



Thursday, June 18, 2009

HEALTHIER FAST FOOD

Fast food restaurants don't have to spell disaster for dieters. Try Quiznos' Flatbread Sammies (all less than 250 calories) or a small Honey Bourbon Chicken sub (320 calories); Taco Bell's Fresco-style items (less than 350 calories); McDonald's Southwest salad with grilled chicken (320); or any of Subway's subs with 6 grams of fat or less (230-370 calories).

WEIGHT LOSS TIP

Experts say there are two basic categories of foods that can be considered "keeping it off superfoods" because they fill your tummy without piling on the calories: fruits and vegetables. For example, two whole cups of steamed broccoli packs a measly 87 calories. Or how about two cups of strawberry slices? They'll add only 99 calories. Even a denser vegetable, steamed carrots, has only 140 calories per two cups. And two cups of a denser fruit, apple slices? That's only 130 calories.

CALORIE FACT

The "Tour of Italy" at Olive Garden, with lasagna, chicken parmigiana, and fettuccine alfredo has 1,450 calories, 33 grams saturated fat, 3,830 milligrams sodium.

EXERCISE TIP

It may sound counterintuitive, but working out actually gives you more energy. Once you get moving, your fatigue will likely disappear. You're getting the endorphins [feel-good hormones in your body] to release. And you're getting the circulation going -- as opposed to coming home and crashing on the couch. It may help to work out in the morning, before you get wiped out by a demanding workday.

NUTRITION TIP

Experts say they've seen it again and again: The larger your plate, the more you're likely to put on it. So serving your meals on smaller plates can help you eat less. But don't throw out those dinner plates. Use the smaller, lunch-size plates to serve dinner, and use the dinner plates for salads.

SMOKING CESSATION TIP

One of the best ways to avoid weight gain while quitting smoking is: amp up the exercise! When you stop smoking, you can breathe better, walk better, run better. Take advantage of that! Exercise also has the additional benefit of helping you burn off the nervous energy many smokers struggle with when they quit. Studies show that people who exercise while quitting smoking gain much less weight, and are twice as likely to kick the habit as those who don't.

HEALTHY COOKING TIP

In most bakery recipes, you can replace half of the sugar with Splenda (or a similar artificial sweetener). This cuts the calories from sugar in half, saving you 48 calories per tablespoon of sugar you replace.

STRESS REDUCING FOODS

All carbohydrates prompt the brain to make more serotonin. For a steady supply of this feel-good chemical, it's best to eat complex carbohydrates, which are digested more slowly. Good choices include whole-grain breakfast cereals, whole-grain breads and whole-grain pastas, as well as old-fashioned oatmeal. Complex carbohydrates can also help you feel balanced by stabilizing blood sugar levels.

HEALTHY RECIPE

Healthy Southwest Cornbread

- *1/2 cup Miracle Whip light dressing
- *1 can (4 oz.) chopped green chilies, un-drained
- *3 egg whites, lightly beaten
- *1/2 tsp. ground red pepper (cayenne)
- *2 pkg. (8-1/2 oz. each) corn muffin mix
- *1 can (11 oz.) corn, drained
- *1/2 cup chopped red bell peppers

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix dressing, chilies, egg whites and ground red pepper in large bowl. Add remaining ingredients; mix just until moistened. Pour into greased 13x9-inch baking pan. Bake 25 – 30 min. or until golden brown. Makes 12 servings. *Each serving has 150 calories, 4 g fat and 1 g fiber.*