★WELCOA | JANUARY 2015

WELCOA's spark16

IGNITE YOUR BEST YOU.

FEATURING 16 GREAT WAYS TO...

START YOUR YEAR OFF HAPPY & HEALTHY

Pages 4-5

A MONTHLY HEALTHLETTER FROM THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA

COMMON CAUSES OF MID-LIFE WEIGHT GAIN

Mid-life weight gain is one of the most predictable and unhealthy accompaniments of aging, with most people gaining at least a pound or two a year. Unfortunately, mid-life comes with a convergence of many different forces that bear on our waistlines, tipping the scales in an upward direction.

THE SIX PRIMARY DRIVERS OF MID-LIFE WEIGHT GAIN ARE:

1. A decrease in metabolism due to loss of lean body mass (muscle)
2. A decrease in metabolism due to impaired insulin function (insulin resistance)
3. Increased time spent sitting
4. Less physical activity/exercise
5. Stress
6. Inadequate sleep duration or quality

The good news is that mid-life weight gain is not inevitable or irreversible. Physical activity reigns supreme as the ideal antidote to avoid mid-life weight gain because it can improve or alleviate all six of these drivers! For best results, strive for 30 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity five or more days a week along with two days of resistance (weight-bearing) exercise each week.

Rethink&Shrink!

3 Ways to Eat Less & Healthier *Without* Changing Your Diet

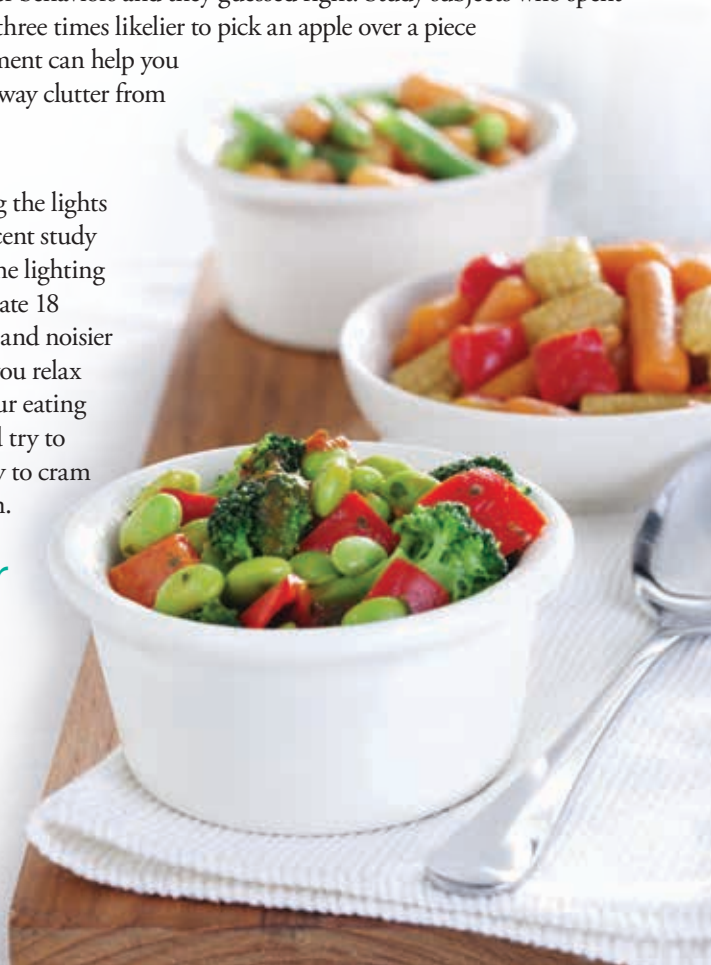
It's a new year, and it's often the time that many of us will aim to overhaul our eating habits. However, eating healthier and eating less don't have to equate to radical change. In fact, small changes and approaches to how you eat could help you eat better and lose some weight.

