The Importance of Nutrition

We have often heard our body referred to as a “machine” and food is the “fuel” that powers us. Yes, food gives us energy but it is so much more than simply fuel. Food provides our body with protein to build muscles, bones, cartilage, skin and blood. Calcium is used for bone health; and fiber to aid gastrointestinal functions, just to name a few. Each and every food decision that we make is a form of communication sending a message to our body. It’s a set of instructions that you give to your body to accomplish amazing things. It is our choice what we want that message to be. Every food choice we make is an opportunity to direct, shape, and remake our body composition, our performance, and our well-being.

America’s Problem

The problem we have in America is our high calorie consumption with the majority of those calories having little to no nutritional value. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of Americans follow a diet consistent with the federal nutrient recommendations outlined by the US Department of Agriculture’s “Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010,” which emphasizes nutrient dense foods and beverages. Instead, the majority of American’s choose a diet rich in saturated fat, trans fat, salt and sugar and lacking in fruits and vegetables, whole grains and fiber. This type of diet significantly contributes to 11 out of the top 15 causes of death in America. (CDC National Vital Statistics Report)

According to the CDC, poor nutrition can contribute to stress, tiredness, low capacity to work, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, stroke, cancers, diabetes, and depression. The list goes on and on. Understanding the concept of weight gain/loss is simple: calories in vs. calories out. However, the quality of the calories consumed is often overlooked and is just as important as the quantity.

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The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with NUTRITION.
~Thomas Edison

This newsletter is provided by Arizona School Board Association Insurance Trust, ASBAIT
**Maintain Good Health**

We spend $2.6 trillion* annually on healthcare in this country—a hefty chunk of the budgets of America’s families, businesses and governments. Because that really hits home for our hard-working members, finding ways to help you save on healthcare costs is a top priority at ASBAIT.

Of course, being proactive and staying healthy is one of the best ways to reduce healthcare costs, which is why it’s important to get regular health screenings. Blood pressure checks, cholesterol tests, prostate screenings, mammograms, and other simple tests can detect conditions that require attention early, when treatment is usually both more successful and less expensive. Keeping yourself and your budget healthy goes hand-in-hand. By putting a little forethought into your healthcare choices, you can help keep costs in line.


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**Healthy Eating Will Lead to a Healthy Heart!**

Heart disease is a major health concern in the United States. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), heart disease is the cause of approximately 600,000 deaths each year.

Eating a poor diet and being overweight are two large contributing factors that cause this disease. There are a variety of medications that can help combat heart disease such as ACE Inhibitors that widen arteries and reduce blood pressure, Beta Blockers that target certain receptors in the heart and blood vessels and multiple medications that reduce cholesterol, but a healthy diet is a key step to preventing heart disease.

The Mayo Clinic shared the following dietary recommendations to help prevent heart disease:

- Control your portion size
- Eat more vegetables and fruit
- Select whole grains
- Limit unhealthy fat and cholesterol
- Choose low fat protein choices such as lean meats and fish
- Reduce sodium intake
- Plan ahead! Have healthy meals choices ready for your busy lifestyle
- Allow yourself an occasional treat so you don’t feel deprived

When you subscribe to a healthy eating plan you are taking the first step to preventing heart disease. Be sure to consult with your physician if you have any questions or concerns.

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**Between the Event & Your Reaction is Choice**

Does life happen to you or are you in control? When we acknowledge it’s our choices that create our lives, we move in the right direction. Taking time to make sure that choice is between the event and your reaction will help. Since we generally get better at things we do regularly, it’s time to think about what will happen after the next challenge you face. Before you react to an event, what will be your first choice? Will it be frustration, denial, curiosity or focused on options?

Assigning good, bad, negative or positive labels on events that occur in our life can put us on a destructive path. There is a time and place for celebration and grief. It’s the time we spend there that matters. Realizing that events that happen are only events, and nothing more, can allow us to focus on countless possibilities. This is where your perception comes into play.

Two people can look at the same thing and have totally different views on what it is. Our previous life experience factors into what we see and what we feel we can do. If you agree, you might be able to see the value in other points of view. These different approaches will provide you with new solutions.

Are you ready to increase your choices by coming up with options instead of emotions between the event and your reaction?
Take Steps to Improve Your Nutrition  

**Myth or Fact?**

**Myth:** Carbohydrates make you fat.

**Fact:** It depends upon which type of carbohydrate you are eating.

Simple, refined carbs such as sugar, white bread, pasta and doughnuts have very little nutritional value and are viewed as empty calories. These carbs definitely contribute to weight gain.

