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Smarter Bodies

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COMING 2009

Expanded Class Room for

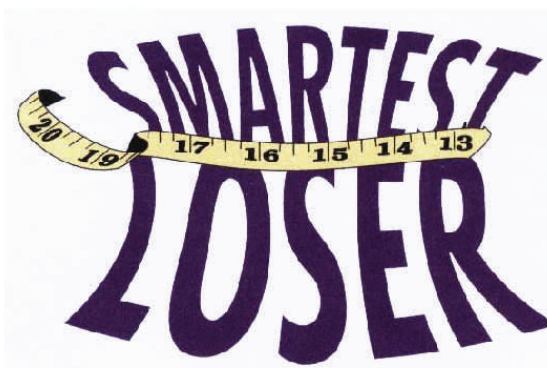
Yoga

Pilates

Kickboxng

Resistance Band Classes

And Spinning as well!



Entries Begin January 1

Microscopic Nutrition



By Michael Palma, B.S., CNM Certified Nutritional Microscopiest

More
Nutritional
Weight Loss
Seminars

Eat More Protein at Breakfast

Drop Weight and Your Cravings Silence a rumbling stomach with a high-protein breakfast



Everyone wants to look good in bike shorts, but eating healthy is never easy. A new study published by the British Journal of Nutrition,

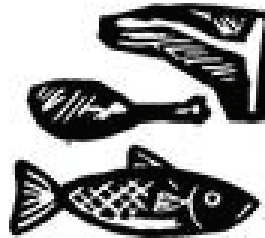
however, has found that eating more protein for breakfast leads to a greater and longer feeling of fullness if you're looking to lose weight. In other words, if you hear vending machines calling your name by mid-day, lean breakfast meats (not bacon) could cut unwanted cravings.

The study, conducted by researchers at Duke University and the University of Kansas Medical Center, had nine men record and score their fullness through five different feeding trials of equal calories. The five diets included a normal amount of protein (.8 grams per kg body weight), extra protein (an additional .6g per kg) at breakfast, lunch, or dinner, and extra protein spread evenly throughout the day. Fullness was reported three hours after every meal and for the whole of the day. The men then tried the different trials with both their recommended daily caloric intake and a 750-calorie reduction.

The results showed little difference be-

tween the diets while the subjects had their normal energy intake. But with the calorie restriction, an amount that would add up to one pound of weight loss per week, fullness scores were the greatest with the additional protein at breakfast.

"The findings suggest," says study author Heather Leidy, M.D. of the University of Kansas Medical Center, "that people trying to lose weight should eat more protein at breakfast to help them maintain their diet and avoid overeating. Alternately, if most of a person's protein is consumed at dinner, hunger is reduced at the following breakfast, which could lead to over-eating later in the day."



For a 150-pound man or woman, the extra protein would amount to 40 grams. You can get that protein from six slices of Canadian bacon or eight turkey breakfast sausage links. Those may sound like gut-bombs, but both meats are lean and these serving sizes have less than 300 calories.

If you're wondering how your bowl of cereal stacks up: For the same 300 calories, a relatively high-protein cereal like Kashi GOLEAN, served with a half-cup of skim milk, only registers about 25 grams. Corn flakes with milk, on the other hand, hold only 12 grams of protein, with most of it coming from the milk.

mp3 Headphones and Pacemakers Don't Mix

Study Shows Magnets in Headphones Can Interfere With Heart Pacemakers or ICDs



If you have a pacemaker or an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD), do not take your mp3 headphones out of your ear and drape them in front of your chest.

So advise doctors who found that headphones placed within an inch or so of these devices may cause them to misfire.

The research was presented at the American Heart Association's (AHA) Scientific Sessions 2008.

Earlier this year, the FDA said that interactions between mp3 players and similar digital music player devices, such as the iPod, and implanted cardiac devices are unlikely to occur.

"But we wanted to look at whether the headphones -- not the players, themselves -- would interact with implanted cardiac devices," says William H. Maisel, MD, director of the Medical Device Safety Institute at Beth Israel Medical Center in Boston.

