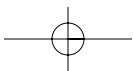
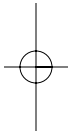
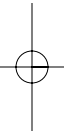
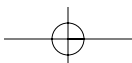
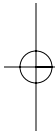
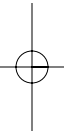




Wellness: A State of Mind and Body We Can All Achieve





My name is Dr. David Sparks and I am writing this book on wellness in order to motivate readers to take a look at the way they are living their lives and evaluate what they might do to improve their health, enhance their appearance, lose weight, increase their fitness and mental agility and overall happiness.

However, I want to point out right from the beginning, that my philosophy concerning wellness is different than any that I have seen published in medical journals, newsmagazines, newspapers, television, radio and the internet. Typically, when we look into wellness, it almost has a “cult” atmosphere surrounding it. In other words, wellness is presented as though it is the only reason for living and in order to achieve a “state of wellness” one must be totally consumed with it in every waking second of their daily lives. That is not what this book is about. This is about an appealing and easily achievable program that will enable you to achieve your goals with only the modest of effort you want to expend.

First of all, let me tell you that I am almost 62 years old, as of this writing, and so far, I have been very healthy all of my life. You could say that about a lot of people. Furthermore, it is well known that genes are an important part of staying alive and healthy. I don't deny that I may have a genetic link to good health because my mother and father both lived until they were close to 92 years of age. However, they both had problems with cancer, heart disease, digestive system disorders and other illnesses along the way. My brother died at the age of 54 by his own hand...he was an alcoholic and a heavy smoker. Lung and throat cancer took him from us at a very early age.

Here's my point. I believe there may have been a genetic factor in the long lives of my parents, but I know for sure that a great deal of their longevity was due to the miracles of modern medicine. Neither one of them was a “health nut” that exercised and carefully watched their diet. It's just that when they got sick and started “falling apart”, there were always wonderful doctors at their side who put them back together again. My brother wasn't so lucky.

So here's my philosophy, which is totally obvious in its simplicity: Wellness is a lot better than illness. That said, when you look up "wellness" in any scientific source, it is suggested that you basically have to live the life of a monk...no alcohol, no coffee, no tobacco, diet consisting of organic greens, tons of fruit, vegetables and herbs...mostly fish or hormone-free chicken, no red meat, no deserts, stay away from all processed foods, sugars, rigorous exercise each and every day, lots of meditation and spiritual cleansing and maintenance....Whew!! The list goes on and on.

Make no mistake: There can be little doubt in anybody's mind that if they were to follow such a regimen, it would increase their chances of living a longer life by whole orders of magnitude. However, most of us living a modern lifestyle are not willing or able to make such a commitment. What about having a little fun in life? Most of us have professional associations, personal relationships, athletic acquaintances or circumstantial occasions that are part of a normal and fulfilling life. If we were forced to live life watching every little detail of the typically published "wellness" regimen, we would have to abandon our friends, colleagues and family and move into a monastery or a convent.

Personally, I've done a few things in life that might give a wellness aficionado nightmares: I have been guilty of drinking more than one or two beers with the boys as I have played sports over the years, I have in the past smoked cigarettes, but not for long and I long ago quit! I've also eaten a lot of chocolate in my day.

I also think that there are shades of gray and I believe that if you can point people in the direction of leading a primarily healthy existence, you have a lot better chance of getting them to buy into the concept and lifestyle.

Here's what I have done and continue to do. I do exercise every single day, I do not eat a lot of fats or processed foods. French fries, potato chips, fast foods in general have rarely crossed my lips. I do take good, nutritional dietary supplements made from all-natural ingredients everyday, I do love vegetables and fruits, eat a little red meat but not much, I don't eat éclairs, doughnuts,

cakes, ice cream, or bonbons, I don't smoke and I stay thin. There's something else that I do very well and until recently, medical science didn't realize how important it was to the overall health and wellness of every human being...SLEEP!

Sleep is the foundation for good health. What that means is that if people are not sleeping enough (7-8 hours a night) or they are not experiencing good quality sleep because of factors such as insomnia, snoring or obstructive sleep apnea, their health is seriously compromised.

I am going to make some recommendations for a long healthy life. I want you to think of these recommendations as being "user friendly". There's going to be lots of information that is consistent with a healthy lifestyle but I'm not going to call it a "wellness bible" because, even though the information is there, I don't mean to suggest that you have to follow every little detail as though your life depends on it. I am only going to point out some basic principles and give you resource information coming from wellness specialists that will enable you to pick and choose information with the following philosophy: If you select a sensible array of foods, if you take, in addition to these foods, a selection of all-natural supplements that are rich in extracts from herbs, fruits and vegetables, if you exercise regularly, if you watch carefully the amount of alcohol you consume, if you refrain from tobacco, if you exercise every day and try to maintain your appropriate weight, and if you make a priority of learning how to relax the mind and, as well, get good sleep, chances are pretty good that you will stay healthier a lot longer than if you disregard all of these reasonable choices.

Don't get caught up in anecdotal stories that can be used to shape your thinking process about health and wellness. I can't tell you how many times I've heard stories about somebody who smoked and drank their entire life and died of "old age"...not due to the effects of their vices. Or, alternatively, stories about health nuts who did everything right from a wellness perspective yet dropped dead pre-maturely. The most famous of these latter cases is the story of Jim Fixx. Here it is.

The first symptom of heart disease is sometimes sudden death. Never was that fact made clearer than in the ironic death of James Fixx, whose best-selling book "The Complete Book of Running" led tens of thousands to take up jogging and made him a guru of the running world. Mr. Fixx made the transition from a heavy young man who smoked two packs of cigarettes a day into a trim, middle-aged nonsmoking athlete. This life change seemed to insure a healthy life, but against all odds, he died from a heart attack at the age of 52 while jogging in Vermont.

Friends described him as being in excellent physical condition and said he had not complained of any symptoms while running 10 miles a day and pursuing other vigorous physical activity.

The point to be made here is that anyone contemplating a choice of a healthy lifestyle could make the following argument: Why bother? Look at the case of Jim Fixx...latter-day health freak who dropped dead in his tracks at an early age. What's the use in trying to be healthy? Or, the other side of the coin, "I'm gonna take my chances...eat, drink and be merry. I know lots of people who get away with it."

Do what the insurance companies do! They look at statistics and develop actuarial tables. There are always going to be anecdotal stories of people who either defied the odds by living long lives even though they made bad choices or succumbed early despite making good choices. The key here is the word odds. Las Vegas didn't build all those spectacular casinos with glittering lights and dancing girls because the odds were against them. The odds were very much with them and I'd like to encourage all of you to think "Vegas style": play the odds for a healthy life by making sensible, wellness oriented choices. Let's look at a dictionary definition of wellness: wellness (n.) The condition of good physical and mental health, especially when maintained by proper diet, exercise, and relaxation habits. Wellness is a philosophy of life. It is recognizing that your health means more than just lack of illness.

So remember the benefits: **feel better, look better, lose weight, perform better socially and professionally.** That's an awful lot

to look forward to and you can take giant steps toward that goal with not much effort. That's why I'm putting this book together. To guide you along the way.

Let us now get down to business with an overview of the kinds of things we can do in order to achieve wellness success.

Remember...**diet, nutritional supplements, exercise, relaxation of the mind and sleep** are the key components. Eat good fuel...burn that fuel. Give the engine a rest. The body is a machine that is designed to operate in this fashion.

I said at the beginning of the book that one of the most important components of wellness is the food you eat. What's the old cliché? "You are what you eat". You can't take that statement literally, but it is absolutely accurate that what goes into your mouth determines in a very large part, how your body behaves. I don't believe that there is any one diet or specific regimen of foods that deliver the most perfect results in terms of wellness. It is more of a theme. As an example, if someone were to tell you that "the apple is the single food that is best for you and you must eat apples only"...that would be wrong. On the other hand, to say that apples are a wonderful food and should be incorporated regularly into your diet is absolutely true. I don't pretend to be an expert dietician. I don't have multiple degrees in nutrition. I do, however, as a medical scientist, understand valid scientific data and discussion. So...I have spent considerable time gathering a variety of excellent options for you to read and digest (no pun intended). If you want to get on the nutritional wellness fast-track, READ ON!

What immediately follows are several resources from nutritional wellness experts that I approve of regarding eating a healthy diet. You're going to learn not only what kinds of foods are good for you, but why. You're also going to find out about dietary taboos...foods that should not be a regular visitor to the dinner table. Remember, this is one of my passions and I believe it's critical for good health. And it's so easy!!

That said, there is some material up ahead that is of a scientific nature. Don't be intimidated...take your time reading it. There's no

time limit and there won't be a test at the end. The whole point is to begin to understand the intricate notion that the body is a magnificent biological machine. It's electric, it's chemical, it's cellular, it's systemic...it's alive. There are key elements it needs in a very fine balance in order to operate at its peak.

There's an age old analogy: The finest Mercedes is built to perform like no other vehicle and it will so long as it is fueled with high-octane gasoline. Fill it day after day with cheap low-octane fuel and we all know what happens. Out of sight and expensive repair bills. Your body isn't a Mercedes...it's a Rolls Royce!

Final Thoughts About This Guide to Wellness!

What lies ahead are what I call the **"5 pillars to wellness"**. What that means is that we are going to show you how to build your body into a temple of wellness. The temple will stand on the five pillars:

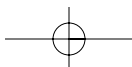
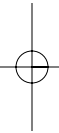
Nutrition...Supplements...Exercise...Sleep...Meditation.

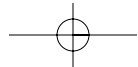
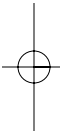
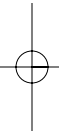
Each of these pillars will be individually defined and described in the upcoming sections of the book. The idea is to give you all the information you need to commit to, and succeed at our goal. I want you to develop a wellness philosophy that you can sustain and live with. You can also make gradual changes if you so desire. In other words, we're going to give you all the tools you need to go from where you are right now...to beginning a light program (something everyone can accomplish with a very small effort). As you progress, and if you want, you can push yourself a little harder and go to the next level...and the next...and the next.

Bear in mind, whatever level you choose is going to significantly improve your health and wellness. I said earlier, you don't have to cloister yourself in a monk's robe and move into a monastery. Pick a level that is comfortable and that you can sustain. This is a journey that should be seen as an enjoyable challenge with an extremely positive outcome. I'm challenging you right now!!! Because I know you can do it.



At the end of the book, I will have recommendations that you can elect to follow. Think of this as a competition with yourself. No matter where you end up, since you are the only competitor, you will ultimately end up in the winner's circle. Good Luck and enjoy!





The Connection between Good Nutrition and a Healthy Body

One of the most important elements in wellness is nutrition. It is not the only element as we stated earlier, but it is hugely important so we'll discuss nutrition first, followed by exercise routines, the need for sleep, then on to meditation and relaxation programs.

There is definitely a huge connection between the foods we eat and wellness and there's a scientific paradox to prove it. If you look at the richest countries in the world, you will find that their per capita rates of heart disease and cancer are far larger than in poorer countries. How could this be? One would predict exactly the opposite. The answer is simple and extremely ironic. People in rich countries eat rich foods. Poor people in poor countries rely on basic foods and here is where the difference lies.

Rich foods! Lots of dairy, lots of red meat, lots of fast food, lots of heavy, calorie-laden sauces, too much sugar in almost everything, too much salt in everything not containing sugar, heavily processed foods...and the list goes on and on.

What about poorer countries. Folks have to rely on fish, rice, local vegetables and fruits. That's it! Well guess what? These kinds of basic foods, mostly provided by nature are the best nutrition we can eat. Knowing the science and the statistics the next several programs discuss and outline the types of foods that I believe are the healthiest to eat. Read these interesting treatments and make decisions for yourself about your goals and how following these ideas will help you achieve those goals. Overall, the theme I recommend is one of simple, basic foods.

The Benefits of Healthy Whole Foods

What's the difference between whole foods and processed foods?

By R. Morgan Griffin

Healthy whole foods: you might know that you're supposed to eat them. But do you really know what they are?

“We live in a society that eats so much processed and manufactured food, that I think there’s some genuine confusion about what qualifies as a whole food,” says Tara Gidus, RD, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. Even for the health conscious, the phrase gets tangled up with other terms. Whole foods can be organic, or locally grown, or pesticide-free...but not always. The definition of healthy whole foods is much simpler.

“When you eat whole foods, you’re getting the food in its natural state,” Gidus says. “You’re getting it intact, with all of the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that are in the food.” Basically, it’s the healthy whole food, rather than the bits that remain after refinement and processing. It’s the difference between an apple and an apple flavored energy bar, or a baked potato and a bag of potato chips.

While whole foods might be associated with an upscale grocery store, they are available to all of us anywhere in the country. Most dieticians feel that eating healthy whole foods has all sorts of benefits. Their nutrients may help to keep your immune system strong and protect you from disease.

“If you’re trying to eat a healthier diet, relying on more whole foods is a great place to start,” says Lucia L. Kaiser, PhD, community nutrition specialist in the department of nutrition at the University of California, Davis.

Healthy Whole Foods

Many studies have found that a diet high in healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are associated with a reduced risk of diseases such as:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Heart disease

So what’s so good about healthy whole foods? For one, they’re loaded with fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They also contain phytochemicals, the general name for natural compounds in plants. While

thousands of individual phytochemicals have been identified, countless more remain unknown. They help in different ways. Some are antioxidants, which protect cells against damage. Examples of antioxidant phytochemicals are flavonoids (found in green tea, red wine, nuts, apples), carotenoids (fruits and vegetables with orange, red and yellow colors), and lycopene (found in tomatoes).

Usually, the term whole foods is confined to vegetables, fruits, and grains. But any dietitian will agree that eating a skinless chicken breast is preferable to eating processed chicken nuggets.

One problem with processed food is that, during manufacture, many healthy nutrients are removed.

For instance, "When whole grains are refined, the bran and the coat of the grain are often removed," says Kaiser. Some nutrients are lost, most significantly fiber. Then, during the enrichment process, nutrients may be artificially added back in. But even after enrichment, the final product is likely to be less nutritious than the whole grains you started with.

The Synergy of Healthy Whole Foods

"One of the biggest advantages of eating whole foods is that you're getting the natural synergy of all of these nutrients together," says Gidus.

"Nutrition science is always discovering new components of foods, things that we didn't know are there," says Kaiser. "Many of them are not even available in supplement form." If we don't know what they are, we obviously can't synthesize them.

Avoiding Additives in Food

The nutrients lost during refinement are not the only disadvantage of eating processed foods. What's added can also be a problem.

A lot of health conscious people are wary of the preservatives and chemicals that are added to processed and manufactured foods. You know -- the ones with the scary-sounding eight-syllable names. But in fact, Kaiser says that some of the worst food additives are household words.

“I think the most worrisome additives are not the preservatives,” says Kaiser. “It’s the salt, sugar, and saturated and trans fats.” Incidentally, trans fat is the common name for a type of unsaturated fat with trans isomer fatty acid(s). Most trans fats consumed today are industrially created by partially hydrogenating plant oils - a process developed in the early 1900s and first commercialized as Crisco in 1911.

While there’s been a lot of attention paid to the risks of trans fats in recent years, Kaiser thinks salt consumption is gravely underestimated. “As a country, we eat way too much salt,” she says and observes that it’s closely associated with high blood pressure and numerous other health problems.

With all of the extra fat and sugar in processed foods, the calories can quickly add up. That leads to weight gain. But eating more healthy whole foods may actually help you maintain or lose weight. The natural fiber in many vegetables, fruits, and grains may fill you up without adding many calories, Gidus says.

The Cost of Whole Foods

There’s another bonus to eating healthy whole foods. Whole foods are much cheaper than processed foods. They’re also available everywhere.

“Generally, the more processed things are, the higher the cost,” says Kaiser. “A bag of healthy brown rice is going to be cheaper than a fancy prepackaged rice mix.”

Of course, there may be a different cost to eating healthy whole foods: the preparation time. It’s hard to deny that popping a processed sandwich pocket in the microwave for three minutes is easier than cooking a proper meal with whole-food ingredients.

But Gidus stresses that you don’t need to cut out all processed foods. The goal is just to decrease the number of processed foods you eat and increase the proportion of healthy whole foods. That isn’t hard, especially when it comes to snacks. The next time you need something to tide you over, eat a handful of nuts or

a piece of fruit instead. It's no harder than reaching for an energy bar -- you'll even be spared the labor of unwrapping it.

The other key to a healthy diet is variety. It's easy to get caught up in the details -- the nutritional value of specific healthy whole foods, and exactly how much you need of each. But Gidus and Kaiser say the best advice is to relax and just eat a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Not only is it simple, but it's the best way to be sure you're getting all the nutrients you need.

"After some research into this, my husband decided that the smartest thing he could do was eat as many fruits and vegetables as he could stand every day," says Kaiser. "That's not very scientific, but it isn't bad advice."

The Value of Eating Fruits and Vegetables

"Eat your fruits and vegetables" is one of the tried and true recommendations for a healthy diet, and for good reason. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables can help you ward off heart disease and stroke, control blood pressure and cholesterol, prevent some types of cancer, avoid a painful intestinal ailment called diverticulitis, and guard against cataract and macular degeneration, two common causes of vision loss.

What does "plenty" mean? More than most people consume. If you don't count potatoes - which should be considered a starch rather than a vegetable - the average person gets a total of just three servings of fruits and vegetables a day. The latest dietary guidelines call for five to thirteen servings of fruits and vegetables a day, depending on one's caloric intake. For a person who needs 2,000 calories a day to maintain weight and health, this translates into nine servings, or 4 cups per day.

Over the past 30 years or so, researchers have developed a solid base of science to back up what generations of mothers preached (but didn't always practice themselves). Early on, fruits and vegetables were acclaimed as cancer-fighting foods and this message is supported in part by the National Cancer Institute. The

latest research, though, suggests that the another big payoff from eating fruits and vegetables is for the health of the heart.

Fruits, Vegetables, and Cardiovascular Disease

There is compelling evidence that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can lower the risk of heart disease and stroke.

The largest and longest study to date, done as part of the Harvard-based Nurses' Health Study and Health Professionals Follow-up Study, included almost 110,000 men and women whose health and dietary habits were followed for 14 years. The higher the average daily intake of fruits and vegetables, the lower the chances of developing cardiovascular disease. Compared with those in the lowest category of fruit and vegetable intake (less than 1.5 servings a day), those who averaged 8 or more servings a day were 30% less likely to have had a heart attack or stroke.

Although all fruits and vegetables likely contribute to this benefit, green leafy vegetables such as lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, and mustard greens; cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, and kale; and citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons, limes, and grapefruit (and their juices) make important contributions.

Fruits and Vegetables, Blood Pressure, and Cholesterol

High blood pressure is a primary risk factor for heart disease and stroke. As such, it's a condition that is very important to control. Diet can be a very effective tool for lowering blood pressure. One of the most convincing associations between diet and blood pressure was found in the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) study. This trial examined the effect on blood pressure of a diet that was rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products and that restricted the amount of saturated and total fat. The researchers found that people with high blood pressure who followed this diet reduced their systolic blood pressure (the upper number of a blood pressure reading) by about 11 mm Hg and

their diastolic blood pressure (the lower number) by almost 6 mm Hg - as much as medications can achieve.

