



Wellness Program Newsletter

NCDOT— Division 13

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Planning Healthy Meals and Healthy Eating Habits— Sharon Whisenhunt, Employee Relations

Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time when possible, so you know exactly what you plan to eat. Last minute choices tend to be less healthy and higher in calories.

Healthy nutritious snacks you can add to your meal plan include crackers, pretzels, baby carrots, popcorn, fresh and dried fruit, yogurt, low-fat cheese, peanut butter, air popped popcorn cereals and nuts and seeds. Try to avoid chips, sodas, cookies, and ice cream



Drink plenty of water during the day, it is healthy and helps you feel less hungry. Some times our brain confuses thirst with hunger. You will eat less if you drink a glass of water before a meal.

Lower your fat intake. Switch to skim milk, lean chicken, no fast food, eat less margarine, butter and mayonnaise, use less oil when cooking meals.

No more soft drinks and juices. Soft drinks are empty calories and juices have less fiber and vitamins than the original fruit.

Try to add more whole grains to your meal plan. Brown rice instead of white rice and whole grain breads instead of white bread.

Avoid foods that are high in sugar, like candy and cakes. Eat vegetables with every meal.

Don't skip breakfast. Eating breakfast, as you wake up, boosts your metabolism and decreases binge eating later in the day.

Eat your meals slower and no more eating in front of the TV. Studies show that we automatically eat larger portions when we snack in front of the TV.

Eat more often to increase your metabolism

When we eat, our bodies are designed to store fat for the future when we might have less food available. If our body is starving it does everything to store fat after every meal and your me-

tabolism slows considerably.

On the other hand when your body feels you have plenty of food available your metabolism increases and your body stores less fat.

This is why starving yourself (and diets that require you to eat less than 1500 calories a day) will never work in the long run as a way of losing fat. Your metabolism will slow down and when you go back to eating like you did before the crash diet you gain a lot more fat than you lost.

So increase the frequency of your meals and the amount of healthy food you eat and you will increase your metabolism and burn more calories after each meal.

There is an added benefit to eating more meals a day - When your body digests food it burns calories, so by dividing what you would eat in a day into smaller meals and eating more often will burn more calories. You will also feel full for longer periods and it will prevent you from feeling hungry during the day.

Start eating early and don't eat late at night

You should eat breakfast as soon as possible when you wake up, this will speed up your metabolism that slowed during the night, if you don't eat breakfast your metabolism will slow even more, as your body reacts to the hunger.

Stop eating at least two hours before you go to bed. This will allow your food to digest properly and help your body rest and recuperate better from the previous day.

Remember, exercise is also an important part to losing weight. Simply walking around the neighborhood, local mall, hiking trails, high school track, etc. will make a difference in achieving your weight loss.





I Am Living Better — Steve Smith, Spindale Equipment

My name is Steve. I have been with the DOT for over 10 years. I have always been very active. I Turkey hunt. I deer hunt, and I also do a lot of fishing. For the past 5 years my job has been sitting 4 or 5 hours a day.

I have always tried to stay in fairly good shape. It was time for a complete physical. I went to the doctor and everything was good except I was overweight and had very high cholesterol. The doctor gave me a choice to take medication or go on a diet and

exercise program.

I did not even have to think about it. I wanted to get into better shape and lose some weight. I started the very next day. I walk 3 to 5 miles a day 6 or 7 days a week. I also work out 3 or 4 days a week. Now after 10 weeks it was time to go back to the doctor. I had lost 22 lbs. and cut my cholesterol 52 points. The doctor said "to keep doing what you are doing." It was a very good feeling to have done this in only 10 weeks. I still walk and

work out about every day.

I would like to encourage everyone by saying "You can do this!". Just put forth a lot of effort and keep doing it



Don't wait for something to happen before you make a change. Make a change before something happens.

"Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist but the ability to start over."

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Running My Race — for Ricky Tipton, Division Construction Engineer

As many of you likely know by now I completed my goal of running the New York City Marathon back in November. It was a great trip to take with my family, and I was very fortunate to have their support in this endeavor of running my first marathon. I would not have made it with out them. As one might imagine you have do quite a bit of running on a weekly basis in order to prepare for a marathon. My training began in earnest in June when I found out that my application was chosen in the lottery. By August I was trying to average 25-30 miles per week on the road. In September and October I was

doing longer runs on the weekend anywhere from 13-20 miles.

