

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

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

Volume 5, Number 3

March 2005

Available on the web:

<http://extension.missouri.edu/stcharles/celebratenl/index.htm>

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Celebrate! A Healthy You

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Pedometer—A Movement Motivator

Interest in pedometers has risen dramatically in the past year. These little pager-sized gadgets make it possible to see how active you are. Their true value, though, is in motivating the wearer to move. Steve Ball, MU Extension fitness specialist notes “When people start wearing them, they get motivated to get more steps in.” It can be fun to check how many steps you’ve taken at the end of a busy day, or to take a walk and see how many steps you’ve gone.



Accuracy is important with pedometers. As Ball says, “You’ll lose interest quickly if the numbers aren’t accurate.” Better quality pedometers tend to be more accurate. A good pedometer that tracks activity time (which Ball recommends) will cost about \$20 to \$25. Models that count steps only are less expensive, about \$10. Pedometers costing less than this are not likely to be accurate.

Placement on the body is also critical for accuracy. It may take a few tries to find the best place on your waist. Pedometers must be worn close to the body and in a position that allows them to stay

parallel with the walking surface. The most common placement is directly up from the knee. Other possible places are over the hip or somewhere between knee and hip on the waist.

To determine the best position for you, take 100 steps, then check your pedometer to see how close it matches. Move the pedometer and repeat this process until you find the placement that works best for you. A variance of 10% above or below is considered an acceptably accurate reading. So, if your pedometer reading is between 90 and 110, that is a good spot for you.



Establish an activity baseline by wearing the pedometer for several days and recording daily totals. Ball recommends then setting a goal of increasing that by 10 percent over the next couple of weeks. During that time keep a log of the number of steps, activity time if your pedometer has this feature, and the types of activities.

“Logging is the key thing,” Ball said. “What we know about goals is that they have to be specific and quantifiable.” Continually set new goals each time one is met. “The novelty will wear off, but you’ll still be thinking about it.”

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"Get a Taste for Nutrition"

This is the theme for National Nutrition Month celebrated each March as a way to promote good eating habits. This theme fits our short series on Stocking the Healthy Kitchen begun last month. The following quick menu suggestions use some of the foods listed in February's issue. Start with any that seem familiar and that fit your family's preferences. Move on to something new once you've mastered those.

With a repertoire of two to three weeks of menus, consider using them as cycle menus. That is, use the same set of menus repeatedly so you have an easy answer to the "what's for dinner" dilemma. Sprinkle in a few seasonally-appropriate foods to take advantage of fresh fruits and vegetables as they come on the market. A refreshing glass of ice cold milk is the perfect beverage for all these meals.

- Breakfast Dinner—Denver Omelet: sautéed onion, green pepper, optional chile peppers and cheese folded into an omelet, served with sliced tomatoes or salsa, whole wheat toast or tortilla and fruit. Try broiled grapefruit, baked banana or cantaloupe with a wedge of lime.
- That's a Wrap—use thin whole wheat flour tortillas as the base. Add a layer of fresh spinach leaves or leaf lettuce (make sure these greens are very dry to avoid a soggy wrap). Next spread a thin coating of lowfat mayo, ranch dressing or salsa. Pile on chopped fresh veggies like peppers, mushrooms, zucchini, broccoli, grated carrots, cabbage, anything you like. Add a few spoons of cooked grain like rice (brown has more flavor and fiber!), barley, couscous or small pasta, and a bit of shredded cheese. Leave about an inch margin of the tortilla uncovered to ease wrapping. To wrap, fold in the edge on one side, then roll up the wrap as tightly as you can. Serve with plenty of napkins!
- Quick Pasta Primavera—cook pasta in large quantity of boiling water. When pasta is done, place frozen mixed vegetables in colander. Pour cooked pasta over frozen vegetables. Meanwhile, swirl small amount of olive oil in pasta pan. Season with basil. Return pasta and vegetables to pan and stir to coat with olive oil and heat over low heat until vegetables are hot. Serve with grated parmesan cheese on top, and a fresh green salad on the side.
- Speedy Soup 'n' Sandwich Supper—stir up a speedy minestrone by cooking small amount of pasta and frozen mixed vegetables with a can of seasoned chopped tomatoes and a can of low sodium chicken broth. Pair with your favorite sandwich made with whole grain bread.

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Timely Tip #12

Tap Into Your Creativity

Creativity allows us to see and experience things in a new way, to come up with better solutions to problems, and as an outlet for emotions. Creativity can even allow us to begin seeing ourselves in a new more healthful way.

Although some people may seem to be more in touch with their creativity than others, each of us can awaken the artist within if we try. Some of the following suggestions come from [Handle with Care; Emotional Intelligence Activity Book](#).