Eating more fruits and vegetables can also help lower cholesterol. In the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Family Heart Study, the 4466 subjects consumed on average a shade over 3 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Men and women with the highest daily consumption (more than 4 servings a day) had significantly lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol than those with lower consumption. How fruits and vegetables lower cholesterol is still something of a mystery. It is possible that eating more fruits and vegetables means eating less meat and dairy products, and thus less cholesterol-boosting saturated fat. Soluble fiber in fruits and vegetables may also block the absorption of cholesterol from food.

Fruits, Vegetables, and Cancer

Numerous early studies revealed what appeared to be a strong link between eating fruits and vegetables and protection against cancer. It has been shown that fruits and vegetables may protect against certain cancers. The International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organization, recently completed a monumental review of the best research on fruits, vegetables, and cancer. Here's what this 387-page scholarly book concludes about studies in humans: "There is evidence for a cancer-preventive effect of consumption of fruit and of vegetables for cancers of the mouth and pharynx, esophagus, stomach, colon-rectum, larynx, lung, ovary (vegetables only), bladder (fruit only), and kidney." Eating more vegetables "probably lowers the risk of cancers of the esophagus and colon-rectum" and "possibly reduces the risk of cancers of the mouth, pharynx, stomach, larynx, lung, ovary and kidney."

Keep in mind that this is for total fruit and total vegetable consumption and that, as pointed out by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, specific fruits and vegetables may protect against specific types of cancer. For example, a line of research stemming from a finding from the Health Professionals Follow-up Study suggest that tomatoes may help protect men against

prostate cancer, especially aggressive forms of it. One of the pigments that give tomatoes their red hue - lycopene - could be involved in this protective effect. Taken as a whole, these studies suggest that increased consumption of tomato-based products (especially cooked tomato products) and other lycopene-containing foods may reduce the occurrence or progression of prostate cancer.

Fruits, Vegetables, and Gastrointestinal Health

One of the wonderful components of fruits and vegetables is their indigestible fiber. As fiber passes through the digestive system, it sops up water like a sponge and expands. This can calm the irritable bowel and, by triggering regular bowel movements, can relieve or prevent constipation. The bulking and softening actions of insoluble fiber also decrease pressure inside the intestinal tract and so may help prevent diverticulosis (the development of tiny, easily irritated pouches inside the colon) and diverticulitis (the often painful inflammation of these pouches).

The Bottom Line: Recommendations for Fruit and Vegetable Intake

Fruits and vegetables are clearly an important part of a good diet. Almost everyone can benefit from eating more of them, but variety is as important as quantity. No single fruit or vegetable provides all of the nutrients you need to be healthy. The key lies in the variety of different fruits and vegetables that you eat.

Some basic fruit and vegetable tips:

- Try to eat more fruits and vegetables. If you need 2,000 calories a day to maintain your weight and health, aim for at least nine servings (4 cups) a day.
- Choose a variety of different fruits and vegetables. It's easy to get into a rut when it comes to the food you eat. Break out and try a wider variety - include dark-green, leafy vegetables; yellow, orange, and red fruits and vegetables; cooked tomatoes; and citrus fruits.

Are tomatoes good for you?

From Shereen Jegtvig, Your Guide to Nutrition.

Tomatoes are not only good for you... they are very, very good for you. Tomatoes contain vitamins and minerals plus they are an excellent source of lycopene and beta carotene. Lycopene is a phytochemical carotenoid found in the red pigment of tomatoes, which may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Don't Forget the Benefits obtained from Specific Types of Grains... So Here Are Tips To Help You Eat Whole Grains

At Meals:

- To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product - such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice. It's important to substitute the whole-grain product for the refined one, rather than adding the whole-grain product.
- For a change, try brown rice or whole-wheat pasta. Try brown rice stuffing in baked green peppers or tomatoes and whole-wheat macaroni in macaroni and cheese.
- Use whole grains in mixed dishes, such as barley in vegetable soup or stews and bulgur wheat in casserole or stir-fries.
- Create a whole grain pilaf with a mixture of barley, wild rice, brown rice, broth and spices. For a special touch, stir in toasted nuts or chopped dried fruit.
- Experiment by substituting whole wheat or oat flour for up to half of the flour in pancake, waffle, muffin or other flour-based recipes. They may need a bit more leavening.
- Use whole-grain bread or cracker crumbs in meatloaf.

-
- Try rolled oats or a crushed, unsweetened whole grain cereal as breading for baked chicken, fish, veal cutlets, or eggplant parmesan.
 - Try an unsweetened, whole grain ready-to-eat cereal as croutons in salad or in place of crackers with soup.
 - Freeze leftover cooked brown rice, bulgur, or barley. Heat and serve it later as a quick side dish.

As Snacks:

- Snack on ready-to-eat, whole grain cereals such as toasted oat cereal.
- Add whole-grain flour or oatmeal when making cookies or other baked treats.
- Try a whole-grain snack chip, such as baked tortilla chips.
- Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack with little or no added salt and butter.

What to Look for on the Food Label:

- Choose foods that name one of the following whole-grain ingredients first on the label's ingredient list:

"brown rice"	"whole oats"
"bulgur"	"whole rye"
"graham flour"	"whole wheat"
"oatmeal"	"wild rice"
"whole-grain corn"	

- Foods labeled with the words "multi-grain," "stone-ground," "100% wheat," "cracked wheat," "seven-grain," or "bran" are usually not whole-grain products.
- Color is not an indication of a whole grain. Bread can be brown because of molasses or other added ingredients. Read the ingredient list to see if it is a whole grain.

-
- Use the Nutrition Facts label and choose products with a higher % Daily Value (%DV) for fiber - the %DV for fiber is a good clue to the amount of whole grain in the product.
 - Read the food label's ingredient list. Look for terms that indicate added sugars (sucrose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, and molasses) and oils (partially hydrogenated vegetable oils) that add extra calories. Choose foods with fewer added sugars, fats, or oils.
 - Most sodium in the food supply comes from packaged foods. Similar packaged foods can vary widely in sodium content, including breads. Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose foods with a lower % DV for sodium. Foods with less than 140 mg sodium per serving can be labeled as low sodium foods. Claims such as "low in sodium" or "very low in sodium" on the front of the food label can help you identify foods that contain less salt (or sodium).

Whole Grain Tips for Children

- Set a good example for children by eating whole grains with meals or as snacks.
- Let children select and help prepare a whole grain side dish.

Teach older children to read the ingredient list on cereals or snack food packages and choose those with whole grains at the top of the list.

Good Proteins Vs. Bad Proteins

Susan Yara

Getting a lean body and Kevlar-like abs doesn't happen automatically. It takes hard work and time spent at the gym, as well as a diet rich in protein...as long as it's the right kind of protein.

Everyone knows that fats are bad and that carbohydrates can be bad, but protein can do no wrong--or so we thought. While many proteins are good, there are some that can be bad for your health.

Since the late 1990s, the Atkins diet, and other fads, like the South Beach diet, have popularized high-protein, low-carb meal plans. As a result, consumption of protein-rich foods has risen dramatically. The Nutrition Business Journal in San Diego estimated that in 2004, Americans spent about \$1.2 billion on protein supplements, and an additional \$2 billion on protein bars. The Department of Commerce reports that per capita consumption of fish is up 4.5%--as is beef consumption, which rose 25% between 1998 and 2004, according to the National Cattleman's Beef Association.

But not all beef is the same: There is a world of difference between a fatty cheeseburger and a lean sirloin steak. But people are still making unhealthy dietary decisions. In fact, people the world over have never been as unhealthy. With almost 70% of the population overweight, it seems people are more confused than informed about what they should be eating.

First, we all know that protein is supposed to be good for us, but what does it do exactly? Protein is essential for a balanced diet, because it builds muscle and collagen. According to Dr. Lilian Cheung, the Director of Health Promotion & Communication at Harvard University, protein is the building block of enzymes, hormones, immune factors and many other molecules that are critical to the body. Harvard's online magazine, Nutrition Source, states, "Adults need a minimum of one gram of protein for every kilogram of body weight per day to keep from slowly breaking down their own tissues."

That means a person who weighs 140 pounds should consume about 63 grams of protein per day--the equivalent of two large chicken fillets--which, for most people, isn't a problem. Weight loss stems from a process called ketosis, which is the basis for the Atkins diet, in which, if all of the starch is removed from one's diet, the body will begin to release fat--instead of storing it--and then burn it as fuel. But that doesn't mean that the more protein you eat, the more fat you lose, because, in the end, protein still contains calories--even in small amounts--and once it turns into fat, the body won't be able to burn all of it at once. Losing weight

is about expending more calories than you consume. What can be bad is how you ingest protein. After all, any food consumed in excess--whether a protein, carbohydrate or fat--is unhealthy. The trick is learning the good proteins from the bad, and how much you need.

"What makes a protein good is its nutrient base, how it was raised and farmed, its omega-3 fatty acid value and if it's high or low in saturated fat," says Oz Garcia, nutritionist and author of *Look and Feel Fabulous Forever*. Omega-3 fatty acids are a type of polyunsaturated fat--a good fat--found primarily in fish, which has healing properties for patients with heart disease.

Soy-based products are surprisingly controversial. While soy-based products used to be primarily for strict vegetarians and the lactose-intolerant, it has now taken its place in the dairy aisle as a type of 'super food,' because it is a vegetable-based protein that packs plenty of nutrients.

The best way to stay healthy is with a balanced diet--one that provides adequate amounts of essential nutrients and leaves a person feeling satisfied after they eat. In fact, most foods naturally combine protein, carbs and fat, which is why a low-carb or no-carb diet is unrealistic.

"I tell my clients that one cup of cooked rice has five grams of protein, even though we think of rice as a 'carb' food, and that spaghetti has about seven grams of protein," says Anne Collins, a nutritionist and founder of annecollins.com. "This is why I strongly advocate a balanced diet."

This is great news for red-meat lovers--as well as for fish fanatics and egg enthusiasts--because a healthy diet doesn't have to be restricted to chicken breasts and grain burgers. Grilling a lean slab of beef tenderloin without heavy sauce or greasy side dishes is a good way to get protein. And though eggs have been frowned upon in the past, they can actually be a good addition to a diet, as long as the yolk, which contains the bulk of fat and cholesterol, is removed.

Examples of Good Proteins

1 cup of white beans: 16 grams of protein, 1 gram of fat __1 cup of chickpeas: 15 grams of protein, 5 grams of fat __Beans, legumes and lentils are a favorite among doctors. They are high in nutrients, protein and fiber. The **Mediterranean diet** is one of the healthiest in the world, and it uses plenty of chickpeas in food such as hummus.

1 large egg minus the yolk: 5 grams of protein, 1 gram of fat. Eggs are sometimes frowned upon by doctors because of their cholesterol content and their potential to cause heart attacks. Fortunately, if the yolks are removed, almost all of the cholesterol and fat are too.

1 ounce of lamb chops: 7 grams of protein, 7 grams of fat. Any type of lean meat is a good source of protein. Buy lamb that has been free-roaming and grazed on wild grass to receive higher levels of nutrients and omega-3 fatty acids.

1 ounce of lean pork chops: 8 grams of protein, 3 grams of fat. Pork is usually a meat that is high in saturated fats, but there are lean versions available. It's recommended that a person limits their pork intake to just a couple of times per week. But as long as it's lean, it's a prime source of protein.

1 ounce of beef tenderloin: 8 grams of protein, 2 grams of fat. For all the steak lovers, red meat doesn't have to be removed from the diet completely in order to be healthy. Most red meat is high in saturated fat, so be sure to pick the leanest, best quality meat, like tenderloin. Also look for beef that is hormone free.

1 slice of low-fat cheese: 8 grams of protein, 6 grams of fat.

1 cup of yogurt: 12 grams of protein, 3 grams of fat. Dairy is essential to a balanced diet--not only does it contain protein, but it also has calcium and bacteria, like acidophilus, that the body needs. Dairy products can be fattening, but low-fat versions of many products are available.

1 cup of almonds: 6 grams of protein, 15 grams of fat. Almonds are a great source of protein and are full of polyunsaturated oils, which are good for the body, heart and skin. Any type of nuts, like walnuts or cashews, are recommended as part of a healthy diet.

1 ounce of salmon: 6 grams of protein, 2 grams of fat. Seafood is one of the best ways to get protein. Nutritionists say anything that comes from the sea is full of nutrients, and seafood, especially fish, such as salmon, is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential to the human body.

Examples of Bad Proteins

1 ounce of bacon: 10 grams of protein, 12 grams of fat. The Atkins diet allowed the consumption of bacon to lose weight, but it is high in saturated fat, contains almost no nutrients and can be hard on the kidneys.

6 chicken nuggets: 18 grams of protein, 21 grams of fat. Chicken is a good source of protein, but once it's fried--especially deep fried--it loses all nutritional benefits. Greasy food contains almost no nutrients, and the fat is bad for the heart, liver and kidneys.

1 cup of beef jerky: 30 grams of protein, 23 grams of fat. Beef jerky may be an easily accessible source of protein, but it contains a lot of sodium, which is hard on the body--especially the heart--and has been linked to high-cholesterol problems.

1 sausage patty: 4 grams of protein, 8 grams of fat. 1 hot dog: 7 grams of protein, 17 grams of fat __Processed meat is fattening and also full of surprises, since no one knows what part of the animal is included. These meats contain excessive amounts of preservatives and fats that are unhealthy for the human body.

1 ounce T-bone steak: 9 grams of protein, 6 grams of fat. This is a hard one to accept for meat eaters, but red meat is high in saturated fat and is hard on the heart, liver and kidneys. Too much red meat can lead to coronary disease, obesity and other health problems.

1 slice of Cheddar cheese: 5 grams of protein, 7 grams of fat. 1 cup of Vitamin D milk: 8 grams of protein, 8 grams of fat. Dairy is

necessary for the body, but there are plenty of low-fat versions. Whole-fat dairy contains a good deal of saturated animal fat, and whole milk can be hard for the body to process.

Ahh, Yes...The Diet Plan. “How to Get Slim in Just ___ Days”

Now that we’ve learned some of the principals and goals for good nutrition, I hope you’re totally inspired to turn a “culinary page” in your life. But because of past eating behaviors, perhaps you’re not as slim and trim as you would like to be, or, more importantly, as your body would like you to be.

Diet plans range from the absurd to the peculiar and everything in between. Diet plans often promise more than they can deliver and generally include very unhealthy systems that could cause more long-term problems with little hope of even short-term success.

Diet plans can range from three-day diet plans to lifetime diet plans - all coming with miraculous promises and... very little hope for success in reality. Countless men and women have searched for the right diet plans to no avail. Successful diet plans seem as allusive as the fountain of youth.

As diet plans come and go, as fad diets gain steam and lose it just as quickly, many dieters become discouraged and many others give up. Diet plans cost billions of dollars per year in equipment and supplies yet for all the money spent, few diet plans provide any real success in the end.

First and foremost, dieters must realize that diet plans are not miracles. Weight that took a lifetime to put on cannot be taken off in a matter of days, especially when you take into consideration long-term health needs.

Once dieters become realistic and understand that to take off weight and keep it off they must make a long-term commitment to their own health and wellbeing they can start considering healthy diet plans.

The healthiest diet plans take into consideration long-term success and overall health and wellbeing. In reality, however, the healthiest diet plan is one that was not created for the purpose of losing weight or maintaining weight. The healthiest of all diet plans is a way of eating that has been known for centuries.

The following thoughts, plans and programs can be looked at as long-term nutritional strategies meaning that once you've gotten your waistline in check, you don't necessarily have to change the way you're eating. Please understand that I am not endorsing or insisting on the benefits of these specific diet plans. These are only programs that I have examined and they appear to be sensible in the spirit of achieving wellness! Remember: Wellness helps you feel better, look better, lose unwanted weight, and perform better mentally, sexually and physically.

Weight Loss: The No Diet Approach

Medical Author: Melissa Conrad Stöppler, MD

Whether you are trying to lose five pounds or more than 50, the same simple laws of physics determine whether or not you will lose weight and how fast your weight loss will occur. Remembering these simple guidelines and putting them into practice can lead to weight loss without the aid of any special diet plans, books, or medications.

Our weight is determined by the amount of energy that we take in as food, and the amount of energy we expend in the activities of our day. Energy is measured in calories. If your weight remains constant, you are probably taking in the same amount of calories you burn each day. If you're slowly gaining weight over time, it is likely that your caloric intake is greater than the number of calories you burn through your daily activities.

Everyone is in control of the amount of food he or she consumes each day, so our intake of calories is something we can control. To a major degree, we can also control our output of energy, or

the number of calories we burn each day. The number of calories we burn each day is dependent upon:

- our basal metabolic rate (BMR), the number of calories we burn per hour simply by being alive and maintaining body functions,
- plus our level of physical activity.

For some people, due to genetic (inherited) factors or other conditions, this resting metabolic rate can be slightly higher or lower than average. Our weight also plays a role in determining how many calories we burn at rest - more calories are required to maintain your body in its present state, the greater your body weight. A 100-pound person requires less energy (food) to maintain body weight than a person who weighs 200 pounds.

Lifestyle and work habits partially determine how many calories we need each day. Someone whose job involves heavy physical labor will naturally burn more calories in a day than someone who sits at a desk most of the day (a sedentary job). For people who do not have jobs that require intense physical activity, exercise or increased physical activity can increase the number of calories burned.

As a rough estimate, an average woman aged 31-50 who leads a sedentary lifestyle needs about 1800 calories per day to maintain a normal weight. A man of the same age requires about 2200 calories. Participating in a moderate level of physical activity (exercising 3-5 days per week) requires about 200 additional calories per day.

5 Tips To Healthy Weight Loss

Submitted By: Kathryn Soloff

I assume that your goal is to lose weight and become healthy. In order to accomplish this you need a plan that you can adhere to. Dr Sparks agrees with me: This plan should not be either a crash diet or a fad diet. What you want to create are lifestyle changes, or habits, that will last a lifetime. These lifestyle changes must be

reasonable. If they are not reasonable you will not be able to keep them up. That is why it is crucial that you develop a realistic plan that you will stick with and in turn you will lose weight and improve your health. You will be surprised that the smallest changes in your lifestyle can make the biggest difference in how you act and feel.

Examine your daily eating habits. Think about the ones that are doing you harm. It is nearly impossible to break bad habits. The only realistic method to break these bad habits is to replace them with good habits. In reflecting on the foods and habits that have negative consequences, consider replacing them with foods and habits that will have the desired, positive results. In other words, instead of merely giving up the bad foods, what can you replace them with?

The following are some habits that you may consider changing. The key here is to replace the bad habit with a good habit in its place. These changes should be permanent. The question that you should ask yourself is "Can I maintain this for the rest of my life?" Think carefully...you want to be able to do this everyday with friends, colleagues and family not asking you, "What are you doing?"

One of the biggest problems contributing to being overweight and unhealthy is eating **fast food**. I realize this is difficult and seems silly, but this is a habit that should be cut out completely. Fast food places provide food that is rich in fat, sodium and additives. If this is something that you do frequently and you are able to eliminate from your routine, this one change in itself will produce some remarkable results. Either choose a healthier place to eat or bring your lunch with you.

