MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

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FROM THE EDITOR

Life is all about the choices we make, and our health is no exception. Even most health risks that seem unavoidable, like being exposed to the flu in a crowded elevator, or hereditary predisposition to a certain type of cancer, aren't completely beyond our control. Often there is some precaution we can take to improve our chances of staying healthy, such as using the stairs in flu season, or following a careful diet. The truth is, we could avoid most health problems, including that nasty flu, without going to extremes. In most cases, healthy living is a matter of consistently doing a few basic things to keep our bodies strong and our resistance high.

So why don't we take better care of ourselves then? We each have our reasons, but they usually come down to "it's too hard" or "it takes too long." So we excuse ourselves by underestimating the danger and overestimating our strength. "I didn't catch the last thing that went around." "I'm in better shape than most people my age." "Surely that won't happen to me." But eventually it does happen, and we wish we'd made the effort or taken the time. Even if we just get run down and not actually sick, we operate at less than our full potential, which means we get less out of life and have less to give.

The good news is that our bodies are remarkably resilient, with built-in early warning, defense, and healing mechanisms. We also have common sense, collective experience, and general guidelines for good health, and men and women of science continue to make discoveries that fill in many details.

Do you want to feel better, perform better, look better, and live longer? The articles in this issue of *Motivated* on healthy living should get you on your way.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

Healthy Living

The power of two

By Leanna Silver

I woke up feeling exhausted, even though I'd just slept for over an hour in the middle of the day—something I rarely do.

What's wrong with me? I wondered. Am I getting sick? I checked my temperature. That wasn't it.

I had work to do, but couldn't focus. Then it came to me, "Do a diet recall."

It was easy to remember what I'd eaten that day—half a piece of toast and a cup of tea in the morning. I glanced at my watch. It was 4 pm.

I had been busy, I told myself. How was I supposed to fit in eating on top of everything else I had to do?

I'm one of those "lucky" people with a fast metabolism. It's always been harder for me to gain weight than to lose it. I needed to eat frequently to keep up my energy and weight, but rarely ate very much at one time. And if a meal didn't suit my taste buds or I was going through an emotional ordeal, I would skip it altogether. My "normal" small meals and snacks gradually tapered off until I was eating almost nothing.

As a result, my energy level was always low, I got sick frequently, and had a hard time recovering. I was finding it harder and harder to exercise, or even to get up in the morning. I had a problem, and it was getting worse.

The solution was obvious—I needed to eat better—but I was bound by bad habits. I thought about the situation, and decided I needed to ask for help from a friend.

At first, I was irritated by the "intrusive" phone calls and text messages from the friend that I had taken into my confidence. I had to keep telling myself that she was only concerned and that I needed her to check on me. Gradually, I grew to appreciate hearing from her frequently, inquiring what I'd eaten that day.

Whether it's a matter of losing weight, gaining weight, exercising more, or simply eating better, try to solicit the help of a friend or family member. And most importantly, find and do whatever it is you need to do to live a healthy lifestyle. It will make a big difference! ❖

Getting and Staying in Shape

Keeping fit is a lifestyle

By Lilia Potters

I'm not a health fanatic or exercise junky, but I've always been health conscious. I tried to maintain a healthful diet and include some exercise into my daily routine as much as possible. As a result, I've been reasonably healthy and in fairly good shape—until a couple of years ago that is.

My circumstances changed and I suddenly found myself frantically trying to cope with stressful situations and increased responsibilities. I still tried to be mindful of my health, but exercise was not happening—not regularly at least—and more fattening and less nutritious fare became more the rule than the exception.

I had the best of intentions, and tried to keep things under control, but after not exercising, and indulging in less healthful food choices more frequently, my energy level kept decreasing while that needle on the scale kept creeping up until one day I realized I'd never weighed that much before.

I am very thankful for the encouragement of my daughter, a fitness buff, who helped me turn things around at that time. She selected a 30-minute workout program that I could do at home, and she checked me on my eating habits. It was not easy to start and remain consistent, but once I got into a routine, I actually missed that half hour of vigorous exercise at the start of each day.

I cut out almost all sweets, except for an occasional square of dark chocolate when my sweet tooth got the best of me, and one day on the weekends when I allowed myself a few special treats. I also started eating less starchy foods and more fruits, veggies, and protein.

It didn't happen overnight, but I am happy to report that I lost about 20 pounds over the period of a year. I not only look better, but I feel much healthier and more energetic!

