

## Editor's Letter



Many people today assume that if they exercise regularly, eat healthy, and get enough sleep...they don't need to worry about diabetes. Yes, these factors play a big role in the prevention of diabetes, but they're not the whole story. A growing number of research is finding that lots of little things can tilt your blood-sugar balance from healthy to diabetic. The good thing is they're all risks we can do something about. Here are the big nine "surprising diabetes risks" and your plan of action.

**1. Watching two hours or more of TV daily.** More TV=Less activity. People who spend a lot of time in front of the TV are much more likely to become obese and develop diabetes.

**Action Plan:** Limit your TV time to 10 hours a week and exercise.

**2. Drinking one soda a day.** Soda's got extra calories, which can easily lead to weight gain.

**Action Plan:** Switch to water, diet soda, or even better, unsweetened tea, which, research shows, may actually protect against the disease.

**3. Skipping breakfast.** Not having that a.m. meal increases levels of an appetite-stimulating hormone called ghrelin, making you hungrier and likely to eat more.

**Action Plan:** Have high-fiber cereal with low-fat milk and one-half cup of fruit in the morning. Eating high-fiber cereals can make your cells respond better to insulin. Consuming dairy products may also cut the risk for insulin resistance.

**4. A bout of major depression.** Depression may alter your body chemistry in a way that makes you more prone to developing diabetes.

**Action Plan:** Take a walk. Just 30 minutes of moderate exercise three times a week can improve symptoms of depression.

**5. A large waist-even if you're at a normal weight.** The fat in your abdomen produces compounds that make cells insulin-resistant. Women should try to keep their waist size below 35 inches.

**Action Plan:** Do 30-60 minutes of cardiovascular exercise three to five times a week. This can melt belly fat better than dieting.

**6. Waking up in the middle of the night.** Not being able to stay asleep means that you're

probably not getting enough shut-eye. This makes you more prone to developing insulin resistance, which can lead to diabetes.

**Action Plan:** Avoid caffeine in the late afternoon and evening, and TV and alcohol right before bed.

(Caffeine and TV stimulate your nervous system, making it harder to fall asleep. Alcohol can make it harder to stay asleep.)

**7. Eating fast food more than twice a week.** It can lead to weight gain, especially if you don't make healthy choices. People who eat burgers, fries, and soda more than twice a week are twice as likely to become resistant to insulin.

**Action Plan:** Satisfy your cravings for fast food with smaller portions. Try a small burger with no cheese, small fries, and a diet soda. Even better, go for a grilled chicken sandwich.

**8. High Stress.** Stress can interfere with your ability to make insulin and process glucose.

**Action Plan:** Take 10 to 15 minutes daily to relax; get a massage, practice some yoga poses, or close your eyes and do some slow, deep breathing.

**9. Consuming lots of processed meats (like hot dogs and bacon)**

These meats are loaded with preservatives that may destroy insulin-producing cells in your pancreas.

**Action Plan:** Cut back. Eating preservative-free varieties may help too.

Fitness. April 2007. Page 120.

## Monthly Fitness Tips



Why aren't more women lifting weights? This is a question we need to think about. Many, if not most, women will spend their workouts doing all cardio exercise and leave out all weight training. What we all need to know is, weight training, even if done only two times a week, is an essential part of the total wellness package. For both optimal health and fitness benefits, women especially need to do a combo of aerobic and strength training on a regular basis. What are the benefits of doing weight training? Read on to find out!

Some of the benefits like: improving muscle tone, bone density, athletic performance and strength (about 30 to 50 percent more after three to six months of training) are obvious. But there are a few

surprises: resistance training helps women fight the aging process by maintaining lean muscle tissue. Women who regularly lift weights have better self-esteem and get sick less often. Others have found that weight training improves the way the body processes sugar, reducing the risk of diabetes.

For women who want to lose weight or prevent weight gain, strength training is key. In our mid-thirties, we begin to lose 5 to 10 percent of muscle strength each decade. Since muscle burns an estimated three times more calories than fat, adding two to four pounds of muscle can translate into an extra 100 calories burned each day. A high-intensity strength routine has been shown to bump metabolism by 20 percent for several hours post-workout. Are you hooked yet? I know I am headed right to our exercise room to pick up a dumbbell☺

Fitness. December 2006. Page 50.

## Kids on the Move



**Twelve minutes.** That's how much more exercise slim kids get each day than overweight children do. Those dozen extra minutes can burn 100-plus calories, and that really adds up. Here are some "get moving" suggestions to ensure that you and your kids get those 12 additional minutes and then some!

**18 months to 5 years** Teach your child how to fly a kite. Make sure you get a good running start each time to get it off the ground. In just 45 minutes, you could burn 315 calories.

**5 to 8 years** Make it a family ritual to go for a walk after dinner. Try to head out for at least 15 minutes. If your kids protest, suggest scootering or a game of chase. In 30 minutes you can burn 139 calories.

**8 to 13 years** Be an active volunteer: jog with disabled athletes or plant flowers in your local park. In just one hour you can burn 336 calories.

**13-plus years** Give your teen's bedroom a spring update. Paint his/her room! Let them pick out a brand new color and paint the room together. In 2 hours you can burn 756 calories painting!

Fitness. April 2007. Page 82.

## Monthly Nutrition Tip

Are you a snacker? Did you know that only 30 percent of us check the calorie count of our snacks before we start eating? Yes, I found this hard to believe. Those calories from snacks really add up throughout the day. Here are some snacking tips for you snackers out there!

**Number one: choose lighter versions of your favorites.** Try baked chips instead of fried. Try low-fat popcorn instead of the regular. **Number two: buy 100-calorie packages of cookies and candy.** After eating, keep a couple in your bag for later to satisfy a sweet tooth. **Number three: Starving? Try something healthy first: drink a glass of water and eat a piece of fruit.** If your stomach is still calling for more, have a few chips or a piece of dark chocolate.

So maybe all you snackers can become smart snackers this month! Happy eating!

## Monthly Schedule



Now that spring has sprung, there are SO many more opportunities for us to exercise. We now have the great outdoors again! Make it your goal this spring to develop a good workout routine. Need a little assistance doing that? As always, I am accepting new clients here in the Cedar Rapids/Marion area. If you or someone you know is interested, please call me at (319) 447-1946. We will set up a consultation appointment and be on our way to working out. I am available on both weekdays and weekends. I look forward to hearing from you really soon!

## Web Site

Tired of surfing the Internet? How about going to a site where you can find some useful information! Check out my website today! Remember, it is constantly updated and has lots of fitness/nutrition information on it. The address to my web site is **www.fitbyjanel.com**. Be sure to tell your friends and family about this address too if they are interested in their health. Also, if you ever have any fitness-related questions, feel free to call me at (319) 447-1946. Happy surfing!