

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body

Volume 4, Number 3

March 2004

Available on the web:

<http://outreach.missouri.edu/scharles/nutrition.shtml>

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Lessons of Serenity Prayer

*God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.*

This prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr in 1926 is a familiar one. Many self-help groups and twelve-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous use it. This prayer has much meaning as well for everyone who struggles with body weight and size.

Let's start at the beginning along with Niebuhr. What do we need to accept about our bodies that cannot be changed? No amount of dieting and exercise is going to change our basic body shape. Tall or short, apple or pear, thin or stocky—our basic body type was set at the moment of conception. We are the unique product of our genetic heritage. Unless we have a fraternal twin, no one else anywhere in the world looks exactly like us. This uniqueness is part of what makes each person special and valued.

Accepting that some things cannot be changed also means recognizing that most of us must give up the idea that we can look like people we see on TV or pictured in magazines. The vast majority of the bodies seen in the media fit only one body type—tall and slender. Look at the people

around you. Do they all fit this body type? Reject the cookie-cutter mentality. Accept size diversity and your own body type.

Accepting our genetic heritage, however, does not mean that what we eat and how we take care of our bodies does not matter. It does matter greatly.



Our genes are somewhat like blueprints or patterns that set up our bone structure, musculature, skin, hair and eye color, and many, many other facets of our appearance. The choices we make every day about what we eat, how active we are, whether or not we smoke, and many others affect how those patterns actually turn out. Just as two tailors might use the same suit pattern but because of the choices they make about fabric and about the way they sew, they will end up with two completely different looking garments.

Thus, the second part of Niebuhr's prayer asks for "courage to change the things I can." Rather than putting all of our energies into changing what is unchangeable, look at your

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Use Food Pyramid to Guide Healthy Eating

How do you know if you are eating healthfully? How can you eat the way you should without going on a diet? The Food Guide Pyramid can help. It is an outline of what to eat each day. Based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the Food Guide Pyramid is not a rigid prescription but a general guide that lets you choose a healthful diet that's right for you.

There have been some calls for making changes to the Food Guide Pyramid. If changes do come about, we'll keep readers of Celebrate! informed about them. For now, however, the Pyramid remains the best tool available to judge how well your eating stacks up nutritionally on a day by day basis.

The Pyramid calls for eating a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need. It emphasizes foods from the five major food groups—grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy and protein. Each food group provides some of the nutrients you need. Foods in one group can't replace those in another. No one of these major food groups is more important than another. For good health you need them all.

The Food Guide Pyramid has a range in the number of servings recommended for each food group because appetites vary from person to person and in the same person from day to day. Eating the minimum number of servings in each food group gives you a good chance of getting most of the

nutrients you need for good health.

Try to hit the target number of servings over the course of several days. For instance, one day you might eat a spaghetti dinner and end up with quite a few servings of grain foods but few from the protein group. Then the next day you have steak for dinner and eat extra protein but fewer grains. Between the two days, the number of servings in each group ends up fitting the Food Guide Pyramid guidelines.

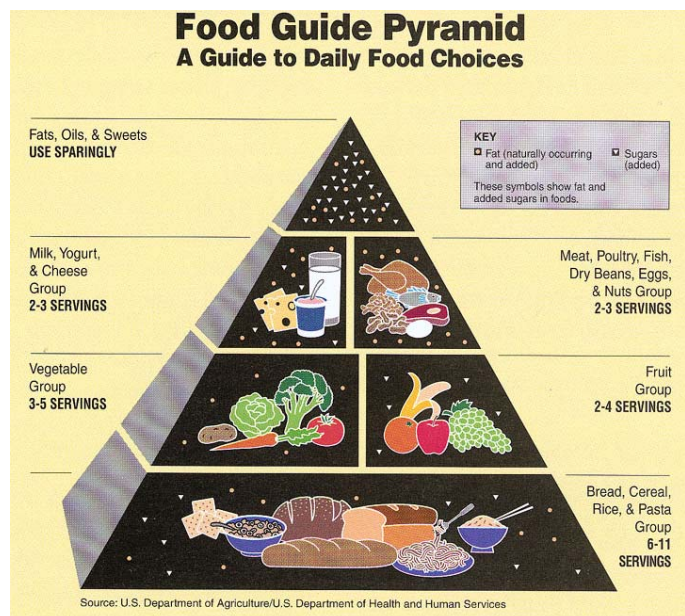
Do you recognize a normal serving size when you see one? Many restaurant and pre-packaged foods available today are much larger than ever before. Health experts have noted with alarm this 'growing' tendency in soft drinks, muffins, bagels, burgers and other foods. What difference does it make? Research shows that both children and adults eat more when presented with larger servings *no matter how hungry they are before eating.*

Check portion sizes with a measuring cup occasionally just to see if they have started to grow. You may find that you're actually eating less of some foods than you thought!

