

# My Health, My Choice, My Life

September 2012 Newsletter



“Tomorrow Starts Today”

## Consumer Leadership Forum

- Dan Armatis, Peer Wellness Coach, Centerstone

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Dan Armatis, Middle TN Peer Wellness Coach, presenting at the Consumer Leadership Forum.

The Consumer Leadership Forum is an annual conference that provides consumer leaders with hope, inspiration, and tools to plan and evaluate Mental Health Transformation Grant (MHTG) programs. The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services received the MHTG in September 2010 to create the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* initiative. The purpose of the Forum is to enhance the capacity for consumer involvement and leadership within MHTG, and increase the knowledge and skills of consumer leaders. The Forum also gives consumer leaders a chance to network and building communities with fellow leaders across all the MHTG locations.

The Consumer Leadership Forum provided me with a great opportunity to talk about wellness and share some of my experiences as an individual with lived experience. Having this kind of platform was an excellent way to spread the word about some of the great things going on in the state of Tennessee, and how the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* initiative is introducing wellness and healthy living to hundreds of people.

As an individual with lived experience, wellness is an all-encompassing part of my life because it is what I rely on to stay healthy and happy. During the forum, I wanted to provide a simple overview of wellness basics so individuals unfamiliar with the concept could easily focus on the fundamentals without being bombarded by too much information. While it was difficult to narrow down such an expansive subject into a 15 minute speech, by focusing on the heart of wellness (such as exercise, diet and stress management), I was able to nail down the most important information. What I wanted to communicate more than anything else was how easy wellness can be achieved with just a few lifestyle changes.

The benefits of wellness are as far reaching as your desire to live a long and healthy life, by giving yourself an honest and accurate assessment of you health. This is not limited to diet and exercise. Unhealthy living habits such as smoking, consuming alcoholic beverages, and risky lifestyle choices all hinder ones ability to reach their maximum potential.

## Healthy Weight Checklist

“The Obesity Prevention Source Healthy Weight Checklist.”

Harvard School of Public Health, 2012

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/diet-lifestyle-to-prevent-obesity/>

For many, the thought of losing weight can be overwhelming. We often give up before we really try, because we do not know where to start. Harvard School of Public Health has come up with a Healthy Weight Checklist, which includes simple steps that can help keep your weight in check and even lower your risk of many chronic conditions.

### WHAT TO EAT:

Choose minimally processed whole foods:

- Whole grains (whole wheat, steel cut oats, brown rice, quinoa)
- Vegetables (a colorful variety – not potatoes)
- Whole fruits (not fruit juice)
- Nuts, seeds, beans, and other healthful sources of protein (fish and poultry)
- Plant oils (olive and other vegetable oils)

### LIMIT THESE FOODS AND DRINKS:

- Sugar-sweetened beverages (sodas, fruit drinks, sports drinks)
- Fruit juice
- Refined grains (white bread, white rice, white pasta) and sweets
- Potatoes (baked or fried)
- Red meat (beef, pork, lamb) and processed meats (salami, ham, bacon, sausage)
- Other highly processed foods, such as fast food

## Healthy Eating Plate

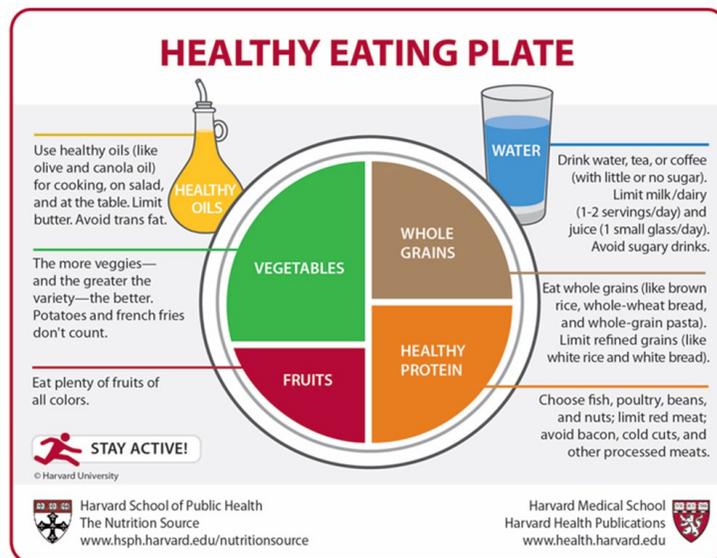
“The Nutrition Source Healthy Eating Plate and Healthy Eating Pyramid.”

Harvard School of Public Health, 2012

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/pyramid/>

The Healthy Eating Plate was designed by faculty members in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health. This new Healthy Eating Plate was designed to be an outline of how our plates should look at each meal.

- \* Fill half of your plate with produce: colorful vegetables, the more variety the better, and fruits.
- \* Save a quarter of your plate for whole grains: brown rice, whole wheat bread and pasta.
- \* The rest of your plate can be made up of a healthy source of protein: fish, poultry, beans, or nuts.
- \* The glass bottle is a reminder to use health oils: olive or canola oils in cooking and on salads.
- \* Complete your meal with a cup of water, or if you like, tea or coffee with little or no sugar.