As for drinks that are artificially sweet; in my view they are bad for your health. Anything bad for your health will make your progress that more difficult.

Cut out all snacks that are either artificially sweetened, have sugar or too much salt. Substitute fresh fruit or whole grain products (bread or non-fat crackers) with all natural fruit spread (no refined sugar).

And, of course, there is the magical ingredient in any weight loss program - exercise. Joining a gym is fine for many people, but I prefer organic exercise. What I mean by that is something you do outdoors, something that is natural. You can walk, jog, swim or ride a bicycle. What you want to do is oxygenate your blood and get your heart rate up, so 45 minutes to an hour would be ideal. Starting in the morning at the beginning of your day is the best time to do this.

Of course it is not uncommon for most people to associate weight loss with being hungry. Here is a surprise. You do not have to be hungry to lose weight. The truth is that eating regular meals and being satisfied will help you to obtain your goal. A healthy weight loss regimen does not involve starving. When you lose weight in a healthy manner, it is permanent.

Five Ways To Keep Your Weight Goals

Author: Ken Black

Anyone who has been on a weight loss program knows that it is really difficult to stay on the routine after a few weeks. It is important to remember that everyone has setbacks; it comes with the plan so to speak. When you have a setback, it is important that you work through the difficulties and get back on track and continue with your routine. Many people feel that once they have fallen out of the routine, they cannot get it back. This is completely untrue. Getting back on track is just a matter of having the right attitude. There are a lot of different ways to accomplish this; however having the information regarding different methods of motivation can only help you. Even if you do not want to, it's important that you force yourself back into your routine.

1. When you mess up, pick yourself up and continue on. This is a good mantra. Write it in big letters and post it everywhere; on your computer at work, on your refrigerator, in your pantry, even on your exercise equipment. It is important to remember that it is all right to mess up occasionally. It's equally important that you get

back on the plan as soon as possible. If you workout a little longer than usual, you may feel that you have made up for the mistake.

2. It is important that you reward yourself for the goals that you meet. You have made a serious commitment to keeping your weight and as you reach each milestone, reward yourself with something special. Remember that the reward should be a non-food item; you do not want to ruin the reason for the achievement. The reward can be anything that makes you happy.

3. Something that may give you incentive to keep your weight loss routine is to take out pictures of yourself when you were thin. Many people feel embarrassed by old photographs, however they can be a great source of inspiration when it comes to losing weight. Looking at yourself when you were thinner and healthier can make all of the difference in the world. You can also take out pictures of yourself after the weight gain and place them side-by-side. When you feel like giving up and throwing in the towel, compare the pictures and decide which one you want to be. The overweight person who is miserable and self-conscious or the happy thin one?

4. Losing weight can be a lonely experience. Studies have indicated that when you have someone to exercise with, you are more likely to stay on the routine you have set. You motivate each other and look forward to the time that you spend together exercising and chatting. The time just flies by and your routine is finished. In no time, you can be achieving your short term and long-term goals. It is, however, very important to choose the right partner. You do not want to end up with someone who wants to chat more than exercise or someone who is not dependable.

5. There are a lot of people who feel that they have to weigh themselves everyday. Experts believe that this can be the death of an exercise routine and the reason that so many people give up early into their schedules. If you feel the need to weigh yourself, it is recommended that you understand that you will be building muscle...muscle is heavy and muscle is good but this may appear that your weight loss routine is not working. Believe me it is. It

may take a while before you see any results, however it is critically important that you keep up with your routine. Many people who start an exercise routine expect miraculous results overnight. This does not happen, no matter who the person is. You will ultimately realize you are losing weight when you put on your jeans and you don't have any trouble pulling up the zipper when you put them on. CONGRATULATIONS SKINNY PERSON!

Diet Mistakes: 6 Reasons You're Not Losing Weight

These common dieting pitfalls can sabotage weight loss.

By Kathleen M. Zelman, MPH, RD, LD WebMD

Are you dieting and not losing weight? More than likely, some common diet mistakes are tripping you up.

The truth, experts say, is that even when you're "on a diet," you may be eating a lot more calories than you think. There's often a disconnect between what we know we should do to lose weight, and what we actually do while trying to diet.

For starters, stop thinking about dieting. Instead, take a look at those everyday habits that could be causing weight gain. Going on a diet can create an obsession with food, heighten cravings, and lead to a "throw-in-the-towel-because-diets-don't-work" mentality.

You might not realize just how quickly calories can add up. An extra tablespoon of salad dressing can add 75-100 calories, an extra tablespoon of butter adds 102 calories, and that 1-ounce bag of chips with your sandwich at lunch adds 162 calories. Eating while cooking, starting each day with a high-calorie coffee drink, finishing off the kids' plates at dinner, or having one too many glasses of wine -- these are just a few of the sneaky habits that sabotage weight loss efforts.

Yet as quickly as calories can add up, they can be subtracted. Becoming mindful of your diet mistakes -- the subtle ways that calories sneak into your diet throughout the day - can add up to real weight loss. Check out our list of common diet mistakes people make, and see if any sound familiar to you.

Diet Mistake No. 1: Racing to the Finish

There's no reward for finishing your meal in record time -- unless you're a contestant in a hot dog eating contest! Our hectic schedules have led many of us to adopt the unhealthy habit of rapid eating.

"We need to adopt more of the leisurely, European-style eating so that we can savor our food, taste every bite, and get the signal of fullness before overeating," says Tara Gidus, MS, RD, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

Diet Mistake No. 2: Skipping Meals

Research shows that breakfast skippers weigh more than breakfast eaters. There is a misconception that skipping breakfast -- or any meal -- saves calories. The truth is that most people who eat fewer than three meals usually end up eating more calories during the course of the day.

Strive for three meals a day. Always start your day with a healthy breakfast, but be careful to choose wisely.

"Even a low-fat muffin can have as many as 400 calories and 5 grams fat," says Joanne Lichten, PhD, RD, a nutrition consultant and the author of *Dining Lean*.

A healthy breakfast should contain both protein and fiber. An egg, a piece of whole-wheat toast, and half a grapefruit have only 250 calories and will keep you feeling full until lunch.

Diet Mistake No. 3: Too Many Liquid Calories

Liquid calories from alcohol, smoothies, coffee with cream and sugar, sweetened juices, teas, and sodas can really contribute to

weight gain. One recent study found that Americans get approximately 21% of their calories from beverages.

“When you drink beverages, you don’t tend to compensate by eating less because most beverages satisfy thirst and don’t impact hunger,” says Gidus.

Switch from calorie-laden beverages to water, club soda, skim milk, vegetable juices, and small portions of 100% fruit juice. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation, and choose lighter drink options.

Here are some calorie counts for common beverages:

- 12-ounce light beer: 110 calories
- 12-ounce regular beer: 160 calories
- 8-ounce coffee with cream and sugar: 30 calories
- 5 ounces of wine: 120-130 calories
- 6-ounce wine spritzer: 80 calories
- 16-ounce sweetened tea: 160 calories
- 12-ounce diet soda: 0 calories
- 12-ounce soda: 150 calories
- 20-ounce smoothie: 410 calories

Diet Mistake No. 4: Oversized Portions

“We have gotten used to huge portions at restaurants so when we are at home, we serve up the same size and think it is normal,” says Lichten.

Experts suggest a few tricks to help you trim your portions:

- Leave a few bites on your plate.
- Use smaller plates and bowls.

Periodically check your portions with measuring cups.

Diet Mistake No. 5: Choosing Unhealthy Add-Ons

Not only have portions crept up in size, we also have a tendency to top off our “diet” salads and other favorite foods with high-fat toppings, like bacon, cheese, croutons, and creamy dressings.

And, at fast-food restaurants, “grilled chicken and salads are not always better than a burger,” notes Lichten. “It all depends on the size and the toppings.”

For example, the Burger King Tendergrill sandwich with honey mustard dressing has 450 calories while their Whopper Jr., with mustard instead of mayo, has only 290 calories. At McDonald’s, the Caesar salad with crispy chicken and creamy dressing totals 490 calories, while a Quarter Pounder weighs in at 410 calories.

Diet Mistake No. 6: Mindless Eating

“Eating amnesia” is the act of unknowingly putting hand to mouth, usually from a bag or box in front of the television, while reading a book. It can also happen at happy hour, or when you finish the last few bites on your child’s plate.

“Resist the temptation to clean yours or anyone else’s plate,” says Gidus. “Think about your waistline instead of the food waste.”

Consider the calories in small portions of some of our favorite snacks, and see how quickly they can add up when portions are multiplied:

- 1 Twinkie: 150 calories
- 12 peanut M&Ms: 125 calories
- 1 ounce of French fries: 88 calories
- 1.5 donut holes: 100 calories
- 3 Hershey kisses: 75 calories
- 3 Oreo cookies: 160 calories
- 15 tortilla chips: 142 calories
- 20 potato chips: 162 calories

And how can you kick the mindless eating habit?

“First, try to get out of the habit of always eating something while you are sitting and relaxing,” says Gidus. “Try a cup of tea, glass of water, or chew a piece of sugarless gum. If you want a snack, portion it out of the bag or container.”

The Mediterranean Diet

Imagine finally enjoying your meals while still being on a diet - a truly healthy diet. Sure there are other diets out there that let you eat hamburgers and bacon all day and every day, however, they are not healthy diets and many people have discredited such diets especially when you consider your long term health goals.

A healthy diet should promote a diverse menu that is easy to follow, including meals that are easy to prepare every day or for special days. The healthy diet eaten by people of Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Turkey and other countries in the area is easy and delicious - you will never be bored while eating a healthy diet again.

The staples of this healthy diet have been seen on menus around the world for many years. People have always associated Mediterranean food with good food but never did they realize that eating such delights is possible on a healthy diet.

Once you have committed to this healthy diet you want to begin to find the right resources for a diet plan including menus, recipes and diet products. Mediterranean food products are sold all over the world by many retailers. The Mediterranean diet seems to properly combine fats, proteins and carbohydrates. The fat comes from olive oil, fish, dairy products including yogurt and moderate amounts of meat. The carbohydrates come from whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Protein from fish and very little meat are also healthy. Researchers have published reports on the success of the Mediterranean diet. Not many other diet plans are able to boast plans that include delicious fish, terrific fruits, vegetables and nuts, great cheese, red wines, whole grains a little meat and an overall diverse menu that is a pleasure to follow day after day, meal after meal.

All too many diet plans are restrictive in terms of what you can eat and not eat. The more restrictive the diet plans are the more difficult they become to follow for long periods of time. Diverse diet plans are easier to follow for longer periods of time because you get to enjoy a truly diverse menu and never get bored.

Diet plans are often considered taboo because they are associated with restrictions. Instead of viewing diet plans as lists of things that you are not able to eat you should begin to view diet plans as ways of eating. The Mediterranean diet is diverse, delicious and easy to follow.

Read This!! Here's a Plan You'll Love!

Good Health...Wellness...Good Nutrition...Eating As Much and As Often as I Like...Losing Weight and Maintaining that Weight Loss, Reducing My Chances of Getting Cancer and Preventing Diabetes.

Can all of these concepts be tied together into one nutritional program? You better believe it! It may not be for everyone, but it DOES WORK. What's it called??? It's next.

The Vegetarian Diet

In the American Dietetic Association's 1997 Position Paper on Vegetarian Diets, they stated that, "scientific data suggest positive relationships between a vegetarian diet and reduced risk for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and some types of cancer." Dozens of scientific studies show that a vegetarian diet is more healthy than a non-vegetarian diet. It is this solid, reputable science that will be quoted throughout this guide, much of it obtained from some of the world's most authoritative and prestigious health advisory bodies. Why is diet so important? Well, if you live an average life span of about 72 years, you will plow your way through an astonishing 30 tons of food. It's the fuel that keeps you going and it's the nutrients in food that make you what you are. Your heart beats on them, your muscles, kidneys

and liver depend upon them. Food keeps you warm, repairs the bits of damage that inevitably occur and it even helps you think. Food is pretty important stuff- but not just any old food. If you were to eat the same diet as a lion - mostly meat and no fruit and vegetables - you would die and probably quite quickly. Similarly, a lion would be unable to survive on the average vegetarian diet. The reasons for the difference are that, after millions of years of evolution, all animals have adapted to their different environments. Meat contains no vitamin C so lions have the ability to manufacture (synthesize) it internally. We, on the other hand, are higher apes and have evolved to eat fresh fruit and vegetables, shoots, seeds, nuts and leaves - a diet rich in vitamin C - on a daily basis. Throughout our evolution there was an abundant supply of vitamin C in virtually everything we ate so our bodies have never had to manufacture it.

Why does all this matter? Because sensible eating is about distinguishing between healthy and potentially unhealthy foods - for us! Take lions, for instance. No matter how much meat they eat, no matter how fatty it is, their arteries don't clog up. Ours, on the other hand, do and the damage can start as young as two or three years old. The result is high blood pressure and heart attacks later in life. These deadly diseases are at epidemic proportions: For example, according to the American Heart Association (AHA), coronary heart disease is the single leading cause of death in the United States today. Moreover, they are almost all diet related - caused by animal products. And some people still claim we're meant to eat meat!

Dr. T. Colin Campbell, of Cornell University, organized a massive piece of dietary research called the China Study - one of the most important ever undertaken. When its findings were published, he said: "We're basically a vegetarian species and should be eating a wide variety of plant foods and minimizing our intake of animal foods. Animal foods are not really helpful and we need to get away from eating them." The Official Position: The world's most important health advisory bodies are now in complete agreement - a vegetarian diet is one of the healthiest possible. And it seems

the fewer animal products it contains, such as milk and cheese, the healthier it is. In other words, the closer it is to being vegan, the healthier it becomes. These are some of the health statements that have been made over the past few years. We will expand on each of the terms used later in the guide.

1. The British Medical Association (BMA): The BMA was one of the first to distill the growing volume of research on diet and health in its 1986 report. It said: “Vegetarians have lower rates of obesity, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, large bowel disorders, cancers and gall stones. Cholesterol levels tend to be lower in vegetarians.” It went on to say that when meat eaters change to a vegetarian diet it can actually lower their cholesterol levels. It concluded by saying that vegetarians obtain all the minerals they need and that folate levels are higher than meat-eaters.

2. The China Study: The initial results of this combined Chinese - U.S. - British study, which began in 1983, were announced in 1989. It was a massive piece of work which looked at the health and eating habits of 6,500 people in real life situations. Its conclusions were accurately summed up a New York Times headline on May 8, 1990: “Huge Study of Diet Accuses Fat and Meat.” In short, it found that the greatest single influence on the growth of degenerative diseases such as coronary heart disease, cancer and diabetes was the amount of animal fat and protein eaten - the more you eat, the greater your risk. It highlighted some extraordinary dietary differences between affluent and not so affluent societies. Animal protein itself raises the risks of cancer and heart disease. These are the two biggest killers in the West but there are others, such as diabetes, strokes, obesity and high blood pressure which are associated with the West’s affluent lifestyle. They are degenerative diseases and the China study found that they increased alarmingly as people changed from a more simple, predominantly vegetarian or vegan diet, to a Western diet based on meat and dairy products. The study also found that the West’s pre-occupation with promoting meat as the main source of iron was wrong. The Chinese diet was predominantly vegetarian and yet adults consumed twice as much iron as an adult in the U.S. The

Chinese diet also contained three times more fiber than a U.S. diet but there was no evidence that these high levels interfered with absorption of iron or other essential minerals. The conclusions were unequivocal - that a plant-based diet is more likely to promote good health and reduce the risk of degenerative diseases.

Cancer:

There are three separate factors which contribute to causing cancer - heredity, environmental pollution and diet. It's difficult to put percentages on them, but diet ranks high and accounts for possibly 30-50% of all cancers. One thing is certain, cancer is very much a Western disease. One half of all cancers in the world afflict just one-fifth of the population - the fifth that lives in the industrialized countries. One set of figures which illustrates this is for colon cancer. People in the U.S. are four times more likely to develop it than Japanese. But when researchers looked at Japanese people who had moved to the U.S., they found that their risk of colon cancer shot up to near that of people in the U.S. The main difference between the two groups was identified as diet - a traditional Japanese diet is low in animal products while a typical U.S. diet is very high in them. Japanese Americans tended to adopt the U.S. style of eating once they moved to our country.____

One scientific method of looking at diseases such as cancer is to establish how different foods affect them, both good and bad - those foods that may cause the disease (positive) and those that may prevent it (negative). They're called correlation studies. One of these studies looked at 37 countries and established a strong positive link between meat and meat protein and intestinal cancer while vegetable protein was negative - it provided protection. Another correlation study carried out in Israel followed the growth of the population from 1.17 million to 3.5 million. Over this period, meat consumption increased dramatically by over 400% and cancers doubled.

Diabetes:

Diabetes mellitus is a condition in which the mechanism that allows the body to use sugar for energy no longer functions prop-

erly. The outcome is that the body can't control the amount of sugar in the blood. In virtually every developing country in the world, diseases associated with affluence are becoming the new health problem. As processed and fat-rich animal foods are increasingly seen as desirable foods so the diseases develop. And they follow a pattern, according to the WHO. One of the first to show itself is diabetes, followed several decades later by heart disease and gallstones, then cancer, and finally chronic disorders of the gastrointestinal tract. A major risk factor is obesity and about 80% of non-insulin dependent diabetics are obese. People who are moderately overweight are twice as likely to develop the disease as people of normal weight (World Health Organization). In a little over a generation, diabetes mellitus has increased six-fold and there are factors at work other than obesity - including heredity. However, heredity wouldn't account for the fact that almost all Sumo wrestlers are diabetics - but their weight and extraordinarily high-fat diet might.

Diabetics can benefit from a high-fiber, vegetarian diet and people who are already eating this kind of diet have a 45% reduced chance of developing the disease. Heavy meat eaters on the other hand - those who eat meat six or more times a week - are nearly four times as likely to develop diabetes.

Conclusions:

So what does the World Health Organization believe we should be eating? Fat should be reduced to 15% of total energy instead of the nearly 40% it is at present - most of it animal fat. There doesn't need to be animal fats in the diet at all as they are not essential nutrients. Neither do we need cholesterol. The bulk of our diet should be complex carbohydrates, starchy foods - potatoes, bread, pasta, rice, yams, etc. They should account for between 50 and 70% of all calories. Protein should provide between 10-15% but can readily be met by a varied diet based predominantly on cereals and legumes. The key component of a healthy diet is, therefore, complex carbohydrates - with as wide a range of fresh fruit, vegetables, grains, legumes, seeds and nuts as possible - in

other words, a sensible vegetarian/vegan diet. There is a wealth of evidence, according to the World Health Organization, that foods rich in starch are really good for health and give protection against several diseases. They improve the chemistry of the digestive system and are a rich source of many minerals and vitamins, including essential fatty acids, calcium, zinc, iron, and water-soluble vitamins - all known to have a clear and positive effect on health. That is a pretty astounding statement from the world's leading health advisory body and a clear call to go veggie.

OK!

