WALK THE TALK

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

November 2018

ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION

November is National Diabetes Month!

– A time when communities across the country team up to bring attention to diabetes and its impact on millions of Americans. According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes affects nearly 30 million adults and children in the United States…that's roughly 10% of our population! Perhaps even more staggering is the fact that another 86 million Americans have prediabetes, a condition which increases the likelihood of developing diabetes, specifically Type-2 Diabetes.

Pre-Diabetes: Signs and Prevention
What is pre-diabetes?
Pre-diabetes means your blood sugar level is higher than normal, but not high enough to be classified as type 2 diabetes. However, without intervention, pre-diabetes can become type 2 diabetes in 10 years or less. If you have pre-diabetes, the long-term damage of diabetes - especially to your heart and circulatory system may already be starting.

Here is the good news: Progression from pre-diabetes to type 2 diabetes is not inevitable. With healthy lifestyle changes such as eating healthy foods, including physical activity in your daily routine and maintaining a healthy weight, you may be able to bring your blood sugar level back to normal.

STEP ONE: Know the Risks
People who fit the following descriptions are more likely to develop diabetes:

- Overweight
- Exercise fewer than three times a week
- Have a sibling or parent with diabetes
- 45 years old or older

STEP TWO: Find your healthy weight
If you are overweight, you are more likely to get pre-diabetes. By losing 5% to 7% of total body weight, you can lower your risk. A good diet can lower your weight and improve overall health. Research shows that modest weight loss and regular physical activity can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by up to 58% in people with pre-diabetes.

STEP THREE: Choose the right foods
Eat More:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas, etc.)
- Whole grains
- Unsalted nuts
- Lean meats

Eat Less:

- Salty Snacks
- White carbs (white bread, pasta, rice)
- Sugary drinks
- Saturated fats

STEP FOUR: Get Active/Make Small Changes
Even light exercise like walking or swimming can make a huge difference. Try to make regular activity part of your routine. Small changes in activity and eating can make a big difference!
Next time you order a sandwich, ask for it open face on whole grain bread, with extra veggies and hold the mayo. Find ways to walk more or incorporate light exercise into your daily routine. Be creative and find a support network that shares your goals.

Resources:
National Institutes of Health:
http://health.nih.gov/
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases:
http://www.niddk.nih.gov/
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion:
http://chronicdisease/index
World Health Organization:
http://www.who.int/
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/prediabetes.htm
American Diabetes Association:
www.diabetes.org
National Diabetes Education Program:
http://www.ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/DPP_FactSheet.pdf

NUTRITION TIPS FOR NOVEMBER

10 Tips to Build Healthier Meals

Eating healthy is not too difficult and making healthier meals only means making small adjustments to how you shop and prepare food. To get you started, check out these tips.

50% Veggies and Fruit - When you are planning a meal make sure half of what you are eating is either a vegetable or a fruit.

Keep Protein Lean - Not all protein is created equal; make sure you focus on proteins like lean beef, pork, chicken and turkey. For a vegetarian option, opt for beans or tofu.

Go With Whole Grains - Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains. Look for the words "100% whole grain" or "100% whole wheat" on the food label.

Add Some Dairy - Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt to get the calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but with less fat and fewer calories.

Say "No" To Sauces - Using heavy gravies or sauces adds fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce.

Slow Down - It takes about 20 minutes for your body's "full sensor" to kick in once you have started eating. When you eat slowly, you give your body time to tell you are full before you overeat.

Use A Smaller Plate - The bigger the plate, the more food we tend to put on it. Using a smaller plate is a great way to control your portion size.

Cut Out The Take Out - Restaurant portions tend to be too big and high in calories. Preparing more of your food at home gives you better control over what you are eating. When you do eat out, opt for healthier choices, try grilled instead of fried.

Mix In Some Variety - There are many healthy fruits, vegetables and grains to try so eating healthy never has to get boring. Try trading tasty, healthy recipes with friends and coworkers.

November Recipe

Mini Spaghetti Squash Cups



Makes: 12 servings
Serving Size: 2
Calories: 75
Preparation Time: 30 minutes
Cooking Time: 50 minutes

Ingredients
1 spaghetti squash (about 3 lbs; save half for another use)
2 Tbsp. olive oil
½ cup finely chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ (8-oz) package Neufchâtel cheese, cut into 1/2-inch chunks, softened
1 egg, beaten
½ tsp. poultry seasoning
1/8 tsp. black pepper
Nonstick cooking spray
½ cup reduced-sugar dried cranberries for garnish