That's because virtually every speaker contains magnets. They are what vibrate and make sound. Portable headphones, because they are so small, need concentrated magnets.

Magnets and Heart Devices

Typically, doctors use magnets to ensure that pacemakers, which treat irregular heart rhythms, are working properly. When exposed to a magnet, the devices pace at a predetermined rate, Maisel explains.

"But when exposed to the concentrated magnet in a headphone, the patient can temporarily feel palpitations."

ICDs, which treat dangerously fast heart rhythms, send either low- or high-energy signals to the heart to abolish them. If ICDs are exposed to concentrated magnetic fields, they may temporarily stop looking for abnormal heart rhythms.

For the new study, the researchers tested eight different models of mp3 player headphones, including both the clip-on and earbud variety, with iPods on 60 defibrillator and pacemaker patients.

"We placed the headphones on the patients' chests, directly over where their devices are located, monitoring them for evidence of an interaction," Maisel says.

There was detectable interference with the device in 15% of the pacemaker patients and 30% of the defibrillator patients. Clip-on headphones were more likely to cause device interference than earbud models.

AHA spokesman Kenneth A. Ellenbogen, MD, of Virginia Commonwealth Medical University in Richmond, stresses that interruption of heart function is only temporary. Removal of the headphones restores normal device function.

Plus, it wouldn't be typical to have headphones within an inch of the device.

Maisel agrees. "Just keep your headphones at least 3 centimeters, or 1.2 inches, from your implantable devices -- that is, do not place headphones in a front shirt pocket or drape them over your chest."

"And make sure a family member wearing headphones doesn't rest his or her head right on top of your device," he adds.



The Truth Behind 10 Diet Myths

Does Eating at Night Make You Fat? Is Caffeine Bad for You? Get the Facts on These and Other Diet Myths



True or false: You'll get fat if you eat at night, high fructose corn syrup makes you gain weight, and caffeine is bad for you.

Those are all diet myths that got busted today in Chicago at the American Dietetic Association's annual meeting.

Myth: Eating at night makes you fat.

Reality: Calories count, whenever you eat them.

There's no proof for this myth, Rosenbloom says. She notes some small studies with mixed results, tests on animals, and a belief that because eating breakfast is linked to lower BMI, eating at night isn't as good. But all in all, Rosenbloom says, it's your calorie total that matters, day or night.

Myth: Avoid foods with a high glycemic index.

Reality: You could use the glycemic index to adjust your food choices, but don't make it your sole strategy for losing weight or controlling blood sugar, Rosenbloom says.

"For those people that are already counting carbs, this can be a way for them to fine-tune their food choices, but it isn't the be-all, end-all for weight loss," she says.

Myth: High fructose corn syrup causes weight gain.

Reality: "There's probably nothing particularly evil about high fructose corn syrup, compared to regular old sugar," Rosenbloom says.

She explains that this diet myth arose in 2003, when researchers noticed that obesity was rising along with the use of high fructose corn syrup. "They speculated that ... maybe we handle [high fructose corn syrup] differently than we do sugar," but "there really isn't any evidence to support that," she says.

The American Medical Association recently concluded that high fructose corn syrup doesn't contribute to obesity beyond its calories.

Myth: Caffeine is unhealthy.

Reality: Rosenbloom says there is some evidence that caffeine may have a positive effect on some diseases, including gout and Parkinson's disease, besides caffeine's famous alertness buzz.

Also, caffeine doesn't dehydrate people who consume it regularly, Rosenbloom says.

But she cautions that caffeine isn't always listed on product labels, and children who drink a lot of caffeinated energy drinks may get more caffeine than their parents expect. "Kids tend to guzzle these things, whereas an adult may sip a beverage," Rosenbloom says.

Myth: The less fat you eat, the better.

Reality: "For some people, counting fat grams can work for weight control, but it isn't the be-all end-all for people," Rosenbloom says.