I was able to accomplish all of this by taking that first step. It was not that long ago that it was an effort to just walk a couple of miles. I know that running is not for everyone, but I believe there is something out there for each one of you. You might want to consider something like walking, hiking, swimming, or the gym. Whatever it is I truly believe that after some time of regular exercise you will feel better. Also, I believe that if you set some type

of goal for your exercise you will be more motivated to keep at it.



Living Forward — Pam Burnette

Okay, it is a day to day battle with me and weight loss. I am trying, but some things have thrown me off track. My little dog (Boomer) was killed at the first of this month. I was so mad for several days then I was sad and then kind of melancholy. The only thing that remained constant was that I didn't care. I didn't care if I worked out. I didn't care about much of anything. I just wanted my little dog back. Then I ended up with a pulled muscle and couldn't work out. Then I got sick with a really bad sinus infection. Then there was Thanksgiving. Could I manage to make it

through visiting family and not eating too much.

I did make it. Throughout all of this, even though I didn't work out, I did watch what I ate. I lost almost a pound over the week of Thanksgiving because I used portion control.



On November 30th, I joined Weight Watchers online. I had talked to Jessica Cantrell, Buncombe Maintenance, and after listening to how inspired she is by being with Weight Watchers, I decided I would join

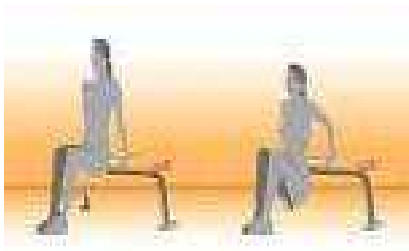
online. I did. I have been keeping up with my points but it is taking some getting used to because I have blown them twice this week, but I think with time, I will learn how to better manage what I eat and use more of the filling foods to keep my points down. Thanks Jessica.

If you would like to join, visit this site: <http://www.weightwatchers.com/Index.aspx> It has already made a difference in my life. After talking to Jessica, I am thinking about joining the meetings also.



Exercise of the Month — Beth Blazer, Division Office

Triceps Dips



Position your hands shoulder width apart on a secured bench.
 Move your feet as far out in front of you as possible or keep them at a 90 degree angle.
 Straighten out your arms and keep

a little bend in your elbows in order to always keep tension on your triceps and off your elbow joints.
 Slowly lower your upper body down towards the floor and keep your elbows tucked into your sides.

Once you reach the bottom of the movement, slowly press off with your hands and push yourself back up to the starting position with your triceps.

I like this exercise because you can do it anywhere and it only takes a minute or two; no special equipment is needed. Any bench or flat knee height surface will do.

Even if you don't have time for a full

workout, just doing short exercises throughout the day can help you stay motivated and begin to see physical changes.

Good luck!



A great after workout drink is a power smoothie. Combine 1 Cup frozen fruit, 1/2 banana, 1 Cup fat free milk, 1 scoop of whey protein. Blend in blender and enjoy.

Recipe of the Month — Jessica Cantrell, Buncombe Maintenance

Cabbage Soup



A very tasty and filling soup.

Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Onions
- 1 Tbsp Black Pepper
- 1 Tbsp Salt
- 1 Head Green Cabbage (medium)
- 1 Lbs Extra Lean Beef (cooked)
- 2 Cups Pinto Beans
- 2 Cups Tomatoes (canned)
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire Sauce

Directions:

Brown ground beef, onion, and Worcestershire sauce and drain. In stock pot combine the rest of the ingredients add ground beef mixture. Cook until cabbage is tender.

Website of the Month

Healthy meal planning is important because you can improve the nutritional quality of your diet by eating more meals at home. Healthy meal planning begins with accurate information about good nutrition and tips for applying that information to your daily life.

Visit: <http://www.mealsmatter.org/> to learn more about healthy meal planning and healthy eating.

Photo of the Month



Photo submitted by:
Beth Blazer, Division Office

Her son: Dallas. Every-day is an adventure with this little tike.

