



live well, work well

October 2013

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The Perfect Lunch for You and Your Kids



According to recently published data by the National Institute of Health, two-thirds of teenagers eat less than one serving of fruits and vegetables a day. Adults fare no better, as less than 30 percent consume the recommended daily number of servings.

Those numbers are concerning because we all know the health benefits associated with diets high in produce: slimmer bodies, healthier lifestyles and reduced likelihood of chronic illness. And diets that include plenty of fresh vegetables have also been shown to help improve children's academic performance.

To achieve those results, teenage girls should be eating 1½ cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables every day. Boys should be eating half a cup more of each per day. These numbers apply to most adults as well.

For adults and children alike, lunches should include an entrée made up of protein, whole grains and a vegetable. Suggestions include turkey pitas, bean and potato tacos, corn chips with a black bean and cheese dip, and that old mainstay: the sandwich.

Entrées should be accompanied by a fruit or veggie side. These could include carrots with red pepper hummus, celery sticks with veggie cream cheese, apple slices with peanut butter or a cup of yogurt with fresh fruit slices.

To make healthy lunches that appeal to your kids, consider the following tips.

Let your children choose vegetables at the store or from the fridge, as they will be more likely to eat what they've picked out themselves.

Help your kids plant and grow a small herb garden. Most herbs are easy to maintain, and your children will be eager to see their plants included in meals. Take the hands-on involvement concept even further by helping them chop vegetables and prepare their own lunches.

You could also take your kids to a farmer's market or even a farm or orchard to stimulate their interest in food production and give them access to the freshest, tastiest fruits and vegetables.

Finally, find out about the dietary habits of your children's role models. Point out that most actors and athletes take really good care of themselves by maintaining a super-healthy diet.

Breast Cancer Prevention

When breast cancer starts out, it is too small to feel and does not cause signs and symptoms. As it grows, however, breast cancer can cause changes in how the breast looks or feels.

Symptoms of breast cancer include lumps in the breast or underarm area, thickening, swelling, flaking, irritation and unexplained redness of the breast areas. Nipple discharge other than breast milk is also a symptom.

Regular mammograms are the best tests doctors have to find breast cancer early, sometimes up to three years before it can be felt. When their breast cancer is found early, many women go on to live long and healthy lives.

But because variables like heredity and lifestyle can influence the likelihood of developing breast cancer, women are encouraged to ask their doctors for a formal estimation of their risk.

Aside from mammograms, general lifestyle changes women can adopt to reduce their risk of developing breast cancer include limiting alcohol intake, controlling weight and engaging in regular exercise.

DID YOU KNOW

Breast cancer is the fifth leading cause of death in women age 40 or above, behind heart disease, stroke, lung cancer and other lung diseases.



How to Find Your Perfect Gym

All gyms are not created equal. While most gyms provide the same set of essential services, there are many important differences in specialization and availability. Here are some tips to keep in mind when choosing a gym that's right for you:

Match your goals—A gym that specializes in lots of muscle sculpting equipment isn't going to help much if you are trying to lose weight and start a cardio program. Before signing a contract, seriously consider your fitness goals and what services you need to achieve them.

Location, money, time—The best gyms in the world aren't going to help you if they are too out-of-the-way for you to travel to them regularly, or if they are only open when you're unable to work out. It also won't help if getting a membership is beyond what you can reasonably afford. Finding a gym that is both convenient and affordable for you will go a long way towards helping you meet your fitness goals.

Halloween Savings

Unlike most holidays, Halloween has little in the way of obligations and a lot in the way of fun. Like most holidays, however, Halloween can be expensive, leaving its mark on your bank account long after the costumes have been mothballed and the pumpkins discarded. This year, use the following suggestions to maximize your fun while minimizing your expenses.

Discount and ration candy. Bulk stores and Internet shopping sites often offer deals on large purchases. Bulk hard candy is generally the cheapest buy on the market. Limit your handouts to one or two pieces per trick-or-treater to make supplies last.

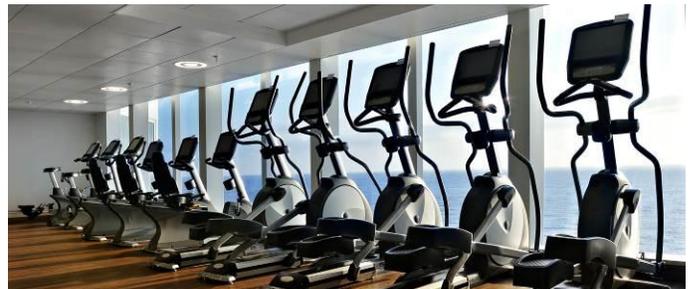
Buy pumpkins close to Halloween. Buying a pumpkin on or just before Halloween will come with significant savings and will keep it from decaying by the time the big night arrives.

Make your own decorations. Lots of leaves in your yard? Pick up pumpkin trash bags to make pumpkin decorations. Use spray-painted cardboard or cereal boxes to form makeshift tombstones. Fashion cotton balls or quilt padding into cobwebs. There are a plethora of frugal shortcuts available once you start getting creative.

Improvise costumes. Why pay a bunch of money for an outfit that will only be worn once? Refashion old clothes and items to dress like an iconic figure. Scour thrift stores to complete your ensemble on the cheap. Parents can also swap children's costumes to prevent having to buy new materials every year.

Start planning for next year. After Halloween ends, large discounts are available at many stores for costumes and decorative items, so plan a shopping trip right after Oct. 31 to save big on next year's festivities.

Shop around—Take advantage of day passes and prospective member programs to see what each gym has to offer before making a final decision. Many let you attend exercise classes where you can observe how much individual attention participants get from the instructor. Also be sure to compare the availability of machines, free space, lockers, mirrors and water fountains.



Chicken Vegetable Soup with Kale

This flavorful soup combines the succulent taste of chicken with the heartiness and healthiness of kale and roasted vegetables to form the perfect dinner for chilly October nights.

4 tsp. vegetable oil
1 cup onion (chopped)
1 cup carrot (chopped)
2 tsp. ground thyme
4 garlic cloves (minced)
4 cups water or chicken broth
1½ cups tomatoes (diced)
2 cups cooked skinless chicken (cubed)
1 cup cooked brown or white rice
2 cups kale (chopped)

Heat oil in a medium saucepan. Add the onion and carrot, sautéing until vegetables are tender, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add garlic and thyme and sauté for an additional minute. Add water or broth, tomatoes, cooked rice, chicken and kale. Simmer for 5 to 10 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings. Each serving provides 180 calories, 5g of fat, 1g of saturated fat, 40mg of cholesterol, 85mg of sodium and 3g of fiber.

Source: USDA