Now we've provided you with some sensible and easy to follow programs for keeping that wellness at a peak and that waistline under control. It's common sense advice from health and wellness experts and you may be saying to yourself, "I should have known that already". We are also, in our book, trying to provide you with all the information that is possible to enable you to make informed decisions scientifically. What follows are opinions from experts on what not to eat too much of and how to approach certain eating habits. It's kind of a dietary limitations guide.

Some Wonderful Keys to Healthy Eating

1. Say "No" to lots of cow's milk.

Cow's milk, as its name indicates, is a feed for calves (necessary for instance to the growth of horns and hooves) and not for people. Cow's milk is milk of the case in kind. To digest casein we need the enzyme - rennin, which is not generated by adults. Milk is a heavy product that distorts digestive functioning. Furthermore cow's milk is allergenic. The dairy industry would have you believe that milk is a great source of calcium. The truth: absorption of calcium from milk is worse than, for example, absorption from vegetables and nuts. Fermented dairy products such as natural yogurts, kefirs, cottage cheese, cheese are recommended because they contain bacteria that have accomplished "the job" for our digestive system and these products have been already

pre-digested before consumption. Additionally they contain "microbes", which are friendly for our intestinal flora, especially advised after antibiotic treatment.

2. Limit your intake of white flour.

White flour is a refined product that is lacking in vitamins and mineral salts (it contains marginal amounts of such components and it is artificially enriched). White flour and products made from it (white bakery products, pastries, biscuits) consist primarily of calories from sugars and have a high glycemic index. We need vitamins and mineral salts in order to break down and absorb flour thus robbing the body of some of its reserves. It is much healthier to consume products made from unrefined flour such as whole wheat flour, Graham flour, or thickly-milled flour. It is also recommended to eat products made without the use of yeast.

3. How About sugar and aspartame.

Sugar as well as flour is a refined product made from sugar beets. In contrast to beets themselves, sugar does not contain important biologically active substances, i.e., vitamins, mineral salts, plant hormones and ferments. Sugar obtained from sugar beets is actually refined, filtrated and crystallized. An often used trick in sugar production is whitening with the aid of calcium chloride which is a poison. Refined edible sugar is saccharose - the source of calories and a high glycemic index. Similarly as in the case of white flour, we need vitamins and mineral salts to break down and absorb, taking them from the reserves of our body. Sugar is one of the main culprits in the development of diabetes. One should remember the source of sugar is not only edible sugar but also (or maybe first of all) pastries, candies, drinks and biscuits._

Aspartame, is the main ingredient in commonly used sweeteners and is one of the most dangerous chemical compounds added to nourishment. Aspartame consists of three compounds: aspartic acid, phenylalanine and methanol. The most harmful is methanol because it decomposes to formic acid and formaldehyde - highly toxic neurotoxins. Sources of aspartame in food are: multivitamins, sugarless

chewing gum, instant cocoa, medicines, drinks, sweeteners, drinks with tea, glazes, yogurts, jellies, fruit and milk drinks, dietetic drinks, instant coffee and tea, purgatives, frozen desserts, coffee drinks, mint drinks, breath refresheners._ As a substitute for sugar (saccharose) and aspartame, I would recommend the use of fructose, available in every store with health foods. Fructose is a sugar sweeter than saccharose so we use less of it. It also has a very low glycemic index. I also find beneficial the consumption of natural honey (apart from its glycemic index), of course in reasonable amounts. In its composition it contains many valuable biologically active substances.

4. Salt and sodium glutamate...Uhh-Uhh!

Reducing salt (sodium chloride) and sodium glutamate (monosodium glutamate) consumption decreases the hazard of artery hypertension. Sodium increases blood pressure in many people. Especially people with artery hypertension and people from families where it occurs should limit the consumption of salt. Further, sodium is conducive to obesity, causes some diseases of the heart, kidney and skin. Daily salt consumption ought not to exceed 6 g. We should quit additional salting before the consumption of meals and limit adding salt during cooking.

Monosodium glutamate is a substance added to food as a so-called flavor strengthener. This substance is strongly allergenic, it also may be the reason for headaches, shortness of breath and facial redness. One should also remember that much salt, and especially monosodium glutamate, is included in such products as meat cured products, instant soups, seasoning mixtures.

5. Drinking of liquids before a meal or two hours after it (as opposed to during a meal).

Drinking liquids during meals causes diluting of digestive juices and disorders of the digestive processes. The process of drinking liquids during meals leads to formation of gas, flatulence and constipation. To help ourselves not drink liquids during a meal (when we feel dryness in mouth) we should "rinse" our mouth (tiny sips and swallow) in the course of a meal. Avoidance of drinking liquids

during a meal gives an advantage to overweight people. During "dry" eating we eat less food, and thus, fewer calories.

6. Thorough chewing of food.

First digestion takes place in mouth. Thorough chewing and mixing of our food with saliva allows more precise and faster digestion by digestive juices. The result is that food enters the stomach faster and "leaves" us faster.

7. Eat foods with a low glycemic index.

High levels of insulin promote gaining weight. This high level is associated with the consumption of some groups of carbohydrates which increase momentary glucose levels in blood serum in a rapid and significant way. In other words we have a so-called high glycemic index. Consumption of foods with a low glycemic index causes slow and relatively small increments in sugar levels. The result: small insulin bursts, that are not as allied with the gaining of weight. It is worth remembering that processing of food products with heat treatment increases their glycemic index. Raw foods are great.

8. Avoid excessive amounts of cholesterol.

Animal fats raise cholesterol levels in serum and increase blood coagulation. Products rich in cholesterol also raise cholesterol concentration. Plant oils do not produce such actions. Replacing animal fats with plant oils (cold-pressed olive oil is highly recommended) is a great idea. High fat content which is bad for your health is located in fat meat, fat cured meat products, ice-cream, cakes, cream and chips. Preparing meat for consumption by separation of visible fat is advised. Among different culinary techniques worth recommending is cooking and roasting without fat (grilling).

9. Eat unprocessed products containing natural vitamins, mineral salts, dietary fiber, Essential Fatty Acids.

Fresh and unprocessed vegetables and fruits are a wonderful source of vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber as well as less-known

compounds as: bioflavonoids, and antioxidants. Because of the high content of dietary fiber, water and minimal fat content (except for coconut and avocado) the caloric value of unprocessed vegetables and fruit is very low in comparison to other foods.

Unprocessed vegetables and fruit should be an addition to every meal. When fresh is not available, fresh frozen is also fine. The best source of Essential Fatty Acids (so-called vitamin F) are flax seeds, cold-pressed flax oil, cold-pressed grape oil, food of sea origin, cold-pressed olive oil, cold-pressed other vegetable oils, nuts, because of their high content of fatty acids belonging to the omega-3 and omega-6 family.

10. Avoid plants picked beyond their vegetative period (early vegetables).

All plants collected beyond their vegetative period have different composition (e.g. lettuce, tomato, Chinese cabbage). Instead of sugars and proteins they contain semi-products - e.g. nitrates, which as a result of biochemical processes within several hours after picking turn into nitrites, which in the mouth create carcinogenic nitrosoamines.

11. Use butter instead of margarine.

Margarine in contrast to butter, is a synthetic product, obtained through hydrogenation of plant fats. This results in the formation of trans isomers (they are known because of their carcinogenic "abilities" and increase of bad cholesterol level in the blood). This causes impermeability of cell membranes. Additionally margarines are enriched with synthetic vitamins A, D, E and K, which, in contrast to natural vitamins contained in butter, are hard absorbed. But we also should not use too much butter because of the content of bad cholesterol.

12. Consumption of 4-5 meals a day without "power-ups" between meals.

At least 3 meals a day are advised but it is much healthier to eat 4-5 meals based on low-calorie products. Regular mealtimes are

important. Starving mixed with eating 2 hearty meals causes "deregulation" of metabolism. We should not eat to "full-up", and only to fulfill hunger. If breaks between meals are too long, we can eat something low in calories, e.g., an apple, natural yogurt or drink water. "Power-ups" between meals are additional redundant calories.

13. Eat your last meal at the latest: 2 hours before going to sleep.

Your last meal ought to be eaten at least 2 hours before going to sleep. In that way you can prevent difficulty with falling asleep caused by intensive work of digestive system.

14. Drink at least 1 liter of non-carbonated water with lemon a day.

Water brings with it many advantages for us when it's pure. Water is a drink totally lacking calories, and with low-calorie diets more than a liter a day is advised. We should not go overboard with mineral water. If we drink it, it ought to be non-carbonated mineral water because carbonated (sparkling) drinks stimulate the appetite. Addition of lemon with peel brings with it natural vitamin C, bioflavonoids, microelements and plant hormones. While drinking we should remember to consume water either an hour before or 2 hours after a meal.

15. Slow down on the coffee and ordinary tea.

Coffee and tea are beneficial for health when you drink no more than two cups of either per day...without sugar. In this amount they positively affect the circulatory system and the brain. Green tea contains many essentials for our bodies. It purifies blood, strengthens teeth, possesses bactericidal properties, acts against calculi in liver, kidneys and bladder, decreases blood pressure, decreases bad cholesterol level. Black teas are not recommended because of tannin content. We should not drink tea or coffee which has been standing several hours after brewing - harmful substances are formed in them.

16. Avoid foods with artificial dyes, preservatives and other synthetic additives.

Synthetic food additives have been mass-added for up to 20 years; and they arouse many controversies. Many of them have been withdrawn from use, others have been presumed harmful, and others have been presumed suspicious of carcinogenic or allergenic reaction, which means when they are used we should pay special attention because they may be dangerous for health. Chemical food additives may improve their look, flavor, change color, consistency, and prolong shelf-life. But these are things that cheat our senses: taste, smell and sight.

We asked a top-level physician specializing in heart health and diabetes and the connection to nutrition to write an article for us that really delves into how the foods we eat directly affect the physiology of the body at the cellular level.

STEPHEN SINATRA, MD, is a cardiologist and the former Chief of Cardiology at Manchester Memorial Hospital in Connecticut. He has specialized in preventive medicine for more than 20 years. He is the author of numerous books on natural health, including *Reverse Heart Disease Now* and is co-author of *Sugar Shock!*

When asked about the key to staying healthy, Dr. Sinatra doesn't hesitate: "The most important things are staying trim and eating a diet that is not inflammatory, which means staying away from sugars."

By sugars, Sinatra doesn't just mean what's on the dessert menu or the white stuff some guys put in their coffee. Beer, wine, all other alcoholic drinks, breads, bagels, crackers and pastas are all sources of concentrated sugar, as far as your body is concerned, and they all disrupt the network of hormones that determines whether or not you like what you see in the mirror. So he says, taking a moderate and sensitive approach to the intake of sugar is one of the most important things you can do nutritionally to stay out of intensive care down the road.

Building a Strong Foundation

Testosterone, insulin, adrenal and thyroid hormones are some of the key players that determine the health of your heart, the size of your waistline and your ability to function well at work and in the bedroom. "We used to think these hormones were all individual players," says Sinatra. "They're not. They work collectively."

Although the interplay of hormones is complex, there is a simple underlying principle: When levels of one are not good, the others also suffer. Sinatra says the answer to the riddle lies in weight control, not by following fad diets, but by understanding a few key cause-and-effect relationships and acting accordingly.

Here's a look:

Insulin: This hormone holds a key to body weight, risk for diabetes, heart disease and other conditions. Here's how it works: After you eat, food is converted to blood sugar (glucose). The pancreas then produces insulin to deliver the glucose to cells to be used as energy.

High-sugar foods and drinks lead to skyrocketing glucose levels, which shift insulin production into high gear. When this high-sugar/high-insulin cycle repeats frequently, cells become overwhelmed with blood sugar and stop accepting it. This is a condition technically called insulin resistance. Weight gain, increased risk for heart disease and diabetes are among the results.

Thyroid: Hormones produced by the thyroid gland regulate metabolism, and iodine is a key nutrient required to produce sufficient amounts of hormones. Toxins in today's environment and reduced levels of naturally occurring iodine in our food result in many men and women having an under active thyroid or slow metabolism, contributing to insulin resistance and obesity.

Testosterone: Excess weight, lack of exercise, insulin resistance and inadequate levels of thyroid and adrenal hormones all contribute to low levels of testosterone. In turn, low testosterone leads to further weight gain, low energy, low libido and other sexual difficulties.

The Hormone Solution: "Weight loss is the most important factor, because when you lose weight, you improve insulin sensitivity, sparing the burden on your other hormone systems," says Dr. Sinatra. Cholesterol and blood pressure generally improve at the same time.

Vitamin supplements, antioxidant extracts from all-natural herbs, vegetables, fruits and nuts can boost the immune system and hormone production.

One of the most important ways to contribute to a healthy balance of hormones in the body is to get proper quality and quantity of sleep. This is because most of our hormones are produced while we are sleeping.

Conclusion: That wraps up the portion of this book that deals specifically with the foods that we can eat in an effort to maintain wellness. Remember again: Wellness means feeling better, looking better and more attractive, losing unnecessary weight and maintaining that weight loss, performing better intellectually, physically and sexually, and making every attempt to avoid diseases such as cancer and diabetes. Healthy, whole, unprocessed foods, with a specific emphasis on fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and herbs supply the body with so much more than just energy. They provide us with the nutritional power to keep our bodies healthy and provide the "firepower" enabling us to minimize the effects of aging and, as such, help us ward off disease.

The Importance of Supplements and The Power of Antioxidants

Let there be absolutely no mistake about it. There is a huge and universal tide of evidence in the medical community that shows the importance of delivering certain types of nutrients to the body in order to ward off the processes of aging and the diseases that accompany aging. This is exactly why we spent so much time discussing wellness as it relates to the types of foods you eat in the previous section of this book. Good food doesn't just fill you up. It supplies the body with the power to not only perform day-to-day activities, but also to fight off disease.

Think about this. We are much healthier when we are young than when we get old. Look at all the diseases that come along with the aging process. Cancers, heart disease, diabetes, gastro-intestinal disorders, organ break downs, arthritis, cataracts, immune system disorders, Alzheimer's disease, dementia and if that's not enough, bags under our eyes and wrinkles on our skin...Gee! We've got so much to look forward to, don't we? But why does this happen?

Not very long ago medical science started asking questions about the correlation between all of these bodily break-downs and aging. A large part of the answer lies in the propensity for one of the Universe's smallest particles...the electron...to take off on its own and go wild. Think of bullets being sprayed into a crowd. The electron is a tiny, tiny particle that has a negative electrical charge...like the negative pole on a battery. It orbits or circles the nucleus of an atom and is held in its orbit because the nucleus, or center of an atom is made up, in part, of positively charged protons. We all know that opposites attract and so it is with atoms, which make up molecules, which make up cells, which make up organs, bone and tissue...which make up humans.

Free-radicals!!

They weren't discovered until the early 1980's. They are thought to play a part in causing some 60 diseases and are capable of wreaking havoc on healthy cells. Free-radicals are unstable molecules, a product of oxidation and, in a sense, the rust of the body.

Other examples of oxidation include how a peeled apple turns brown in the open air, a banana turns brown or how animal fat goes rancid in the garbage.

Free-radicals are molecules that have lost an electron from their outer shell and are now unstable...representing a threat to our bodies. Free-radicals are considered the "bad guys" or enemies of the body. In medical terms, they are the "unpaired electrons". When they are "paired" they don't cause a problem. It's only when they are alone (unpaired), that they cause "oxidative stress" and need to be "neutralized/made harmless". But I'm going a little bit too fast. Let's stop and re-set our mental computer with some important background information.

Dr. Denham Harman is considered the founder of the free-radical theory of aging, first presented in 1954. This theory states that oxygen-based compounds, created in our own body, are the primary cause of aging. Free-radicals are molecules that have single electrons in orbits. Free-radicals are unlike stable biological molecules where the electrons always orbit in pairs. These free-radicals, desperately seek to find another electron, attracting it wherever they can, from proteins, lipids, cellular membranes, DNA and so on. Curiously, oxygen free-radicals are a necessary product of the reactions creating energy from food fuel in the body, just like smoke comes from burning wood. There is good evidence now that free-radicals contribute to the development of cancer, heart disease, arthritis, cataracts, skin wrinkling and Alzheimer's Disease. In fact, it has been calculated that the genetic material in each cell is struck 10,000 times each day by free-radicals.

It's almost like the way the Earth is constantly being hit by comets and asteroids with one exception: the Earth has a layer of protection called the atmosphere and it burns up incoming objects. Unfortunately, the cells in the body don't have such armor. The repair process from free radical damage is only 99.9 percent perfect, and in time, the damage accumulates. This includes damage to DNA which ultimately can result in cancer. Let's take another look at free-radicals as though we're going back to our high school chemistry class.

Background: A Brief Look at Chemical Bonding

To understand the way that free-radicals and antioxidants interact, you must first understand a bit about cells and molecules. So here's a very brief refresher course in Physiology/Chemistry 101: The human body is composed of many different types of cells. Cells are composed of many different types of molecules. Molecules consist of one or more atoms of one or more elements. These tiny particles are all joined and held together by chemical bonds.

As you probably remember from your old high school days, atoms consist of a nucleus, neutrons, protons and electrons. The number of protons (positively charged particles) in the atom's nucleus determines the number of electrons (negatively charged particles) surrounding the atom. Think of a tiny solar system where the planets (electrons) are orbiting the sun (the nucleus made up of protons and neutrons).

Electrons are involved in chemical reactions and bond atoms together to form molecules. Electrons surround, or "orbit" an atom in one or more shells. The innermost shell is full when it has two electrons. When the first shell is full, electrons begin to fill the second shell. When the second shell has eight electrons, it is full, and so on (Figure 1).

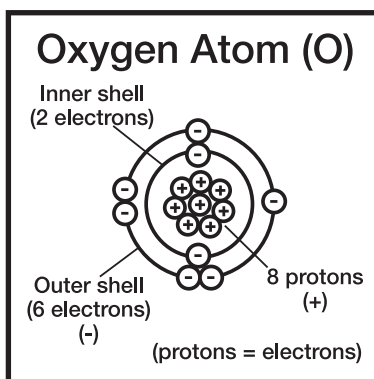


Figure 1

The most important structural feature of an atom for determining its chemical behavior is the number of electrons in its outer shell. A substance that has a full outer shell tends not to enter in chemical reactions. This is also known as an inert substance. Because atoms seek to reach a state of maximum stability, an atom will try to fill its outer shell by:

- Gaining or losing electrons to either fill or empty its outer shell
- Sharing its electrons by bonding together with other atoms in order to complete its outer shell

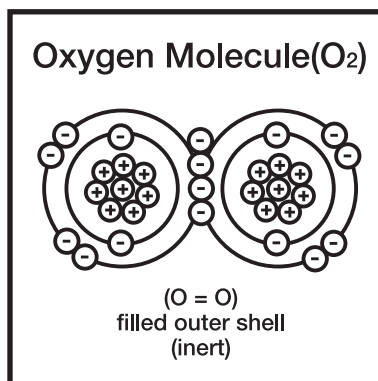


Figure 2

Atoms often complete their outer shells by sharing electrons with other atoms. By sharing electrons, the atoms are bound together and satisfy the conditions of maximum stability for the molecule.

