



Saturday, August 22, 2009

WEIGHT LOSS TIP

Only 10% of Americans consume the recommended three servings a day of whole grains. One simple way to find whole grains is to look for the FDA-approved health claim that reads, "In a low fat diet, whole grain foods may reduce the risk of heart disease and some forms of cancers." This is found on whole-grain products that contain at least 51% whole-grain flour (by weight) and are also low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. Another easy way to find whole-grain products is to look for the Whole Grain Council's whole grain stamp, which shows how many grams of whole grains are in each serving. If all of the grain is whole grain, the stamp also displays a "100%" banner.

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Do the math. A realistic goal is losing 1 to 2 pounds a week to stay healthy. That means being realistic about your time frame. If you need to lose 25 pounds, figure you are embarking on at least a three-month program. Fifty pounds? Assume a time frame of at least six months. Aim to burn 500 to 1000 calories a day either by eating less, exercising more, or both.

DOES STRESS AFFECT ALLERGIES?

Stress is your body's response to conflict or situations, both internal and external, that interfere with the normal balance in your life. Virtually all of the body's systems, including the digestive system, cardiovascular system, nervous system and immune system, make adjustments in response to stress. When you are feeling anxious or stressed, your body releases numerous hormones and other chemicals, including histamine. Histamine is a powerful chemical that can lead to allergy-like symptoms. Stress does not cause allergies, but it can make an existing reaction worse by increasing the level of histamine in the bloodstream.

BENEFITS OF FIBER

Eating a high-fiber diet may also help with weight loss. High-fiber foods generally require more chewing time, which gives your body time to register when you're no longer hungry, so you're less likely to overeat. Also, a high-fiber diet tends to make a meal feel larger and linger longer, so you stay full for a greater amount of time. And high-fiber diets tend to be less "energy dense," which means they have fewer calories for the same volume of food. Here are some high fiber food choices to try: fruits, vegetables, beans, popcorn, oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat breads and pastas.

NUTRITION TIP

What could be easier than eating air-popped popcorn as a snack? A study in the 2008 May issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* found that people who regularly ate popcorn averaged 2.5 servings of whole grains per day, while non-popcorn eaters got less than one serving.

HEALTHY RECIPE

Black Bean Salsa

- *1 can (16 oz.) black beans, rinsed, drained
- *1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen whole kernel corn, thawed
- *1 medium tomato
- *1/4 cup chopped red onion
- *1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- *1 envelope GOOD SEASONS Garlic & Herb Salad Dressing & Recipe Mix
- *2 Tbsp. chopped cilantro
- *1/2 tsp. minced fresh jalapeno pepper (optional)
- *1/4 tsp. ground cumin

Mix all ingredients in large bowl until well blended; cover. Refrigerate at least 15 minutes. Serve with tortilla chips. Store leftover salsa in airtight container in refrigerator. Makes 32 (2-Tbsp.) servings. *Each serving has 25 calories, 0 g. fat and 1 g. fiber.*