

Providing your wellness committee with updates and relevant health information!

Wellness Works Coordinator's Bulletin

January 2018

Highlights from this Month's Bulletin:



What's Your Waist Girth?

The ins and outs of belly fat.

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Save the Date!

Annual Wellness Conference—Tuesday, April 24, 2018 at the Harraseeket Inn, Freeport, Maine.

Mark your calendar...we are in the process of planning the 30th Annual Wellness Conference! The conference will be held on Tuesday, April 24, 2018 at the Harraseeket Inn, in Freeport, Maine. We are still in the planning phase. In the weeks to come, we will share more details and registration information.

January is National Blood Donor Month

There are many reasons to donate blood, you don't need a special reason to give blood; you just need your own reason. Some of us give blood because we were asked by a friend. Some know that a family member or a friend might need blood someday. Some believe it is the right thing we do. The number one reason donors say they give blood is because they "want to help others. Whatever your reason, the need is constant and your contribution is important for a healthy and reliable blood supply.

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What's Your Waist Girth?

Waist girth is a horrible name for something really important to know... the measurement of your waist line! Maintaining a trim midsection does more than make you look great—it can help you live longer. Larger waistlines are linked to a higher risk of heart disease, diabetes and even cancer. Losing weight, especially belly fat, also improves blood vessel functioning and also improves sleep quality.

It's impossible to target belly fat specifically when you diet. But losing weight overall will help shrink your waistline; more importantly, it will help reduce the dangerous layer of visceral fat, a type of fat within the abdominal cavity that you can't see but that heightens health risks.



Here's how to whittle down where it matters most.

1. Try curbing carbs instead of fats.

Johns Hopkins researchers compared the effects on the heart of losing weight through a low-carbohydrate diet versus a low-fat diet for six months—each containing the same amount of calories—those on a low-carb diet lost an average of 10 pounds more than those on a low-fat diet—28.9 pounds versus 18.7 pounds.

2. Think eating plan, not diet.

Ultimately, you need to pick a healthy eating plan you can stick to. The benefit of a low-carb approach is that it simply involves learning better food choices—no calorie-counting is necessary. In general, a low-carb way of eating shifts your intake away from problem foods—those high in carbs and sugar and without much fiber, like bread, bagels and sodas—and toward high-fiber or high-protein choices, like vegetables, beans and healthy meats.

3. Keep moving.

Physical activity helps burn abdominal fat. Exercise seems to work off belly fat in particular because it reduces circulating levels of insulin—which would otherwise signal the body to hang on to fat. The amount of exercise you need for weight loss depends on your goals. For most people, this can mean 30 to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise nearly every day.

4. Lift weights.

Adding even moderate strength training to aerobic exercise helps build lean muscle mass, which causes you to burn more calories throughout the entire day, both at rest and during exercise.

5. Become a label reader.

Compare and contrast brands. Some yogurts, for example, boast that they're low in fat, but they're higher in carbs and added sugars than others. Foods like gravy, mayonnaise, sauces and salad dressings often contain high amounts of fat and lots of calories.

6. Move away from processed foods.

The ingredients in packaged goods and snack foods are often heavy on trans fats, added sugar and added salt or sodium—three things that make it difficult to lose weight.

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Key Strategies for Healthy Food Shopping

Grocery stores are full of options- some good, some not so good. Be a savvy shopper and fill your cart with what's smart for your health.

Know your store. Grocery stores group like food items. Figure out where the grocer stocks more of the good stuff and do most of the shopping there. Hint: In most stores, it's the perimeter, not the inner aisles.

Bring a list...always...and stick to it. Plan ahead. Decide which foods you need, and how much, before you go to the store. Then, don't be lured in by the chips or soda pop in aisle 7. If the items not on the list, it doesn't go in the cart of the basket.

Use the facts. Read the Nutrition Facts label on prepackaged foods you're considering. Don't forget to check out the ingredient list too.

For more healthful strategies for navigating the grocery store, schedule the "Buy Well, Eat Well" class with Abby or to learn more about the new Nutrition Facts label, book the class "A New Look for the Label." You can reach her at adipasquale@memun.org

Source: Hope Health



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January is National Blood Donor Month

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And you'll feel good knowing you've helped change a life. To learn more about blood donation and the Red Cross, please visit redcross.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

This is what you need to know to give blood. Blood donation is a simple, four-step process: registration, medical history and mini-physical, donation and refreshments. It is a safe process, and a sterile needle is used only once for each donor and then discarded. The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes. The entire process, from the time you arrive to the time you leave, takes about an hour and 15 minutes. The average adult has about 10 pints of blood in his body. Roughly one pint is given during a donation. A healthy donor may donate red blood cells every 56 days, or double red cells every 112 days. There are four types of transferable products that can be derived from blood: red cells, platelets, plasma and cryoprecipitate. Typically, two or three of these are produced from a pint of donated whole blood, hence each donation can help save more than one life.

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7. Focus on the way your clothes fit more than reading a scale.

As you add muscle mass and lose fat, the reading on your bathroom scale may not change much, but your pants will be looser. That's a better mark of progress. Measured around, your waistline should be less than 35 inches if you're a woman or less than 40 inches if you're a man to reduce heart and diabetes risks.

8. Hang out with health-focused friends.

Research shows that you're more apt to eat better and exercise more if your friends and family are doing the same.

Curious about what your waist girth could mean for your overall health? Contact Danielle to schedule the Fitness Assessments at your worksite...this is one of numbers you will find out! She can be reached at dyale@memun.org.

Source: John Hopkins Medicine