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Food and Fitness

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EATING IS ONE of life's greatest pleasures. There are so many foods and ways to build a healthy lifestyle there is lots of room for choice. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans offers great ideas and sensible guidelines to help you with these choices. The guidelines begin with the basics of the ABCs for you and your family's health. These guidelines are intended for healthy children (ages two and older) and adults any age. **Aim for fitness; Build a healthy base; and Choose sensibly.**

AIM FOR FITNESS. That means aim for a healthy weight and be physically active every day.

-A healthy weight is key to a long, healthy life

-Over time, even a small decrease in calories eaten and a small increase in physical activity can keep you from gaining weight or help you lose weight.

-Engage in 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity most, preferably all, days of the week. Make physical activity a regular part of your routine.

-Moderate physical activity is any activity that requires about as much energy as walking two miles in 30 minutes.

BUILD A HEALTHY BASE. Let the Food Guide Pyramid guide you so that you get the vitamins, minerals, energy and other healthful substances from foods your body needs each day. Make grains, especially whole grains, fruits, and vegetables the foundation of your meals. This forms a base for good nutrition and health. Foods that are safe from harmful bacteria,

viruses, parasites, and chemical contaminants are vital for healthful eating.

-Since foods within the same food group differ in their array of nutrients and other healthful substances, choosing a variety helps you get all the nutrients and fiber you need. It can also keep your meals interesting day to day.

-Also choose some low-fat dairy products and low fat foods from the meat and beans group each day. It's fine to enjoy fats and sweets on occasion.

-Wash hands often; keep raw meats and ready-to-eat foods separate; cook to proper temperatures; and refrigerate promptly to below 40 degrees.

CHOOSE SENSIBLY. Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat. Choose beverages and foods that limit your intake of sugars. Choose and prepare foods with less salt.

-Choose low fat dairy products, cooked beans and peas, fish and lean meats and poultry.

-Use the Nutrition Facts Label to help you choose foods lower in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. Read the label to compare and help identify foods lower in sodium.

-Take care not to let foods high in sugar crowd out other foods you need to maintain health, such as low-fat milk or other good sources of calcium.

-Chose herbs or spices on foods like grilled or roasted entrees, baked potatoes, and salads to help you limit sodium intake.



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Steps to help increase exercise success

IMAGINE A MAN in his mid-50s sitting with his legs crossed watching television. In comes his three-year-old granddaughter who sits on his foot desiring him to rock his leg sending her up and down in delight.

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh. The child laughs and says, "Do it again; do it again."
"I can't," the grandfather responds. "You're too heavy."

In addition to health benefits, people who make a moderate exercise program a part of their everyday schedule can also enjoy the little things in life, like playing with grandchildren. Dr. Jeffrey Hallam, a health behavior scientist and assistant professor of exercise science and wellness at the University of Mississippi (UM), said the grandfather could grant the child's wish if he routinely engaged in moderate exercise.

"Moderate intensity-based exercise not only builds muscle strength and endurance, but it also helps to maintain quality of life," Hallam said.

The problem so many face, however, is sustaining an exercise program. Hallam offered six basic skills that can enhance an exercise program, helping participants remain true to their regimen:

Goal setting. Begin a program by setting specific, measurable and attainable goals within a specified time. For example, a beginner could exercise for 30 minutes two days a week. Then add a third day the next month and so on until you are exercising 30 minutes, five days a week.

Time management. Set a specific time to exercise, scheduling around family, work and social obligations. Make exercise a priority, don't double book your exercise appointment.

Relapse prevention. If walking is your chosen exercise, don't let bad weather become an excuse. When inclement weather occurs, go to an indoor walking facility or have an alternative exercise, such as riding a stationary bike.

Social support. Exercise with a friend or significant other. The buddy system not only provides support, but it also makes you obligated to your partner. Also, tell your friends about your exercise program. It helps to motivate you when they ask how the program is progressing.

Self-monitoring. Keep track of when you exercise. Write it down on a calendar or journal. This can serve as a continuing source of encouragement and a confidence booster.

Reinforcement. Reward yourself daily, weekly or monthly for exercising.

"If people implement these six components, then they're more likely to remain faithful to an exercise program," the UM professor said. "Everyone can do these six skills, so replace willpower with skill power."

HALLAM SAID unstructured exercise programs, such as walking or riding a bicycle, are better than structured programs, such as an aerobics class. His research found that 80 percent of the people who utilized the six skills maintained their unstructured exercise program for 12 months or more, while 50 percent of the people involved in a structured exercise program dropped out within six months.



