

# Spring Into Summer

May 2001

Dreaming of summer? Thinking about the beach, the sun, the sand, the swimsuit? The season of elastic waists and baggy sweaters is over and there is no doubt about it, an extra 10 or 15 pounds can make a difference. It's time to take action. Skip the fad diets—they will only leave you frustrated and hungry! Forget the "D" word. Focus instead on a healthy living approach that includes a "nutritional plan" and increased activity. Here are a few ideas to get you started . . .

## **Begin With Self Assessment**

Do you really need to lose weight? Calculate your body mass index and waist to hip ratio using the formulas on page 2. Check with your doctor before starting any weight control program.

## **Get A Smart Start With Breakfast**

Many people think that skipping breakfast saves calories thus hastening weight loss. Not true says the Mayo Clinic. According to research, chronic breakfast skippers actually burn an average 150 fewer calories in a days time than breakfast eaters—even when both consume the same total calories. Why? Your metabolic rate slows at night and doesn't speed up again until you eat. If your first meal of the day is lunch, that's 3 or 4 hours that your body is burning calories at a lower rate. So, start with breakfast and keep your metabolic rate high throughout the day with small meals and snacks.

## **Base It On Fruits & Vegetables**

The Mayo Clinic has developed a new Healthy Weight Pyramid™ that emphasizes the importance of fruits and vegetables. It places them at the base of the pyramid instead of breads and cereals. Why? Because vegetables and fruit are low in calories and high in "health-enhancing" nutrients like vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals. According to the Healthy Weight Pyramid™, vegetables and fruits can be eaten in unlimited amounts. See [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com) for details.

## **Low Fat, Not Fat Free**

Some fat in a meal provides satiety value—that means it can keep you from feeling hungry too quickly. So eat "good for you" fats and keep the fat calories between 20 and 30% of your total calorie intake.

## **Let Water Work for You**

The water content of foods may play a critical role in weight control. Dehydration stimulates the appetite and eating foods with a high water content (like an apple or soup) fills you up better than drinking water to wash down dry foods (like granola bars).

## **Got Milk?**

According to the National Dairy Council there is "a growing body of research indicating that calcium from dairy foods may help with weight loss." The new dietary guidelines set the calcium requirement for healthy adults (ages 19-50) at 1000 mg daily. Enjoy a variety of dairy products and make them fat free or at least low fat.

**Exercise Every Day**

Exercise helps in two ways. First you are burning calories while you exercise. Then, even after the activity is over there is a second elevation in metabolic rate that could last as long as 12 hours or more. The length of time metabolism stays increased will depend on the intensity of the activity and the muscle groups involved.

Start today and set yourself up for success. If you need a little help with your weight management program, call 548-9112 for an appointment with the University Dietitian.

*Kate Cerulli*

University Dietitian