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★ HEALTH INFORMATION PRESENTED AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT ★

Fruit or Juice?

According to Shape Up America!, you should choose fruit at breakfast instead of juice. Cut up 1 apple to top your oatmeal (or take it with you for a mid-morning snack). Choosing fruit gives us the benefit of more fiber, providing a sense of fullness on fewer calories.

Remember: the daily goal is fullness on fewer calories.

And be sure to drink water with your breakfast—8 ounces is plenty. If you drink caffeinated beverages, like coffee or tea, remember the caffeine is dehydrating. So drinking some water with breakfast is important. You don't get any calories in plain tea or coffee. The calories are found in the milk, cream and sugar you add to your coffee or tea.

Breakfast Benefits

Shape Up America!—a national health advocacy organization—recently analyzed national data on breakfast eating in teenagers (ages 12 to 16). Specifically, researchers at Shape Up America! wanted to look at breakfast eating in very thin teenagers and compare their eating habits to those of normal weight teens and overweight teens.

What the researchers found is a stunner—especially when it comes to teenaged girls!

Believe it or not, the thinnest teenage girls are most likely of all to eat breakfast regularly. As weight increases, breakfast eating among the girls declines steadily. Breakfast eating reaches the lowest level among the overweight girls.

But the information doesn't apply only to teenagers. In fact, you may have seen recent news reports about a similar study confirming the benefits of eating breakfast in young adults (ages 25 to 37). The study of Dr. Mark Pereira and other research shows that not just any breakfast is best for weight management. Some choices are better than others—check out this model breakfast.

Start with a bowl of oatmeal (or substitute any other cereal offering about 150 calories and no less than 4 grams dietary fiber per serving). Cold cereals can work too, provided that you read the nutrition label on the box to check the calories and dietary fiber per serving. The key is to select a low-calorie, high fiber cereal, and keep your portion size under control. Aim for at least 4 grams of dietary fiber in a serving and keep your serving as close to 150 calories as possible.

Use 1 cup of non-fat (skim) milk on your oatmeal or cereal and the rest of the milk can be used in your coffee or tea. To sweeten the oatmeal, we used half a tablespoon of maple syrup, but a sugar free sweetener could be used instead.

Source: Shape Up America!

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What You Need To Know...

Help! I'm Just Getting Started With My Physical Activity Program...

Congratulations on your decision—it's a great one! Here's the best advice we can offer!

Start slowly.

Remember to start out slowly and add new activities little by little. After a few weeks or months, slowly build up your activities—and do them longer and more often. Also be sure to keep the following suggestions in mind.

Choose an activity that you enjoy.

Team up with a friend or join a class. Find more tips to help you get active.

Be realistic.

Remember: It's not all or nothing. Even 10 minutes of activity is better than none! Try walking for 10 minutes a day a few days a week.

Find a time that works for you.

Try fitting in 10 minutes of activity before work or in the evening after dinner.

Consider strengthening your heart AND your muscles.

Try some of these activities a few days a week:

- Sit-ups
- Heavy gardening (digging or shoveling)
- Doing push-ups on the floor or against the wall
- Lifting small weights (use cans of food if you don't have weights)

Have fun with your family.

If you have children, be a role model for making healthy choices. Encourage your whole family to get outside and get active – go for a hike or organize a family soccer game.

Source: The National Health Information Center



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INTERACTIVE MINDS

If You Are Trying To Help Someone Get Active

Invite them to walk with you. Start small – try taking a walk after dinner twice a week.

Get informed. Learn new stretches and warm-up exercises, find sample walking programs, and read about the benefits of exercise.

Be understanding. What is your loved one's reason for not getting active? Maybe they feel overwhelmed or embarrassed. Be patient. Let them do things on their own time. In the meantime, you can be a positive role model by staying active and eating healthy.

Recognize small efforts. Offer encouragement. Even if your loved one did not meet their exercise goals for the week, praise them for what they did do.

Choose healthy gifts. For birthdays or special rewards, choose gifts to encourage your loved one to exercise:

- ◆ New sneakers or workout clothes
- ◆ A basketball or balance ball
- ◆ Hand weights
- ◆ Pedometer
- ◆ Gift certificate to an exercise class

Source: The National Health Information Center