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Eat Your Veggies

Antioxidants might be just what the doctor ordered

MANY OF US who are prone to fits of conscience have little entities who sit on a shoulder and whisper things in our ears. From time to time we might hear this little being say, "You know, you really need to eat more fruits and vegetables." We realize it's important, but we don't always think about why.

It turns out that our lives might depend on it, that's why. According to growing volumes of research, numerous compounds found in plant foods have properties that can protect us from cancer and heart disease, the two most prominent causes of premature death.

The keys include antioxidants, which are well-known foot soldiers in the war against disease, and relative newcomers, phytochemicals, which are non-nutritive substances found in fruits, vegetables and grains that can provide protective benefits from life-threatening illness. Beta carotene, one of the better-known antioxidants, is part of the carotenoid category that forms a subgroup of phytochemicals. Although research is ongoing, phytochemicals also are believed to slow aging and boost the immune system.

While the food-cancer link has been developing for years, the idea that specific foods have positive cardiac benefit is fairly new to the public, which long has been told to minimize heart risk primarily by avoiding certain foods, particularly those high in animal fats.

Phytochemicals work against heart disease by reducing the oxidation of low-density lipoproteins, also known as "bad" cholesterol. Some phytochemicals function as cancer preventives because they carry antioxidant properties, which means they can help reduce the effect of free radicals, components in the body that can become carcinogenic agents.

Cancers involving epithelial cells, such as lung, cervical, esophageal, stomach and colon cancers, are most susceptible to the preventive benefits of phytochemicals. The risk of hormone-related forms, like uterine and breast cancer, also can be affected by fruit and vegetable consumption because some phytochemicals block hormonal pathways.

Different foods furnish differing forms of protection. Tomatoes, for example, recently have found favor for their lycopene content. Lycopene, an antioxidant, is one of many cancer-resisting agents, and it seems to be most plentiful in cooked tomatoes, such as those used in pasta and pizza sauces.

Broccoli, on the other hand, provides sulforaphane, a different cancer-fighter. And purple grape juice and red wine contain polyphenolic compounds, which can reduce the risk of heart disease by supporting healthy cardiac function.

Lutein, found in greatest amounts in leafy vegetables and winter squash, is thought to help slow the progression of degenerating vision. Saponins, found in legumes, oats and asparagus, are believed to help boost the immune system.

Onions and garlic have plentiful amounts of sulphides, which help thin the blood and prevent clotting, also helpful toward the efficient working of the heart.

Even herbs have been found to have disease defenses in their chemical makeup. Rosemary, sage and ginger are particularly rich in antioxidants.

THE VARYING benefits in different foods bolsters the argument for variety in the

diet. Some studies also suggest that concentrating on single elements is not a wise course of defense against disease. In fact, a study of smokers who were given beta carotene supplements actually found evidence that those substances taken in isolation can cause an increase in the growth of cancerous tumors.

However, research in the area is still in its infancy. Questions still remain to be answered about the relationships among the food components, so it is not known yet whether certain foods can negate the benefits of phytochemicals, or which foods work best together to protect against disease.

Experts emphasize a diet encompassing a broad range of foods as the best strategy. There are almost 2,000 known plant pigments, 800 flavinoids and 450 different carotenoids. Clearly there is no one super food, no magic pill that promises lifelong health.

The trouble is that a poor diet is easier to come by than a wholesome one. With only occasional exceptions, fast food tends to be nutritionally destitute, and even for families who eat at home, less-than-healthy convenience foods can make it difficult for busy people to live up to the credo "strive for five."

Supermarket salad bars can be helpful, she said, and planning ahead can make it easier to have healthy foods available to the family. Experts advise people to seek out fresh foods, eating the most perishable items first, although frozen and canned goods are nearly as high in phytochemicals and other beneficial components as their fresh counterparts. She also recommends whole grains over refined baked products which have undergone processing that removes nearly all of the phytochemicals that originally were in the ingredients.

In the end, the advice is basic and familiar: eat your vegetables. And your fruit. And keep it simple. It only makes sense.

Keep things easy, things you're likely to eat.

ADDING ANTIOXIDANTS

Although many remain yet to be identified, phytochemicals have been found throughout the plant kingdom, so eating a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains is the best way to benefit from their dietary protection against cancer and heart disease.

Antioxidants, which function in some of the same ways as phytochemicals, have established health protective properties, and they can be found in these three principal categories, listed in order beginning with the best sources of each nutrient.