## How to Avoid Overeating

“The Obesity Prevention Source Healthy Weight Checklist.”

Harvard School of Public Health, 2012

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/diet-lifestyle-to-prevent-obesity/>

**W**ith the obesity rate rising, and two out of three U.S. adults overweight or obese, it is apparent that many of us need to eat fewer calories. Harvard School of Public Health has come up with some tips to help us avoid overeating.

- **Eat breakfast.** While skipping a meal may seem to be the easiest way to cut calories, skipping breakfast can backfire when hunger comes raging back mid-day, which can lead to overeating.
- **Choose small portions and eat slowly.** Slowing down while eating and choosing smaller portions are great ways to help avoid overeating. By doing so, it gives the brain time to tell the stomach when it has had enough food.
- **Eat at home.** Fast food, restaurant meals, and other foods prepared away from home tend to have larger portions and be less nutritious than the foods we may cook for ourselves.
- **Eat mindfully.** An easy way to avoid unnecessary calories is to take time and think about why you are eating. If you are hungry, make the healthiest food and drink choices possible. If you are not hungry, choose something else to do or have a piece of fruit instead of eating a full meal. Limit distractions by turning off the television or computer, and focus all of your senses on the food, so that you can truly enjoy what you are eating.

## Healthy Tips

“Healthy Habits Stealth Health: Get Healthy Without Really Trying.”

MedicineNet.com, 2009

[http://www.medicinenet.com/health\\_tips/article.htm](http://www.medicinenet.com/health_tips/article.htm)

- ◇ Have a good cry. It can boost your immune system, reduce levels of stress hormones, eliminate depression, and help you think more clearly.
- ◇ Eat a handful of walnuts before bed. You'll be giving yourself a boost of fiber and essential fatty acids along with the amino acid tryptophan -- a natural sleep-inducer.
- ◇ Start each dinner with a mixed green salad. Not only will it help reduce your appetite for more caloric foods, but it also will automatically add veggies to your meal.
- ◇ Do a squat every time you pick something up. Instead of bending over in the usual way, which stresses the lower back, bend your knees and squat. This forces you to use your leg muscles and will build strength.
- ◇ Twice a day, breathe deeply for three to five minutes

## 5 Healthy Options

- Meagan Hinds, Peer Wellness Coach, Helen Ross McNabb

“5 Healthy Cereals.” *Livestrong.com*. May 5, 2011. <http://www.livestrong.com/article/435994-top-5-healthy-cereals/>

We all have days where we simply don't feel like cooking. With the growing number of pre-packaged options we see in the grocery store, it's difficult to choose the healthiest ones, and we often fail to read the food label. Many items are loaded with hidden sugars and preservatives, and choosing the healthiest option can become overwhelming. Here are 5 cereals found at the grocery store that are a healthier option.

### 5 Healthy Cereals:

#### 1. **Heart to Heart Oat Flakes and Blueberry Clusters by Kashi**

This delicious, fruity cereal is an excellent option for whole grains with added flavor. This cereal will help reduce cholesterol, because each serving has 1 gram of soluble fiber that combines with water during digestion to help remove cholesterol. The sugar count is a bit high, at 12 grams, but this is due to the natural fructose of the blueberries. At 200 calories a cup, this heart healthy cereal is a great choice for breakfast.

#### 2. **Organic Cranberry Crunch by Health Valley**

This is another fruity cereal with the added benefits of crisp brown rice. While the sugar count is also a bit high at 13 grams, added sweeteners include cane juice and organic pineapple, pear, and peach juice, which is preferred over high fructose corn syrup or artificial sweeteners. This cereal is a great option for those who eat cereals higher in sugar

#### 3. **Vanilla Almond Crunch by Bear Naked**

If you prefer a flavorful, fruit-free cereal, this is the option for you. The higher fat content, which is 2.5 grams, is due to the presence of the almonds, which is a healthy fat. This cereal has a nice crunchy texture, and the whole grains keep you feeling full until lunch, and is sweetened by using evaporated cane juice. It also contains no artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives.

#### 4. **Whole Grain Cheerios by General Mills**

This brings us to the traditional, old American staple. Cheerios is one of the healthiest cereals available. It also has the added benefit of lowering cholesterol levels. If this option is too bland for you, pair it with some almond milk or fruit for some added nutrients and flavor.

#### 5. **Shredded Wheat by Post**

This is one of the simplest cereals available, and contains no sugar or sodium. Again, if this option is too bland for you try using an alternative to cow's milk such as almond or soy milk and fruit for some added flavor.