How Free-radicals are Formed

Normally, bonds don't split in a way that leaves a molecule with an odd, unpaired electron. But when weak bonds split, free-radicals are formed. Free-radicals are very unstable and react quickly with other compounds, trying to capture the needed electron to gain stability. Generally, free-radicals attack the nearest stable molecule, "stealing" its electron. When the "attacked" molecule loses its electron, it becomes a free radical itself, beginning a chain reaction. Once the process is started, it can cascade, finally result-

ing in the disruption of a living cell. Whenever an electron is torn from a molecule, a little spark is produced, and this is what damages cell membranes.

Some free-radicals arise normally during metabolism. Sometimes the body's immune system cells purposefully create them to neutralize viruses and bacteria. However, environmental factors such as pollution, radiation, cigarette smoke and herbicides can also spawn free-radicals.

Normally, the body can handle free-radicals, but if antioxidants are unavailable, or if the free-radical production becomes excessive, damage can occur. Of particular importance is that free radical damage accumulates with age.

The key concept here is oxidation. We all breathe and when we breathe we take in oxygen. That's good because oxygen keeps us alive. But oxygen also allows oxidation which is the crux of aging. Here's why.

Oxygen atoms have two spaces for electrons in their outer electron shell and have a strong tendency to scavenge electrons from other atoms that can share them. In doing so, these other atoms usually combine with oxygen to make oxide minerals. This tendency of oxygen to grab electrons is so characteristic that chemists use the term 'oxidation' to refer to any process whereby electrons are removed from another atom.

Oxidation means that a molecule or atom interacts with oxygen in such a way as to form a chemical bond (sharing electrons). When oxidation occurs, there is typically a release of energy (heat). In the human body, the oxidation of food provides energy to the cell. When energy is produced, there is waste product. So oxidation of certain components (food) is good to provide energy. But oxidation of human cells, meaning burning them up or turning them into waste is bad. Free-radicals contribute to oxidation.

Free-radicals contribute to oxidation and anti-oxidants (which we learn about next) bond with free-radicals to neutralize them. Thus cells are not oxidized because of anti-oxidants introduced to the body.

Antioxidants: Our Biological Saviors

Antioxidants are substances found in food that can counteract the damaging effects that oxidation has on our cells and tissues. They perform this neat little trick by going to war with highly unstable free-radical molecules that roam our bodies generating this detrimental oxidative stress. When these radicals steal away an electron from a normal, healthy cell in your body, oxidation can occur. Remember, it's the same type of process as when metal rusts...or a cut up apple turns brown. Similar to the way a banana slowly browns, we also tend to brown, or rust, as free-radicals accumulate in our bodies over time. Antioxidants fight free-radicals by supplying them the electron they lack, and thus neutralize them.

Antioxidants neutralize free-radicals by donating one of their own electrons, ending the electron-"stealing" reaction. The antioxidant nutrients themselves don't become free-radicals by donating an electron because they are stable in either form. They act as scavengers, helping to prevent cell and tissue damage that could lead to cellular damage and diseases such as cancer.

All the world's health advisory bodies agree that antioxidants are part of the body's vital self-protection mechanism, which actually defend you against the big killers: heart disease and cancer. They were almost unknown until somewhat recently and knowledge is still growing. The big saviors are antioxidant nutrients found in herbs, vegetables, fruits, nuts and grains. A recent discovery by Glasgow University, in Scotland, added another powerful antioxidant to the list - flavonol. It is not in meat but predominantly in fruits and vegetables.

It is believed that these flavonol compounds may have anti-cancer effects due to their ability to reduce oxidative stress (in other words, protection against free-radicals) and alter other cellular functions related to cancer development.

"Unlike many of the dietary components, flavonols are concentrated in specific foods rather than in broader food groups, for example, in apples rather than in all fruit," notes the research study.

Previously, the most consistent inverse association was found between flavonols, especially quercetin in apples and lung cancer, as pointed out in this study. While found in many plants, flavonols are found in high concentrations in apples, onions, tea, kale, and broccoli.

Overall Benefits of Antioxidants:

- Stronger immune resistance to flues, viruses and infections
- Greatly reduced incidence of all cancers
- Prevention of glaucoma and macular degeneration
- Reduced risk of cholesterol-oxidation and heart disease
- Anti-aging of cells and overall body

So, in review, it's pretty obvious that everyone, as part of their daily life, should be trying to maintain a healthy diet that promotes wellness. A major part and vitally important component of the healthy nutritional program includes antioxidants (we're going to learn in the next section that regular exercise also helps combat free-radicals).

Unfortunately, modern lifestyles and frantic schedules don't always allow people to get the antioxidants they so badly need from fruits and vegetables. That's where all-natural herbal, fruit, vegetable, grain and nut extracts come in...in the form of **dietary supplements**.

There is a booming business in the United States for supplements that are supplied all over the world. Supplements from good companies are packed full of the kinds of antioxidant extracts that have been shown to fight all of the diseases that go along with aging: Cancers, heart disease, diabetes, gastro-intestinal disorders, organ break downs, arthritis, cataracts, immune system disorders, Alzheimer's disease, bags under our eyes and wrinkles on our skin.

The Wisdom of the Ancient Chinese:

The world often gives too much credit to modern day health scientists in Europe and the United States for discovering ways to combat disease. Let's give a little applause to the collective genius of the Chinese people from centuries ago. The health benefits of **ginger and garlic** have been known for over 2000 years. They have been cultivated and used for thousands of years in China, not only acting as flavoring ingredients, but also as medicinal herbs!

The health benefits of ginger come from chemicals called volatile oils, specifically gingerols and shogaols, that also give ginger its spicy, pungent taste. In traditional Chinese medicine, ginger is used to calm upset stomachs, soothe nausea and stop diarrhea. It has been widely used in Europe to open blocked arteries, treat the symptoms of the common cold and ease headaches. Denmark researchers have discovered that ginger can block the inflammation of blood vessels in the brain, which leads to migraines. Using the same theory, ginger has been found to produce "marked" relief in arthritis pain.

A researcher at Cornell University Medical College discovered that ginger has an effect on blood clots that is similar to that of aspirin. It also appears that high cholesterol levels are lowered by incorporating some form of ginger into any nutritional program. One of the newest reports of the health benefits of ginger is that it may stop cancer from growing and spreading.

Let's not neglect the health benefits derived from garlic. Garlic has positive effects on blood pressure, lowers blood fats, and also lowers cholesterol. Garlic even helps to prevent cancer! One German study had shown that garlic reduced cholesterol levels by 20 percent in all the test subjects. This sure beats any medicine you plan on taking. The best part - it's completely natural. So in the final picture, a **ginger-garlic** combination has potential to be a very powerful all-natural blood pressure regulator that lowers cholesterol, benefits digestion and fights cancer.

If you're convinced, as you ought to be, that ginger and garlic are a very beneficial addition to your goal of achieving wellness, you can find ginger and garlic supplements very easily. Just be sure they are all-natural.

Do Not Be Misled:

When looking for a natural antioxidant supplement, always ask a simple question, "Can I find these ingredients at a salad bar or fruit and vegetable stand?" If your answer is "no" then keep on looking for something that comes from the human food chain and has been proven safe and effective. Unfortunately, some "so-called" dietary supplements are not made from the all-natural extracts found in fruits, vegetables, herbs, grains and nuts. In fact, these supplements are man-made (synthetic) which spells trouble. A large part of our problems in modern times are caused by chemicals in our environment. Synthetic supplements offer a chemical solution to a chemical problem. This is absurd thinking. There are many negative health and environmental impacts from synthetic ingredients in vitamins and supplements. Put simply, the human body has evolved for millions of years to digest foods found in nature. Most synthetically produced vitamins and supplements are chemical compounds that cannot be found in nature, hence the human body does not recognize these ingredients which can result in unanticipated reactions. The body knows the difference between real and fake and it always prefers real.

Some vitamins in synthetic supplements are water soluble, so they flush out of the body quite easily. Other vitamins are fat soluble. The fat-soluble vitamins include vitamins A, D, E and K. Because they are soluble in fat (lipids), these vitamins tend to build-up in the body's fat tissues, fat deposits, and liver. This storage capability makes the fat-soluble vitamins potentially toxic when consuming high-dose synthetic versions of these vitamins, rather than food-based vitamins that the body knows how to metabolize. Care should be exercised when taking the fat-soluble vitamins, and it is recommended that you avoid the synthetic forms of these vitamins whenever possible.

Conclusion:

Taking all-natural supplements made from vegetables, fruits, herbs, grains and nuts can supply the body with much needed antioxidants. These antioxidants counteract the devastating effects of free-radicals that attack the body and produce over 60 age related diseases including: the deterioration of bone, joints and connective tissue; the wearing out of organs; the decline of the immune system; the irritating advance of the visible effects of aging; and even, possibly, to some extent, the aging process itself.

All-natural supplements are particularly important when we are not able to eat the proper foods, that we earlier recommended, on a regular basis. If we want to increase our chances of maintaining our wellness, all-natural nutritional supplements can provide a huge advantage to us. Think of all-natural supplements as being power-packed capsules filled with high concentrations of disease fighting antioxidants. When you take them regularly you are putting on internal armor in your body. This armor will deflect the biological bullets known as free-radicals. When free-radicals are neutralized, you can fight off the aging and disease processes much more effectively. Translation...Wellness is allowed to take over your body.

Onward and Upward to Exercise

I said at the beginning of the book that I believe staying active is a major key to longevity, staying and feeling young as well as overall wellness. Back before modern conveniences such as cars, buses, elevators, kitchen and utility room appliances, lawn mowers, leaf blowers and the rest, think of how much movement and exercise occurred just to live an ordinary life. God gave us muscles and limbs...our bodies have been designed to accommodate physical work. Where in the master plan of nature does it say that we should be inactive and sedentary? However, when you look at the great masses of people as they walk down the street, through a mall or the airport, what do you see? Couch potatoes. People who have been sitting, not walking or running.

Inactivity shows in your body, on your face and in your mind. You must acknowledge and remember that exercise makes the heart pump and the blood flow. When blood flows, it delivers fresh oxygen to every cell in the body. Exercise tightens muscles, burns fat and improves every aspect of your appearance.

Ok, you're saying to yourself, I get the message. But I've been inactive so long, that I am totally out of shape. How do I start without dropping dead within three minutes?

Starting a new fitness program can be a daunting task. But remember, you're making a GREAT decision that can improve every aspect of your life. You should also remember that lots of people have successfully and dramatically lost fat, gained lean muscle, and improved their overall health...so you certainly can too. The following tips will help you get off to a good start as well as keep you from making some common beginner's mistakes.

The very thought of going from zero fitness and marshmallow softness to full stamina, firmness and energy can seem overwhelming - enough to make you want to lie down. But even against the odds and the tide of excuses and a history of wearing the dubious crown as couch-potato king, you can start. And you can **continue**...into a regular routine of exercise. If you're at this point in your life, you're the right candidate for transformation. This plan just may be your best bet.

Change is an all-or-nothing proposition. You either do it, or you don't. You can't just exercise for 3 times one week, once the next week, take a couple of weeks off, go twice a week, and so on and expect to reap all the benefits. Only a handful of people can get into a regular exercise routine by suddenly beginning to exercise. For these few folks something just clicks inside and they work out with energy and they enjoy it. But for the other 95% of us, getting into a regular routine with exercise is not so easy.

For most, beginning an exercise program comes in stages, step by step, many of which happen before you even slip on your workout shoes or enter the gym. The very fact that you're reading this section of the book means that you're already in one of the important first stages. And continuing to exercise regularly is also a process of change, a cycle of smooth sailing and bumpy seas.

Fortunately, there are techniques that you can use to help you move to the next level. Just be aware that the stage you are in changes all the time. Of course, once you know where you are, it's easy to see what's next. Here's how to get there....

Step 1: I don't want to exercise

If you are at this stage, you may be wondering what could possibly be done to get you to budge beyond it. Other people might be pressuring you, but IT'S UP TO YOU--you're the one who has to tie your shoes and go out for a walk. And you don't even want to make the effort to think about it. Two things can offer a push: Acquiring knowledge and whining.

Acquiring knowledge involves being open to facts and opinions concerning your state of fitness (or lack of it) and both the benefits of exercise and the health risks of not exercising. The source of the information can be external--others observing that you don't exercise, loved ones confronting you about it, family members giving you newspaper or magazine articles about exercise. Or it can be internal--watching TV or movies about sports, reading about exercise, learning about the psychology of why people don't exercise

In some cases, simply soaking up the incoming information can at least make you more likely to start thinking seriously about exercise, even if you have no intention of doing anything about it. It could be, however, that despite the good efforts of your friends and relatives, the fact still remains that you don't want to exercise. And right now you simply may not be interested in gathering information.

So maybe you need to try venting and whining. This involves giving vent to the problem. You may complain about what happened the last time you tried to exercise ("Oh, that cramp I got! I was sore for days!") or all the things that kept you from working out ("I wanted to, but my daughter Janey had a dentist's appointment").

All this talking and complaining about the problem helps. It at least gets you thinking about exercising. It gets the wheels turning so that getting fit becomes a problem to be solved. That is, if you CHOOSE to look at it that way.

Here's my rule for complainers: You have exactly TWO MINUTES to vent and complain. Ready? Go... (Tick, tock, tick, tock...) Okay, done. NOW GO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

It may seem that nothing is happening in the "I Don't Want to Exercise stage", but the more you acquire knowledge and vent and whine, the more their effects can accumulate.

Step 2: Thinking about it

When you've reached this point, not only are you more aware that a problem exists, you're also seriously considering doing something about it. This is great progress, even if you haven't actually made a commitment to start.

In this stage, you're considering the pros and cons of starting, even if you haven't quite gotten yourself to plug in the treadmill. You're at the point where you might increase your physical activity or you might decide you're not quite ready for prime-time--or any other time--workouts and give it up for now.

In this stage, you know where you want to go and you may even know how to get there. But you can't quite motivate yourself into following through with any action. Acquiring knowledge and venting/whining can be helpful here, as well as two other techniques: role modeling and reinventing yourself.

Role modeling goes beyond acquiring knowledge. Here you closely observe someone you know, someone in the public eye or even some fictional character who might inspire you to fitness. You might chat with a friend who exercises regularly, or watch sporting events like the Olympics. Who would be role models you respect and like? Pick some activity you might enjoy and watch a master of it. Once you open yourself up to the possibilities, you may be inspired to get moving yourself.

Reinventing yourself involves looking at yourself in a different way. This is the time to return to the power of fantasy. Try imagining yourself as an athlete or a dancer, or just someone who is really in shape. This is NOT silly; every champion from every walk of life had FIRST in his mind a dream of what s/he wanted to become.

Imagery could involve mentally picturing yourself as more flexible or thinner or whatever else exercise could help you with. Take three minutes, sit down, lean back, close your eyes and fantasize about anything physical that you want to try, like weight training, running, roller-blading, etc. Just do it.

When it's over, how does it feel? If you imagined playing tennis, could you feel the racquet? The sprinting? Did you see the tennis court, feel the sun, warmth, other tennis players? Could you feel the thrill in the pit of your stomach and your head when the match was over? Make it happen in your mind. The brain is extraordinarily powerful. You can if you think you can, just like the Little Engine that Could.

Also, you can use imagery to conjure up a picture of yourself benefiting from exercise. Think of the thing exercise could help you with that is most important to you. Could your joints be more flexible? Would you be happier 10 pounds lighter? Close your eyes.

Imagine yourself moving as you would like to move. Watch this in the theater of your mind for however long it interests you. When you grow bored, stop, whether five seconds have passed or 10 minutes. Repeat this two or three times a day.

It's even possible that performing certain movements in your mind rehearses the motor pathways so that when you do try the actual movement, it'll be easier.

Step 3: Getting ready

This stage combines intending to change with making some small changes in behavior. In this stage, your intention and behavior crank up a notch. This means more reinventing and imagery, plus some baby steps toward the real thing.

For example, exercising has been on your to-do list for years. After watching some fitness shows on TV, you fantasize about looking like the people in them. Then you decide you could do those exercises. So you start making tapes of the shows to fit them in when your schedule permits. Visualize yourself as being every bit as fit and attractive as somebody you admire: a friend, a work mate...a movie star. Visualization is an incredibly effective, proven technique for programming your brain to do what it needs to do to be successful.

With a new attitude will come new actions. For example, you're walking to work more frequently, when you used to take a cab or drive. You're choosing the stairs over the elevator. You're actually going for a short walk at lunchtime instead of just sitting and eating.

Step 4: Starting

Don't start any exercise regimen without properly fueling your body. We have discussed proper foods throughout our book so far, but an excellent idea is to add an all-natural, robust multi-vitamin to your daily nutritional routine. This will provide the body with energy resources at the cellular level. Remember, wellness starts with a body that has access to those nutrients it needs in order to function properly.

This stage is when you begin exercising on a regular basis. But this is the stage where most people equate change, overlooking the other steps that are part of the process. This is understandable, since in this fourth step you actually choose some type of exercise or group of activities and start working out.

People can see that you've changed your behavior in order to overcome your comfort zone that has kept you from getting fit. You appear to have gotten off your duff by committing time and--yes--energy.

This is the most challenging stage. Many people overdo it. Then if they hurt or exhaust themselves, they become discouraged and drop back to Step 1. Let me emphasize in big letters: **Start slowly**. Don't make the mistake millions of new exercisers make: doing too much too soon. Too much of anything will make you sick of it in a hurry. Eventually you'll learn to love exercising but, when you're first starting out, you need to "ease" into it. Don't try to become a fitness model in one week!

If you have begun exercising and kept at it for anywhere from a day to six months, you may think you're home free. Unfortunately, it's not so. For true change, you must also develop new habits and skills to keep from falling back and skills to deal with new problems.

One way to start is to announce to the world what you're about to undertake. Once you've publicly connected yourself with exercise, social support pushes you to keep the connection. If you stop, people may ask what happened, and you probably won't feel good about admitting failure.

Your pronouncement is your "coming out." It can involve very personal meanings and is different for each person. It often involves a dramatic statement or gesture that signals a break from the past. You're declaring that the rest of your life will be different from your past. Your coming out could be as simple as buying your first pair of workout shoes or joining a gym.

Starting also involves making slight adjustments in your world. Move your exercise equipment to a more convenient location or join a gym that is on your way to or from work, or close enough to visit on your lunch hour, rather than one you have to make an effort to get to.

Know what's ahead. Realize that there are several key steps to beginning a new fitness program. These are the mental stages most people progress through before being successful. They include: not wanting to exercise --> thinking about it --> getting ready for it --> starting it --> enjoying it and doing it almost daily. Prepare yourself for each stage and you'll be better able to deal with any problems or doubts that arise.

Getting Up for It! Due to the ill-effects of not exercising, a lot of people complain about being too tired...or not having enough energy. "If only I had a little more pep or **zip**, I know I could get going". If you're in this mind-set before you begin your routine, you might want to find an all-natural, energy boosting supplement. Products with Vitamin B-12, guarna, ginseng, green tea, maca can provide that lift that will energize you without creating jitters or palpitations. Please understand I am not encouraging you to take energy products that are loaded with sugar and caffeine (example: Red Bull). These types of products may be OK for other activities but not for exercise. They can give you the cold sweats and shakes during your routine. Go natural...go for what's good for the body.