- Beta carotene-rich foods: sweet potatoes, cooked spinach, carrots, acorn squash, cantaloupe, Romaine lettuce, dried apricots, watermelon, summer squash, asparagus, fresh peaches, sweet corn.

- Vitamin C-rich foods: cantaloupe, grapefruit, red bell pepper, dark-green leafy vegetables, papaya, strawberries, oranges, mango, green bell pepper, orange juice, baked potatoes, raw broccoli, raw cauliflower, cooked brussels sprouts, raw tomato, sweet potato, lemons.

- Vitamin E-rich foods: fortified cereal, sunflower seeds, sunflower oil, mayonnaise, safflower oil, wheat germ, canola or corn oil, brazil nuts or peanuts, blue cheese dressing, peanut butter, olive, peanut or soybean oil, cooked spinach, mango.

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• **USTA JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS:** To find out how you can get your child involved in team tennis for the spring season, contact Mimi Johnson, 601-953-1591, mimijohnson@msmoc.com.

• **FOR ALL YOUR TENNIS NEEDS, GO TO** www.mstennis.com.



SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

*information based on article by Jack L. Groppe, Ph.D printed by the USTA

Healthy tips

Brisk walking

To find out if you're walking briskly enough to get aerobic benefits, count the number of steps you take in one minute.

Count each step, says Consumer Reports on Health.

If you take 125 steps per minute, that's enough for fitness for average adults, and meets the American College of Sports Medicine's guidelines.

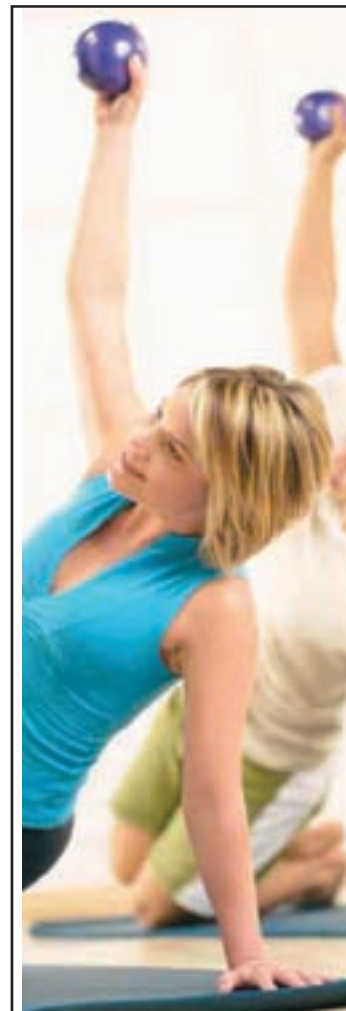
One mile equals 2,000 steps for fitness, it says.

Healthy steps

Think about making this the year you choose a healthier lifestyle.

The following are ideas to put on a "to-do list" as healthy steps for the new year.

- Walk 10 minutes each day.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Start with 15 minutes of activity each day and work up to 30 minutes.
- Exercise with a friend.
- Join an exercise class.
- Try new healthy recipes each month.
- Eat a variety of food each day.
- Drink more water.
- Cut back on soda pop.
- Modify favorite recipes to make them healthier.
- Don't snack as much.
- Watch less television.
- Balance being busy with relaxation.
- Get a complete physical.
- Laugh more.



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Simple screenings play key role in fighting disease

AGE 50 IS OFTEN thought of as the prime of life. For many it represents being at the top of their game in terms of finances and family. It also signals the end of a carefree approach to personal health and the beginning of a closer watch over physical conditions.

Almost every serious health condition is more likely to occur in men and women after 50.

That's why many public health agencies run health-screening programs for those 55 and older. Typically, clinics are run in apartment buildings, offices, schools and anywhere else there is adequate space. Carol Roach and Deborah Hill, public health nurses, travel throughout their county with testing equipment.

These screenings can detect such health problems as high blood pressure, anemia and diabetes, and can evaluate vision and hearing.

Despite their simplicity, the screenings are the first step in fighting disease. That's why Hill and Roach spend an hour interviewing patients as they seek information that may lead them to recommend more specific tests.

"We ask if they have varicose veins or cramps in their legs, for example," Hill said. These questions may seem basic, but both conditions indicate the possibility of arterial or vascular disease.

The "Guide to Clinical Preventive Services" put out by the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force recommends blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, as well as mammograms and colonoscopies, for those over 50. Some doctors recommend mammograms and colon screenings as much as 10 years earlier if there is a family history of breast or colon cancer.