Directions
1. Fill a soup pot with 1 inch of water; place the whole squash in the water. Bring to boiling over high heat, cover, and cook for 25 to 30 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a knife. Remove the squash, place on a cutting board, and allow to cool slightly. Cut the squash in half lengthwise; reserve half for a later use. Remove the seeds and discard. Using a fork, scrape the flesh of the squash half, shredding it into noodle-like strands. Place strands in a large bowl.
2. Meanwhile, in a small skillet over medium-low heat, heat the oil until hot. Cook the onion and garlic for 3 to 4 minutes, or until softened, stirring occasionally. Add to the squash.
3. Add the Neufchâtel cheese to the squash mixture, and mix until thoroughly combined. Stir in the egg, poultry seasoning, and black pepper.
4. Preheat the oven to 400° F. Coat two (12-cup) mini muffin tins with cooking spray. Spoon equal amounts of the squash mixture into each muffin cup and lightly press 2 to 3 dried cranberries on top. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until lightly browned. Let cool slightly, 2 to 3 minutes, then remove from muffin tins and serve immediately.

Rethink Dessert - It is Ok to indulge your sweet tooth, just do it with a healthy choice like fresh fruit.

Source: USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, 10 Tips for Healthy Meals http://www.choosemyplate.gov/

Recipe adapted from Mr. Food Test Kitchen Guilt-Free Comfort Favorites by Howard Rosenthal, available May 2018

November Fitness Tips: Get the Whole Family Involved

Staying physically active is key to overall health and wellness, and with the seasons changing, you may be interested in new ways to keep your family exercising. Participating in physical activity can be a fun way to involve the whole family. Try any of the following ideas:



Walking: This is by far one of the most universal exercises that nearly anyone can enjoy. It is a good weekday activity as you can always find a few minutes to take a quick walk!

Bike rides: With proper equipment like helmets, and awareness of traffic patterns, bike rides can be a safe and family-friendly activity. Take quick rides after dinner or plan for a longer ride on the weekend.

Visit a park: Parks are a nice place to enjoy a bike ride or walk. Exploring nature trails and paths while enjoying the outdoors can be beneficial both physically and mentally.

Play games: Whether you are in your own backyard or at a park, playground, or local field, the opportunities for physical activities are almost endless. Games like tag, jump rope, basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball, and many more are great ways to get the family moving.

10 Changes To Get More Exercise Every Day

1. **Do squats or lunges at your workstation and work your entire lower body**
2. **Swap out your chair for an exercise ball**
3. **Use the stairs instead of the elevator**
4. **Park farther from the entrance to add some extra steps**
5. **Add some incline to your flat treadmill workout to burn extra calories**
6. **Try planks instead of crunches for a more complete core workout**
7. **Choose pushups instead of bicep curls – you'll work more muscle groups in the same amount of time**
8. **Break up your cardio with an interval workout**
9. **Take a walk at lunch rather than sitting the whole time**
10. **Try something new – take a different group exercise class with a friend**

How to Practice Mindfulness

You already have a host of mindfulness activities for the classroom in your toolkit, but what about tips for helping you be more present in the moment? Have you ever tried to meditate, or practice mindfulness yourself?

To learn what it takes (and how to do it), we talked with two mindfulness pros over at Intel: Marissa Powers, a bioengineer whose extensive neuroscience work includes integrating biosensing into the meditation experience using virtual reality, and Lindsay Benjamin, a client software evangelist at Intel who founded an 8-week course in mindfulness for her company.

If you want to be fit, you have to exercise. That's how Benjamin and Powers view the connection between mindfulness and meditation. Meditation, Benjamin says, is time spent in silence when we actually learn how to calm down our nervous system, and build the capacity to be present and be mindful. A few tips:

Download a few guided meditation apps on your phone, like Headspace or 1 Giant Mind and stick with one you really like. You'd never sit at a piano and expect to play without a lesson, right? Through guided meditation, you'll learn exactly what to do and how to do it, and Benjamin and Powers both really like these apps.

Stay with it for at least 8 weeks. Studies show that it takes 8 weeks of meditation (about 5-10 minutes per day) even by a total beginner to produce measurable changes in the brain—measurable through an MRI, says Powers.

Mindfulness, Continued

If you just can't focus and meditate by yourself, consider encouraging other teachers to get in on it. Bring them together in an empty classroom, put your phone on the table, and do the guided meditation as a group. There is actually a collective energy that you kind of cultivate, says Powers, helping each other reduce stress and staying in the moment.

Practice your new mindfulness skills throughout your day. If you're cutting vegetables at dinner, you're cutting vegetables at dinner, says Benjamin—nothing more, nothing less. If you're washing your hands, she says, feel the water. Smell the soap. See the soap. If you notice your mind start to wander, gently bring it back to the present and notice what you're doing, one thing at a time.

Like with anything, the more you practice, the more you'll be able to stay in the present and live your life the way it's meant to be lived. In a world full of distractions, it's probably one of the best things you can do for you and for your students. Good luck, and enjoy the process!

Source: Room 241 Blog
https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/lifestyle/mindfulness-training-for-teachers/