Send photos to:
 Pam Burnette at Div Office or
 Email: pburnette@ncdot.gov



Division Weight Loss Challenge

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"The healthiest part of a donut is the hole. Unfortunately, you have to eat through the rest of the donut to get there!"

The Division Weight Loss stats will be published in the next newsletter. November was our last month to join the Weight Loss Challenge, and as many of you did, it made our weight increase instead of decrease so we will have a better idea after December's weigh in of how much we have lost. I know a lot of you are really trying. Keep up the good work..



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"What fits your busy schedule better, exercising one hour a day or being dead 24 hours a day?"

Cigarette Smoking and Cardiovascular Disease — Joey Allen, Division Office

AHA Scientific Position

Cigarette smoking is the most important preventable cause of premature death in the United States. It accounts for more than 440,000 of the more than 2.4 million annual deaths. Cigarette smokers have a higher risk of developing several chronic disorders. These include fatty buildups in arteries, several types of cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (lung problems). Atherosclerosis (buildup of fatty substances in the arteries) is a chief contributor to the high number of deaths from smoking. Many studies detail the evidence that cigarette smoking is a major cause of coronary heart disease, which leads to heart attack.

How does smoking affect coronary heart disease risk?

Cigarette and tobacco smoke, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure,

physical inactivity, obesity and diabetes are the six major independent risk factors for coronary heart disease that you can modify or control. Cigarette smoking is so widespread and significant as a risk factor that the Surgeon General has called it "the leading preventable cause of disease and deaths in the United States."

Cigarette smoking increases the risk of coronary heart disease by itself. When it acts with other factors, it greatly increases risk. Smoking increases blood pressure, decreases exercise tolerance and increases the tendency for blood to clot. Smoking also increases the risk of recurrent coronary heart disease after bypass surgery.

Cigarette smoking is the most important risk factor for young men and women. It produces a greater relative risk in persons under age 50 than in those over 50.

Women who smoke and use oral contraceptives greatly increase their risk of

coronary heart disease and stroke compared with nonsmoking women who use oral contraceptives.

Smoking decreases HDL (good) cholesterol. Cigarette smoking combined with a family history of heart disease also seems to greatly increase the risk.

What about cigarette smoking and stroke and peripheral arterial disease?

Studies show that cigarette smoking is an important risk factor for stroke. Inhaling cigarette smoke produces several effects that damage the cerebrovascular system. Women who take oral contraceptives and smoke increase their risk of stroke many times. Smoking also creates a higher risk for peripheral arterial disease and aortic aneurysm.

What about cigar and pipe smoking?

People who smoke cigars or pipes seem to have a higher risk of death from coronary heart disease (and possibly stroke), but their risk isn't as great as that of cigarette smokers. This is probably because they're less likely to inhale the smoke. Currently there's very little scientific information on cigar and pipe smoking and cardiovascular disease, especially among young men, who represent the vast majority of cigar users.

What about passive or secondhand smoke?

The link between second hand smoke (also called environmental tobacco smoke) and disease is well known, and the connection to cardiovascular-related disability and death is also clear. About 22,700 to 69,600 premature deaths from heart and blood vessel disease are caused by other people's smoke each year

Contact and Information

- Pam Burnette — 251-6171
- Joey Allen — 251-6171
- Wanda Carver — 251-6171
- Beth Blazer — 251-6171
- Fran Hemphill — 298-0692
- Jessica Cantrell — 298-0390
- Jim Rogers — 251-6171
- Randy Tritt — 251-6171
- Sharon Whisenhunt — 251.6265
- Ricky Tipton — 251-6171
- Faye Marlowe — 652-7848
- Joyce Scott — 652-4024
- Suzu Mace — 682-2241

Links for Articles in this Newsletter:

- <http://www.americanheart.org>
- <http://www.mealsmatter.org>
- <http://www.weightwatchers.com>



Wellness is the effect of living optimally, and it has become the most important aspect of today's healthy lifestyle. When you fully engage your life, you recognize that living well is rewarding and exciting. You set and meet personal goals. You become ambitious and adventurous. It is a place where today is a new experience and tomorrow is a new adventure.