



## Nutrition Nibbles

### In Gratitude

During this month of November and season of Thanksgiving, I think it is only appropriate that we reflect on all the things we are grateful for. Unfortunately, many of us forget that we should be thankful for our bodies. After all, without our bodies, we'd have no life, no existence! How often do we push our bodies to do more without properly taking care of them? I challenge you to turn November into your month to focus on taking care of your existence, honoring your body, and showering it with gratitude. Don't have a clue where to start? Here are a few ideas for you to try on:

#### **Keep a personal gratitude journal.**

Gratitude journals are a wonderful reminder of all the greatness in your life, big and small. Why not keep a daily gratitude journal about your body? Write down at least one thing each and every day that your body allowed you to do and one thing you actually like about your physical body. For example, you might write: *"Today I am thankful for my legs that carried me to and from my neighbor's house. I like the way my dimples show when I smile."* That wasn't so hard, was it? I bet that when you focus on the positives, you'll be more motivated to take of yourself in other ways.

**Be kind, drop the whine.** Many of us walk around sounding like a broken record. "I feel fat (fat is not a true feeling, by the way!), I hate my thighs, I can't stand my double chins, etc." I dare

you to try and go through November without bullying yourself. Don't compare yourself to your friends, your colleagues, or supermodels either. That never feels good!

**Feed and water yourself!** We're usually pretty good about feeding our pets or children and providing them with fresh water but we don't always show the same kindness to ourselves. Now is the perfect time to start! Make a vow to stop skipping meals. Allow yourself a mid-afternoon snack without guilt (see last month's newsletter for some ideas). Start and end your day with a tall glass of water. Already do these things? Pick something else to improve in your diet--add an extra serving of veggies to your dinner plate, switch to whole wheat pasta, or cut down on your diet soda habit.

**Exercise for enjoyment.** Our bodies were designed to move...so just move it already! Don't think of physical activity as punishment for the food sins you've committed, think of it as a pleasurable stress-reducer and way to reconnect with your physical being. I have yet to meet someone who wasn't pleased with themselves after a walk, some yoga stretches or a hula hoop session. Just remember to choose an activity you actually like; otherwise you'll never stick with it.

**Fend off the flu.** The hustle and bustle of the upcoming holiday season can leave our autoimmune systems

### College Corner: Trick-or-Treat

*Halloween is officially over but do you find remnants of this holiday hanging around in your dorm room or apartment? Here are some creative ways to slash your Halloween candy stash:*

- 1. Turn your candy into a service project.** Gather your goodies and donate your leftover treats to soldiers abroad. Check out Operation Care and Comfort at <http://www.occ-usa.org/occlist/index.cfm> for more information. There are two drop-off stations conveniently located in San Jose.
- 2. Stash it in the freezer for holiday baking.** "Hide" those chocolate candy bars deep in the freezer and when it comes time to bake holiday cookies, chop them up and throw them in the mixing bowl.
- 3. Send the candy to work with your friend, roommate, or neighbor.** Don't bring that Halloween candy to work with you—you don't want to sabotage your coworkers or yourself by letting that candy follow you around all day!
- 4. Turn that extra candy into seasonal décor.** Fill a large glass hurricane with candy corn and a tall candle—voila, instant decoration! String some lifesavers together to form a sweet holiday garland. Your

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## In Gratitude continued...

weakened and our bodies subject to catching colds, flus, and viruses. Fight off bugs by getting adequate rest, finding constructive ways to de-stress, staying hydrated, and adding extra vitamin C sources to your diet (citrus fruit, kiwi, tomato-based foods, broccoli, kale, fresh thyme and parsley).

**Schedule some “me time.”** As the holidays near, it is easy to get swamped with errands, shopping, appointments and chauffeuring others around. Make some sacred time for yourself. Schedule it like any other important appointment on your calendar. Guard that precious time and do something nice for yourself—read a book, take a snooze, surf the web. Do NOT use that time to do something you think you should do or need to do. Instead, do something fun! If you're really pressed for time and can't imagine carving out 15 minutes for yourself, start by blocking off your lunch break. Don't work through lunch

and don't use that time to run errands. Instead, take the 30 minutes to sit quietly (or in the company of friends) and focus on nourishing your body.

**Live like you're dying.** Unfortunately, many of us don't make taking care of ourselves a priority until we're devastatingly sick. But the fact is you are already dying, a little bit every day. Don't come to the end of your days wishing you had taken better care of yourself or done something differently. Start honoring your body now! Get more sleep, make better dietary choices, move your body more often starting this second. Enjoy better quality of life and a greater quantity of life!

I hope you are inspired to make November your month of personal gratitude—enjoy nurturing your body over the next four weeks. **Happy Thanksgiving!**

## Trick-or-Treat continued...

*friends will be so impressed with your creativity!*

- 5. Transform that candy into a series of science experiments.** Check out this one mom's "candy science experiments" at [http://www.science20.com/science\\_motherhood/top\\_10\\_scientific\\_uses\\_leftover\\_halloween\\_candy](http://www.science20.com/science_motherhood/top_10_scientific_uses_leftover_halloween_candy) These are fun ways to get your roommate to give up their Halloween treats too! Just make sure any "experimenting" you do is dorm room approved!
- 6. Toss it out!** Better to waste that candy, than to "waist it!"

*Now that you've properly handled your Halloween treat stash, stock-up on naturally sweet and filling foods, like fruit. Happy Health To You!*

## Dining In A Dash

During the holiday season, many people feel like all they do is *rush, rush, rush* from one event to another obligation. Unfortunately, most of us don't make healthy eating in a hurry enough of a priority. Here are some tips for keeping your eating choices fit in a flash:

• **Become familiar with the healthiest choices at your favorite haunts.** We tend to frequent a handful of diners and drive-thrus. Do your homework ahead of time—seek out the nutrition facts and come up with

several light "go-to" options.

- **Check out Healthy Dining Finder** at <http://www.healthydiningfinder.com/home> to find dietitian-approved menu choices on the fly. They also have a free app-based version of their services called YumPower.
- **Pack some snacks.** In for a long day of errands? Staying after-hours at work for a party? Pack an additional healthy snack (see last month's newsletter

for ideas) so that you can power-through without succumbing to ravenous hunger and subsequent overeating. Forget that drive-thru: a smart snack can tide you over until you can make it home for a sensible meal.

• **Don't drink your calories on-the-go.** If you must dine out, skip the calorie rich sodas, coffee drinks, smoothies, or cocktails. Drinkable calories don't fill us up like chewable calories do. Skipping your typical beverage and opting for water or club soda can help you maintain your figure this holiday season.

Don't let dashboard dining do you in. Even if you falter and make a poor choice, remember that the next snack or meal is a brand new opportunity to make a better choice.

## Favorite Food

Lots of people are curious about what dietitians eat when they are "off-duty." My latest find from the local farmer's market is delicata squash. Delicata squash is a beautiful, thin-skinned winter squash that is mild-tasting and easy to prepare (no peeling required!) Trim the ends of the squash, slice in half lengthwise, and scoop out the seeds.

Slice into half-moons and roast in the oven at 400°F until tender, at least 20 minutes. Toss with a little olive oil, salt, and pepper. Enjoy the roasted squash by itself or add it to your dinner salad. Delish!

