A Healthy Lifestyle to Bite Into

Time passes so quickly that sometimes seasons often take us by surprise. Warm weather brings a renewed interest in those New Year’s Resolutions we made long ago, and perhaps stopped working toward sometime during the dreary winter months. Recharge your solutions during National Nutrition Month!

Adapting a healthy lifestyle is not just great for weight loss alone, it also promotes overall health and can reduce your risk for diseases.

Tips for Healthy Food Choices

- Always at meals, fill half of your plate with plenty of fruits and vegetables
- When eating grains, make half of them whole grains (whole wheat bread/pasta, oats, brown rice)
- Choose healthy protein sources such as lean meats, poultry, seafood, beans, eggs, nuts/seeds
- When choosing dairy products, try to choose low-fat options
- Limit or avoid foods with added fats, sugars and salt

In addition to making healthy food choices, try to include physical activity as part of your daily routine. Shoot for a goal of 30 to 60 minutes 4 to 5 times per week, keeping in mind that any movement is better than sitting still when it comes to improving your cardiovascular health.

5 Best Types of Exercise to Improve Cardiovascular Health

1. Circuit/Interval Training – working out at a very high intensity, the blood starts to pump a lot harder and challenges the elasticity of the arterial wall. It is best to opt for minimal rest periods and alternate.

Kids’ Corner

Cooking More Often at Home with your Kids
We are all guilty of eating out more and cooking less at home. When you cook at home, you can make better choices about what and how much you eat. Cooking can be a fun activity and a way to spend some extra time with family.

- Start gradually. If you don’t normally cook, make it a goal to cook once a week and gradually increase it weekly.
- Add more vegetables and fruits, smaller portions of protein and grains, and don’t forget dairy, which you can make a beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.
- Always plan ahead. This will allow you to make better food choices. It’s also important to keep healthy staples on hand such as dried fruit, whole wheat pasta, frozen seafood, or no-salt added canned vegetables.
- Experiment with healthy recipes. Use fat-free or low-fat products. Also, use spices and herbs to add more flavor.
- To start managing what you eat; only place small portions of food on your plate.
2. Swimming – the pool may be a great place to float lazily along, but the water can also be a full body challenge. Swimming laps or even swim classes will not only raise your heart rate and improve cardiovascular health, but the water also provides multi-directional resistance that will improve your muscular strength and tone.

3. Running (intervals) – a steady run is obviously an excellent way to stay in shape. Running intervals will push your cardiovascular fitness to the next level. All you need is 20-30 seconds – going out for 10 seconds or a lower run for 20 seconds. Work hard enough to get out of breath, and then take a rest period to recover and repeat.

4. Cycling – a cardiovascular activity that is easy on the joints. Cycling is a low-impact exercise that you can do solo outside on the trails, on the road, or in a gym. Cycling uses large muscle groups in your legs to raise your heart rate and burns calories.

5. Weight Strength Training – this is great for building muscle mass, which will help you burn fat. Weight training is also great for cardiovascular health and bone health. Basically, when you make your muscles stronger, you make your body stronger.

*You should consult with your physician or other health care professional before starting an exercise or diet regimen to determine if it is right for your needs. This is particularly true if you have a history of high blood pressure, heart disease, or if you have experienced chest pain.*

Sources:
http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/healthy-eating/bite-into-a-healthy-lifestyle