Here are three easy ways to eat less and healthier without a radical diet change:

1 | Tidy up your living space. Researchers at the University of Minnesota suspected that an organized lifestyle could result in healthier behaviors and they guessed right. Study subjects who spent time in an organized room were more than three times likelier to pick an apple over a piece of chocolate. To be sure, an orderly environment can help you feel in control. Take a few minutes to clear away clutter from your living and work space.

2 | Soften the lights. Dimming the lights at mealtime may help you eat less. In one recent study researchers found that when they changed the lighting and music at one fast food restaurant diners ate 18 percent less than those who ate in a brighter and noisier environment. The calmer setting may help you relax and slow down while eating. Be aware of your eating environment—dim the lights if you can and try to choose a relaxing spot where you're less likely to cram large bites into your mouth as fast as you can.

3 | Always eat from smaller dishes. A Cornell University food psychologist discovered that the larger the plate or bowl you eat from, the more you unknowingly consume. In one recent study, researchers found that moviegoers given extra-large containers of stale popcorn still ate 45 percent more than those snacking on fresh popcorn out of smaller containers holding the same amount.



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE FROM DR. ANN

Hot&Healthy SUPERSTAR CHILI *for a Crowd*

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ¾ lbs. chopped yellow onion
- 3 red bell peppers, chopped
- 2 lbs. venison sausage, casing removed (can substitute chicken sausage like Aidell's brand)
- 8 lbs. ground venison (can substitute extra lean ground beef)
- 2 tbsp. of freshly ground pepper
- 2 12-oz cans of tomato paste
- 3 tbsp. of fresh, minced garlic
- ½ tsp. of cayenne pepper
- 3 ½ oz of plain chili powder
- 3 oz ground cumin
- Salt to taste
- 4 ½ tbsp. of dried oregano
- ¾ cup of Dijon mustard
- 4 ½ tbsp. of dried basil
- 5 large cans of Italian plum tomatoes, drained
- ¾ cup of red wine
- ¼ cup of lemon juice
- ½ cup of fresh dill
- ½ cup of chopped fresh parsley
- 4 cans (15 ½ oz each) of black beans
- 3 cans (5 ½ oz each) of pitted and chopped black olives

DIRECTIONS:

Heat olive oil in a large stock pot. Add onions and peppers and cook over low heat until tender. Add sausage and ground meat and heat over medium heat until browned. Reduce heat to low and stir in black pepper, tomato paste, garlic, cayenne pepper, cumin, chili powder, Dijon mustard, salt, basil, and oregano. Add tomatoes, red wine, lemon juice, parsley, dill, and black beans. Simmer uncovered for 20 minutes. Add olives, seasoning, and simmer for another 5 minutes. Garnish with plain yogurt and chopped spring onions (optional).

Serves 35-40 people (Great for a party!)

Dr. Ann
Ann Kulze, M.D.

With formal training in nutrition and medicine, plus hands-on experience as a mother of four and family physician, Dr. Ann is a unique nutrition expert for the real world.

The whole food ingredients found in Dr. Ann's recipes are the right foods for health and vitality. Nutritional excellence naturally follows.

For more, visit ***DrAnnWellness.com***.

Superstar Food of the Month: Garlic

A recent review of the latest studies evaluating garlic's beneficial effects on blood pressure provided some *real* artery-opening results. After combining the data from 11 separate clinical trials, researchers found that garlic reduced the top (systolic) and bottom (diastolic) numbers by a whopping 8.4 and 7.3 mm Hg respectively for those who had high blood pressure. These results are similar or even better than what we observe with standard doses of high blood pressure medications!

Get into the habit of kicking up both the flavor and heart-healthfulness of your meals by using fresh garlic regularly.

Foods That Make You Hungry

Much of the battle with body weight can be won simply by cutting down or ridding your diet of foods that drive your hunger. And yes, there are such foods. The culprits are easy to identify and remember because they are white or contain white ingredients like white flour, white rice and sugars.