Now. Let's get back to the mental approach to exercise. In this phase, you should give yourself plenty of positive reinforcement. Promise yourself a treat if you exercise today. Call a friend you haven't talked to in a while, or get tickets to some show or concert or ballgame you would like to see. Use your imagination to reward yourself for signs of progress.

Step 5: Keeping on

It doesn't matter what you've chosen, just **keep moving**: walking, slow jogging or cycling, try some light-weight workouts. If you

belong to a gym you might want to try a beginner's exercise class. Just choose something you enjoy and don't do more than 20 or 30 minutes of exercise 3 or 4 times per week. After 2 or 3 weeks you can begin to gradually increase the intensity, duration, and frequency of your workouts but don't "jump ahead" too much or you'll regret it!

You know that you've been keeping on when you can successfully overcome new obstacles that get in the way and not lose the gains you've made in Step 4. Mastering this stage is crucial if exercising is to be an integral part of the rest of your life.

The techniques for keeping on are the sum of everything that got you this far. So whatever tricks work for you, use them. It doesn't matter if they're different from the ones that help your best friend or that work for Cindy Crawford or Leeza Gibbons.

Remember what we said earlier: The stage you're in changes all the time. You may work yourself all the way up to Step 5, but then you get sick or injured, or take a trip, or otherwise get distracted.

You may have fallen to Step 2. Maybe even to square one. Nothing magical about reaching the final Step 5 will keep you there. If you find yourself at some lower level, you have to use the techniques appropriate to that level to climb back up. Then you may have to use bits of them to keep on keeping on.

A couple of final points that are important. Remember that diet is a huge part of the equation when it comes to wellness, or losing weight, gaining muscle, or just getting all-around fitter and healthier. Don't get into a regular exercise routine and get cocky. You can easily sabotage your efforts by exercising and then putting a bunch of junk in your body. No junk food, fried food, sugar, white flour, and artificial ingredients. Eat plenty of healthy whole foods - lean proteins, whole grains, legumes, and only "good" fats. Also get in the habit of drinking plenty of pure water everyday. This step alone will make all the difference in the world in terms of how you feel and how successful you are with your new fitness program.

In fact, since we're talking about diet here, let's continue on a parallel path by introducing you to a great combination between diet, exercise and losing weight. I found a great article...particularly for women. Remember that being lean and fit promotes **wellness!**

Protein + Exercise May Promote Weight Loss

High-Protein Diet May Enhance Effects of Exercise in Weight Loss

August issue of the *Journal of Nutrition*

Aug. 29, 2005 -- A high-protein diet may enhance the effects of exercise in helping people lose fat without losing muscle.

New research shows obese women who exercised regularly and ate a reduced-calorie diet high in protein lost more fat and less muscle than those who ate a similar diet high in carbohydrates. Both diets contained the same number of total calories and percentage of calories from fat.

"Both diets work because, when you restrict calories, you lose weight. But the people on the higher-protein diet lost more weight," says researcher Donald Layman, PhD, professor of food science and human nutrition at the University of Illinois, in a news release.

Researchers say women on the high-protein diet also lost more weight around the abdominal area.

"There's an additive, interactive effect when a protein-rich diet is combined with exercise. The two work together to correct body composition; dieters lose more weight, and they lose fat, not muscle," says Layman.

Protein May Keep Muscle, Burn Fat

In the study, researchers compared the effects of a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet against a high-carbohydrate, low-protein diet combined with exercise in 48 obese women.

Both diets contained 1,700 calories, 30% of calories from fat, and about 17 grams of fiber.

But women on the high-protein diet substituted high-protein foods, such as meats, dairy, eggs, and nuts, for foods high in carbohydrates, such as breads, rice, cereal, pasta, and potatoes, to get about 30% of their total calories from protein.

Women on the high-carbohydrate diet, in comparison, ate about half that amount of protein and got about 60% of their daily calories from carbohydrates.

Both diets fall within the acceptable nutrient levels prescribed by the Institute of Medicine, according to the researchers.

Both groups participated in a high- or low-level exercise program. The high-exercise group consisted of five 30-minute walking sessions and two 30-minute weight lifting/stretching sessions per week.

Exercise for the low-intensity group emphasized voluntary lifestyle recommendations of a minimum of 30 minutes of walking five days/ week.

After four months, the results showed that both groups of dieters lost weight, and those who exercised more lost less muscle tissue and lost more fat.

High-protein dieters in the high-exercise group lost an average of 22 pounds and less than a pound of lean muscle. High-carbohydrate dieters in the high-exercise group lost an average of 15 pounds but lost more than 2 pounds of muscle.

But the real key to losing weight while maintaining muscle appears to be exercise.

The high-protein, low-exercise dieters lost an average of 19 pounds but lost over 4 pounds of muscle. The high-carbohydrate, low exercisers lost 17 pounds, but nearly 6 pounds of that came from muscle.

Nearly 100% of the weight lost in the high-protein exercise group was fat, while 25%-30% of the weight lost in the high-carbohydrate exercise group was muscle, says Layman.

Amino Acid Behind Fat-Burning Effect

Layman says the weight loss advantage of a high-protein diet may be its high level of the amino acid leucine. Leucine works with insulin to stimulate protein synthesis in muscle, he says.

"The diet works because the extra protein reduces muscle loss while the low-carbohydrate component gives you low insulin, allowing you to burn fat," says Layman. "Some people refer to this as the metabolic advantage of a protein-rich diet."

Getting back to the focus on exercise, here's something else to think about in terms of motivation. A personal trainer can make a HUGE difference in terms of showing you what to do and getting you on the right path. They're also great motivators. Most gyms have at least a couple of trainers on hand to create a simple workout and diet program for you. You can also usually find them in your local yellow pages. If you really want to "do it right" get yourself a personal trainer and get going!

Well that's it. The basic steps to starting a new fitness/exercise program. Remember -- start slowly, visualize success, keep it simple, and learn to enjoy moving and using your body. Most people can see significant, visible results within just a few weeks of starting a new program. Stick with it until then and you'll (hopefully) get into the positive-reinforcement cycle where you see results, get more motivated to keep going, see even better results, get even more motivated, and so on. Good luck!

Choosing the Type of Exercise

This is obviously a very important step because the exercise you choose is going to contain a number of factors to consider: What do you enjoy doing, how much does it cost, what's available in your area, do any of your friends do it. In this next section of the book, we're going to introduce you to all kinds of exercise activities that will serve you well in your goal to achieve wellness.

One of the most universal and cheapest things you can do is running. Everybody can do it and we've got a great program for you.

The Couch-to-5K Running Plan

This beginner's running schedule has helped thousands of new runners get off the couch and onto the roads, running 3 miles in just two months.

Too many people have been turned off of running simply by trying to start off too fast. Their bodies rebel, and they wind up miserable, wondering why anyone would possibly want to do this to themselves.

You should ease into your running program gradually. In fact, the beginners' program we outline here is less of a running regimen than a walking and jogging program. The idea is to transform you from couch potato to runner, getting you running 5K on a regular basis in just two months.

It's easy to get impatient, and you may feel tempted to skip ahead in the program, but hold yourself back. Don't try to do more, even if you feel you can. If, on the other hand, you find the program too strenuous, just stretch it out. Don't feel pressured to continue faster than you're able. Repeat weeks if needed and move ahead only when you feel you're ready.

A few minutes each week

Each session should take about 20 or 30 minutes, three times a week. That just happens to be the same amount of moderate exercise recommended by numerous studies for optimum fitness. This program will get you fit. (Runners who do more than this amount are doing it for more than fitness, and before long you might find yourself doing the same as well).

Be sure to space out these three days throughout the week to give yourself a chance to rest and recover between efforts. And don't worry about how fast you're going. Running faster can wait until your bones are stronger and your body is fitter. For now focus on gradually increasing the time or distance you run.

Run for time, or run for distance

There are two ways to follow this program, to measure your runs by time or by distance. Either one works just as well, choose the option that seems easiest for you to keep track of. If you go with the distance option, and you are not using a track to measure the distances, just estimate. It's not important to have the distances absolutely exact.

Before setting out, make sure to precede each session with a five-minute warm-up walk or jog. Be sure to stretch both before and after.

Couch to 5K program

Week	Workout 1	Workout 2	Workout 3
1	Brisk five-minute warmup walk. Then alternate 60 seconds of jogging and 90 seconds of walking for a total of 20 minutes.	Brisk five-minute warmup walk. Then alternate 60 seconds of jogging and 90 seconds of walking for a total of 20 minutes.	Brisk five-minute warmup walk. Then alternate 60 seconds of jogging and 90 seconds of walking for a total of 20 minutes.
2	Brisk five-minute warmup walk. Then alternate 90 seconds of jogging and two minutes of walking for a total of 20 minutes.	Brisk five-minute warmup walk. Then alternate 90 seconds of jogging and two minutes of walking for a total of 20 minutes.	Brisk five-minute warmup walk. Then alternate 90 seconds of jogging and two minutes of walking for a total of 20 minutes.
3	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then do two repetitions of the following: Jog 200 yards (or 90 seconds) Walk 200 yards (or 90 seconds) Jog 400 yards (or 3 minutes) Walk 400 yards (or three minutes)	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then do two repetitions of the following: Jog 200 yards (or 90 seconds) Walk 200 yards (or 90 seconds) Jog 400 yards (or 3 minutes) Walk 400 yards (or three minutes)	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then do two repetitions of the following: Jog 200 yards (or 90 seconds) Walk 200 yards (or 90 seconds) Jog 400 yards (or 3 minutes) Walk 400 yards (or three minutes)

Couch to 5K program

Week	Workout 1	Workout 2	Workout 3
4	<p>Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then:</p> <p>Jog 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/8 mile (or 90 seconds)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)Walk 1/4 mile (or 2-1/2 minutes)</p> <p>Jog 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/8 mile (or 90 seconds)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p>	<p>Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then:</p> <p>Jog 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/8 mile (or 90 seconds)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/4 mile (or 2-1/2 minutes)</p> <p>Jog 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/8 mile (or 90 seconds)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p>	<p>Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then:</p> <p>Jog 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/8 mile (or 90 seconds)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/4 mile (or 2-1/2 minutes)</p> <p>Jog 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/8 mile (or 90 seconds)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p>
5	<p>Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then:</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes)</p> <p>Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p>	<p>Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then:</p> <p>Jog 3/4 mile (or 8 minutes)</p> <p>Walk 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)</p> <p>Jog 3/4 mile (or 8 minutes)</p>	<p>Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog two miles (or 20 minutes) with no walking.</p>

Couch to 5K program

Week	Workout 1	Workout 2	Workout 3
6	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then: Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes) Walk 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes) Jog 3/4 mile (or 8 minutes) Walk 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes) Jog 1/2 mile (or 5 minutes)	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then: Jog 1 mile (or 10 minutes) Walk 1/4 mile (or 3 minutes) Jog 1 mile (or 10 minutes)	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2-1/4 miles (or 25 minutes) with no walking.
7	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2.5 miles (or 25 minutes).	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2.5 miles (or 25 minutes).	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2.5 miles (or 25 minutes).
8	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2.75 miles (or 28 minutes).	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2.75 miles (or 28 minutes).	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 2.75 miles (or 28 minutes).
9	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 3 miles (or 30 minutes).	Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 3 miles (or 30 minutes).	The final workout! Congratulations! Brisk five-minute warmup walk, then jog 3 miles (or 30 minutes).

We all Love to Walk, Don't We?

If the running/walking program above is not convenient, is not advised by your doctor, doesn't fit your capabilities because of knee or joint problems, here's a softer approach.

Beginning a Fitness Walking Program

Walking is one of the easiest and most profitable forms of exercise. All you need is a good pair of shoes, comfortable clothing, and desire.

Benefits of walking:

- Lowers cholesterol.
- Improves cardiovascular fitness.
- Burns calories
- Enhances bone strength.
- Reduces blood pressure.

How to start: First of all, start out slow and easy. Just walk out the door. For most people this means head out the door, walk for 10 minutes, and walk back. That's it? Yes, that's it. Do this every day for a week. If this was easy for you, add five minutes to your walks next week (total walking time 25 minutes). Keep adding 5 minutes until you are walking as long as desired.

WATCH your posture. Walk tall. Think of elongating your body. Hold your head up and eyes forward. Your shoulders should be down, back and relaxed. Tighten your abdominal muscles and buttocks and fall into a natural stride.

Be sure to drink plenty of water before, during, and after walking. Incorporate a warm up, cool down and stretches into your routine. Start your walk at a slow warm up pace, stop and do a few

warm-up / flexibility drills. Then walk for the desired length of time. End your walk with the slower cool down pace and stretch well

after your walk. Stretching will make you feel great and assist in injury prevention.

The toughest thing about starting a fitness program is developing a habit. Walking daily will help (a minimum of 5 days a week is a good goal). You should walk fast enough to reach your target heart rate, but you should not be gasping for air.

After you have formed the habit you will want to evaluate your program and your goals. Here are some general guidelines:

If you are walking for the general health benefits try to walk 30 minutes a day, most days of the week, at a "talking" pace. (Talking pace means you have elevated breathing, but you can still carry a conversation.)

To improve cardiovascular fitness you should walk 3 to 4 days a week, 20 to 30 minutes at a very fast pace. At this pace you are breathing hard but not gasping for air.

If you are walking for weight loss you should walk a minimum of five days a week, 45 to 60 minutes at a brisk pace.

Once you can comfortably walk for 30 to 60 minutes 5 to 6 days a week you may want to put more "umph" or speed into your routine.

Notice: If you're new to walking, start off with slow, short sessions and build your way up gradually. If you have any health concerns or medical conditions, be sure to check with your doctor for advice before you begin a routine.

Cross-Training for Walkers

Cross-training (participating in any fitness activity other than your primary sport) is more important and beneficial than many walkers realize. Cross training is used to improve your fitness level and stay active without over-using walking muscles.

Using a different activity can help strengthen muscles not used by walking. The result is better walking workouts and fewer injuries. One of the best ways to cross train is bicycling for several reasons:

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- 1) It's fun
 - 2) Can be done outdoors or indoors
 - 3) Benefits cardio system
 - 4) Strengthens quadriceps
 - 5) Cycling at high rates trains legs to move faster, improving walking turnover rate.

A primary fitness activity is walking and is beautifully supplemented with biking (or other aerobic activity), strength training, Pilates and Yoga. There are a variety of activities you may wish to choose from. Utilize this variety to keep your muscles moving and ward off exercise boredom.

Some popular cross training activities:

- Cycling (outdoor or stationary)
- Swimming
- Hiking
- Rock climbing
- Inline skating
- Elliptical trainer
- Stair machine
- Nordic Trak (ski machine)
- Step videos or other aerobic videos

In-Line Skating

In-line skating, or rollerblading, has skyrocketed in popularity. So what do millions of people who in-line skate know that you don't?

Benefits:

- Improves, balance, movement and coordination
- Improves cardiovascular development and lung capacity

-
- Strengthens lower back and leg muscles
 - Promotes weight loss by burning as many calories as running in one hour

What to Look for in Rollerblades

If you do not have a pair of rollerblades, you might want to try out a pair before buying. Sports rental shops often rent them for \$10-20. When you decide to buy a pair and start an in-line skating program, follow these tips:

- Make sure the skates fit firmly and comfortably.
- Find an outdoor area with a flat and relatively smooth surface when beginning.
- Learn how to turn, slow down and stop! Your skates should come with instructions on how to do so.
- As with all exercise routines, warm up first.

Stretch muscles when finished, focusing on the groin, quadriceps and hamstrings.

Jumping Rope

If you're like most people, the words "jump rope" remind you of the playground at your old elementary school. But these days, jumping rope is much more than child's play. It offers a great cardiovascular workout, builds bones and burns calories. One of the best things about jumping rope is that you have to spend very little money to get started. All you need are a comfortable pair of shoes and a rope. Try and find a rope that is light-weight and has foam grips to prevent it from slipping out of your hands. Also, be sure that, when folded in half, the rope reaches from the floor to your armpits.

Jumping Tips:

- The surface you choose to jump on will affect your workout. Jump on a wood floor or rubber mat, because those surfaces absorb shock. Stay away from concrete.

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- Turn the rope with your wrists while keeping your hands at waist level.
 - Keep your back straight and your head up.
 - Make your jumps low, like a boxer.

Build up your endurance slowly, but aim to jump for five to 10 minutes three or four times per week.

Kickboxing

Kickboxing is becoming one of the most popular ways to exercise. Also known as cardio kickboxing and boxing aerobics, kickboxing comes in many forms, only one of which is Billy Blanks's Tae-Bo. Not only is it a great adrenaline high, but it provides a great cardiovascular work and tones and strengthens muscles. In fact, the average person burns 350 to 450 calories during a 50-minute kickboxing class!__In a typical kickboxing class, you will begin with a series of stretches and a quick cardiovascular warm-up. You will then be taught punches, hand strikes and kicks, which you will perform repetitively to ensure that you have proper form. Next, you will put the moves together, increasing coordination and stability. Finally, you will be taken through a cool down and stretches.

There are several important things to remember when starting your kickboxing program.

- Beginners should not kick higher than is comfortable.
- Rotate your hips.
- Do not hold weights when punching.
- Do not lock joints when punching or kicking.

Exercise at your own pace. Do not try to keep up with other people in your class. More often than not, they are not paying attention to what you do - they are more worried about their own technique.

Pilates

Pilates, pronounced Pi-laa-teez, is an 80-year-old method of physical conditioning that features hundreds of exercises completed either on a mat or on various pieces of specialized equipment. Pilates is often referred to as the “thinking person’s” exercise. To gain maximum benefits, during each exercise you think, sense, and feel what your body is doing. For example, during any given exercise you may be asked to feel how your spine is moving, how your abdominal muscles feel, whether you are straining anywhere. With Pilates you learn to focus intently on all muscles and joints that are working.

This stimulating exercise technique for both the body and mind is now recognized globally and is a suitable means of conditioning and rehabilitation for people of all activity levels.

How Does Pilates Work?_In a nutshell, Pilates teaches people that effective exercise is about quality rather than quantity and that our bodies are integrated systems made up of interrelated parts. To truly target specific muscles or actually get joints to move properly means paying attention to efficient body mechanics.

Strengthening muscles and improving joint mobility does not happen by doing more repetitions faster and harder. Pilates is not about numbers. Rather it is about positive physical changes occurring because people begin to understand how muscles and bones work together.

The strong, integrated, Pilates-trained body is built on awareness, attention to detail, and the realization that you must always work with your body rather than against. “No pain, no gain” has no place in a Pilates session.

Who Benefits From Pilates?_Pilates-based exercise can be adapted for just about anybody - from elite athletes to those looking to keep their bodies fit and healthy to people who may have injuries.

Athletes and dancers use Pilates to stay highly tuned, injury free, and ready for peak performance. For the general public, Pilates

offers a refreshing change from more traditional types of exercise. You become stronger, more flexible, and rejuvenated WITHOUT jarring or straining your body in the process.

