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February is Heart Month...Are You Ready?

Heart Month is here! But it isn't too late to request free Go Red For Women materials from the American Heart Association. Red Dress stickers, Go Red newsletters, wallet cards, and Go Red registration cards can help you spread the life-saving messages of the Go Red For Women movement during Heart Month.

Here are a few suggestions for activities to help you celebrate Heart Month.

- Wear your own Red Dress Pin and tell people what it symbolizes.
- Ask each of your clients in February to register for the Go Red movement. Let your clients know that when they register they will receive their very own Red Dress Pin and educational information in the mail to help remind them of the important education you provided to them during their WISEWOMAN visit.
- Place Go Red registration cards and Red Dress stickers in your waiting rooms.
- Recruit all of your co-workers, friends, and family members to sign up for the Go Red For Women movement!

To request your free materials, contact Sarah Poole at sarah.poole@heart.org or call 616-482-1508.

WISEWOMAN Program Preparing for CDC Application

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to fund state and tribal WISEWOMAN programs for the next five years.

The Michigan WISEWOMAN team is currently busy reading through the FOA to determine any program changes we will need to make for the next fiscal year. Our plan is to put together a draft of the changes by February 1. We will hold a couple of conference calls the week of February 4 to get input from you on the feasibility of those changes. We look forward to talking with you then.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Robin Roberts at 517-335-1178 or robertsrobi@michigan.gov.

Want to Stay Healthy? Try Lifting Weights

~ By Cathy Goike
District Health Department #4

When many of us hear *strength training* we think of the football player working on weight machines to build large muscles. But keeping our muscles fit is just as important as keeping our heart healthy. The bad news is muscle mass naturally decreases with age, and this will directly affect your ability to perform the activities of daily living such as putting the groceries away, mowing the yard, or sweeping the floor. If you don't do anything to replace the muscle you lose, you'll add fat. The good news is, regardless of age, simple strength training exercises can make a huge difference in your health!

"After age 30, adults lose 10 percent of their muscle mass each decade," says Edward Laskowski, MD, physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN and co-director of the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center. "Although aerobic workouts like walking or running are important, they can't take the place of strength training when it comes to building and preserving muscle."

These are other pluses for strength training:

- **Stronger bones.** By stressing your bones, strength training increases bone density and helps reduce the risk for osteoporosis.
- **Reduced risk for injury.** Building muscle protects your joints from injury. It also helps you maintain flexibility and balance with less falls.
- **Increased stamina.** As you grow stronger, you won't fatigue as easily. This will make everyday chores and activities easier to accomplish.
- **Improved sense of well-being.** Strength training can boost your self-confidence and improve your body image.
- **Improved blood sugar (glucose) control.** Studies have shown that persons with diabetes who participated in 16 weeks of strength training had improvements in blood glucose control.
- **Sleep improvement.** People who exercise regularly fall asleep more quickly, sleep more deeply, awaken less often and sleep longer than those who do not.
- **Arthritis relief.** People who participated in a 16-week strength training program reported a decrease in pain and an increase in strength.
- **Weight management.** When you build muscle you are building your body's ability to burn calories. Muscles burn more calories, fat tissue does not. Strength training can increase metabolism by as much as 15%.

Start with these simple exercises:

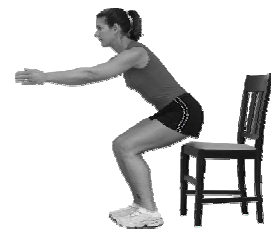
- **Wall Push Up**

Stand about 1 to 1 ½ feet away from a wall. Place hands shoulder distance apart on the wall and lower your chest towards the wall. Start with 2 sets of 10. This exercise works the upper body.



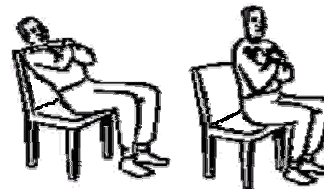
- **Chair Squat**

Sit in a chair towards the front edge. Lift your behind up off the chair and hover over the chair for 5-10 seconds. Do this 2-3 times. This exercise works the lower body



- **Abdominal Crunch**

Sit toward the front of chair, knees bent, feet flat on floor. Lean back in a half-reclining position. Keep your back and shoulders straight throughout exercise. Raise upper body forward until sitting upright, using hands as little as possible (or not at all, if you can). Start with 2 sets of 10. This exercise works your core muscles, which include the stomach and back.



The above three exercises are the bare minimum of strength training one should do. They work the three main areas: upper body, lower body, and core muscles. As you get stronger, you can add repetitions and/or sets. Before starting any new exercise program, check with your doctor.

Healthy Eating on a Budget



It's a common misperception that a healthy diet is more expensive than an unhealthy one. If your priority is a healthy diet, you can exchange the cost of nutrient-poor snacks, desserts, and soft drinks for fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Here are a few money-saving strategies for enjoying a healthy diet on a tight budget.