She says that people with heart disease, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome may benefit from adding a little healthy fat -- the monounsaturated kind -- and cutting back on carbohydrates. But they shouldn't increase their overall fat intake -- just swap saturated fat for monounsaturated fat.

"If you go out to an Italian restaurant and you have triple cheese-meat-

sausage lasagna but then you have a little olive oil on your bread, you're not doing much for your heart," Rosenbloom says.

Myth: To eat less sodium, avoid salty-tasting foods and use sea salt in place of table salt.

Reality: Your sense of taste doesn't always notice sodium, and sea salt or other gourmet salts aren't healthier than table salt.

"Just because it doesn't taste salty doesn't mean that it isn't salty," Rosenbloom says. She says many processed foods contain a lot of sodium -- check the label.

Sea salt, Rosenbloom says, contains slightly less sodium per teaspoon than table salt only because sea salt is coarser, so fewer grains fit into the teaspoon.

Myth: Drinking more water daily will help you lose weight.

Reality: There's no evidence that water peels off pounds.

Foods containing water -- such as soup -- can fill you up, "but just drinking water alone doesn't have the same impact," Rosenbloom says. "Our thirst mechanism and our hunger mechanism are two different things."

Myth: Whole grains are always healthier than refined grains.

Reality: Whole grains are a healthy choice, but you needn't ditch refined grains. "You can have some of each," Rosenbloom says.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's "My Pyramid" dietary guidelines recommend getting at least half of your grain servings from whole grains.

"It doesn't say you have to replace all of your breads with whole grains or all of your foods with whole grains," Rosenbloom says. She adds that enriched grains -- refined grains with certain nutrients added (such as wheat enriched with folic acid, an important nutrient for preventing neural tube birth defects) -- have some perks.

"Enriched grains generally are going to have more folate, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and iron. The whole grains usually have more fiber, vitamin e, selenium, zinc, potassium -- so there's kind of a trade-off," Rosenbloom says.

Myth: Sugar causes behavioral problems in kids.

Reality: You might want to check your expectations about sugar and children's behavior.

For most children, "the excitement that kids have when supposedly they eat sugar is probably more related to the event and the excitement of the event than it is to actually consuming sugar," Rosenbloom says.

She cites research showing that when parents think their kids have been given sugar, they rate the children's behavior as more hyperactive -- even when no sugar is eaten.

Myth: Protein is the most important nutrient for athletes.

Reality: "It is true that athletes need more protein than sedentary people. They just don't need as much as they think. And they probably don't need it from supplements; they're probably getting plenty in their food," Rosenbloom says.

But timing matters. Rosenbloom recommends that after weight training, athletes consume a little bit of protein -- about 8 grams, the amount in a small carton of low-fat chocolate milk -- to help their muscles rebuild.

"That's probably all you need," she says. "You don't need four scoops of whey powder to get that amount of protein."

FREE FILE OF THE MONTH

Google SketchUp 7.0

Google SketchUp is an easy-to-learn 3D modeling program that enables you to explore the world in 3D. With just a few simple tools, you can create 3D models of houses, sheds, decks, home additions, woodworking projects - even space ships. And once you've built your models, you can place them in Google Earth, post them to the 3D Warehouse, or print hard copies.

<http://sketchup.google.com/>

late eaters" -- those who ate at least two 50-gram bars of chocolate a day.

The chocolate-eaters were deprived of their favorite sweet for three days; they were also told not to exercise or have caffeine for two hours before the test period. Abstaining from chocolate, being under stress, and then exposing someone to chocolate has been shown to ignite cravings for chocolate.

Blood pressure and heart rate were monitored; participants also completed a food-craving questionnaire.

On separate days, one group of participants took a brisk 15-minute walk on a treadmill. They were told to walk as if they were catching a bus, but not until they were out of breath. The comparison group sat quietly for 15 minutes.

After walking or doing nothing, each participant took a computerized test (the stressor) and unwrapped and handled a chocolate bar -- but they were not allowed to eat it.