A DISEASE THAT IS RECEIVING INCREASING attention — partial arterial obstructive disease, or PAD can be easily screened.

"It is a partial or complete obstruction of vessels that supply blood to tissues in the legs, thighs or pelvis," said Dr. Warner Bundens, an associate professor of family and preventive medicine at the University of California San Diego.

Half of those with the disease show no symptoms, one of which is an intermittent cramping of the leg muscles while walking. Bundens said statistics show that by age 50, about three percent of the population has PAD. "By age 60, that increases to eight percent, and by 70, it's 18 percent," Bundens said.

The test, known as an ankle brachial index, or ABI, involves taking the blood pressure of an ankle and comparing it with the blood pressure of an arm. If one is lower than the other, Bundens said, there is usually a problem. About half of the people testing positive for PAD will have a heart attack within five years.

Some screenings aren't as simple as the ABI. Bone-density screenings, for example, are controversial. These screenings test for osteoporosis in post-menopausal women. The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends bone-density screenings for women over 65. But studies haven't shown that these screenings accurately predict the risk of hip or vertebral fractures, which could occur 20 to 30 years later.

The necessity of prostate cancer screenings also is debatable. Although a screening by a family physician, who can feel the prostate for lumps, is recommended, many doctors argue against a blood test because of its unreliability.

The test, known as the PSA, gives a false result 80 percent of the time. If a man receives a false positive result, he will usually take the next step, which is a costly evaluation of the prostate gland.

Soap, water best defense against colds

An informal poll of family practitioners and health department employees produced one constant in the battle against pesky viruses: Wash your hands.

Following that universal admonition were some individual tips that can provide additional protection:

- Carry disinfectant wipes individually packaged in your wallet or in a purse-size container. Use them to wipe the handles of the grocery cart. To be extra safe, use a second wipe after the first if you have a baby who might decide to teeth on the handle as you do your shopping.

- Think twice before sending your little ones into play areas filled with a sea of ping-pong balls, which also could be a hotbed of viruses.

- Once you have recovered from a cold, consider starting fresh with a new toothbrush.

- To keep your sinuses from drying out at night, making them more susceptible to viruses, keep live plants or bowls of water in your bedroom.

- If you are in a crowded room and the person next to you begins coughing or sneezing, turn and walk away, trying not to inhale until you are a distance away from the flume of germs.

- Consider buying stock in the companies that manufacture disposable disinfectant

wipes. Watch doctors and nurses. More and more health-conscious people are using them on the handles of gas station pumps, at automatic teller machines and pay telephones. If you're traveling out of the country, they are as essential as your passport.

- Don't be surprised to see fellow diners using a napkin to pick up restaurant salt and pepper shakers or to handle their menus. Think of the traffic through the establishment and the opportunity for infection.

- Take your own crayons to restaurants that routinely provide them for young guests.

- Even in the homes of friends, try to avoid dipping into community bowls containing nuts, popcorn, chips or candies. And forget the dip unless it's an intimate gathering of two.

- No one wants to believe their own kitchen may be harboring germs. But research has shown that your kitchen sponge can be a breeding ground for germs. Change it regularly and, in between, wash it on the top rack of your dishwasher to freshen it. Change dish towels daily.

- Finally, if you are nimble, flush public toilets with your foot. Then crank out the paper towels before you wash your hands, use them and then grab the exit door handle with them and arc your best hook shot to sink them in the waste container as you leave.

'About Four Mile Trail Run' scheduled April on grounds of museum

Each year as the cold temperatures of January and February begin to slowly give way to the milder weather of spring, people begin looking to get outside and enjoy all that nature has to offer. A highly anticipated springtime outdoor activity is Buffalo Peak Outfitters' "About Four Mile Trail Run." Considered Jackson's oldest trail run, the "About Four Mile Trail Run" was originally held on the Natchez Trace and was moved to the nature trail on the grounds of the Natural Science Museum five years ago. The run is now held in conjunction with Nature Fest, which combines several outdoor events for individuals of all ages.

Through the years the number of participants has increased, and currently nearly 90 runners of all ages participate. Each participant receives a gift bag and winners are awarded prizes. A special tradition of the trail run involves a concrete pig hidden along the trail. The runner who discovers the pig and carries it over the finish line is awarded an additional prize.

In conjunction with the trail run, a paddle demo will be held on Mayes Lake where paddlers of all experience levels can try a variety of kayaks. The public is invited to participate in the trail run and paddle demo.