Of course, the goal is to make eating right and getting proper exercise lifelong habits—not just something we do for a few days or a few weeks until we lose a few inches from our waist or drop a dress size or two. Unless we correct the habits that brought on those extra inches, they will soon be back.

In some cases, we might need to undertake a short-term program to get healthier or lose weight, but then we need to build new long-term health habits if we want to hold on to the ground we've gained.

Replacing poor health habits with new ones takes determination, but the payoff in greater vitality makes it self-sustaining, and we soon feel so much better that we want to keep doing the things that make us feel that way.

Answers to Your Questions
Starting an exercise program

Q: I want to get in better shape, but don't know where to start. How much exercise is enough? What type of exercise is best, and how much time do I need to spend on it?

A: The answers to those questions depend on a number of factors, including your age, general health, present fitness level, and metabolism. There are, however, a few general guidelines for a successful exercise program.

✔ Find one or more forms of exercise that you enjoy, because then you're more likely to stick with it.

✔ Start slow, with modest goals, and build up gradually. You can't become fit from one day to the next. Expecting too much too soon is likely to result in injury and discouragement.

✔ Your program should combine cardiovascular exercise to strengthen the respiratory system with resistance exercise to strengthen muscles and bones.

✔ It needs to be regular (three to four times a week is great)

✔ It needs to be for an extended period of time (start with 30 minutes and build up from there).

✔ It needs to be vigorous enough to get your heart pumping and make you break a sweat.

✔ Warm up at the beginning of your exercise routine, and cool down at the end.

✔ Inform yourself. Understand the benefits and potential risks of the specific exercises you'd like to do. Get your information from respected sources, shy away from sources that advocate extremes, and balance the advice given by several sources, when possible.

✔ Have a plan. Choose your forms of exercise, make a realistic plan, and stick to it.

✔ Change your routine from time to time. Your body adapts to any form of exercise over time, and then that exercise loses some of its benefits.

✔ If you are over 40, seriously overweight or out of shape, or suffering from a medical condition, consult your doctor before starting on a new exercise program. ❖

The people who say they don't have time to take care of themselves will soon discover they're spending all their time being sick. —Patricia Alexander

Obesity

Once a **symbol** of **wealth,** now a **danger** to **health**

Obesity is a massive danger to health. It is the primary driver for the development of type 2 diabetes, promotes high blood pressure, increases the risk of heart disease, and is one of the bigger preventable causes of cancer.

Many healthcare professionals also consider obesity to be a disease in itself. As one researcher put it, "it shortens life, causes painful symptoms and other health complications, and puts people at risk for other diseases."

And it is a worldwide problem. According to the most recent World Health Organization global statistics, more than 1.4 billion adults are overweight. Of these, over 500 million adults are obese, and more than 40 million children under the age of five are overweight or obese.

Obesity is not only a health risk. For thousands of years it has also acted as a powerful social and cultural symbol.

But what it has symbolized has shifted remarkably over time. While in the past being overweight could be seen as a symbol of health, wealth, and well-being, it has been transformed into a sign of psychological, physical, and even moral overindulgence.

Learning about obesity causes, treatment, and prevention is one of the best things that you can do for yourself and will help you to gain a better understanding of how it could affect you or someone you love.

Causes of Obesity

A bad diet is not the only thing that causes obesity, but it is one of them. If you eat foods that contain things like high fructose corn syrup regularly (fast food contains a ton of it!), you are putting your body at risk for obesity. There are many ingredients in everyday foods that are simply not natural. If your

body cannot process these ingredients in a timely fashion, it can cause you to gain weight over time. In addition, if you don't get enough exercise on a regular basis, obesity may be in your future. These aren't the only causes of obesity, though.

There are some diseases, like hypothyroidism, that can impact your weight. Hypothyroidism is a disease that affects the hormones produced by your thyroid gland. When this happens, your metabolism is impacted and you can gain a lot of weight over a short period of time. So there are some medical factors that are outside of your control that can cause obesity.

Obesity Treatment and Prevention

Because a poor diet and a lack of exercise are the most common causes of obesity, there are some simple treatments for it. By incorporating more natural foods into your diet, drinking more water, cutting out as much junk food as possible, and getting into the habit of exercising several times every week, you can drastically lower your weight and decrease your chances of becoming obese. If you suffer from a disease like hypothyroidism, though, you will need to consult your doctor.