Researchers found that the group that exercised had a significant reduction in chocolate cravings when compared to their baseline.

Taking a brisk walk also eased blood pressure readings for participants after the mental-challenge test and handling the unwrapped chocolate. Being sedentary did not appear to lessen cravings.

Facts About Food Cravings

In their study, the researchers also provided this background information about food cravings:

- Up to 97% of women and 68% of men experience food cravings.
- Cravings are usually for dense, calorie-packed foods.
- Food cravings often come before a bout of unhealthy eating.

In an introduction to the study, the researchers write that food cravings have been known to be responsible for throwing people off track when they are in treatment programs to lose weight or to recover from an eating disorder.

The researchers hope the findings can help shed light on how to interrupt cravings, since past research has shown that even tiny changes in how much people eat and small increases in exercise can be helpful in keeping weight off and creating good health habits.

The study appears in the latest issue of the journal *Appetite*.

Craving Chocolate? Take a Walk Instead

*Study Shows a Brisk Walk May Help Curb
Chocolate Cravings*



Chocolate has a special allure for many of us, bordering on the addictive. But a new study shows that taking a brisk walk can cut down the urge to eat chocolate -- and may help curb cravings that can derail weight loss efforts.

When it comes to cravings, chocolate is the most common and "intensely" craved food, according to background information presented with the study findings.

Researchers wanted to look at what goes into an intense craving and how one might break it.

Adrian Taylor and Anita Oliver of the University of Exeter gathered 25 people whom they describe as "regular choco-



Apple-Butternut Squash Soup

Unsweetened apple cider adds body and a natural hint of sweetness to this thick and flavorful soup, and creamy winter squash delivers ample amounts of beta-carotene, B vitamins, and fiber. This recipe is very easy but it does take slightly longer to cook, which allows the flavors to meld perfectly. Look for packaged cut squash to help you save prep time



1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil 1 small onion, thinly sliced 2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces 3 cups lower-sodium chicken broth 1/2 cup unsweetened apple cider Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat oil in a large heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook until softened and lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add squash, cover, and cook 10 minutes more, stirring occasionally. Add broth and simmer until softened, 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Using a slotted spoon, transfer solid ingredients to a blender with apple cider and purée until smooth. Add 1 1/3 cups of the cooking liquid and purée until smooth. Stir back into the pan. Serve hot.

Makes 6 (1 1/2-cups) servings.

Nutrition at a Glance: Per Serving: 160 calories, 5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 6 g protein, 28 g carbohydrate, 4 g dietary fiber, 135 mg sodium

Exercise: The Brain's Fountain of Youth

To Prevent Mental Decline, Exercise During Middle Age Is Critical



Daily physical exercise keeps the brain young, mouse studies suggest.

But don't wait too long to start. The brain-boosting effects of exercise diminish rapidly after early middle age, say researchers working in the lab of Yu-Min Kuo, PhD, of Taiwan's National Cheng Kung University Medical College.

Kuo's team previously found that young brains create new brain cells and integrate them into existing brain networks. As animals get older, however, this process dramatically slows. And this slowdown in brain cell creation is linked to impaired memory and learning.

Can this age-related mental decline be reversed by exercise? To find out, Kuo and colleagues trained mice to run on exercise wheels, at 70% of their aerobic capacity, every day for five weeks. Control mice were not trained to exercise, although they did have exercise wheels.

Mice began exercising at age 8 months (early middle age for a mouse) or at age 12 months (midway to mouse old age, which is 24 months).

Sure enough, mice that worked out every day grew 2.5 times more new brain cells than couch potato mice. And in the exercising mice, far more of these new neurons survived, grew, and integrated into existing

brain networks.

"Treadmill running not only increases the quantity but also enhances the quality of newborn neurons," the researchers report.

"Chronic treadmill running alters the chemistries of middle-aged brains toward an environment resembling younger brains."

Mice that started exercise in early middle age did much better than mice that didn't start exercising until later middle age.