Plan your grocery shopping.

Most importantly, take a few minutes to plan your meals for the week. Look for bargains and coupons in the newspaper and use the Food Guide Pyramid to plan meals with lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and a small amount of protein. Try to include vegetable sources of protein, such as soy, lentils, and beans to stretch your food dollar. Then prepare your grocery list based on the ingredients needed for the upcoming week's meals. By shopping from a list, you will avoid buying non-nutritious *extras* on impulse.

Shop the perimeter of the grocery store first.

Foods around the perimeter of the store are usually fresh and minimally processed. Fill up your cart with these foods before venturing into the interior aisles which house more processed foods that are less nutritious.

Buy fruits and vegetables in season.

For good taste and savings, buy produce, especially locally grown produce, in season. To avoid spoilage, try to buy only the amount that you will be able to eat in the next few days. Frozen fruits and vegetables are a good choice during those seasons when fresh produce is more expensive.

Buy generic.

Generic store brands often are less expensive than name brands, but still offer the same nutritional value. Always check the food's unit price (that is, the cost per unit, such as ounce or pound). Unit prices are usually found on a shelf tag below the product. Purchase the brand and package size that is least expensive, based on the food's unit price. In regard to large packages, be sure that you can properly store the food so that it won't spoil before it is eaten.

Control portions.

Although single-serving packages are helpful for controlling caloric intake, they are usually more expensive than larger packages. So if you purchase large bags of dried fruit, whole grain crackers, etc., make your own single servings in re-sealable plastic sandwich bags. This is a great way to have healthy snacks on hand and to avoid the temptation to buy high-calorie foods from a vending machine or fast food restaurant.

Eat at home.

If you have time to cook during the week or to cook on the weekends and freeze foods for later use, you can avoid prepackaged and restaurant foods that are likely to be higher in calories, fat, sodium, and sugar. Not only will you save money, but you will enjoy healthier meals!

Healthy Choices for Your Snack Attack

It's 2:30 pm and you hear your stomach growl. You wander down the hall toward the vending machines to grab something sweet or salty. But beware – those extra calories can add up if your snacking involves candy bars and potato chips every day. Eating too much of the wrong kind of snacks can lead to extra weight gain and obesity, which, in turn, can increase your risk for serious diseases including cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.

Enjoying the occasional sweet or salty treat won't hurt, but it shouldn't become a daily habit. Instead, look for healthier options to satisfy cravings, for example:

- Baked sweet potato chips
- Trail mix with almonds, raisins, and granola
- Frozen fruit bars
- Rice cakes topped with peanut butter and banana slices
- Air-popped or light popcorn
- Fat-free chocolate pudding
- Pita chips and hummus and/or guacamole

Warming Up to Frozen Foods

Do you suffer from portion control syndrome? Just about all Americans do. Serving sizes have become larger and larger, and we're starting to mimic this at our own family dinner table.

One simple way to control portion sizes at home is freezing. Make a fabulous dinner for the family, serve the plates, and then freeze the rest before anyone is tempted to "go ahead and finish it."

More than just a way to control portion size, freezing food can also save you money. Buy meats in bulk (and when prices are low) and freeze them in four-ounce portions for individual servings. By planning ahead, you'll have what you need on hand, in the right portions, and for a good price.



Police Your Portions

As America continues to expand the size of its food portions – from all-you-can-eat buffets to extra-large, super-king-sized servings – our waistlines are expanding as well. Understanding healthy portion sizes can not only help you lose weight but could also help lead you to a healthier lifestyle and even reduce your risk of cancer and other diseases.

Here are a few tips to remember:

- If your meal is larger than a healthy portion size, save some for later.
- Find a friend who's willing to share a meal with you. Most meals these days are large enough for two people to share. You'll save money too!
- Don't eat straight from the bag. When snacking at home, place a few chips, cookies, or crackers in a bowl to help prevent overeating.
- Buy single-serving snack bags. Each bag is already separated into a smaller portion size for you and will help you avoid overeating.
- Instead of a bowl of chips or a handful of cookies, choose high-fiber fruits and vegetables; they'll help you feel fuller and will save on calories too.

How Can I Make Healthy Food Choices in Spite of Limited Money?

When funds are short and you have a difficult time stretching your food dollars, don't give up on healthy eating. Planning ahead and taking a few short cuts will save both your time and your food dollars. It's worth the effort for better health to learn to stretch your food dollars.

Stretching your food dollars is easy by taking a little time for planning and creativity.

