



## Nutrition Nibbles

### Exercise: Fact or Fiction?

by Kelley Colditz

It seems that today's world is filled with quick fixes and simple solutions to all of our health and fitness dilemmas. It would be great if supplements and one-move wonder exercises could trim our waistlines and cut our calories, but unfortunately many of those tricks are just out to get your cash or entice you to buy the newest magazine on the stand. This month's article challenges you to look at the fact or fiction behind many of today's popular health and fitness "quick fixes."

**Q:** Test your *Exercise: Fact or Fiction* knowledge. Answers and explanations are at the bottom. No cheating!

1. I can lose weight around my stomach by just doing crunches.  
*True? False?*
2. Running is the best and only exercise worth doing.  
*True? False?*
3. Lifting weights increases the calories I burn even AFTER I work out.  
*True? False?*
4. Exercise only counts if I get sweaty.  
*True? False?*
5. Having a snack before moderate or intense exercise is a good idea.  
*True? False?*
6. If I am going to build muscle, I have to eat a lot of extra protein.  
*True? False?*

**A:** How do you think you did?

1. I can lose weight around my stomach by just doing crunches. **FALSE.** Targeted exercise will not guarantee that the weight is lost from that area – your body will take energy from many different places while you exercise. Your body stores its extra energy in the form of fat and doesn't really know the difference between your buns or your arms when it is in search of fuel for your body. Aerobic exercises, those that get your lungs working harder, like brisk walking, jogging, biking, hiking, jump roping, even hula hooping, will help you burn more calories during your exercise session. Weight lifting builds muscle and it is important to strengthen all areas of your body for the best fitness outcome. Experiment with different techniques using weights, resistance bands, household items, or your own body weight to strengthen your arms, legs, stomach, back, and buttocks. Muscles require a lot more energy for your body to maintain. If you follow a healthy diet, your body will have no choice but to use fat for extra energy to continually "feed" your muscles!

2. Running is the best and only exercise worth doing. **FALSE.** Running is a great exercise but not the best for everyone and certainly not the only one worth doing. Not everyone has the body for running and it may put unhealthy amounts of pressure on body parts like your knees and back. If you are just starting to add exercise

### Are You A Savvy Snacker?

Snacking can sustain your energy levels and help with weight management if executed smartly. Have you ever waited too long to eat a meal and then found yourself gnawing on the kitchen cupboard and everything not nailed down in the pantry? That is an instance when having a savvy snack would have kept you on track with a healthy diet and prevented overeating later on. Make sure your snacking doesn't turn into an excuse to graze and keep that snack to around 100 calories. Here are a few snack ideas...

#### 100 Calories Looks Like:

- Half an apple or 6 wheat thin crackers with 2 teaspoons of peanut butter
- An orange and a few dry-roasted nuts
- 10 cashew nuts or almonds
- 3 ounces cooked whole-grain noodles with 1 fresh tomato and 1/2 ounce hard cheese
- 4 mini rice cakes with 2 tablespoons low-fat cottage cheese
- 1/4 cup fat-free ranch dressing with mixed raw veggies
- 1/3 cup of unsweetened applesauce with 1 slice of whole-wheat toast, cut into 4 strips for dunking
- 3 handfuls of unbuttered popcorn, seasoned with herbs
- 4-6 ounces of fat free or low-fat yogurt

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## Exercise: Fact or Fiction continued...

to your routine, start small and build up slowly by focusing on activities you enjoy. Walking can be one of the easiest activities to add since it doesn't require much besides a comfortable pair of shoes. Explore things you loved to do as a kid like flying a kite, playing on the swings, playing tag, biking, playing tennis, or swimming.

3. Lifting weights increases the calories I burn even AFTER I work out.

**TRUE!** Muscles require a constant supply of energy throughout the day and much more energy than fat to maintain...so when you build muscle, it is working around the clock to help you burn calories.

4. Exercise only counts if I get sweaty. **FALSE.** Anytime you get your body up and moving you are doing great things for your health and well-being. Sweat is your body's way of regulating your temperature. If it's cold outside or you are exercising in a cool, shady place, you may be exercising just as hard but not sweating as much as you would in the hot sun – and that is OKAY! Either way, remember to drink plenty of water before, during, and after your exercise to keep your body well hydrated.

5. Having a snack before moderate or intense exercise is a good idea. **TRUE.** If it has been awhile since you ate a meal or snack before exercising, you might benefit from a small, healthy snack before beginning your workout. Snacks like a small handful of whole wheat crackers with a thin layer of natural peanut butter, fruit, a whole grain granola bar, or half of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich can give your body a little extra energy boost to help get you through your workout and avoid feelings of light-headedness or fatigue. After a meal, your body breaks down all the

nutrients in your food and absorbs them into your bloodstream. Your blood delivers these nutrients to body parts that need them, including muscles. Extra nutrients go into storage (fat) and are not very easy to get out during intense exercise. By having a snack before you start, you give your body a little extra energy and nutrients so your muscles can work hard.

6. If I am going to build muscle, I have to eat a lot of extra protein.

**FALSE.** Tons of advertisements and supplement companies will stress the need for high protein supplements if you want to build muscle mass. The truth of the matter is that most people already consume plenty of protein in their diet if they consume healthy amounts of high protein foods like meat, eggs, nuts, beans, and dairy. These foods are important to eat and part of a well-rounded diet. They can provide your body with adequate amounts of protein to build muscles without additional supplements. When you eat too much protein, your body filters it out in your kidneys and discards it in your urine. Bottom line: Spending money on the supplements will probably just give you very expensive urine! Aim for 5-6 ounces of protein per day. Three ounces of meat is about the size of the palm of your hand or one small chicken breast. One tablespoon of peanut butter is equal to one ounce of protein. [Click here for more protein portion sizes.](#)



## Savvy Snacker continued...

A few smart snacking tips to keep you on top of your game:

o **Always be prepared!** Don't be lured by the vending machine, quick mart, or drive-thru. Keep a small healthy snack with you *at all times* in case hunger strikes.

o **Make sure the snack option you have in stock isn't too tempting.** You don't want to eat it if you're NOT hungry!

o **Schedule that snack.** Mid-afternoon is a great time for a planned pick-me-up and will prevent overeating at dinner.

### Meet Guest Author, Kelley Colditz

Kelley is a Dietetic Intern through the Bowling Green State University Distance Internship Program. She received her Bachelor's of Science in Nutrition from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo in 2009. Kelley is completing her internship throughout Northern California and looks forward to improving the lives of people in her community as well as pursuing opportunities in developing nations. As a registered dietitian (RD), she hopes to focus on influencing healthy eating habits and lifestyle choices in children and families. Kelley encourages an "everything fits" lifestyle and wants to help people build balanced lifestyles that support enjoying whole foods, staying active, and being the healthiest person you can be. Stay tuned for more newsletter articles written by Kelley!