## Fitness for Beginners

Quetta Pipkin, MS, AIM Center Fitness Specialist

**B**eginning an exercise program can be frustrating. We run out and buy expensive exercise equipment, fitness tapes, and activity tracking gadgets, only to find that we don't have the motivation to utilize any of it! Motivation cannot be bought, it comes from within you. When you are beginning an exercise program, "easy does it" is a thought that should be considered. Begin slowly. The ideal exercise time for individuals beginning a new program is 20 minutes of continued physical activity on most days of the week. Once you have arrived to the point of being physically active you can then challenge yourself to gradually increase your exercise time. Then you will find yourself on a path that leads to gradual change in your body weight, endurance, and overall health.

## Physical Activities for Beginners

Cruise, Jorge. "8 Easy Exercises for Beginners from Jorge Cruise." *Lifescript healthy living for women*. June 16, 2010.  
[http://www.lifescript.com/diet-fitness/articles/0/8\\_easy\\_exercises\\_for\\_beginners\\_from\\_jorge\\_cruise.aspx](http://www.lifescript.com/diet-fitness/articles/0/8_easy_exercises_for_beginners_from_jorge_cruise.aspx)

When you do an exercise for the first time, it is important to learn how to do it properly. Just follow these steps:

- \* Go slow with your movements at first
- \* Don't be afraid to stop and check the instructions if you forget what is next.
- \* Maintain proper form; it is critical to avoid injury.

**For more great tips and exercises go to:**

[http://www.lifescript.com/diet-fitness/articles/0/8\\_easy\\_exercises\\_for\\_beginners\\_from\\_jorge\\_cruise.aspx](http://www.lifescript.com/diet-fitness/articles/0/8_easy_exercises_for_beginners_from_jorge_cruise.aspx)

### Beginner Squats

**Step 1:** Stand between two sturdy chairs with your feet shoulder-width apart.

**Step 2:** Squat down, keeping your back straight, abs tight, chest up and knees over your ankles, through a count of 10 seconds.

**Step 3:** At the maximum tension point, hold for 2 seconds, and then return to the starting position through a count of 10 seconds.

**Step 4:** Without resting, repeat three times.



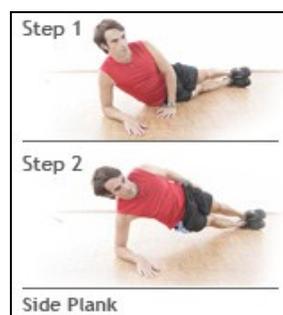
### Side Plank

**Step 1:** Lie on your side with your legs extended and left arm resting in front of you. Prop up your upper body with your right forearm against the floor.

**Step 2:** Exhale as you lift your hips off the floor, balancing your body weight on your right forearm and outer edge of your right foot.

**Step 3:** Hold for 30 seconds.

**Step 4:** Switch sides and repeat for 4 repetitions.



## My Health, My Choice, My Life Graduation Celebration!

# CONGRATULATIONS To All Our Participants!

The graduation celebration is a time for all of our participants to come together and celebrate their achievements in completing the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) workshops.



Life Care: Nashville



Health Recovery Group: Morristown



New Start: Greeneville



Friendship Place: Harriman



Maryville Wellness Recovery Center



Volunteer's Our Place: Murfreesboro



Park Center: Nashville

## Wellness Activity Corner

### NUTRITION

V X K E U W A K A K F I Y I X H D U R P  
A F E L F K Q E N J K N A S D J B I M J  
H U J F U A O N F J N D E B W O N U U Y  
I W H O L E G R A I N S N P B D B L L T  
V W B H F I C Q T V V W P R C Q C D T P  
O S S A O K K O S Q N P V O A N A K L K  
D L U B P J L E Y T O R V T Z A L B P Y  
E T Y C A T I T S W K G E E Y P O D F Z  
O S X A V R M G C G Q H G I C P R E U K  
R B E C R R M T A A G I E N F L I K P V  
A N I E K P I D R Q G L T T Z E E Y S P  
N J B B H V K D B M K H A J G S S W L H  
G Z Y P V C S M O O M S B I O X S M A N  
E B K A K P O S H D C N L P N T I G R Q  
S M Y N B T Y T Y X X I E I A U U P E M  
X M N W R P L O D O Y M S F C H W Q N U  
S T R U G O Y R R G B A X A J M N E I I  
V L P U W V K R A J G T V N O Z J V M D  
T I U R F C S A T L M I T U O F K A Z O  
V P W R I F X C E T D V R J S H Q Y Y S

|              |         |          |             |        |
|--------------|---------|----------|-------------|--------|
| Apples       | Cheese  | Minerals | Sodium      | Yogurt |
| Berries      | Carrots | Oranges  | Vegetables  |        |
| Calories     | Fats    | Protein  | Vitamins    |        |
| Carbohydrate | Fruit   | SkimMilk | WholeGrains |        |

### WORD SCRAMBLE

OTNURINTI  
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BFIER  
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ENPRATIO  
-----

CNSAK  
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GEALVETEB  
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NTIESSF  
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KRABSEFTA  
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## Stay Connected

My Health, My Choice, My Life

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