- Have a backwards day, beginning with dinner for breakfast.
- Use a copier or scanner and computer to enlarge small objects and reduce big ones. Use copies of the results to make a collage.
- Make up a card game. Start by changing a game you already know, then change it again.
- Try cooking with herbs and spices new to you. Check spice labels to guide your use or find a cookbook in the library.
- Make up silly sentences by cutting out every fifth word on a newspaper page and pasting them to a sheet of paper.
- Make up your own magnetic poetry using favorite words written on a magnetic sheet and cut apart. Check office art supply stores for magnetic sheets.
- Listen to music unfamiliar to you. Some music stores allow you to listen to recordings before buying them. You can also find a wide range of music on the Internet.

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- Fire up the Grill—make an all-grilled meal by cooking your favorite meat and vegetables on the grill. Season with balsamic vinegar instead of barbeque sauce for a different flavor. Fresh or canned peach halves heat in a couple of minutes on the grill. Top with a little vanilla yogurt and a few chopped nuts for dessert.



- Salad Supper—many salads are meaty enough for a main dish like chef's, spinach or Cobb. Add a can of tuna or chicken to a mixed green salad. Salads that combine cheese, nuts and fruit with greens are another option. Add crusty bread and you might still have room for pudding (instant) for dessert.

- Quick Chili—as a base for chili mac, tacos or taco salad, or on top of baked potato. Cook one pound lean ground beef or turkey with 1 small chopped onion and a minced garlic clove. Drain any fat and add a can of chopped tomatoes and a can of chili flavored beans. Add additional chili powder if desired.



- Mom's Emergency Pantry Meal—salmon patties made with canned salmon, bread crumbs, beaten egg and a little mayo sautéed in a nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray. Serve with boxed macaroni and cheese made with nonfat milk and 3 table-spoons of margarine instead of ¼ cup. Heat a can of peas with a little pimiento tossed in for color. For a truly retro meal, open a can of fruit cocktail and serve with cookies for dessert.



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It can also be exciting to see how many steps you log in a week or a month, or even a year. Make logging your steps a bedtime habit just like brushing teeth or putting on pajamas. Keep a notebook or pad of paper on the dresser where you'll see it as you undress. Record the numbers from your pedometer and reset it to zero as soon as you take it off. Then it will be ready for you to pick up again the next morning, ready to motivate you to be active all day long.

Activity Suggestions for March



Practice stress relief with deep breathing, guided imagery, meditation, yoga, tai chi. Get a massage, take a bubble bath, call a friend, play with a pet. Organize your house or office, put away clutter, buy fresh flowers.



Help children or grandchildren set up an obstacle course in the back yard. Include things to jump over, run around or crawl through. Keep safety in mind and use objects with rounded edges or that are soft enough to prevent injuries if someone falls onto them.



Get stronger by strength training. Look for books by Miriam Nelson, PhD like Strong Women, Strong Bones or her Strong Women web site <http://www.strongwomen.com> for specific information on safe and effective exercises.

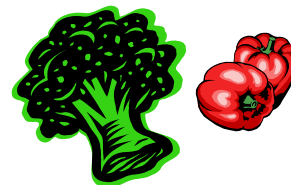
Menu of the Month

Let's Celebrate! St. Patrick's Day by decorating dinner plates with plenty of *green* vegetables. Broccoli Red Pepper Stir Fry is a recipe found at www.5aday.org website sponsored by Produce for Better Health Foundation. It is flavorful enough to stand next to lean corned beef or grilled fish or chicken. Add a tossed *green* salad and a *green* dessert like lime flavored yogurt layered parfait style with pineapple chunks in a stemmed glass. Plenty o' *green* in this menu!



Broccoli Red Pepper Stir Fry

½ tablespoon olive oil
 ½ tablespoon walnut oil
 2 large cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
 3 cups broccoli flowerets
 2 tablespoons water
 1 large red bell pepper, washed, cored and cut into short strips
 1 medium onion, peeled, cut in half and then into lengthwise slivers
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 ½ teaspoon salt



Prepare all ingredients before starting to cook. Heat oils in large skillet over high heat. Add garlic and sauté only until slightly cooked; do not brown. Immediately add broccoli. Stir fry continuously until all broccoli has turned a bright green color. Add 2 tablespoons water, cover and remove from heat for 2 minutes.

Return skillet to high heat. Add red pepper and onion. Continue to cook, stirring for another 2 to 3 minutes. Vegetables will be crisp and brilliant in color when properly cooked. Toss with lemon juice and salt and serve.

Makes 4 servings. Nutrition information per serving: 70 calories, 4g fat, 2g protein, 9g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 307mg sodium.

Note: Substitute another ½ tablespoon olive oil for the walnut oil if desired.



Words to Consider

“Beauty comes in all ages, colors, shapes and forms. God never makes junk.” –Kathy Ireland

“Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.”
 –John Wooden

“Happiness comes of the capacity to feel deeply, to enjoy simply, to think freely, to risk life, to be needed.” –Storm Jameson

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.” –T.S. Eliot

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