This year's event will take place on Saturday, April 4, at Mayes Lake (behind the Natural Science Museum off Lakeland Drive). For more information, call Buffalo Peak Outfitters.



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7-8 yr. olds:	Tuesdays 4:00pm-5:30pm	Feb. 10, 17, 24..Mar. 3, 10, 24
9-11 yr. olds:	Wednesdays 4:00pm-5:30pm	Feb. 11, 18, 25..Mar. 4, 11, 25

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*Based on a full-service weight loss program which includes reducing, stabilization and maintenance. Registration and required products, if any, at Diet Center regular list prices. See center for full details. †Results may vary. © 2008 Diet Center Worldwide, Inc.®, Akron, OH 44333, a Health Management Group™ company. All Rights Reserved.

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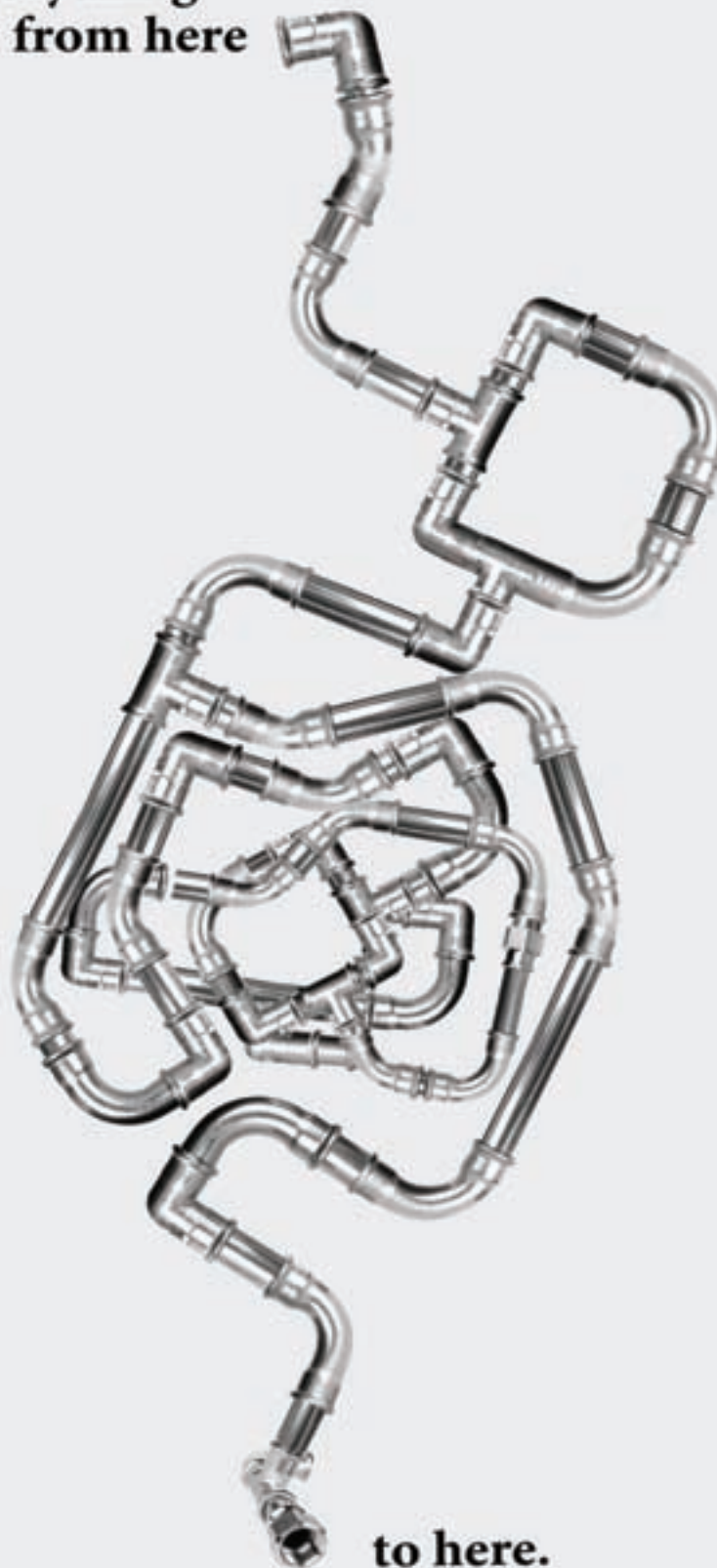
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