Due to their lack of fiber, processed nature and inherent starch structure, these foods are easily and quickly broken down in the digestive tract, giving rise to sudden and large elevations of blood glucose. We refer to quickly digested carbs as "high glycemic load" carbs.

Unfortunately, the spikes of blood sugar that ensue when we eat these kinds of carbs are followed shortly thereafter by a precipitous drop in blood sugar. The fallout from this sudden descent in blood glucose results in you feeling hungry again. High glycemic load carbs cause a vicious cycle of eating and hunger and blood sugar peaks and valleys that can incite unhealthy cravings, or even true binging.

Luckily, ridding your diet of these "great white hazards" is a very straightforward and truly life changing step in the right direction.

Limit or restrict all white flour products. These include potato chips, bagels, white bread, waffles, pizza dough, white rolls, white rice and sweets (especially the processed kinds like candy bars, cookies, cakes).

Always choose fiber and nutrient-rich carbs. These carbs are a healthy and filling alternative and include fruits, vegetables, physically intact whole grains, and beans. These carbs are fantastic for appetite control because they have a much lower glycemic load. Good choices for physically intact whole grains are oatmeal, brown or black rice, quinoa, barley, farro, and bulgur.

Choose multigrain or whole wheat pasta over traditional white pasta. Other wholesome starch options to replace the processed white ones are winter squashes, any variety of beans, lentils, and peas.

Avoid or limit any sugar-fortified beverages, such as sodas and fruit drinks. Sugary drinks drive blood sugar levels down too low too fast.

For dessert, have a small portion of high-quality dark chocolate.

4 Ways to Make Your Pasta Dishes Healthier

Pasta can fit deliciously into optimal appetite control, especially if you follow these four guidelines.

1. Choose multi-grain, whole wheat, brown rice, or soba (buckwheat) pastas over conventional white pasta.
2. Cook it al dente (a slightly chewy texture). This will reduce its glycemic response, which is better for your arteries and your metabolism.
3. Flavor it with a little extra virgin olive oil and lemon, or a tomato-based sauce instead of cream or cheese-based alfredo-type sauces.
4. Combine your pasta with a variety of vegetables and herbs to give it color and flavor!

WELCOA's spark16... Simple Wa

HAPPY & H

Cool Tool!

Consider setting and tracking your goals with Lifetick. It's a webapp that makes it easy to add and track multiple goals, build plans and steps for each one, and then look back on your progress over time.

https://www.lifetick.com/

1 Be wary of diet shakes and supplements. Do you really want to drink shakes for lunch every day for the rest of your life? Most of these products can help you shed a few, but they're not realistic in the long run. The best way to lose weight and stay healthy is a balanced diet rich in fruits and veggies.

2 Find out if you're getting the preventive services you need. Visit **http://healthfinder.gov/myHealthfinder** and enter your age, sex and pregnancy status and the tool will tell you. You can also use myhealthfinder to find out about the services recommended for a loved one.

3 Learn your BMI in 15 seconds. Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to adult men and women. Learn where you land at: **http://www.eatright.org/bmi/**.

4 Start cleaning your fridge every week. This habit is a great way to quickly identify what you're wasting your money on (when you throw out spoiled food).

5 Take 10 minutes and learn how to read the Nutrition Facts label. It will help you make wise and healthy choices. Learn more at: **http://www.fda.gov/food/ingredientspackaginglabeling/labelingnutrition**.

6 Add 10 minutes to your nightly sleep until you reach 7 to 9 hours a night. Research shows that sleeping only four to five hours can affect the body's hormone levels, which can lead to increased hunger and weight gain.

7 Make an emergency kit. Stock bottled water, batteries, a flashlight, and some canned food in a safe place in case of emergencies.