For those in rehabilitation, Pilates is unsurpassed. The modified Pilates exercises are restorative, safe, and beneficial._

Step-Ups

If you want to get your legs and buttocks into shape, look no farther than a step bench. It provides a workout that has the cardiovascular benefits of running but joint stress that is equal to walking. When you start a step class, be sure that your step bench is only four to six inches off the ground. Once you've mastered those heights, you can gradually increase to twelve inches. But, be sure that when you put your foot on the bench, you knee bends no more than 90 degrees.

Form is important in stepping:

- Keep your neck relaxed, but straight.
- Don't lock your knee joints.
- Maintain good posture. Do not arch your back.
- Lean from your ankles, not from the waist, as you step up.

Also, remember these safety tips:

- Put your entire foot on the step.
- Make sure your entire foot touches the floor, except in rapidly repeated movements, like lunges.
- Do not pound your feet. Pounding causes undue stress on you knees and ankles.
- Watch the platform.

Swimming

Swimming is one of the best ways to get a total body workout. It has cardiovascular, strength and flexibility components that are essential parts of being fit. The biggest advantage of swimming as a form of exercise is that water's buoyancy reduces a person's "weight" by 90%. Therefore, weight bearing muscles, bones and joints have less stress put upon them.

Ideas for Your Water Workout

- Water walking or running offers a cardiovascular workout and strength training (from water resistance). Simply stand in waist-deep water and move forwards or backwards to work different muscle groups.
- For another aerobic exercise, tread water in a neck-deep depth while moving your legs as if you're peddling a bicycle.

Use aquatic equipment to intensify your workout. Use a kickboard to target your legs or hand paddles to target your arms.

Weight Training

Once thought an activity for men only, weight training is becoming popular with both sexes as its benefits are learned.

- Weight training increases the strength of your connective tissues (tendons and ligaments), muscles and bones.
- It increases muscle mass, helping your body burn more calories so weight maintenance becomes easier.
- It increases your general strength, making daily tasks easier to perform.
- Your body becomes defined and toned.
- It decreases the risk of bone loss as you age.

When you decide to start your weight-training program, consult a trainer or someone at your local gym and have him show you proper form. Lifting weights improperly can cause serious injury.---

Beginners Weight Training Program:

- Train 2-3 times per week, training your full body in one session
- Be sure to train on non-consecutive days. Example: Monday - Wednesday - Friday
- Be sure to warm up for 5-10 minutes prior to weight training, for example, on a treadmill
- Do 1 light warm up set of 15 repetitions prior to the workout set on every exercise
- Rest after every set as long as it takes to recover from the previous set

The following is an example of a beginners weight training program (it is strongly advised that you use caution and only proceed with the following exercises under the supervision of a qualified personal trainer)

Shoulders	Machine Shoulder Press	3 sets / 12-14 reps
Back	Machine ~ Pull Downs	3 sets / 12-14 reps
Biceps	Barbell Curls	2 sets / 12-14 reps
Triceps	Machine - Cable Pushdowns	2 sets / 12-14 reps
Chest	Pec Dec	3 sets / 12-14 reps
Legs	Leg Curl	3 sets / 12-14 reps
Calves	Machine - Standing Raises	2 sets / 12-14 reps
Abdominals	Crunches	3 sets / 12-14 reps

Lifting Tips

- Warm up your body with aerobic exercise for five or more minutes before weight training.

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- Exercise each muscle group at least two times per week, leaving a two-day resting period between workouts.
 - Vary your workout by using free weights and your body for resistance.
 - Beginners should perform one set of 12-15 repetitions.
 - To build lean muscle and promote endurance, use lighter weights and perform more repetitions. To build bulk and become stronger, lift heavier weights and perform fewer repetitions.
 - Control your movements. Do not jerk or move quickly.
 - Breathe normally. Do not hold your breath.

Conclusion:

We have now laid out programs explaining three of the pillars for wellness: (1) nutrition, which is mandatory in maintaining proper weight, (2) nutritional supplements and (3) exercise. There is some combination in the book so far that will fit everybody. I don't want to lecture here, but there's no excuse for anybody to say that they just can't get it done. You **can** and if you want to achieve all the benefits of a wellness program, i.e., better appearance, better health, better self-image, feeling better, better mental and physical performance,...you will! Just think about looking **GREAT!** That should do it!

Now...**on to sleep**. Of course I mean by this, let's take on the science of sleep. But before we leave exercise, be sure that you're getting good sleep. This energizes you for each and every day's workouts. Most of the time exercise can "rev up" your body and brain and if this occurs too close to bed-time, it can lead to you being too excited to get to sleep easily. Do your routine early in the day if that is possible. If not, consider finding an all-natural (**non- prescription**) sleep aid that can provide the brain with the tools it needs to wind down and let you fall asleep naturally and gently.

Introduction to The Basics of Good Sleep

Most researchers believe sleep does something important for the continuation of life. It has a rejuvenating effect on the mind and body. Every living thing requires sleep. Without it, our mind and nervous systems begin to break down. If we stay awake too long, we become irritable and even psychotic.

I always say that sleep is the foundation to wellness and what I mean by that is that you cannot possibly be well or healthy if you are not getting the proper quality and quantity of sleep. The reasons are not obvious. It's not as simple as saying "Well, I didn't get enough rest last night and now I'm tired". Think about sleep as being one of the busiest factories in the world. When you're sleeping, the "factory of the body" is working very hard on rebuilding you for the next day. Every cell in your body is being rejuvenated, refreshed, reactivated.

When we sleep we are said to be resting, which may be a misnomer, since rest implies being idle. The internal processes going on while we sleep are anything but idle. During sleep our bodies and brains are highly active, performing an organized series of events that allow our body and brain to rejuvenate, revitalize, refresh, renew and recharge the batteries. We need a prescribed amount of sleep in order for our systems to adequately detoxify and self-repair, as well as manufacture and release hormones, which make our organs and glands function properly.

To give you a few examples, sleep is when the immune system replenishes itself after fighting off colds and flues, as well as certain types of cancers. During sleep and only during sleep, muscle tissue rebuilds and repairs itself after the wear-and-tear of the day's activities. We manufacture hormones that control our moods, keep our weight in check, give us the energy and drive to produce happy love lives and, in the process, if we choose, happy children. Imagine this: When you are tired because you didn't sleep properly, it shows on your face. How many times in your life have you been told "You look tired". The fact is, that when you don't sleep properly, it affects hormone production which, in turn, leads to actual physical changes in your skin, like bagging under the eyes and wrinkles. So when we sleep, we completely re-tool,

re-organize, refresh...rejuvenate. And, speaking of rejuvenation, did you know that the mind also gets refreshed and renewed when we sleep. That's what dreams are for, and dreams occur in a very special part of sleep.

There are two main categories of sleep.

- Non Rapid Eye Movement Sleep (NREM)
- Rapid Eye Movement (REM)

NREM sleep has four stages or depth levels. Stage One is characterized by high frequency (fast), low amplitude (small) brain waves. As we move to Stages Two, Three and Four, the brainwaves get slower and slower (lower frequency), and bigger and bigger (larger amplitude), signaling that we are getting deeper and deeper into sleep. Each stage of sleep delivers a specific renewal, rejuvenation, and recharging function for specific systems of the body.

We mentioned that most hormones are generated during sleep. One such hormone is known as human growth hormone. Scientists know that this hormone plays a major role in the way we grow, age and metabolize food. Thus this hormone has a role in helping to keep our weight under control. Are you beginning to see just how important it is to realize these deep levels of sleep?

REM sleep, on the other hand, is a period in which the eyes move rapidly and erratically underneath the eyelids. While this appears as though it is lighter sleep since the brainwaves are similar to Stage One of NREM sleep, we are almost completely paralyzed during REM.

REM sleep is associated with dreaming, and dreaming plays a major role in our mental health. There is a lot of evidence that shows dreaming is a time when the brain is processing information that has recently been gathered. There appears to be a transferring of information gained while we're awake from short-term memory to long-term memory. There's also some thought that dreams help us to resolve conflicts or chaos in our lives. While dreaming, we often deal with things that fascinate or terrify us.

During normal sleep, you cycle through these various stages approximately every 90 minutes to 2 hours. However, if your sleep is repeatedly interrupted because of a chronic sleep disorder, thus not allowing natural deep sleep to occur, there is a very good chance that you will feel tired, fatigued or sleepy and may have trouble concentrating or paying attention while awake. Also, sleepy individuals are at far greater risk for driving accidents, get sick more often and have trouble maintaining their weight. In fact, people who do not sleep well have all kinds of problems.

One thing is clear; no one can go for very long without sleep. It is not “macho” or brave to do without proper rest, nor is it “normal” to feel tired all the time. Quite the opposite, ignoring the signs of a sleeping problem is nothing short of self-destructive and the consequences are quite serious.

Consider this list of scientific observations regarding poor sleep:

- A shortened life span
- Greater risk of cardiovascular disease
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Decreased work performance
- Memory lapses
- Marital strife
- Irritability
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Problems with weight control
- Explosive outbursts
- Mood swings
- Greater risk of high speed highway crashes
- Road rage
- Accident prone
- Body aches
- Decreased sex drive; impotency
- Premature aging

If you are feeling “burned out” or if others often suggest that you “look tired”, heed the warning signs! Millions of people just like you suffer needlessly from sleep disorders that render the sleep they do get ineffective.

If you “see yourself” in the symptoms just listed, then take us seriously. And, Oh, by the way, we are going to help you...you just have to commit to letting us help you to fix the problem. Let’s take a look next at the most common sleep disorders and some of their co-morbid conditions.

Sleep Disorders:

Insomnia:

Insomnia is a catchall term for the many conditions that keep us from getting enough sleep. It could be related to trouble falling asleep, or waking up frequently during the night or early in the morning. It may be related to a one-time event, such as the loss of a job or relationship. It can be chronic, which means a critical problem over a long period of time. It occurs when we worry so much about being able to fall asleep that the thought alone keeps us awake!

Only recently have physicians and other health care workers begun to take the complaint of insomnia seriously, in large part because the vast increase in voiced concerns from patients about this condition.

Who gets it?

Anyone who has had trouble getting to sleep in the past can suffer from insomnia. They have come to equate their beds with an unpleasant nightly struggle that leaves them exhausted during the day. Insomnia has many possible causes including stress, anxiety, poor sleep habits, depression, jet lag, medications, food, and lifestyle choices such as smoking. Perhaps the biggest contributor to chronic insomnia is denial. In our 24/7 society, daytime fatigue and irritability are considered par for the course. We

attempt to get by with less sleep than our bodies and brains need. Guess what? Your lack of sleep “will catch up with you.” Eventually, those who gallop through life at full speed, despite the warning signs will run headfirst into a roadblock called poor health. There’s simply no getting around the basic human requirements our ancestors laid out for us eons ago.

Solution:

There are a number of solutions to insomnia and they all relate to allowing the body and brain to wind down...relax...slow down. Remember, as we fall asleep, the brain’s electrical activity literally slows down as we move through the various stages of sleep. In fact, if you look at a high-tech recording of brainwave activity (called an electroencephalogram), you can actually watch this phenomenon.

Sleep isn’t the only way to slow the brain down. There’s another way and it’s called Meditation. When we meditate, we consciously tell the brain to relax and go into a slower state. If you look at the brainwave activity of someone who is meditating, you will see that this activity is very similar to the brainwave activity of someone who is in the early stages of sleep.

Consider what happens when we have insomnia. We lie in bed and our brain’s race with all kinds of thoughts. We worry about the future, perhaps we’re concerned about tomorrow’s heavy schedule, we may be ruminating about the past. Because of all this “brain chatter” we get wound up and can’t fall asleep. We’re going to talk about meditation in a section that is coming up, but for now, suffice it to say that if you can learn to meditate, you can learn to relax the brain in order to overcome insomnia.

Another way to take on insomnia is through taking all-natural supplements (not prescription medications). The great thing about our bodies and brains is that there are natural hormones that occur when we wind down and the hormones direct our brains to slow down. If we over-ride these natural processes through excitement or anxiety, it may mean that we need a little help to get to sleep. Do not take pharmacological compounds (prescription

sleep medications) on a regular basis. They are habit forming and not natural. There are some wonderful all-natural supplements that you can take that have naturally occurring hormones and amino acids such as melatonin, and tryptophan. These compounds are generated by the body to help induce sleep. As we get older, it is thought that our bodies produce fewer of these sleep-inducing compounds and sometimes we have trouble getting to sleep. Essentially, properly formulated supplements can help your body and brain by introducing these naturally occurring, sleep inducing compounds. I recommend taking such a supplement along with some form of meditation and relaxation. Perhaps a massage will also add to the ultimate goal...the healing power of relaxation and sleep.

There's more to poor sleep than insomnia:

There are other conditions that also can cause poor sleep. These conditions are of an organic or physiological nature and are referred to as sleep disorders. The following is an outline of the more common medical abnormalities that cause poor sleep, and that may require the attention of a doctor.

Snoring:

Snoring is a noise produced when the pressurized breath stream passes over the relaxed tissues of the throat (most notably, the soft palate and uvula) and sets these floppy tissues into vibration. Snoring by itself is not considered dangerous, although it can disrupt the sleep of the snorer himself or herself. When someone snores, the noise can partially arouse them from the deeper stages of sleep. They may not be aware of it while they're sleeping, so they tend to deny that it's a problem (in denial). But daytime fatigue, and those attractive bags under the eyes tell a different story. That story is simply that snoring can prevent good quality sleep. Something else! Excessive and loud snoring may be a marker of obstructive sleep apnea (see definition below), which can be life-threatening. The latest studies show chronic snorers may have a greater incidence of high blood pressure (hypertension), chronic fatigue, mood disorders, low libido, heart disease, weight gain and diabetes.

Who gets it?

Snoring is not unusual among adults, male and female. In fact, about 60-percent of Americans over age fifty snore. Snoring often disrupts sleep for others in the house as well, resulting in daytime fatigue for all affected. With obesity on the rise nationally, more and more of us are snoring, which means that we are not sleeping well.

Solution:

There is an array of options ranging from simple outpatient procedures typically performed by Ear, Nose and Throat physicians (ENT's). These procedures are called Laser Assisted Uvulopalatoplasty or (LAUP), a radio-frequency procedure sometimes referred to as Somnoplasty, or a more extensive surgery known as Uvulopalatopharyngeoplasty or (UPPP). All of these procedures are intended to eliminate or reduce snoring by removing or reducing excess tissues from the upper airway. This opens up the breathing pathway making it easier to breathe during the night.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA):

"Apnea" means "no airflow." Obstructive sleep apnea occurs when the upper airway (the narrow passageway between our nose and mouth at the back of our throats and the lungs) partially or completely collapses and becomes completely or partially blocked. This causes a cessation of regular breathing for short periods of time (between five and 90 seconds). Making things worse, the person suffering OSA can stop breathing as many as 20, 30...even more than 80 times per hour.

Excessive snoring is usually associated with sleep apnea. Middle-of-the-night heart attacks, high blood pressure, stroke, cardiac arrhythmia's, diabetes, difficulty with weight control, daytime fatigue (including falling asleep while driving), poor focus, memory lapses, irritability and poor libido are all associated with obstructive sleep apnea.

Drinking alcohol can make obstructive sleep apnea worse because it relaxes the muscles in your throat and the tongue causing them to collapse even more than they might normally.

Who gets it?

It was once thought to be the scourge of primarily overweight, middle-aged and elderly men. However, researchers now realize that abnormal breathing during sleep can affect people of any age or sex. In fact, at least thirty percent of those affected with sleep apnea are not obese. Most people with the disorder have a smaller than normal upper airway and other subtle bone and soft-tissue differences, therefore, the condition can be inherited. People can also do it to themselves. Extra tissue in the oropharyngeal airway is common in overweight men with short, thick necks and that extra tissue (fat deposits) causes a “crowding” of the upper airway.

Acid Reflux:

As we grow older, some of us may experience more gastroesophageal reflux (GERD), or a backflow of acid that can give us chest pain indistinguishable from coronary disease symptoms. Shortness of breath, wheezing and coughing may also become more common during sleep and can be aggravated by sleep apnea. Nocturnal chest pain and shortness of breath can also result from heart or lung disease, which in turn are sometimes aggravated by sleep apnea.

Who gets it?

Lots of people experience heartburn after a large meal, or eating something spicy. However, because obstructive sleep apnea causes negative pressure in the chest cavity all night long, GERD is known to be a co-morbid condition with sleep apnea. Obviously, it is important to make sure your heart and lungs are in good shape and that sleep apnea is not the cause of your problems. Regular exercise may be what's needed to get your body back into shape in order to eliminate these occurrences that are keeping you from restful sleep. GERD is extremely serious and if you experience chronic and very noticeable discomfort, particularly at night, you must see a doctor.

Solution:

As we just said, sleep apnea can be life threatening. It can cause severe daytime sleepiness and symptoms of depression. Drops in the levels of oxygen in the blood during sleep, may cause awakenings among those with sleep apnea.

For these reasons, if you suspect you may have sleep apnea, you need to see a doctor. There is a small mask that fits over the nose and/or mouth called a CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure). This device provides air pressure that supports the walls of the airway during sleep. There are a number of alternative procedures or surgeries in which a doctor might remove the extra tissue to widen the airway, or treat the tongue in such a way as to prevent it from relaxing during sleep and collapsing backwards, thus shutting off or obstructing the upper airway.

Restless leg syndrome:

This is described as a chronic discomfort in the legs and feet (a pins and needles feeling). The feeling peaks during the evening and night. Those with restless leg syndrome may feel the urge to move their legs and feet to get temporary relief. As a result, this may delay getting to sleep and also cause awakenings or arousals during sleep, leading to daytime fatigue.

Who gets it?

Restless leg syndrome is a common problem among middle-aged and older adults. It is a possible indicator of kidney or liver failure, some nerve disorders, vitamin deficiencies, pregnancy, iron deficiency. It may also be associated with the use of some medications including antidepressants. The condition is more common in women than men and may be hereditary. About fifty-percent of those who have restless leg-syndrome have relatives with the same condition.

Solution:

Nutritional supplements which include magnesium, potassium, calcium, vitamin E and folic acid. Many times, the supplements need to

be in high dosages and prescribed by a doctor. There are also some prescription medications (ReQuip) that are very effective.

Chronic pain/Fibromyalgia:

As we age, the little aches and pains, the backaches, the headaches, the overall stiffness in our joints caused by arthritis, the burden of extra weight on our muscles and bones take their toll. We prop ourselves up on pillows, turn on the heating pads and swallow a handful of painkillers, desperate for relief. No wonder we have trouble sleeping!

Until recently, the terms fibromyalgia or fibrositis were not well known. Now, as baby boomers age, they have become the buzzword among physicians dealing with patients who suffer from an uncertain source of debilitating pain. Fibromyalgia is pain in the soft tissues of the body, particularly in the tender points along various muscles. Interestingly, but by no means surprisingly, the painful symptoms associated with fibromyalgia are exacerbated by poor sleep or a lack of sleep. Fatigue, sore throats, and other aches and pains are also common with this condition.

Who gets it?

Fibromyalgia is most common (80-percent) in women of childbearing age.

Solution:

Exercise is the best remedy for sufferers of fibromyalgia and those with chronic pain. Stretching out the limbs and joints can go a long way in managing the pain. Sleeping pills can actually make matters worse if taken on a long-term basis.