"Middle age represents an important turning point of life," the researchers say.

Interestingly, the brain changes seen in exercising mice weren't caused by a drop in stress hormones, as some studies predicted. Instead, the positive changes came from increased production of signaling molecules that promote brain cell growth and survival.

Quote of the Month



"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

~ Mark Twain



Smart Golf Tips and Tricks

Trying to Lift

Problem

You always try to lift the ball up, into the air. This even happens with the driver.

Cure

As long as you hit down on the ball with the clubhead, it will get the ball up. The more you hit down on it, the more it will go up and the less distance it will get. If you are worried about not getting enough loft with your driver, tee the ball up higher or buy a driver with more loft.

Therapy

If you are having difficulties trying to lift the ball up into the air with your fairway woods then practice clipping the ground a little while using a sweeping motion. Remember to try to make square contact with the sweet spot on the clubface and to accelerate through the ball. While practicing with your fairway woods and on the tee box, use this opportunity to tee the ball up to help improve a flush contact between the sweet spot and ball. Because on the fairway you will not be able to tee the ball up, you need to also practice nicking the ground a little while practicing so that you do not simply make contact with the back of the ball but you can also reach bottom of the golf ball. Learn to make full swings that will allow you get to the bottom of the golf ball. To do this, practice with the a tee, swing as usual but make sure you clip the tee so that it moves.

Wind on the Green

Problem

It is windy on the green but not windy where you are standing.

Cure

Plan on the ball to fly through the air pretty much the way it normally does from this distance. However, wind can have a significant effect on the ball when it rolls on the green. If you are making a short shot, you will be using a higher trajectory and it will increase the odds

that the wind will alter the ball flight.

Therapy

Instead of focusing on the yardage from the pin, you also need to consider the yardage of the front of the green and the back of it. Now watch to see which way the flag is blowing. If the flag is blowing towards you, it would be wise to use the club that would normally allow you to reach the back of the green. If it is blowing away from you, use the club that will allow you to reach the front of the green. This will allow the ball to roll to the hole. Remember, once you have selected the club for this shot, commit yourself to it and believe you made the correct decision.

Chili Dipping

Problem

You hit the ball fat or hit the ground instead of the ball when trying to chip the ball up onto the green.

Cure

Avoid using your wrists to help scoop the ball up, into the air. If you do, you will chili dip your chip.

Therapy

Place most of your weight on your front foot and keep your hands ahead of the ball. Keep your wrists quiet throughout the swing. Make a descending blow onto the ball and allow the loft of the club to pop the ball up into the air and on the green



Smart Cycling

Cycling Training Tips: Over-the-Counter Strength

Studies in older test groups show that ibuprofen and acetaminophen help build muscle strength after workouts



Taking recommended doses of ibuprofen and acetaminophen boosts strength and muscle growth when paired

with a simple strength program, according to Ball State University researchers. The study, conducted by the Human Performance Lab at Ball State University, followed thirty-six men and women, aged 60-78, through three months of strength training. Subjects performed 15-20 minute sessions three times per week with a daily placebo or manufacturer's recommended dose of ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

After three months, the volunteers' quadriceps were measured for size and strength. Those taking ibuprofen had 22 percent more volume and were 30 percent strong than the placebo group. People taking the acetaminophen had 44 percent more volume and were 22 per-

cent stronger. The results took researchers by surprise, as a previous one-day study had indicated pain relievers may impinge muscle growth.

It appears that continued consumption of the pain relievers enhances the metabolic response of muscles to strength training, explained Todd Trappe, Ph.D. In short, Aspirin and Advil could boost your strength and muscle growth after hitting the gym.



A previous, one-day study had found the opposite effect in younger subjects. However, one possible explanation offered by

the researchers for the new study's findings is that the body may overreact to the negative effects of pain relievers. Further study is needed to confirm the effects on younger groups, but taking over the counter pain relievers like Advil (ibuprofen) and Tylenol (acetaminophen) could give you the most out of your strength sessions.