8 Learn what's realistic about weight loss. Some people feel like failures if they're not losing five pounds a week, and will then give up altogether. If you're trying to lose, aim for one to two pounds per week. By doing so, you are less likely to regain any lost weight or lose too much muscle.

ays To Kick-Off Your Year HEALTHY!

According to a report from the Center for Information Technology Leadership, widespread use of personal health records (PHRs) could save the U.S. health care industry between $13 and $21 billion a year.

Learn more about getting your PHR at:

http://www.myphr.com/

9 **Create a list of behaviors you want to eliminate, and then rip it to shreds.** Perhaps it's using your credit card, or your tendency to be too hard on yourself. Whatever it is, write it down and say goodbye to it when you tear it up!

10 **Tap into your motivation.** What motivates you to get healthy? Do you want to look better in your clothes, feel more energetic, or simply improve your health? Get clear about what you want, and then use that to inspire you throughout your journey.

11 **Find one way to pamper yourself, and stick to it.** Make self-care a routine. This can include a massage, a hot bath, or 30 minutes to sit and listen to music. Some call it pampering, but it's really about finding time for yourself to relax and recharge.

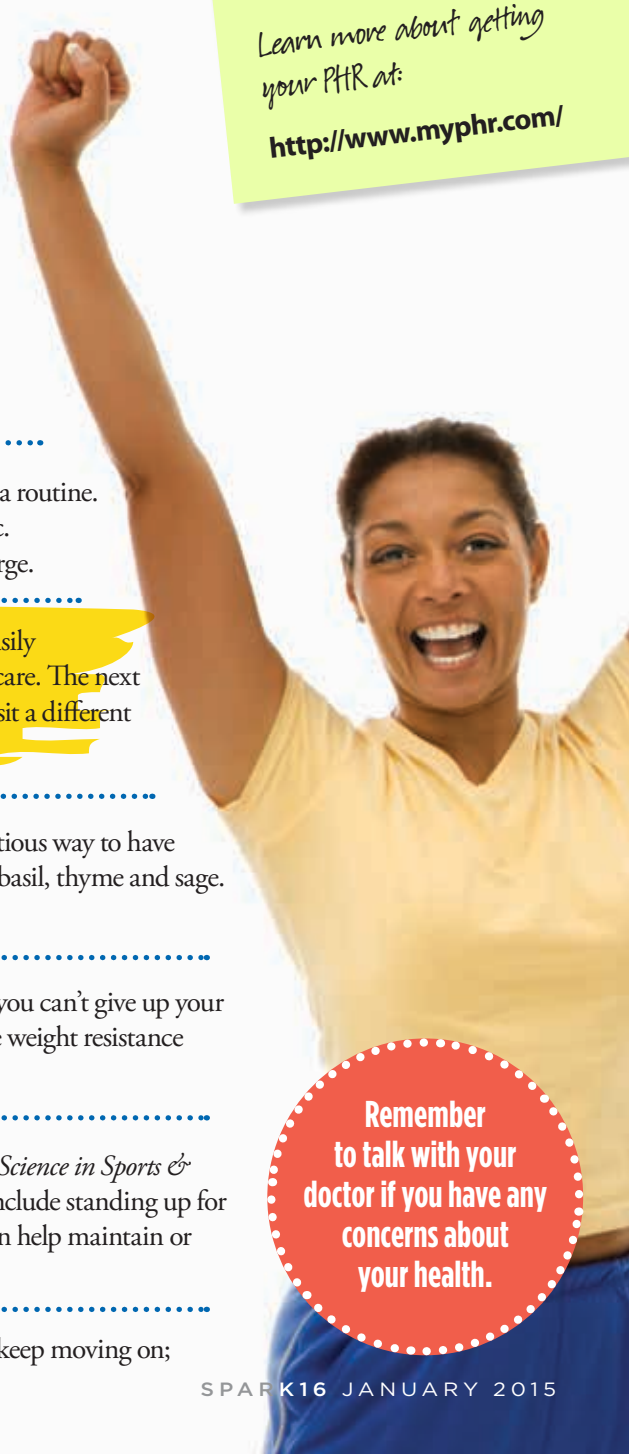
12 **Create a personal medical record.** Having complete, updated and easily accessible health records means you can play a more active role in your health care. The next time you visit the doctor, simply ask for your recent records, and do so each time you visit a different health care provider.

