March is National Nutrition Month®! During this month the American Dietetic Association urges consumers to look beyond the myths of nutrition and focus on the facts. Because in 2008, Nutrition is a Matter of Fact!

1. Eating right doesn’t have to be complicated. Use MyPyramid.gov to develop a personalized plan for lifelong health.
2. The best nutrition advice is based on science. Before adopting any changes to your diet, be sure the information is based in scientific fact.
3. Get your food and nutrition facts from the expert: a registered dietitian. RDs are uniquely qualified to translate the science of nutrition into reliable advice you can use every day.
4. Balancing physical activity and a healthful diet is your best recipe for managing weight and promoting overall health and fitness. Think nutrient-rich rather than “goo” or “bad” foods. The majority of your food choices should be packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients—and lower in calories.
5. Look at the big picture: No single food or meal makes or breaks a healthful diet. Your total diet is the most important focus for healthful eating.

Wellness Works....When It’s Available

WELLNESS IS working! American workers realize that participating in such programs won’t only improve health, but will actually lower their personal healthcare costs, according to Jerry Ripperger, Principal’s national practice leader of consumer health. Yet, a surprising number of employees do not yet have access to wellness at their workplace, according to the recent Principal Financial Well-Being Index.

“When workers become personally involved in their own wellness, workers and employers alike begin to see a big impact,” says Ripperger. “Al Sings point to the positive benefits of wellness programs, and employers get it; yet many employers still haven’t taken the step.” For example, Kaiser research shows that companies tend to implement a wide range of wellness programs, although they are still utilized by only a small minority of corporations.

For many employers, wellness programs are beginning to be viewed as an investment rather than an expense. Ripperger says that CFO’s have always viewed healthcare as an expense, but rarely as an investment. “But improving the health of your employee base, rather than simply providing reimbursements, is an exercise in risk management with a true Return on Investment.”

Ripperger notes that a recent Principle study found that for every dollar spent on putting a wellness program in place, employers have seen an average reduction of $2.45 in medical claims. Generally, it takes about 18 months for an employer to start seeing such returns, he notes the longer a wellness program is in place, the more healthcare costs can be reduced.

While Ripperger said it’s difficult to pinpoint the exact cost of a wellness program, it’s often less than 5 percent of a company’s total healthcare costs.

Prepare, handle and store food properly to keep you and your family safe from food-borne illness.

Don’t fall prey to food myths and misinformation that may harm rather than benefit your health.

Read food labels to get nutrition facts that help you make smart food choices quickly and easily.

Find the healthy fats when making food choices. By choosing polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats, you can keep your saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol low.

Source: www.eatright.org, ADA

On the flip side, insurers have been stepping up efforts to help their policyholders stay healthy by offering their customers more products, programs, information, and online tools to help them take charge of their health.

The aim of insurers is to avert illness, or failing that, to detect illness early and manage it to stop it from getting worse. Insurers say most of the nations’ health costs result from chronic diseases, many of which are highly influenced by personal choices. “Nine out of 10 initial heart attacks and a third of all cancers would never happen if we took better care of our own bodies.” says Gubby Barlow, CEO, Premera Blue Cross.

Even YMCAs nationwide are getting into the health-fitness movement through their Activate America program. Officials are retraining staff, redesigning facilities, and revising activities to combat what the Y calls “the nation’s ongoing lifestyle crisis.”

Source: Employee Benefits Agency Inc, HR Insiders
ABC’s of Wellness

A is for Antioxidants, said to prevent cancer.
B is for a Balanced Diet, to which chips and soda are not the answer.
C is for Calcium, which can be found in nuts as well as cheese.
D is for Daily, which is how often you should practice a healthy lifestyle.
E is for Exercise, and might mean hunting, a swim or a run.
F is for Friendships and times together that equal fun.
G is for Green Leafy Vegetables, a good source of fiber and vitamin C.
H is for High Blood Pressure, which can affect your ability to see.
I is for Iron; when you have a deficiency you become tired, pale and weak.
J is for Jumping Jacks, an exercise you could do to maintain a strong physique.
K is for Kitchen, where you got to sneak a HEALTHY snack before bed.
L is for Lycopene, an antioxidant found in ketchup and red tomatoes.
M is for Movies and Music, ways to relieve stress for some.
N is for Nutrition, your food is where it comes from.
O is for Obesity, the second leading cause of unnecessary death.
P is for PEIF, the place to go exercise regularly and sweat it out.
Q is for Quality, which is what your health information should be.
R is for Relax, maybe sitting down with a novel and hot tea.
S is for Screenings, provided by your doctor.
T is for Tendonitis, which is treated with anti-inflammatory medication.
U is for Ulcers, which contrary to popular belief are not caused by stress.
V is for Volunteering, how good it feels you could never guess.
W is for WELLNESS, the state of being healthy and feeling well.
X is for X-Rays, used to check up on our bones.
Y is for Yoga, which helps your muscles and mind feel relaxed.
Z is for Zinc, an essential nutrient in most nuts to name one.

