



The North Country's Premier Nutrition and Diabetes Education Firm

“Empowering you to eat well, live well, and be well.”

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Spring 2010 Newsletter

Hot Topics

- Change your diet mindset
- Eat breakfast on the go
- Use your plate to lose weight
- Be happy for a healthy heart

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A Different Kind of Diet

If you're a living, breathing human being, you've very likely been on one at some time in your life. For women, it's one of the most dreaded nouns (and verbs) in our vocabulary. And for businesses, it's one of the most lucrative markets in America.

Diet. The dreaded d-word. We've grown to associate the word diet with synonyms such as "deprivation" and "hunger." For some, it has come to mean "tasteless" and "unsatisfying." But while the word diet, according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, can mean "an allowance of food prescribed for a special

reason (as to lose weight)," it doesn't have to. Merriam-Webster also defines diet as "food and drink regularly consumed."

If we focus on diet as being the sum of the food and drink we take in, we can look at it from a different perspective. A diet is not, therefore, about what we give up, or what we choose not to eat, but rather about what and how much we choose to put into our bodies. It is not about deprivation, but about consumption. It becomes a word about more than calories and fat grams. It becomes about health, pleasure, balance and purpose.



From now on, why not stop talking about "going on a diet" and start talking about "your healthy daily diet"?

Think of your diet as your daily food intake, and not as that limiting plan you'll start tomorrow.

From now on, a diet is not something you "go on." Your diet is what you eat and drink. It's as simple as that.

(Cont'd on pg 2)

Healthy Meals Start with Your Plate

Building a healthy meal doesn't have to be difficult. It all starts with your plate.

Size matters. If you're like most American's you are probably eating off 12-inch or larger plates. No matter what the

plate's size, we have a tendency to fill it. The larger the plate, the more food (and calories) we eat. To decrease calorie intake, try transitioning to smaller plates.

Divide it up. Now that you have a smaller plate,

how do you know what to put on it? Build a healthy meal the easy way by imagining your plate as a pie graph, or one of those divided disposable plates, with three separate sections.

Half your plate should

Happiness is Good for the Heart

According to a recent study published in the *European Heart Journal*, happier people may have healthier hearts. The study indicated that people who reported being generally happy and content were less likely to develop heart disease. In fact, it seemed that as a person's level of happiness increased, their risk to develop heart disease decreased.

It isn't clear exactly the reason why happier people may have healthier hearts, but adding a little happiness to your life certainly couldn't hurt. To improve your overall happiness and help your heart, try some of these strategies:

- Spend some time every day doing something you enjoy. Don't stress yourself out trying to squeeze something else in, but make your favorite activities a priority—even if it's only 10 or 15 minutes a day.
- Get physical. You've heard it before, but exercise improves mood. Get those endorphins

pumping with a brisk walk or your favorite workout DVD. It doesn't take much time—just 10 minutes or so—to reap the mood-boosting benefits.

- Just relax. Don't wait for your yearly vacation or the infamous "someday" to take a break. Make regular time to relax, whether it's by taking a bath, getting a massage, meditating, or watching your favorite television show. Whatever you choose to do, be present and savor the time.
- Have a good laugh. Watch a good comedy or have lunch with a friend who always makes you laugh. It's hard to NOT be happy when you're laughing so hard your belly hurts.
- Spin it. When something has you down, try seeing the experience from a positive angle. It may not eliminate the negative, but it might make it a little more bearable.

Don't worry, be happy. Have some fun. Try new things. Accentuate the positive whenever you can. Happiness just might be medicine for your heart.

A Different Kind of Diet

(Cont'd from pg. 1)

This diet is not about deprivation, or limiting options, or counting calories. It's about making choices. Are you including healthy, beneficial foods in your daily diet, or are you foregoing fruits and vegetables for candy and soda?

While it's important not to consider any food as "bad," remember that some foods are better for us than others. We don't have to give up candy or soda if we don't want to, but limiting our intake of treats is also important.

Take some time to think about the food choices you are making and pay attention to your body's signals. Write down everything you eat for a day or two. Include the times you ate, and note what you were thinking or feeling before and after you ate. Then analyze your eating behavior. Do you eat certain types of food when you're in a particular mood? Do you overindulge in social situations?

You might also want to check out the USDA guidelines (<http://www.mypyramid.gov/index.html>) for suggestions on the types of foods you should be including in your diet. Are you eating enough fruits and vegetables? Do you eat more meat than recommended? Are you getting your 2 to 3 servings of dairy each day?

Once you're aware of your diet, then you can begin to adjust it, practicing more intuitive eating. Don't try to change everything over night, though, and don't expect to be perfect in your choices. We make hundreds of food-related choices every day. We can't expect to make the right ones every time.