- Prepare a shopping list before going grocery shopping. A list will help you avoid impulse purchases and will also help prevent extra trips to the store. A good idea is to keep a note pad near the cupboard or refrigerator to write down out-of-stock items to buy on your next trip to the grocery store.
- Before putting something in your cart, write it on your list. It may seem silly, but it will make you stop and think about whether or not you really need the item or whether it is an impulse buy.
- Check the store ads and be on the lookout for store specials. Buy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and fish when they are on sale. Foods are often on sale when they are in-season and at their freshest, an extra benefit.
- Replace staples like flour, rice, and pasta when they are on special.
- Shop after eating so you're not hungry and less likely to give into temptation.
- Read labels and compare prices to get the best buy. While you shop, use unit pricing to identify the lowest cost package size and find the brand that costs less. Remember that just because something is on sale, it doesn't mean that it is the best buy. Usually, store or generic brands are lower in price.
- Use coupons, but only for products you normally buy. Coupons can gobble up both time and money, if used unwisely.
- Incorporate less meat and more dried beans into your meals. Canned beans, such as kidney or garbanzo, may be easier to use than dried beans.
- Stock your pantry and refrigerator with quick to fix foods to save both money and time. Start with staples. Staples are foods you eat all the time, maybe even every day. Keep your pantry, refrigerator and freezer well stocked with your favorite basic foods. If you do, you will be able to make healthy meals fast. Staples for your family might be: milk, eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese, bread, tortillas, pita bread, flour, peanut butter, beans (dry and canned), lentils and peas, canned tomatoes, canned tuna fish, frozen veggie burgers, nuts, rice, pasta and noodles, potatoes, garlic, onions, raisins, fruits and vegetables (frozen, canned and fresh), and cooking oil.

Weight-loss Health: How to Stop Emotional Eating

Sometimes the strongest longings for food happen when you're at your weakest point emotionally. Many people turn to food for comfort — consciously or unconsciously — when they're facing a difficult problem or looking to keep themselves occupied.

But emotional eating — eating as a way to suppress or soothe negative emotions, such as stress, anger, anxiety, boredom, sadness and loneliness — can sabotage your weight-loss efforts. Often, emotional eating leads to eating too much food, especially high-calorie, sweet, salty, and fatty foods.

The good news is that if you're prone to emotional eating, you can take steps to regain control of your eating habits and get back on track with your weight-loss goals.

The connection between mood and food

Major life events — such as unemployment, health problems and divorce — and daily life hassles — such as a stressful work commute, bad weather, and changes in your normal routine — can trigger emotions that lead to overeating. But why do negative emotions lead to overeating?

Some foods may have seemingly addictive qualities. For example, when you eat enticing foods, such as chocolate, your body releases trace amounts of mood- and satisfaction-elevating hormones. That "reward" may reinforce a preference for foods that are most closely associated with specific feelings. Related to this is the simple fact that the pleasure of eating offsets negative emotions.

Food can also be a distraction. If you're worried about an upcoming event or rethinking an earlier conflict, eating comfort foods may distract you. But the distraction is only temporary. While you're eating, your thoughts focus on the pleasant taste of your comfort food. Unfortunately, when you're done overeating, your attention returns to your worries, and you may now bear the additional burden of guilt about overeating.

How to regain control of your eating habits

Though strong emotions can trigger cravings for food, you can take steps to control those cravings. To help stop emotional eating, try these suggestions:

- **Learn to recognize true hunger.** Is your hunger physical or emotional? If you ate just a few hours ago and don't have a rumbling stomach, you're probably not really hungry. Give the craving a few minutes to pass.
- **Know your triggers.** For the next several days, write down what you eat, how much you eat, when you eat, how you're feeling when you eat and how hungry you are. Over time, you may see patterns emerge that reveal negative eating patterns and triggers to avoid.
- **Look elsewhere for comfort.** Instead of unwrapping a candy bar, take a walk, treat yourself to a movie, listen to music, read or call a friend. If you think that stress relating to a particular event is nudging you toward the refrigerator, try talking to someone about it to distract yourself. Plan enjoyable events for yourself.
- **Don't keep unhealthy foods around.** Avoid having an abundance of high-calorie comfort foods in the house. If you feel hungry or blue, postpone the shopping trip for a few hours so that these feelings don't influence your decisions at the store.
- **Snack healthy.** If you feel the urge to eat between meals, choose a low-fat, low-calorie food, such as fresh fruit, vegetables with fat-free dip or unbuttered popcorn. Or test low-fat, lower calorie versions of your favorite foods to see if they satisfy your craving.
- **Eat a balanced diet.** If you're not getting enough calories to meet your energy needs, you may be more likely to give in to emotional eating. Try to eat at fairly regular times and don't skip breakfast. Include foods from the basic groups in your meals. Emphasize whole grains, vegetables and fruits, as well as low-fat dairy products and lean protein sources. When you fill up on the basics, you're more likely to feel fuller, longer.
- **Exercise regularly and get adequate rest.** Your mood is more manageable and your body can more effectively fight stress when it's fit and well rested.

If you give in to emotional eating, forgive yourself and start fresh the next day. Try to learn from the experience, and make a plan for how you can prevent it in the future. Focus on the positive changes you're making in your eating habits and give yourself credit for making changes that ensure better health.