COST of Inactivity

By Randy Herring
Hospital costs compared to the costs to maintain a healthy lifestyle are much higher. Statistics show that it costs much less to stay fit than it does to heal health ailments or complications brought on by not living a healthy lifestyle.

Inactivity
Inactivity costs the U.S. $24 billion a year. According to the centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 28% of the population report no leisure-time physical activity. It is this portion of the population that could save the U.S. $24 billion if they would do more than drive their car to the supermarket and back to their garage. Actually, the situation may be worse. According to a researcher of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, state-level reports have indicated up to 48% of people do some activity, but not enough to get health benefits. If the state-level estimates of inactivity are used the costs of inactivity could be $37.2 billion.

The Damage
The damage done by lack of exercise is huge. Inactivity accounts for 22% of coronary heart disease, colon cancer and osteoporotic fractures, as well as 12% of diabetes. Other studies have found that lack of exercise raises the risks of such conditions as high blood pressure, stroke and breast cancer. Researcher Graham Colditz, Brigham and Women's Hospital concludes that we have succeeded in designing a society that has removed the need for energy expenditure (we move less because of technology!). On the other hand, society has made it a lot easier to take energy in (300 calories more than a decade ago!). Food is everywhere. Based on estimates that about 23% of Americans are clinically obese, the health care costs of obesity are approximately $70 billion.

Statistics
Statistics show that it costs much less to stay fit than it does to heal health ailments or complications brought on by not living a healthy lifestyle. To value your own body and to provide it knowledge, nutrition and proper exercise is the least expensive commodity. It is also the highest calling or responsibility one can have to him/herself. So take it upon yourself to JUST DO IT, BUT DO IT RIGHT!

And According to the CDC, physical activity is one of the Leading Health Indicators, thus one of our top Public Health priorities.

• Studies have demonstrated that the more frequent and vigorous your activity levels, the better your health.

• The U.S. Surgeon General recommends an accumulated 30 minutes of moderate endurance-type physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week to achieve health benefits.

• Studies have shown that a lack of regular physical activity doubles the risk of developing: Cardiovascular Disease, Adult Onset Diabetes, Obesity & Hypertension: Regular physical activity prevents or delays the development of high blood pressure, and exercise reduces blood pressure in people with hypertension.

To get more physical activity, JUST GET UP AND MOVE AROUND!

Source: www.bodybuilding.com
Source: Healthywv.org

“When it comes to eating right and exercising, there is no ‘I’ll start tomorrow.’” ~V.L. Allineare
Food for Thought

Send your recipes to anherman@nmu.edu!

MIXED MEDITERRANEAN GRILL

This is a wonderful comfort food dish. I love this recipe served over rice, but you can serve alone, or with your favorite side. The blend of different Italian sausages, with shrimp, veggies, makes it a dish with everything! Not only does it taste great, but is colorful, and flavorful too! This recipe is for an indoor grill pan, but if using an outdoor grill, everything can go on the grill at the same time.

INGREDIENTS

Extra virgin olive oil for drizzling
2 plum tomatoes cut in halve lengthwise
1 med red onion cut into 4 thick slices
1 sm. head of fennel (cut in half; through root, then each cut into 4 pieces held together by the root)
1 yellow pepper, 1 red or green pepper, quartered
1 zucchini
1 head radicchio quartered
Balsamic vinegar
1 lb. sweet Italian sausage
1 lb. hot Italian sausage
1 lb. raw shrimp (large) peeled, and deveined
2 cloves garlic chopped
1 teaspoon, or more to taste
handful chopped flat leaf parsley
1 c. fresh basil leaves chopped
1 lemon, salt & pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat grill pan to high heat
2. Drizzle oil liberally on onion, tomatoes, fennel, bell peppers, zucchini and radicchio
3. Place on grill 3 min. on each side, until opaque in gies, makes it a dish with everything! Not only does it taste great, but is colorful, and flavorful too! This recipe is for an indoor grill pan, but if using an outdoor grill, everything can go on the grill at the same time.

- When there is room on the grill, add shrimp cook 2 flakes.
- While meat is cooking, combine in a bowl, shrimp, oil, garlic, salt, pepper, and red pepper.
- Place sausage on grill cook 8 min, or until cooked through.
- Drizzle with oil, and balsamic vinegar, and cover with foil to keep warm.
- Remove from grill and place onto a large platter.
- Sprinkle with parsley and basil, and juice from lemon over everything.
- Can serve over rice, or have alone.

When you add color to your plate you are painting the picture of health.

Fruits and vegetables in bright hues of red, green, orange and purple are also rich in compounds beneficial to health. They help fight disease by reducing the formation of free radicals – molecules that cause oxygen-induced cellular damage.

Scientists believe the most intensely colored fruits and vegetables have the highest levels of protective nutrients. Several servings daily may reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke, diabetes and, possibly, cancer, Alzheimer’s and macular degeneration. The more you consume, the more protection you gain, according to health officials.

