

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

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

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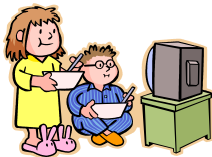
April 2008

Play More, Watch Less

Research clearly shows that when children and teens watch more than an hour or two of television per day they are more likely to make unhealthy food choices, be less physically active and spend less time working on school assignments. It seems likely that the same may be true for adults as well.

Here are some points about TV watching to think about the next time you find yourself flipping through the channels looking for something to watch.

- There is no waking activity that people do that burns **fewer** calories than watching TV. This includes other sedentary activities like playing video games, reading, talking on the phone.
- The typical youth sees 40,000 advertisements per year on TV alone. Many of them are for foods which are high in calories and low in nutrients like sugary cereals, snack foods and chips.
- The more TV watched, the more likely youth are to snack between meals, eat foods advertised on TV, and try to influence what foods their parents buy.
- Be a parent and limit your child's screen time (TV, video and computers) to no more than two hours per day as pediatricians recommend.
- Set a good example yourself, by keeping your own screen time to less than two hours per day.
- Take television sets out of bedrooms. Yes, this may mean that occasionally family members may not get to watch what they each want. This is a good way to learn about taking turns and negotiating.
- Turn off the TV during meals and eat together as a family. Practice talking to one another.
- Plan TV viewing rather than just automatically plopping down in front of it every night after dinner. Just think of all the activities you might do instead.
 - Develop hobbies and other interests. Get involved in your community, neighborhood, school or place of worship.
 - Play games, especially active ones, with your kids or other adults.



- Children who watch TV at mealtimes eat far fewer fruits and vegetables.
- Having a television turned on while sleeping, even if the sound is muted, disrupts healthy sleep patterns and contributes to chronic fatigue.
- Students who watch more than 1-2 hours of television per day are less interested in school activities and have lower academic scores.
- Youth who see violence on television are more likely to find violence as an acceptable way to solve problems.
- Work in your yard or tackle projects in your home that you never have time to do.
- Improve your mind by reading or taking a class, or joining a book club.
- Socialize more. Go out with friends to see a play, attend a concert, go to a movie.
- Walk your dog, play with and care for your pet.
- Call or write old friends. Visit your neighbors.

What can we do to reduce TV time for ourselves and our children?

April 21-27 is National Turn Off TV Week. What better time to start making changes in the viewing habits of your family!

Menu of the Month

Eggs have long been a symbol of spring. In fact they are used in many different cultural and religious celebrations. Despite recent price increases, eggs continue to be one of our least expensive sources of complete protein. If priced at \$2.00 per dozen, large eggs provide a pound of high quality protein for only \$1.32. Nutritionally speaking, they also compare favorably to other protein sources like beef, pork and poultry. They are a good source of iron, zinc, vitamin A, and several B vitamins, but relatively low in fat.

This month's recipe, **Athens Spinach Squares**, makes for a quick supper or brunch when served with a salad of spring greens, whole grain rolls and mixed fruit for dessert. This is an adaptation of a recipe from the American Egg Board.

Athens Spinach Squares

6 eggs
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
1 package (10 oz) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and well drained



Heat oven to 350°F and spray 1-quart casserole with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, beat together eggs, feta cheese and nutmeg until well blended. Stir in spinach. Pour mixture into prepared casserole and bake until knife inserted near center comes out clean, about 30 to 35 minutes.

Makes 4-6 servings: Nutrition information (based on 5 servings): 146 calories, 11g protein, 4g carbohydrates, 10g fat, 285mg sodium.

Satisfaction Essential to Healthy Weight Management

Contrary to popular belief, many nutrition experts feel that enjoyment of food is a necessary part of healthy eating. When food is enjoyed, people feel satisfied and are more likely to rely on internal cues to stop eating.



A recent study conducted at Cornell University supports this point of view. Researchers looked for an explanation to what is known as the French paradox—that is, why don't the French get as heavy as Americans, or have the same rate of heart disease, when they eat all that fat-laden cheese, pate, and pastries? The Cornell research found that a significant difference between French and American eaters is how people decide to stop eating. We Americans are more likely to use external cues, like a clean plate or the end of a TV program we're watching, to decide when to stop eating. The French, on the other hand, use internal cues like feeling full

and satisfied. Interestingly, in both countries, the heavier the person, the more likely they were to rely on external cues.

Diets and most weight management plans emphasize external cues by specifying what and how much to eat. Dieters are encouraged to disregard internal cues in the name of 'self control.' Pleasurable, satisfying eating is ignored or even scorned. No wonder diets are unsuccessful! They put people at war with their bodies and the perfectly natural desire to eat food that tastes good.

In future issues of *Celebrate!* we'll look more at the relationship between eating satisfaction, weight management and good health.

Words to Consider

"You can bury a lot of troubles digging in the dirt."
—Author Unknown

"Gardening is a way of showing you believe in tomorrow."
—Author Unknown