Shedding Light on the Issue... Circadian Rhythms: Disruption Can Lead to Disordered Sleep

Here's a term you need to know. It may well hold the key to getting the sleep you need.

Circadian Rhythms. Everyone has them. They're as old as the human species. Whether we move to the ancient beat of our internal clock in a way that promotes good rest is clearly up to us. It is also clear that millions of people do not, and as a result spend countless hours staring at the walls of their bedrooms wondering when sleep will come and then spending the next day, half asleep on the job or at school.

What doctors refer to as our "master biological clock" is really a small cluster of brain cells or neurons located in back of our eyes where the fiber tracks from both the right and left eyes cross. Thus, important visual information coming from the outside world is immediately translated for our internal systems. The amount of light received through the eyes continuously resets our clock, much in the way grandpa would set his pocket watch each morning and perhaps again in the evening. The fact is, many of us are running on clocks that are either too slow or too fast and could use a good tune up!

Recently, sleep therapists have learned how to manipulate our light/dark rhythms through use of specially designed bright lights. There are many on the market from which to choose ranging in price from \$200 to \$800. Since they are primarily for serious circadian rhythm disorders and pose a risk of eye and skin damage if used improperly, we recommend you consult with a specialist before choosing one.

The good news, however, is that natural light and creative lighting arrangements in your home and office can have similar beneficial effects as the just mentioned bright lights for most of us.

Remember, long before the invention of the light bulb or the advancement of the technological age (which brought us inside and glued to our computers), our ancestors spent most of their time out-

doors during the day and in bed by sundown. Maybe its time to revisit some of that logic. Is it time to reset your clock?

Business Travelers:

“Jet lag” is called the traveling sleep disorder. Millions of travelers struggle from what was once thought to be a state of mind. Now, however, researchers have determined that the condition actually results from an imbalance in our body’s natural biological clock, which is slow to adjust when traveling through different time zones.

Long distance travelers spend several days trying to catch up on their sleep.

There are some simple behavioral adjustments travelers can make before, during and after arriving at their destination to minimize the effects of jet lag:

- Select a flight that allows early evening arrival and then stay up until 10 p.m. before retiring that first night.
- Anticipate the time change for trips by getting up and going to bed earlier in the days prior to an eastward trip, and later for a westward trip.
- Upon boarding the plane, change your watch immediately to the destination time zone.
- Upon arrival at a destination, avoid heavy meals.
- Try to get outside in the sunlight whenever possible. Daylight is a powerful tool for regulating the biological clock (staying indoors worsens jet lag).
- Bring elements or objects from home that will make you feel comfortable, such as a picture of the family or favorite coffee mug.
- Check your room for potential sleep disturbances that may be avoided, such as see-through drapes or unwanted outside noise.

Whatever the source of your particular sleep problem, whether it be physical or psychological, everyone needs to reset their internal clock. They can do so if they follow the basic rules of good sleep hygiene. Here is a list recommended by top sleep experts:

Good Sleep Hygiene: The Basics

1. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day (including the weekends, when possible). Sticking to a schedule helps regulate your internal clock that in turn regulates your sleep-wake cycle.
2. Exercise regularly. Every healthy routine includes exercise, but this is not just about getting or staying in shape. Regular, moderate exercise deepens sleep. People who exercise for 30-40 minutes, four days a week report sleeping an hour longer and cutting in half the amount of time it took to fall asleep. However, don't exercise right before going to bed! Leave a space of about 3 hours between vigorous exercise and bedtime.
3. Turn down the sound. Many people are light sleepers, easily disturbed by noises. Wear ear-plugs or turn on a fan or white-noise sound machine to muffle external sounds.
4. Darken the room at night. Even small amounts of light may disturb sleep. Try using heavy curtains or shades to block out light and get rid of any alarm clock with a lighted dial.
5. Avoid oversleeping. Sleep only as much as you need to wake feeling refreshed. Too much sleep, which is often a symptom of depression, may leave you feeling fatigued.
6. Let natural light awaken you. Open the curtains in the morning and let in the light through clean windows. Turn on the lights in the house and let your brain and body know its time to get up!
7. Break up your sleep, if necessary. Don't be afraid to break up your sleep into two periods. A short nap in the afternoon and a longer stretch at night.

Speaking of naps:

Sleep experts generally discourage napping during the day. However, if you must nap, then do so **AT THE SAME TIME EVERY DAY FOR THE SAME AMOUNT OF TIME**. Occasional naps at various times, and naps longer than 15-minutes actually inhibit continuous sleep at night.

8. Sleep cool. Rooms that are too warm may disturb sleep.
9. Avoid caffeine. Many people have difficulty sleeping after they ingest coffee, tea, cola, or other beverages or foods such as chocolate that contain caffeine. Caffeine can have an affect on your body for up to 20 hours after ingesting it! Try a warm, herbal tea or warm milk before bed. Milk contains tryptophan, which helps induce sleep. Some aspirins contain more caffeine than a cup of coffee!
10. Limit alcohol. For some people, a glass of wine or some other alcoholic beverage helps them fall asleep. But beware! Alcohol also tends to fragment sleep and may cause “rebound” awakenings through the night. If you do consume alcohol, do so several hours before retiring.
11. Eat a snack. Hunger pangs may interfere with sleep. Try crackers and cheese, a piece of toast, or warm milk and honey to take the edge off of hunger. Carbohydrates, such as bananas and bagels, help stimulate the body’s natural sleep hormone, serotonin. Avoid foods high in protein, fat, sugar or foods that are acidic, especially if you tend to get heartburn.
12. Stop smoking. We all know that cigarette, pipe and cigar smoking are bad for your general health, but chronic tobacco use may also disturb sleep.
13. Reserve your bed for sleep and sex only. Some sleep experts recommend only sleeping in bed. Reading, watching television, doing crossword puzzles, finishing paperwork and other activities should be reserved for the living room or other parts of the house. Your mind should associate your bed with sleeping.

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14. Go with the flow. If you can't sleep, don't fight it. Go into another room and read, watch TV, or do some other activity (except for working on a computer) until you feel sleepy. Make sure the material you chose does not make you anxious or upset.

Charting the Course:

With the help of someone who knows your sleep patterns, you may come to realize just how serious your sleep problem truly is. Or, you may already be taking steps, such as cutting down on alcohol, and eliminating cigarettes and heavy food. These steps will have a profoundly positive effect on your overall health, which is tied directly to how you sleep.

Much of it truly is common sense. Sometimes we all need a little reinforcement to get our lives in order! Open your mind to the possibilities. A warm, cozy sleeping sanctuary will go a long way in helping you sleep, and providing a sensible, interesting and calming world in which your family will thrive. Oh! I forgot. Good sleep will greatly enhance your chances of achieving total wellness.

The Beauty of Meditation:

Which category would you rather fit into? The stressed sad and angry crowd, ready to lash out at anyone who gets in your way including the driver who cuts you off on the road? Or the energetic, relaxed and happy crowd-albeit a smaller group-wondering why the rest of the world is so...uptight! What's the old song..."Don't worry be Happy". Easily sung, but how do I get there? Meditation may be one of the keys.

Meditation of one style or another can be found in most of the major religions, including Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. Generally, Eastern religions have tended to concentrate on meditation as a means of realizing spiritual enlightenment. This has usually also included many health promoting practices. In the West, meditation has been embraced for both reasons, too, although many people know it most as a self-help tool for promoting good health and for stress management. Many forms of meditation result in the clearing of one's mind and this promotes a sense of calm and heightened awareness. During meditation, the brain's activity alters significantly, as mapped by a high-tech medical instrument called an electroencephalograph (EEG). The most well-known brain waves evident during many kinds of meditation are called alpha waves. These brain waves accompany relaxation of the entire nervous system. Gamma, delta and theta brain waves accompany other types of meditation and are associated with various altered states of consciousness. Scientific studies show that the regular practice of meditation can be a powerful healing tool for a range of disorders, including:

- Anxiety
- Chronic pain
- Depression
- Headaches
- High blood pressure
- Insomnia

-
- Migraines
 - Stress
 - Life-threatening illnesses
 - Recovery from accident or illness

Benefits of meditation:

- The direct benefits of meditation can include:
- Improved physical, emotional and mental health
- Focused and clear thinking
- Enhancing a sense of self and personal presence
- Increased emotional balance
- Greater relaxation and ease
- More equanimity in the face of challenges
- An improved sense of spiritual fulfillment and awakening.

Soothing the nervous system:

Resting the mind has a dramatic effect on brain activity. When the brain moves into an alpha wave state, many physiological changes occur, starting with the autonomic nervous system. One of the main roles of the autonomic nervous system is to regulate glands and organs without any effort from our conscious minds.

The autonomic nervous system is made up of two parts, sympathetic and parasympathetic. These systems act in opposite yet complementary ways: the sympathetic nervous system 'revs' the body, while the parasympathetic calms it down. Chronic stress or burnout can occur when the sympathetic nervous system dominates for too long.

During an alpha wave state, the parasympathetic half of the autonomic nervous system comes to the front. This results in lowered blood pressure and heart rate, a reduction in stress hormones and

slowed metabolism. If meditation is practiced regularly, these beneficial changes can become relatively permanent.

Research combining current technological innovations (magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI) and the talents of long-term meditators has revealed marked changes in both brain function and structure. Finding evidence of these types of changes adds Western scientific validation to many of the claims made by advanced meditators for centuries.

Different types of meditation

Meditation has evolved out of many different religions and philosophies, which means there are many different techniques to choose from. Some examples include:

- Concentrating on the breath - consciously noticing the movement of air in and out of your nostrils, or counting the breath in variety of ways.
- Emptying the mind - allowing the mind to clear and 'float', gently pushing aside any stray thoughts, or allowing thoughts to float in and out of awareness.
- Looking at an object - focusing your attention, but not necessarily your thoughts, on the shape, sound and texture of an object, such as a tree or a candle flame.
- Movement - using a physical technique like yoga, Qi Gong or Tai Chi to still the mind by coordinating the breath and the body with gentle movement.
- Using a mantra - repeating a word or phrase over and over, either out loud or silently, to focus the attention, perhaps timed with the breath.

Practicing meditation:

Whatever your preferred technique, it helps in the beginning to have a quiet place, a comfortable sitting position and around five minutes

to half an hour without outside distractions. Set an alarm if you don't want to lose track of time. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to sit cross-legged on the floor in order to meditate. You can sit in a chair or sit up in bed. You might just fall asleep, however, if you try to meditate lying down, which defeats the purpose of doing it.

Meditating every day at around the same time can help to develop a regular habit and make it easier and quicker to slip into deeply meditative states. Although you can master meditation by yourself, some people prefer to attend classes and learn in a group from an experienced teacher.

Trying too hard:

Trying to meditate is a lot like trying to sleep - attempting to force it can often make it more difficult. Thinking of a meditation session as a chance to relax rather than as a discipline you have to master can make a great difference. If your attention wanders, practice acceptance and avoid getting annoyed with yourself. Simply direct your attention back to what you are doing and experience the moment.

Where to learn:

- Yoga, Qi Gong and Tai Chi teachers
- Meditation teachers

Things to remember:

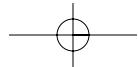
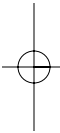
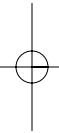
- Meditation is the deliberate focusing of attention to bring about feelings of calm, and heightened energy and awareness.
- Regular meditation offers many health benefits, such as reduced stress and reduced blood pressure.

There are many different ways to meditate, such as using a mantra, looking at an object, or focusing on the breath. If we're all worked up when we get into bed, the brain is running at top speed and of course we end up tossing and turning.

Don't Forget Massage:

If I were to ask anybody in the world to fill in the blank, I'll bet 99.9% would get it right. Try this yourself. "Getting a full body massage with all-natural oils may be one of the best ways to _____."

Hopefully, you filled in the word relax! Of course a massage helps you to relax for more than just the time that you're getting a massage. It helps to accomplish long-term relaxation and when we're relaxed, we sleep well, don't we? I guess I don't have to keep going on this point. You get it. Get a massage for yourself and don't forget a nice massage oil. It's sensual, it's relaxing, it's Heaven on Earth. Relax and Sleep Tight!



Starting Your Program Using the Five Pillars of Wellness

Let's review a series of things we've learned in the book and try and chart a course for the "New Me". This course must be something sustainable meaning that it cannot be like a fad diet where you start out with lots of enthusiasm, go all out for a few days, a week or maybe a month...then give up. This is supposed to be a book on wellness and wellness isn't something you can achieve on a part-time basis.

Something else to think about. Wellness isn't an all-or-nothing proposition. If you can take steps, even though they may be small, baby steps are better than no steps at all. Maybe the best way to take things on is to start slowly. If that's all you can manage, so be it. You'll be better off than doing nothing at all. If you start slow and find it comfortable, then you can increase your participation somewhere down the line.

Starting with the Basics:

Remember the five pillars...**Nutrition, Supplements, Exercise, Sleep** and **Meditation**. You can begin a nutrition program by making just minor changes in your eating habits... if it's too hard to physically commit, then just start thinking about food and what different kinds of food do to your body. Start by saying No! to fast food. Try to resist the urge to dash down to the hamburger stand to order a burger, fries and Coke. If you do go to a fast food restaurant in order to get a meal, at least start to look around at the food and at the people who are eating there with you. How do they look? Think about how fried foods are prepared...mostly deep fried in trans fats. Start to learn that you're not in the best of places for wellness to occur. Start thinking salad, grilled chicken and/or fish. Prepare yourself...get into the mind-set that these are good choices. Cut that fried rice portion you normally eat in half and substitute vegetables for the other half, go for fruit...not candy. No big deserts. If you have to appease the sweet tooth, try some non-fat yogurt. When you're eating, make a conscious effort to chew your food well. Don't gobble and swallow. It takes time for your brain to catch up with your stomach to find out that you are full of enough food to be satisfied. So chew and wait between

bites. You'll be amazed at the results. Just these minor changes can make a major change in your body chemistry or, if you're in the "thinking about it only mode", your thought patterns will start to change.

There is no reason why you have to go light on supplements. They're the easy part of our wellness program. Find a source for a good multi-vitamin and for an energy booster to get you revved up for your exercise program. Find an all-natural sleep aid if you have difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep. There are specific antioxidant supplements designed to boost organ function and you should take them if you feel a part of your body might be vulnerable due to either abuse over the years or because of your heritage such as a parent who had kidney disease or some other problem with their organs. You can find all-natural liver formula, breast health, prostate health, anti-cancer formulas as supplements to your diet. That's the easy part...taking supplements. Don't forget the garlic and ginger. This combination helps reduce blood pressure, aids digestion and fights cancer.

On to exercise! Remember what we said earlier in the book. Beginning an exercise program for many of us may be easier if it comes in stages, step by step. Many of these happen before you even slip on your workout shoes or enter the gym. You may be someone who wants to forget the gym in fact. Right now, if you haven't been used to exercising, look around you. Look for people who look healthy, who have their weight totally under control, who look good and are attractive. Say to yourself, "I'll bet they exercise and I know I can do the same thing". When you go to the office or to a department store, don't take the elevator or escalator. Take the stairs. Walk to lunch. Don't take a smoke break or coffee break at work in the morning...grab a bottle of water and go for a 5 minute walk. Same thing at lunch or mid-afternoon. Start a competition with yourself. How many days can I go without missing my break-time walk? It will become fun, habit-forming...addictive. And by the way, do your best to not take any smoke breaks...ever. Cut out the tobacco completely. How about the liquor? I'm not telling you to quit alcohol altogether. I am asking

you to think about how much you're drinking and to try to cut back a little bit. I've done this myself, even recently. I had an injury and in the course of healing, a doctor friend of mine gave me a little scare. He said that even moderate drinking on a daily basis is not good for your health. I started thinking about how often, the boys break out the beers in the locker room after a game. Realizing that I'm in a locker room every day, I started adding up how often I reached for a "cold one" without really thinking about it. Going along with the crowd. I have been amazed at how easy it has been for me to say "No thanks guys, I've gotta do some stuff later on". It's no big deal to say no but it's a huge deal to your health. OK...let's move along.

When you aren't busy with work or kids or spouses or friends, try to do some informal meditating. Listen to your breathing. Think about ocean waves crashing on the beach. Think about a bird gliding in the sky. Do not allow other daily thoughts about work, family, money, or stress to enter your mind. Think "soft". Do you know what this does for you. It brings you to a state of relaxation. And when you train yourself to relax, guess what comes next? The ability to sleep. The formula is this: relaxation = less stress; less stress = good sleep; sleep and relaxation = two of the five wellness pillars.

Progressing Beyond the Basics:

First of all, if you've progressed far enough to start thinking about advancing in your wellness journey...Congratulations. Now, if you want to take it further, Good for You and there's no reason why you can't. I am not going to try and lead you by the hand from here on out. All I want to say is that you can use this book to guide you along to any wellness goal that you would like to achieve. Go back to the nutrition section and find a combination of foods, weight loss diets (if necessary) and schedules that you (1) find you can do and (2) think to be the most appealing. Remember, there's no such thing as too many vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts and healthful proteins. Start slowly and increase the shift in your nutrition away from heavy carbohydrates, fats, and sugars. Yuk!!!

The same message applies to nutritional supplements as I stated in the Basics section. Find good all-natural supplements to boost your body's immune system and fight the aging process. Remember that our goal is to feel great and look even greater. Supplements are designed to help you with these efforts. That's why they're called supplements, for goodness sakes. They supplement the nutritional content of your diet.

Exercise? I laid out several work-out routines that enable you to pick from dozens of activities. A wide array of options should provide you with any number of choices that you enjoy...and that's important to the end goal...staying with a program. You can walk, run, roller blade, lift weights, attend pilates classes, swim...it doesn't matter what you do so long as you do something, hopefully on an everyday basis. Again, go into competition with yourself. If, on Day 1, you walk for 10 minutes, then stick with that for a couple of days then increase to 11 minutes for a few days, then 12, 13, 14...etc. Swim 2 laps in the pool Day 1 then several days later 3 laps...you get the picture. Don't set unrealistic goals for yourself. Be satisfied with whatever progress you make. Be consistent. Be proud. Wait about a month with this daily exercise regimen and then start looking for subtle little changes in your body. Better muscle tone, less flab and most importantly, you'll start feeling better. Natural body chemicals called endorphins get released into your bloodstream when you exercise and create what exercise enthusiasts call a "natural high". As you feel better, you're going to start looking better. Isn't it funny how this all works. Your confidence starts to grow, you have a sense of pride and achievement...you're an athlete! You look marvelous!

You Look Full of Energy!

You know what I'm going to say next. Remind yourself about the rules of good sleep hygiene that we stressed in the section on sleep. Learn to sleep 7-8 hours per night and to sleep well. Sleep hygiene and meditation can get you there. When you are using all five wellness pillars on a regular basis, you will never hear

those terrible words, “You look tired today”. No you don’t, you look fresh and full of energy.

**CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NEW YOU...YOU
HAVE ARRIVED AND ARE NOW A PERSON WHO
EVERYONE WILL LOOK UP TO AND ADMIRE.**

Got a friend? Try passing along some of this information so that you can inspire your pal to get on the path to wellness. It’s the greatest gift you can give.