Visit the produce aisle in your market at least once a week. You’ll find a growing variety of apples, tomatoes, salad greens, squash and melons, as well as hybrids and baby versions. Your goal: Include as many fruits and vegetables in your diet as possible – from 5 to 9 servings daily.

Adding more color to your plate is easy:
- Top your cereal with blueberries, raisins or dried cranberries.
- Have a slice of melon mid-morning.
- Pack apple or orange slices every day.
- Toss frozen berries in a smoothie.
- Steam broccoli or asparagus to serve with your ready-to-eat entrée.
- Serve sliced tomatoes with bagged multicolored salad mixes.
- Add green, orange, red or yellow bell peppers or red cabbage to stir-fry.
- Replace baked potatoes with baked winter squash or yams!
- Serve sautéed spinach leaves with broiled chicken or fish.

Think color for dessert, too — blend a sliced nectarine with chopped dates and walnuts.

Source: http://personalbest.com/2008/march.htm

Cooking with Color
The Local Scene
Healthy Living in the NMU Community

Upcoming Events

Gourmet ski and Feast at Forestville Trailhead
Saturday, March 8th, 2008
Visit: http://www.noquetrails.org/ for more Information

Eben Ice Caves Hike
Saturday, March 8th, 1-5pm
Explore the beautiful ice formations of the caves during this naturalist guided hike. Easy to moderate hike. Boots with good traction recommended. Meet: Moose Wood Nature Center, then car pool to site. Drive time about 40 minutes - one way. Suggested donation of $5 appreciated. For more information call (906) 228-6250.

Upstride Down Ski Adventure
Saturday March 15th, 2008
For more information about the Noquemanon Trail Network call (906) 228-6182.

Spring Carnival, Marquette Mountain
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, March 14th, 15th and 16th

Organic on a Budget
Presented by Natasha Gill, from the Marquette County Food Co-Op

Please Join us for this
Soup Symposium
Thursday, March 20th 2008 from 12-1pm in the Charcoal Room of the University Center
A lunch of soup and baguettes will be provided

VITAMIN AND MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS

Its pretty obvious that as professionals we are busy people and due to that our diets are not always the most nutritious. Skipping meals and eating on the run does mean that most of us miss some vitamins and minerals from food. Could taking supplements offer some value? Vitamin and mineral supplements do not take the place of good nutrition, however they may help fill in some of the nutrition gaps in our diets. Read carefully to learn how to use supplements safely and wisely.

The first thing to understand about supplements is that the supplement industry is basically an unregulated industry. This means that no government agency, including the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), tests supplements to see:

- If they contain what and how much the label says
- If they are contaminated with ingredients not listed on the label
- If they have a value for health

There are however, a few supplement guidelines issued by the FDA. The most important one says that any healthy claims on the label or in the product information of supplements must be based on conclusive research and approved by the FDA. Any other claims must be general and include the phrase “not evaluated by they FDA.”

Supplemental forms of vitamins and minerals are often not the same chemical form as those in foods. That is because natural forms are often not shelf stable. Therefore, in order to maintain the potency of supplements, a slightly different form of a supplement must be used. In many cases it is unknown whether these shelf-stable forms have the same health benefits as food-based nutrition. Many supplements have not been adequately researched to verify long-term health benefits. Even if there is some research, the amount used in studies are often much more than a consumers can purchase and consume safely. Supplements do not contain all nutrients necessary for good health. Many foods contain nutrients not yet available in supplement form, which may also help promote good health. Thus why supplements do not offer complete nutrition. Overdoses of vitamin/mineral can be toxic and dangerous. Take supplements with between 100-500% of RDI or RDA amounts. Do not exceed UL intakes.

Choosing and Getting the Most Out of Your Supplement

Despite these drawbacks, taking reasonable amounts of multi-vitamin and mineral supplements may prevent deficiencies and even provide health benefits beyond just preventing deficiencies. The following terms are FDA approved to be used on supplement labels:

RDI = Recommended Daily Intake
- Newest estimate of safe and adequate nutrient intakes.

RDA = Recommended Daily Allowance
- Previous recommended level of vitamin/mineral intakes to prevent disease.

UL = Upper Tolerable Intake Level
- The National Academy of Sciences has, for the first time ever, set an upper level for some vitamins and minerals.

Check your favorite brands for potency, purity and absorption. Log onto www.consumerlab.com, and check it out.

Purchase a supplement with the USP (U.S. Pharmacopeia) lettering. These supplements meet strict standards for dissolution, disintegration, strength and purity. “sustained release” products can’t use the USP lettering.

There’s some advantage of natural over synthetic or laboratory-produced vitamins. But the differences are probably not significant enough to warrant spending a lot of money on “natural” supplements.

Check the expiration dates on the bottle. Don’t buy more than a 30-day supply at a time to maintain freshness and potency.

Source: Apple Promotions, www.applepromotions .com