But making better choices more often can significantly improve our health and help us to lose excess weight. Why not choose two or three ways that you can improve your diet over the next few weeks and focus on those goals? Before you know it, you'll be building a brand new diet that fits your own needs and objectives. What are you waiting for?

Ask Your RD: Simple Breakfast Ideas

I keep hearing that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, but I just can't seem to squeeze it into my busy morning routine. Can you recommend some simple, on-my-way-out-the-door breakfasts that I can eat on my way to work?

Starting your day with breakfast is very important. It gets your metabolism going and boosts your energy for the day. If you don't have time to sit down and eat a good hearty breakfast, try one of these on-the-go morning meals. They can all be purchased in single servings or made ahead of time and portioned.

Breakfast Bars

If you're purchasing breakfast bars for a quick morning meal, stick to ones that are low in added sugar and high in fiber. For healthy homemade version, try the recipe below:

Oat and Almond Bars

Makes 24 bars, about 155 calories each

Ingredients:

1/2 cup vegetable oil	1/2 cup honey
2 tsp vanilla extract	1 egg
3/4 cup flour	1/2 cup sliced almonds
1/2 cup raisins	3/4 tsp salt
2 cups uncooked old-fashioned oats	1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup toasted wheat germ	

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a 13x9 inch pan with foil and spray with non-stick cooking spray. In a small bowl, mix the oil, honey, vanilla and egg until well blended. Set aside.

In a large bowl, stir the oats, flour, sugar, almonds, wheat germ, raisins and salt until well mixed. Using a rubber spatula, stir the liquid mixture into the oat mixture until well combined.

Scrape the mixture into the lined pan and pat the mixture out evenly. (It may help to wet your hand to keep the mixture from sticking.)

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until the edges are pale golden. Remove from the oven and place the pan on a wire rack, cooling about an hour until completely cool.

When cool, use the foil to transfer the baked oat sheet to a cutting board. Cut the sheet lengthwise into 4 bars. Then cut each bar into 6 pieces. To store, keep in an air-tight container at room temperature. Keeps up to 2 weeks.

Breakfast Sandwiches

You can usually find these in the frozen food section, but watch out for ones that are high in fat or sodium. You can also make them yourself using the simple recipe below.

Ingredients:

6 whole grain English muffins, toasted	
6 eggs	6 slices low-fat cheese

Instructions:

Coat the bottom of a round microwaveable container about the diameter of an English muffin with non-stick cooking spray. Whip one egg in the bowl cook in the microwave on high for 1 1/2 to 2 minutes or until egg is firm but not over cooked. Allow to cool for a minute or so. Slide a knife along the edge of the container and flip the egg out onto a plate. Repeat this process with the remaining 5 eggs, until you have 6 egg "patties".

Assemble the sandwiches by placing one egg patty on one half of each English muffin. Top the egg with one slice of cheese and cover with the other half of the English muffin. To store for quick breakfasts, wrap each sandwich tightly in plastic wrap, place all six sandwiches in a freezer-safe plastic bag and freeze.

To reheat, remove one sandwich from the plastic wrap and microwave on high for 1 1/2 to 2 minutes. Let stand for 1 minute before eating.

(For more easy breakfast ideas, see page 4.)

More Simple Breakfast Ideas

Smoothies

A number of yogurt brands have started offering yogurt smoothies so they're easy to find in the store and drink on the go, but again, you'll want to check the ingredients for added sugar. If you want to make them at home, try adding your choice of ingredients (fruit, milk, juice, yogurt, nut butter, etc.) to your blender's pitcher and putting it in the refrigerator the night before. Then all you have to do is put the pitcher on the base in the morning and give it a quick blend. You could also blend everything, pour it into a travel cup and put it in the refrigerator ready to go the night before. Just grab it from the refrigerator on your way out the door.

Other Ideas

Anything that includes whole grains and some protein and can be easily carried with you makes a great on-the-go breakfast idea. If you're still stumped or want some variety, try one of these:

- Small homemade bran muffin and an apple
- Slice of homemade banana bread and a cheese stick
- Whole-grain crackers with peanut butter and a piece of fruit
- Peanut butter and jelly on whole grain toast
- Hard-boiled egg, whole grain crackers and a piece of fruit

Healthy Meals Start with Your Plate (Cont'd from pg. 1)

Use your plate to create
perfect portions!

be filled with vegetables. The other half should be evenly split between your protein and whole grains.

Don't clean it. Growing up you probably heard some version of the "Clean your plate" rule at least once. Now that you're an adult, it's time to break that rule and pay more attention to your body than what you see on your plate. As you get close to finishing your meal, ask

yourself if you are still hungry. If you aren't, don't be afraid to leave a few bites on the plate. Yes, there may be children starving in the world, but eating more than your fill won't make them any less hungry. Instead, consider taking a smaller serving at your next meal.

Paying closer attention to your plate is a small change that can make a big difference to your health. Why not give it a try?



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