

Spring 2019

# Well~Connected

## Spring into Better Health

There's something about the seasonal transition from winter to spring that elicits an energizing hope and a renewed ambition toward personal growth. Now that spring has sprung, it's time to take advantage of the longer, warmer days and breathe fresh air into old nutrition and fitness routines. Whether you're just starting out or are an old fitness pro, make the most out of a new season and reinvigorate your routine. Changes don't have to be huge, life-altering events to make a difference.

One small behavior adjustment repeated day after day can have profound effects on your life. Remember: consistency is key!



### Enjoy Garden-Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Do you tend to put food over fitness, using exercise as an excuse to indulge in your favorite meals with the intention of burning off the extra calories later? Or, do you flip the equation and put fitness over food? In truth, food and fitness should go hand in hand—two equal parts of a healthy lifestyle. Nutrition provides our bodies the energy and brain power we need in order to be the best version of ourselves each and every day. With spring in sight, fuel your body with all of the wonderful fresh fruits and vegetables coming into season. Set a goal for yourself to eat the recommended two cups of fruit and two and a half cups of vegetables each day. If those amounts seem daunting, set a lower goal to increase your daily fruit and veggie intake until you are able to reach the recommended servings.

- \* **Grill:** Add grilled vegetables to your next sandwich for a flame-kissed, healthy twist to an old favorite.
- \* **Grate:** Sneak grated vegetables into your meatloaf, spaghetti or eggs.
- \* **Blend:** Make an oil and vinegar salad dressing using raisins or dates as the sweetening agent.

### Exercise in the Fresh Air



*"The beautiful spring came;  
and when nature resumes her  
loveliness, the human soul is  
apt to revive also."*

*-Harriet Ann Jacobs-*

With the warmer weather, are you itching to get outside for a set of tennis, a few laps in the pool, or perhaps tee-up for your first round of golf in ages? Exercising can be a great mood-booster, especially in the fresh air, but before you jump in full-throttle, you'll need to brush off those winter

cobwebs and prepare your body in order to avoid injury. Start slow, especially if you haven't been very active throughout the winter. A good rule of thumb is to schedule your annual exam at the beginning of spring so that you can jump into the season with a clean bill of health. For the first month, gradually increase your duration and intensity until you've built up enough flexibility and endurance to move into a more strenuous activity. Regardless of your activity or intensity level, incorporate stretching and strengthening exercises to combat potential injury.

### Fit Tip: SING YOUR HEART OUT



Stop talking and start singing! Studies show the benefits of singing your heart out are incredible! Whether you are enjoying a sing-along in the shower or with friends on a karaoke machine, each time you make a joyful noise, you are enhancing your health.

In addition to an aerobic exercise for the lungs, singing increases your well-being with each note you belt by releasing positive endorphins into your system that increase your energy level and improve your mood. Singing also reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, stimulates blood circulation and can be practiced anywhere. On your next road trip or while sitting in traffic, turn up the volume and sing along!



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Q:

In an attempt to live a healthier lifestyle, I have decided to start bringing a lunch with me to work each day. What are some healthy lunch choices to pack in my sack that will sustain me throughout the day?

Ask the  
*Health*  
Coach

Congratulations on choosing a healthy lifestyle! This is a wonderful goal! You did not mention likes and dislikes, but here are some thoughts and ideas to choose from:

#### If you choose a sandwich:

Think in terms of 100% whole grain bread instead of "white" bread. If a sandwich isn't satisfying enough on its own, you might bring a thermos and have a cup of soup with it. Choose a broth-based soup if you are watching calories.

#### If you choose a salad:

Try it with a homemade dressing. Combine olive oil, balsamic vinegar, mustard, salt and pepper. Eating "real" dressing with healthy ingredients—in moderate amounts—can be more satisfying than the fat-free dressing options.

#### Top off with a few heart-healthy items:

I recommend adding some avocados, olives, and nuts (sunflower seeds, cashews, pumpkin seeds are nice options) to sandwiches, soups or salads. These foods are high in calories, but they contain the "good-for-you" fats that will keep you satisfied longer. If you're watching your weight, don't overdo these toppings! To keep your lunches healthy and filling, focus on fun ways to pack in lots of vegetables. Try grilling veggies, which enhances the natural flavors.

#### Invite some friends to join in the fun:

A friend of mine is in a lunch-pool at work with two other people. On one day of the week, one person makes lunch for everyone in the group. If you go this route, make sure you are all on the same page as to what constitutes a healthy food choice.

Bringing your lunch helps to support your goals of living a healthier lifestyle while saving you money so that you can afford to be adventurous! And... as a reminder to bring your lunch, drop your car or house keys into your lunch box or bag!



## THAI COCONUT CURRY MEATBALLS

Prep: 5 minutes - Cook Time: 30 minutes - Total Time: 35 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

#### Meatballs

1/2 C chopped carrots	1 tsp fresh grated ginger
1/4 red onion chopped	1 clove garlic
2 Tbs cilantro	1/2 tsp ground cumin
1 Tbs lime juice	1/2 tsp red chili flakes
2 1/2 Tbs basil	1/4 tsp each salt/pepper
1 1/2 Tbs soy sauce	1 lb ground chicken

#### Sauce

14 oz can coconut milk	2 Tbs lime juice
1 1/2 Tbs red curry paste	1 tsp minced garlic
1 Tbs almond butter	1/2 tsp red chili flakes

### INSTRUCTIONS

Pre-Heat Oven to 400F.

#### Meatballs

1. Place all of the ingredients (except chicken) into a blender and chop.
2. Mix in chicken.
3. Shape into 2" balls and place on a greased pan.
4. Bake for 15 minutes. Roll balls over and bake an additional 15 minutes.

#### Sauce

1. In sauce pan, heat coconut milk over low-medium heat.
2. Add remaining ingredients and simmer for 10 minutes, continually stirring until sauce thickens.

Serve over Jasmine or Cauliflower rice.

## Spring 2019 Wellness Campaign



Participant Prize

Commit to increasing your **self-awareness** each day for 5 weeks.

**IGNITE YOUR INSIGHT**

## Fitbit® Challenge Winners

### December

Elsie Zapata, Morton ISD  
Valerie Knox, Aledo ISD  
Tammy Griffin, Silsbee ISD

### January

Danielle Rousseau, Arp ISD  
Marla Debons, Marble Falls ISD  
Brittany King, Muleshoe ISD

### February

Kelly Hanna, Godley ISD  
AnnMarie Williams, San Angelo ISD  
Sonya Sanchez, Denver City ISD

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"According to the latest scientific research, the human body is 60% water and 40% stress."