Learn to recognize standard serving sizes. Each of the following is one serving:

- ✿ A small to medium piece of fruit like an apple or orange is about the size of a tennis ball
- ✿ One slice of sandwich bread
- ✿ One-half regular hamburger or hotdog bun
- ✿ One-half cup of cooked spaghetti, pasta, rice or cooked cereal
- ✿ Four ounces of cooked lean meat, a piece about the size of a deck of playing cards
- ✿ One cup of leafy vegetables or salad, about the size of your fist
- ✿ A teaspoon of butter, about the size of the tip of your


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All this emphasis on serving sizes does not mean that anyone should go hungry. Rather, use standard servings as a starting point, then let your appetite determine whether to eat more or less. Don't automatically eat it all just because it is in front of you.

The Food Guide Pyramid is one tool to help you be as healthy as you can be. Use it to help you decide what to eat. Trust your body to tell you  how much to eat.

If you have trouble getting a minimum of three servings of vegetables plus two servings of fruits every day, here are some ideas to help you get more.

- ♥ Keep a bowl of washed fruit in plain view on dining room

table, kitchen counter or office file cabinet. Apples, pears, bananas, oranges, grapes keep for several days at room temperature.

- ♥ Grab a piece of fruit as well as a bottle of water when you head out the door to run errands. You'll be less likely to stop for a less-healthy snack or drink.
- ♥ No time to fix a brown bag lunch? Take a piece of fruit with you to add to the fast food or restaurant meal you get at noon.
- ♥ Salad bars at grocery stores are great places to load up on washed, ready to eat veggies for brown bag lunches. Most will keep for a couple of days in the refrigerator so buy extra for tomorrow.
- ♥ Include more color in what you eat. Vegetables and fruits

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everyday eating and activity habits. Most of us will find something we could do to improve. While these changes will not turn us into a model or TV star, they will help us make the most of our genetic blueprint. Eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables or taking a walk every day are the kind of simple changes that can have a positive affect on our health, and will help us make the most of our appearance too.

It does take courage to change the way we eat and the way we spend time. Making these changes for the rest of your life takes real effort. It is much easier to go on a short-term diet than to change your lifestyle. Lifestyle changes are possible, however, especially if tackled one step at a time.

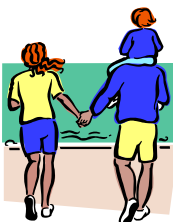
Be wise. Let go of any impossible dreams you may have about your appearance. Focus instead on making choices every day that will help you be the best possible you. Eat sensibly, be active, and treasure your uniqueness.

Activity suggestions for March



Spring into Action with jumping activities. Hop on a pogo stick, bounce on a trampoline, get out the sidewalk chalk and gather the kids for a game of Hop Scotch. Don't worry what the neighbors will think—invite them to join in the fun!

Practice doing the **duck dance**, a sure bet at every wedding reception. Sure, it's goofy, but only the fit get through the entire song without stopping to catch their breath. Make sure you're ready to wiggle those tail feathers.



Join a **walking program** like America on the Move (www.americaonthemove.org), a hospital-sponsored mall walking program or Walk & Roll for Health. The goal for Walk & Roll is for residents of St. Charles County to log 2 million miles of activity in one year. Contact Linda Rellergert (see address, phone and email address on page 1) for information on how to get involved.

Menu of the Month

Corned Beef and Cabbage is such traditional St. Patrick's Day fare that making any change might be met with concerned looks. However, if you think of Brussels sprouts as tiny cabbages, you're likely to find **Brussels Sprouts with Peppers and Potatoes** to be a fine accompaniment to thin slices of corned beef. Crisp raw vegetables would give a nice crunch. Add coarse-textured, multi-grain bread to bring in another more traditional food. Whether or not you serve the meal with green beer is up to you. Go Green!

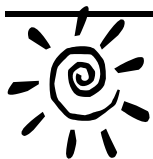


Brussels Sprouts with Peppers and Potatoes

1 tbsp vegetable oil
 1 onion, chopped
 1 large potato, peeled and cut in small cubes
 1 bay leaf
 1 lb Brussels sprouts, halved if large
 1 sweet red pepper, cut in ½ inch pieces
 ¼ c vegetable or chicken stock
 freshly ground pepper
 2 tbsp. chopped parsley or green onions (optional)



In large nonstick skillet, sauté onion in oil until soft, 2 or 3 minutes. Add potato cubes, bay leaf, Brussels sprouts, red pepper pieces and stock; cover and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until sprouts and potatoes are tender (add water if necessary to prevent scorching). Season with pepper to taste. Serve sprinkled with parsley or green onions if desired. Makes 6 servings. Nutrition information per serving: 82 calories, 13g carbohydrate, 2g fat, 109 mg vitamin C, 5g fiber, 64 mg sodium.



Words to Consider

"Challenges are what make life interesting; overcoming them is what makes life meaningful." --Joshua J. Marine

"This is courage. . .to bear unflinchingly what heaven sends."
 --Euripides

"Courageous risks are life giving, they help you grow, make you brave and better than you think you are." --Joan L. Curcio

"If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking." --Buddhist proverb

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