SMART RUNNING

Abdominal Muscle Strain

1. What is it?

An abdominal muscle strain is an excessive stretching or tearing of one or more of the four abdominal muscles. These muscles are the rectus abdominus (the “six pack” muscle in the front of the abdomen), internal oblique, external oblique and transverses abdominus muscles.

2. What are the causes/predisposing factors of injury?

Causes of injury vary. Too many crunches done too aggressively or with poor technique can strain the muscle, as can overstretching the area by a twisting movement or a backward bending movement. A sudden cough or sneeze may also cause injury.

Predisposing factors include poor conditioning of the muscles and lack of an appropriate warm up prior to activity.

3. What are the symptoms?

As with all muscle strains this injury is graded from a 1 to a 3 based on severity. A “1” is overstretching of the muscle fibers with no tearing, while a “3” is a complete rupture. A grade 1 injury may not present as pain initially, but may be felt later as localized soreness over the injury site. Grade 2 and grade 3 injuries are usually felt immediately and may present as spasm, swelling and later bruising over the site. A grade 3 injury may additionally present

as a hernia or defect in the involved muscle.

Generally, abdominal strains will make it painful to do a sit up, bend backwards, and sometimes twist from side to side depending upon the specific muscle involved.

4. What can be done to prevent or treat this injury?

Treatment can be challenging since you cannot splint the area and it is nearly impossible to rest the abdominal muscles. Avoiding activities that aggravate the injury is essential. Icing and use of anti-inflammatories can be of benefit as is gentle pain free stretching. In cases of a complete rupture, surgical repair may ultimately be necessary.

Prevention is simple. Make these muscles stronger and perform appropriate warm up procedures prior to activity. There are numerous abdominal strengthening exercises in the form of crunches and core stabilization programs. These are important for proper posture as well as reducing the likelihood of low back pain. All runners should be doing some type of these exercises to reduce the chance of injury not only in the abdominal area but in the low back as well.



Rheumatoid Arthritis: The Importance of Exercise

Learn about the importance of exercise for rheumatoid arthritis. Arthritis exercises can safely provide pain relief and build muscle strength.



When joints are stiff and painful, exercise might be the last thing on your mind. Yet when you have rheumatoid arthritis, exercising regularly is one of the best things you can do to take care of yourself and your joints. Here is why exercise is

so important:

** People who exercise live longer, with or without rheumatoid arthritis.*

** Regular exercise can actually reduce overall pain from rheumatoid arthritis.*

** Exercise can keep your bones strong. Thinning of the bones can be a problem with rheumatoid arthritis, especially if you need to take steroids. Exercise helps bones keep their strength.*

** Exercise maintains muscle strength.*

** Regular exercise improves functional ability and lets you do more for yourself.*

** People with rheumatoid arthritis who exercise feel better about themselves and are better able to cope with problems.*

Is Exercise Safe If You Have Arthritis?

Is exercise safe? Yes -- certain kinds of exercise are proven to be safe for people with rheumatoid arthritis. There are three types you can do: stretching, strengthening, and conditioning.

- Stretching exercises are the simplest and easiest. They consist of stretching and holding different joint and muscle groups for 10 to 30 seconds each. Stretching improves flexibility, and daily stretching is the basis for any exercise program.
- Strength exercises involve working the muscle against resistance. This can be either with or without weights. Resistance training strengthens the muscle and increases the amount of activity you can do pain-free.
- Conditioning exercise, also called aerobic

exercise, improves cardiovascular fitness. There are countless benefits to aerobic exercise! Among them, it makes your heart and blood vessels healthier, prevents disability, and improves mood and well-being. Good conditioning exercises for people with rheumatoid arthritis include low-impact activities like walking, swimming, bicycling, or using an elliptical machine. Any of these will get your heart pumping.

After being cleared by your doctor, you should try to do 20 to 30 minutes of low-impact conditioning exercise on as many days as you feel you can. More is better, but any amount is better than none at all!

