lively fruit salsa that can be eaten with baked tortilla chips or served over chicken or fish!

The term “**cooking greens**” is used to describe a wide variety of edible plant leaves that are typically cooked (as opposed to salad greens, which are eaten raw). Cooking greens are far more popular in southern states than they are in the rest

of the US. And what a shame! Cooking greens are loaded with vitamins A and C, fiber, iron and antioxidants, and are especially rich in calcium. In fact, ounce for ounce, collard greens, kale and mustard greens have the same amount of calcium as whole milk (and dandelion and turnip greens have even more)! With multiple varieties, including beet greens, collards, dandelion greens, kale, Swiss chard, mustard greens, broccoli raab, sorrel, and turnip greens, you're bound to find one your family likes! Cooking greens can be prepared by blanching (softening by a dip in boiling water), braising, microwaving, sautéing, steaming or included in other recipes. Try shredded in soups (Swiss chard is quite good in chili), mashing with potatoes, or sautéing with garlic until tender and tossing with pasta. They can even be layered in your favorite lasagna recipe!



What's in Season:
Spring

Vegetables:

Artichoke, asparagus, spinach, lettuces, kale, rhubarb, broccoli, collards, watercress, carrots, fennel, celeriac, peas, mushrooms, leeks

Fruits:

Apricots, mangoes, avocados, strawberries

Minestrone with Greens and Beans

Source: Martha Stewart Everyday Food, Online at www.marthastewart.com

1 tbsp olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
Coarse salt and ground pepper
2 tbsp tomato paste
1 lb (2 bunches) collard greens (or other hardy green), stalks removed, leaves coarsely chopped
½ tsp dried thyme
½ tsp red pepper flakes
2 cans white beans, rinsed and drained
1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes in juice
Grated Parmesan (optional), for serving

In large saucepan, heat oil on medium heat. Add onion and garlic, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion begins to soften (5-6 min). Add tomato paste, and cook, stirring, until onion is coated (30 sec). Add greens, thyme and red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring, until greens start to wilt (2-4 min). Place ¼ of the beans in a bowl and mash (this will help thicken the soup). Add all the beans to the pan with the tomatoes and 4 cups water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer until greens are tender (10-15 min). Season with salt and pepper and serve with Parmesan. Add whole grain bread and a crisp salad for a complete meal.

Apricot Bar Cookies

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research, featured in The New American Plate.

Canola oil cooking spray
1 cup quick cooking rolled oats
1 cup wheat flour
1/3 cup packed brown sugar
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp baking soda
1/3 cup canola oil
5 tbsp apple juice, divided
½ cup apricot jam (look for fruit sweetened varieties!)
1 pkg. (7 oz) dried apricots, diced



Preheat oven to 350. Spray 9X9 baking pan with cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix oats, flour, sugar, cinnamon, salt and baking soda. In a small bowl, whisk oil and 3 tbsp juice and pour over oat mixture. Blend until moist and crumbly. Reserve ¾ cup for topping. Press remainder into pan. In small bowl, blend jam with 2 tbsp apple juice. Stir in apricots. Spread over crust. Sprinkle reserved crumb mixture over apricots, pressing lightly with finger tips. Bake 35 min until golden. Cool completely before cutting into bars.

Nutrition on the Web

Have more nutrition questions? The web is full of nutritional info, some good some bad. Check out these great nutrition sites for info you can trust (and some great ideas, too).

American Institute for Cancer Research:

- www.aicr.org

CDC's Fruits and Veggies Site:

- <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/>

Fruits and Veggies: More Matters

- <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>

My Pyramid:

- www.mypyramid.gov

National Agricultural Library's Nutrition Site:

- www.nutrition.gov

Dole 5 A Day:

- www.dole5aday.com

Have a picky eater in your home?

Check out the creative ideas of one English mom and her son, Freddie as they eat their way through the A-Z of vegetables in The Great Big Vegetable Challenge. Mom records their daily adventures on their blog:

- <http://greatbigvegchallenge.blogspot.com/>

We're On the Web!

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Go Green for National Nutrition Month and Claim your FREE Reusable Grocery Bag!

Want an easy way to go green during the month of March? Whatever your motivation, whether it be for the environment, for your health, for St. Patrick's day or all of the above, this reusable Fruits and Veggies – More Matters™ grocery bag (see below) fits the bill! The green bag folds to the size of a wallet and closes snugly with Velcro tabs to easily fit inside your purse or glove compartment (so you'll always have it handy!). Perfect for carting home all your green leafy veggies or packing a healthy lunch to work!

To claim your free bag, clip the coupon to the right and correctly answer the challenge question (the answer can be found somewhere in this newsletter). Bring your coupon to the Weber-Morgan Health Department, Division of Health Promotion (3rd floor) or mail it to:

Weber-Morgan Health Department
Attn: Rochelle Creager
477 23rd Street
Ogden, UT 84401



Coupons are only valid during the month of March and must be postmarked, if mailed, by March 31st. Please allow extra time for your bag to be mailed to you.

Free Reusable Grocery Bag!

By correctly answering the challenge question, this coupon entitles the bearer to one free Fruits and Veggies - More Matters™ reusable grocery bag, courtesy of the Weber-Morgan Health Department.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Challenge question: the brain needs a minimum of _____ carbohydrates per day (hint: the answer can be found on pg. 3).

Coupon expires March 31, 2010. Limit one bag per person. Duplicate or incomplete coupons will not be honored.