13 **Start growing your own herbs.** It's easy, cheap and an incredibly nutritious way to have fresh greens on hand all winter. Some easy crops to get started on are cilantro, basil, thyme and sage. Use your herbs as a topping for wraps, in juices or blend into raw soups.

14 **Give up one TV show to make time for physical activity.** Or if you can't give up your favorite show, at least exercise while watching! Get on the treadmill or do some weight resistance moves in front of the tube.

15 **Make a conscious effort to fidget.** A study published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* found that any movements that are not formally exercise, which can include standing up for a few seconds, bobbing your foot as you sit, or stretching your arms above your head can help maintain or augment your fitness (especially if you sit behind a desk all day).

16 **Don't let setbacks get you down.** If you have a setback, regroup and keep moving on; healthy endeavors and lifestyle changes do not happen overnight!



Remember to talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

Do You Know Enough About Diabete

Did you know that many people who have diabetes don't know it?

Of the 29.1 million who have diabetes, about 8.1 million are undiagnosed. In addition to the millions of adults with diabetes, another 57 million adults have "pre-diabetes" meaning that their blood sugar levels are high, but not yet at a diabetic level.

Are you at risk for diabetes?

Take the Diabetes Risk Test. It will ask you some simple questions and assess your risk. **http://www.diabetes.org/are-you-at-risk/diabetes-risk-test/**

Type 2 diabetes is not an infectious disease, but if it were, public health officials would say we're in the midst of an epidemic. More than 29 million Americans have diabetes, and if the spread of the disease continues at its present rate, it's estimated that more than 48 million people will be diagnosed in the U.S. by 2050.

What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes usually takes several years to develop (mostly without a recognizable sign or symptom). It occurs when the body can't make enough insulin or can't properly use the insulin it makes.

Why should I care about diabetes?

You can live with and manage type 2 diabetes, but it's a serious condition. The disease is the leading cause of blindness and kidney failure among adults. It can also cause mild to severe nerve damage and significantly increases the risk of heart disease.

The good news is that type 2 diabetes is largely preventable. Research shows that about nine out of 10 cases could be avoided by adopting healthy lifestyle choices.

Indeed, you can do your part to prevent type 2 diabetes by:

- Exercising regularly—aim for at least 30 minutes of activity on most (preferably all) days of the week.
- Keeping your weight under control—see tip #3 on the previous page to learn if your weight is in the normal range.
- Not smoking.
- Eating a healthy diet—aim to fill half of every plate with fruits and veggies.
- Abstaining from or limiting alcohol.

These lifestyle behaviors can also lower the chances of developing heart disease and some cancers.

Recently diagnosed?

A diabetes diagnosis can be scary, sad and/or shocking—especially if you haven't been feeling sick or any different than you felt before you were told you have diabetes. However, just because you don't feel sick, doesn't mean you should take the disease lightly.

es?

Luckily, there's a lot that you can do to keep yourself healthy. All of the prevention measures listed in this article, along with strict adherence to your doctor's treatment plan, are excellent strategies for keeping the disease in check, and keeping your blood glucose levels at a normal range.

Some people who learn they have diabetes mistakenly think their life will forever be miserable and they won't be able to do everything they used to do. That's certainly not true. In fact, with healthy lifestyle modifications, those with diabetes may begin to feel much better—perhaps losing extra weight and experiencing more energy.

Here are some additional myths about type 2 diabetes:

Myth: You can never eat sugar again.

Reality: Sweets (especially fruits) don't have to be off limits, as long as it's in moderation and part of a healthy meal plan combined with exercise.

