

To Your Health

Trend Watch

Physical activity/exercise will become a family affair.

Families will focus on activities that allow them to interact while being more physically active. Finding activities that are fun for everyone and making the activities a part of the regular schedule will become a top priority. Such activities may include walking, running, a friendly game of softball or soccer, kite flying, bike riding, or going to the gym as a family.

Fad diets will be overshadowed by sensibility.

Although numerous books on the latest quick fix to lose weight will continue to be published, Americans will grow wary and instead opt for sensible, lifestyle choices. Trends for 2008 will focus on achieving and maintaining a healthy weight through sensible choices and simple substitutions in lieu of the latest fat diet.

Overall, the Calorie Control Council has high hopes for consumers in 2008 when it comes to practical weight loss.

Source: Coordinated Approach to Child Health web site, from Calorie Control Council survey.

Save Money

Cutting costs is a high priority for many families. Here are some suggestions that may help you. Some won't apply to your situation; some you may be doing already. Hopefully you'll find at least *one* idea to practice.

- Feed your family healthy food choices. Keeping them healthy will help you save on medical bills.
- Plan your meals one week at a time. Then, review the grocery ads to take advantage of specials. Make a shopping list from your menu plan and the ads.
- Plan one meatless day per week.
- Eat less expensive foods; drink less expensive beverages. Look for store brand food items. Reduce the amount of soda that you drink.
- Grocery shop when you are not hungry. Shop from your grocery list. Avoid impulse buying.
- Cut your food shopping trips to no more than one a week. You will save gasoline, time, and money.
- When you shop, compare the price per unit: pound, ounce, dozen, package, serving. Take your calculator with you.
- Use fresh fruits and vegetables, 100% fruit juices, milk, air-popped popcorn for snacking. You'll be healthier.
- Grow some of your own vegetables.

Adapted from "101 Ways to Save Money," Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Quick Question:

Sports Drinks

Q. My child participates in all kinds of sports. She is convinced that she should always have a sports drink nearby? Do you agree?

A. Water is the beverage most needed by child athletes. Even during cold winter months, kids in sports can become dehydrated if they don't drink enough water before, during and after activity. Sports drinks are not needed unless your child is engaged in 90 or more minutes of continuous activity (i.e. endurance sports such as running or cross-country skiing). Your child can easily replenish the electrolytes lost in sweat with a snack of fruit and a handful of salted pretzels or nuts.

See RED on Valentine's Day

Red fruits and vegetables contain many health-promoting nutrients - including lycopene and anthocyanins. This color group may help promote: a lower risk of some cancers, a healthy heart, memory health, and urinary tract health. So, eat "red" on Valentine's Day and throughout the year.

Red fruits and vegetables include: tomatoes, spaghetti sauce, pizza sauce, tomato juice, red peppers, red onions, red beets, red cabbage, kidney beans, apples, pink grapefruit, red grapes, strawberries, cherries, watermelon, raspberries, cranberries, pomegranates.

Some ideas for Valentine's Day (or any day) include:

- Pasta with tomato sauce.
- Add red bell pepper and cherry or grape tomatoes to greens for a tossed salad.
- Change your cole slaw: add red bell pepper, red onion, apple, or make it with red cabbage.
- Make your morning bowl of oatmeal with dried cranberries or dried cherries.
- Red grapes as a side dish to your sandwich at lunchtime, or as a snack.

For additional red fruit and vegetable recipe ideas -

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

Produce for Better Health at

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Source: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

Physical Activity in Winter

To keep yourself motivated to exercise during the winter, focus on what you'll achieve. Exercise can improve your mood, increase your energy level, and help you sleep better. Try to set aside 30 minutes or more on most days of the week for physical activity. It doesn't have to be all at one time. You can work it in a little here or there. And it doesn't have to be strenuous.

Source: Food and Fun for Active Families, 2007 nutrition calendar, ISU Extension

Did you know... Impulse purchases at grocery-store checkouts such as candy and snacks add 14,300 calories a year to the average woman shopper's diet, 11,000 for men.

Source: Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, Jan. 2008