Exercises to Avoid if You Have Arthritis

Are there any kinds of exercise you should avoid? In general, you should be careful about activities that put a lot of stress on a joint, or are "high-impact," such as:

- * Jogging, especially on paved roads
- * Heavy weight lifting

That's not to say that these activities are totally off-limits. If you're interested in trying them, talk to your doctor first.

Your rheumatologist can help you create an exercise program that is right for you. This may also involve meeting with a physical therapist. Physical therapists can identify what areas you need to work on, choose the right exercises for you, and tell you how vigorously you should exercise.

There are also community exercise programs designed just for people with arthritis. People with Arthritis Can Exercise (PACE) and the Arthritis Self Help Course (ASHC) are offered by the Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org).

You should work with your treatment team to design the right plan before starting to exercise, especially if you have other medical problems.

As you start to exercise regularly, you'll realize the benefits, and you'll know you've taken control of your rheumatoid arthritis. Soon, not only will your joints feel better - you'll feel better too.



Top Nutrition Trends for 2009

Survey: Americans Eating More Whole Grains, Vegetables, Fruits

Whole grains are hot, trans fat is not, and more Americans say they're doing all they can to eat right, according to a new survey from the American Dietetic Association (ADA).

In the survey, 783 U.S. adults dish on their diet and exercise habits. Among the findings:

- Consumption of whole grains, vegetables, and fruits is up.
- Trans fat, beef, pork, and dairy consumption is down.
- More Americans have a good attitude toward diet and exercise and say they're doing their best to eat healthfully.

Here's a closer look at those findings.

Food Trends

Here are the top five foods or nutrients that survey participants say they've increased during the past five years:

- Whole grains: 56% say they're eating more
- Vegetables: Half of participants say they're eating more vegetables
- Fruits: 48% say they're eating more fruit
- Low-fat foods: 48% say they're eating more low-fat foods
- Omega-3 fatty acids: 38% say they've boosted their consumption

The upward trend in consumption of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables is good news, notes ADA spokeswoman Jeannie Gazzaniga-Moloo, PhD, RD, who presented the survey results today in Chicago at the ADA's annual meeting.

Here are the top five foods or nutrients that participants report reducing during the past five years.

- Trans fat: 56% say they've cut back on foods containing trans fat
- Beef: 41% say they're eating less beef
- Pork: 33% report eating less pork
- Dairy: 23% say they've cut back

Low-sugar foods: 20% say they've cut back

Gazzaniga-Moloo says people may be cutting back on beef, pork, and dairy because of cost and the hunt for lower-fat foods. But she points out that "there are lower-fat alternatives within those three foods -- beef, pork, and dairy -- [and that] they do provide an excellent source of certain nutrients," such as calcium, protein, and vitamin D in dairy products, and protein, iron, and B vitamins in pork and dairy.

More People Eating Better

More people are improving their attitude toward diet and exercise and taking action for a healthier diet, according to the survey.

The ADA splits participants into three groups -- "I'm already doing it," "Don't bother me," and "I know I should" -- based on how they answer various survey questions about diet and exercise habits.

Here's how the groups ranked this year and in the ADA's 2002 survey:

- I'm already doing it: 43% (up from 38% in 2002)
- I know I should: 38% (up from 30% in 2002)
- Don't bother me: 19% (down from 32% in 2002)

The shift out of the "don't bother me" category and into the "I'm already doing it" category shows that "consumers are certainly becoming more aware of the importance of balanced and healthy eating, [and] regular physical activity," says Gazzaniga-Moloo.

But there's still room for improvement. "What we would like to see is more of the 'I know I should' moving into the 'I already am'" category, Gazzaniga-Moloo says.

Top Excuses for Not Eating Better

Why aren't people doing more to improve their diets? Here are the top five reasons from the survey:

- 79% say they're satisfied with the way they eat.
- 73% say they don't want to give up the foods they like.
- 54% say it takes too much time to keep track of their diet.
- 52% say they need more practical tips for healthy eating.
- 41% say they don't know or understand diet and