Myth: You can eat all the meat you want.

Reality: A healthy diet includes protein, carbohydrates, fats and fruits and veggies. The key is a balanced diet that focuses on whole, minimally processed foods.

Myth: You can't have any carbs.

Reality: You can have carbs, but portion control and quality are crucial. Not all are created equal, so focus on whole grain carbs (like brown rice, quinoa, oatmeal) since they are a good source of fiber and they are digested slowly, keeping blood sugar levels steadier.

Should I get tested?

If you find out early that you have diabetes, you can get treatment to prevent damage to your body. The American Diabetes Association recommends routine screening for type 2 diabetes beginning at age 45, especially if you're overweight. If the results are normal, repeat the test every three years.

To diagnose type 2 diabetes, you'll be given a glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test. This blood test indicates your average blood sugar level for the past two to three months. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or higher on two separate tests indicates you have diabetes.

Glucose:
Also commonly called sugar, glucose is an important energy source that is needed by all the cells and organs of our bodies.

Insulin:
A hormone that regulates the amount of glucose in your blood.

WELCOA's spark16

IGNITE YOUR BEST YOU.

In every issue you'll find 16 ridiculously simple ways to stay healthy!

IN THIS ISSUE

» Are Your Surroundings Making You Gain Weight?

» The Type Of Food That's Making You Hungry

» What You Need To Do To Start The Year Right

» Could You Have Diabetes And Not Know It?

DID YOU KNOW?

45 years old

THE AGE AT WHICH THE AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDS ROUTINE SCREENING FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES.

57 million

ADULTS HAVE "PRE-DIABETES" MEANING THAT THEIR BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS ARE HIGH, BUT NOT YET AT A DIABETIC LEVEL.

$13–$21

THE AMOUNT IN BILLIONS THAT THE WIDESPREAD USE OF PERSONAL HEALTH RECORDS COULD SAVE THE U.S. HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY A YEAR.

TYPE 2 DIABETES ARE YOU AT RISK?

There are several risk factors that affect your risk for type 2 diabetes. Some of the risks are lifestyle behaviors you can change, and some like your age, you can't. Once you know your risks you can take steps to lower them, so you can lead a longer, healthier life.

Risk factors for type 2 diabetes:

- Overweight
- High blood glucose (sugar)
- History of diabetes during pregnancy, called gestational diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Unhealthy cholesterol
- Physical inactivity
- Smoking
- Unhealthy diet
- Excessive alcohol use

What's In A Number?

6,000 CALORIES

Recent data shows that the average American drinks 1.5 cans of soda each day, which equates to about *6,000 calories a month.*

0 CALORIES

Swap those cans for zero-calorie water and you'll eliminate thousands of empty calories from your diet. Even if you drink diet soda, water is the healthier choice!

WELCOA Information is reviewed by a prestigious Medical Advisory Board comprised of physicians and health care professionals and is intended to help you make smart health decisions for yourself and your family. Although editorial content is based on sound medical information, we ask that you consult a health care professional for all matters of concern. We also encourage you to keep your copies to build a convenient home-medical reference or recycle issues to friends and family.

©2014 Wellness Council of America, 17002 Marcy Street, Suite 140, Omaha, NE 68118; phone 402.827.3590; fax 402.827.3594; visit our Web site at www.welcoa.org. All rights reserved. ISSN 1549-9367. Executive Editor: David Hunnicutt, PhD; President: Ryan Picarella; Vice President of Operations: Brittanie Leffelman; Director of Membership and Business Development: Brenda Lerouge; Director of Strategy and Planning: Sara Martin Rauch; Creative Director: Brittany Stohl; Director of User Experience: Graden Hudson; Multimedia Designer: Adam Paige; Contributing Editor: Carie Maguire. Information may not be reproduced, copied, cited, or circulated in any printed or electronic form without written permission from the publisher.