

March is on its way out and that means spring weather is beginning!! We can all come “out of hibernation” and take our activity outdoors again! (My applause to the hardy souls who do it outdoors year round!) Daylight savings time begins this weekend (“spring” that clock ahead one hour Saturday night!) National Napping Day will happen on April 3, 2006 right after the switch in time! Since many of us seem to be sleep deprived, we can benefit from napping! Check out their website at <http://www.napping.com/index.html> . Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a real concern for many individuals. SAD is a mood disorder associated with depression episodes and related to seasonal variations of light. Symptoms can include bouts of depression, increased eating, decreased exercise and resulting weight gain. Studies have shown that students learn better and score higher on tests when provided environments with natural light. Also, employees increase their productivity, decrease absenteeism and have fewer health complaints when exposed to natural light. Read more about this condition and the recommended treatment at <http://www.nmha.org/infoctr/factsheets/27.cfm> . Do your best to get outside daily for your dose of health benefiting natural light! It’s a form of preventive medicine that doesn’t cost you a penny!

So what’s the best way to begin an exercise program if you have been sedentary for much of the winter? The hardest part is often taking that first step! It’s important to choose an activity you can grow to enjoy and to begin slowly and gradually build. If you tackle too much right away, you will develop muscle soreness and fatigue which will discourage your good efforts. Injury is also a concern when you are not in adequate shape. Keep in mind the FIT principles (frequency, intensity and time). And once you have started exercising, what keeps you motivated? Find a fitness partner to offer accountability. Consider keeping an exercise log (perhaps just a calendar, a journal, or your goals and a chart of what you accomplish). You need to schedule your workouts just as you do other important meetings and appointments. Perhaps music, some book tapes or viewing TV during your exercise will keep you going. For more information on getting started and developing an exercise program, read <http://www.primusweb.com/fitnesspartner/library/activity/startexercise.htm> . Just remember exercise and activity does not require membership at a gym or fitness facility! There are many free activity options!

As March departs, we bid farewell to another National Nutrition Month. In keeping with the theme of “Step up to Nutrition and Health”, I’d like to toss out some very easy steps to bring good health even on your busy days!

1. **Drink orange juice with added calcium.** It has as much calcium as milk and calcium is thought to play a role in blood pressure control and possibly weight control (in addition to be critical to your bones and teeth!) Just remember not to overdo the juice in your diet as although it adds nutrients, it doesn’t provide fiber or a sense of fullness as whole fruit will do. (Recently released recommendations suggest adult consumption should be no more than 4 ounces of juice daily).
2. **Have a “5 or more gram” cereal.** Choose a cereal with at least 5 g of fiber per serving. Fiber is a cancer fighter, lowers your risk for diabetes and keeps you feeling full. Aim for 25-30 grams of fiber daily!
3. **Toss some blueberries on that cereal** (or elsewhere). Blueberries, whether fresh, frozen or dried, are packed with beneficial antioxidants to slow down the aging process, prevent memory loss, and help fight chronic disease. And they taste good, too!
4. **Take an apple to work.** Put it on your desk when you arrive in the morning so it’s handy to grab when the munchies hit! It’s a good source of soluble fiber (be sure to eat the peel!) which along with the antioxidants may lower blood

cholesterol, improve bowel function, reduce the risk of stroke, prostate cancer, type II diabetes and asthma.

5. **Stash nuts in your desk.** They are rich in monounsaturated fats, vitamin E, magnesium and phytochemicals. Research suggests that those who Snack on them 4-5 times a week tend to live longer. Just don't overdo it! They are a potent source of fat and calories (1 ounce= 14 gm fat and 170 calories)
6. **Buy better bread.** White bread has the fiber and nutrients stripped from it whereas whole wheat bread has fiber, important nutrients such as selenium and copper and other healthy ingredients. Individuals who consume whole grains have less diabetes, breast cancer and heart disease. Don't be fooled by the color of the bread! Unless the first ingredient includes the word "whole", it isn't a whole grain.
7. **Say "Salmon!"** Salmon is one of the richest sources of omega-3 fats. These fats fight macular degeneration, severe menstrual cramps, fatal heart attacks and possibly even breast cancer. You can use fresh, frozen or canned varieties and there are a myriad of ways to make it taste delicious!
8. **Add tea to your drinking.** Tea has a large amount of antioxidants-more than most veggies! Individuals who drink green tea regularly have lower rates of some types of cancer and black tea drinkers have fewer blood clots which can trigger strokes and heart attacks.
9. **Open a can of beans and add them to something!** There are so many varieties and all are tops in soluble fiber in addition to multiple nutrients and phytochemicals. They are a great lean protein source, can help to lower your blood cholesterol and heart attack risk, and stabilize blood sugar and offer antioxidants to fight aging and chronic diseases. Puree them into a spread with spices (hummus) for snacks or sandwiches, add them to soups or salads, make them into patties, sub them for meat chunks in stew or skillet dishes, or make them the centerpiece of the meal (as in Red Beans and Rice). Any way you eat them, they are so good for you!
10. **Drink a glass of water when you brush your teeth in the morning and evening.** Water helps nearly every part of the human body function. 55-75% of our bodies are water! Yet only one-third of us get the recommended amount of water daily. Signs of mild dehydration include fatigue, lack of concentration, and headaches.

**Come see me if you want to discuss how to improve your health! I am here as your resource and would love the opportunity to help you! Call me at 294-9625 or respond to this e-mail.**

Enjoy your weekend!  
Eat healthy and enjoy!

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