Complex carbohydrates such as whole grain, beans, fruit, and vegetables are extremely important in your diet because they are your bodies main source of fuel, nutrients and fiber. Your body views these as energy.

**Benefits of Good Nutrition**

There are countless benefits associated with good nutrition such as:

- Improved immune system
- Reduced risk of illness and disease
- Heart and brain health
- Energy

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**Frittata with Turkey Italian Sausage and Kale**

**Ingredients:**

- 3 tablespoons oil
- 1/2 cup yellow onion, diced
- 3 links turkey Italian sausage, removed from casings
- 3-4 kale leaves, de-stemmed and ripped into 1-inch pieces
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- salt & pepper to taste
- 8 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- green onion for garnish

**Cooking Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Heat oil in a cast iron skillet (or oven-safe skillet) over medium heat on the stove top. (Make sure the oil gets up on the sides of the skillet so you can easily remove the frittata when it’s ready.)
3. Sauté onion and sausage until the sausage is cooked through.
4. Stir in kale leaves, herbs, salt, and pepper and cook for another minute or two.
5. While the sausage is cooking, whisk eggs and water in a medium bowl. Add whisked eggs to the sausage mixture.
6. Reduce heat to low and let the frittata cook, undisturbed, for about 2-3 minutes, until the edges of the frittata are set and the middle is bubbling.
7. Finish cooking the frittata in the oven for 12-15 minutes, until the middle is just set and the top is golden brown. Let the frittata cool for 5-10 minutes before serving.
8. Sprinkle with chopped green onions and serve!

Image and recipe reprinted with permission from www.acleanbake.com and www.healthyaperture.com
Asking The Right Questions About Your Medications

Whether you’re taking a prescription drug or one you buy over-the-counter, don’t hesitate to ask your doctor or pharmacist questions. **Keep a list of the medications and doses readily available in your wallet or phone!**

- **What’s the name of the medication?** Learn both the generic and brand names.
- **Why are you taking the medication?** It’s critical that you understand the purpose of the medication. Knowing why your doctor has recommended a particular medication will increase the chances that you take the medication appropriately and receive the intended benefit.
- **What effect can you expect?** How will the drug make you feel? How soon can you expect results?
- **How much, when and how long should you take it?** Make sure the directions make sense.
- **Are there restrictions?** Some foods and alcohol can interfere with the effectiveness of a drug and cause certain side effects.
- **What are the side effects?** Which side effects may go away with time? Which side effects should prompt you to contact your doctor?
- **What do you do if you miss a dose?** Do you take it as soon as you remember or wait until the next dose is due?
- **Are there alternatives?** Do other drugs or treatments cost less or have fewer side effects? Will a generic drug provide the same benefit?

**Nutrition is Power.**

**What’s Inside You?**

**Spring 2015 Working~Well Campaign starts NOW!**

**Contact your wellness coordinator for more information.**

**2014-2015 HUSU ACADEMY**

**FIT BIT Challenge Winners!**

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<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lori Beltran</td>
<td>Mary Kay Stevens</td>
<td>Stacey Mathews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agu Aria Unified</td>
<td>San Carlos Unified</td>
<td>Continental Elementary District</td>
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**2014-2015 Participant Awards**

- Debra Friedman- Bullhead City SD
- Karen Chamberlain- CAVIT
- Wanda Burton- Page UD
- Lori Hoopes- Pima UD
- Maxine Eglinsdoerfer- St David USD

**Coordinator Awards**

**Outstanding Performance**

- Merlinda Avila- Saddle Mountain USD
- Judy Bower- Tanque Verde UD

**Vivacious Vocalist**

- Laura Bower- Mohave Valley ED
- Kim Lowers- Toltec ED

**Wellness Event of the Semester**

- Cammie Corona- Solomon ED

**Honorable Mention:**

- Ajo USD, Alter Valley ED, Avondale ES, Baboquivari USD, Camp Verde USD, Concho ES, Gila County Regional SD, Higley USD, Litchfield ES, Mayer USD, Page UD, Pendergast ES, Santa Cruz Valley UD, Seligman USD, Sonoita ESD, Stanfield ES, Vail USD, Whiteriver USD, Yavapai Accommodation School