It is also recommended that you see you doctor regularly for check-ups, at which time you can ask her to check your Body Mass Index, or BMI. This is a test that takes your height and weight into account to determine if you are overweight.

Regardless of how you do it, make sure you do everything you can to become and stay healthy and at the right weight. That way, you will be able to enjoy life more fully. ❖

Simple **Steps** to **Preventing Diabetes**

If type 2 diabetes was an infectious disease, passed from one person to another, public health officials would say we're in the midst of an epidemic. This difficult disease, once called adult-onset diabetes, is striking an ever-growing number of adults. Even more alarming, it's now beginning to show up in teenagers and children.

The problems behind the numbers are even more alarming. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness and kidney failure among adults, and increases the risk of heart disease. It causes mild to severe nerve damage that, coupled with diabetes-related circulation problems, often leads to the loss of a leg or foot.

The good news is that type 2 diabetes is largely preventable. About nine cases in 10 could be avoided by taking several simple steps: keeping weight under control, exercising more, eating a healthy diet, and not smoking.

Control your weight. Excess weight is the single most important cause of type 2 diabetes and increases the chances of developing it seven fold. Being obese makes you 20 to 40 times more likely to develop diabetes than someone with a healthy weight.

Get moving—and turn off the television. Inactivity promotes type 2 diabetes. Working your muscles more often and making them work harder improves their ability to use insulin and absorb glucose. This puts less stress on your insulin-making cells.

Even walking briskly for a half hour every day reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 30 percent. This amount of exercise has a variety of other benefits as well, and even greater cardiovascular and other advantages can be attained by more, and more intense, exercise.

Prolonged television-watching appears to be an especially-detrimental form of inactivity: Every two hours you spend watching TV instead of pursuing something more active increases the chances of developing diabetes by 20 percent; it also increases the risk of heart disease (15 percent) and early death (13 percent). The more television people watch, the more likely they are to be overweight or obese, which explains part of the TV viewing-diabetes link. The unhealthy diet patterns associated with TV watching may also play a role.

Try to stop smoking. Add type 2 diabetes to the long list of health problems linked to smoking. Smokers are roughly 50 percent more likely to develop diabetes than non-smokers, and heavy smokers have an even higher risk.

Tune Up Your Diet

Four dietary changes that can have a big impact on your health

Adapted Web Reprint

1. Choose whole grains and whole grain products over highly processed carbohydrates.

Whole grains don't contain a magical nutrient that fights diabetes and improves health. It's the entire package—elements intact and working together—that's important. The bran and fiber in whole grains make it more difficult for digestive enzymes to break down the starches into glucose. This leads to lower, slower increases in blood sugar and insulin, and a lower glycemic index. As a result, they stress the body's insulin-making machinery less, and so may help prevent type 2 diabetes.

2. Skip the sugary drinks, and choose water, coffee, or tea instead.

Like refined grains, sugary beverages have a high glycemic load, and drinking more of this sugary stuff is associated with increased risk of diabetes. What to drink in place of the sugary stuff? Water is an excellent choice. Coffee and tea are also good calorie-free substitutes, as long as you don't load them up with sugar and cream or drink too much of them, as too much caffeine can also take a toll on you.

3. Choose good fats instead of bad fats.

The types of fats in your diet can also affect the development of diabetes and other diseases. Good fats, such as the polyunsaturated fats found in liquid vegetable oils (not corn oil), nuts, and seeds can help ward off diseases. Trans fats do just the opposite. These bad fats are found in many margarines, packaged baked goods, fried foods in most fast-food restaurants, and any product that lists "partially hydrogenated vegetable oil" on the label.

4. Limit red meat and avoid processed meat

Studies showed that eating even smaller amounts of processed red meat each day—just two slices of luncheon meat, one hot dog, or the like—increased diabetes risk by 51 percent. Swapping out red meat or processed red meat for a healthier protein source, such as nuts, beans, quinoa, low-fat dairy, poultry, fish, or for whole grains, lowers your risk of diseases greatly. ✛

10 ways to instill healthy lifestyle habits in your children

Adapted Web Reprint, www.sparkpe.org

Children learn from the influences around them. Part of growing up is creating the habits that will follow your children throughout their lifetimes and shape them as they mature. Instilling a healthy lifestyle in your children when they are young can help build the framework for an entire lifetime of healthy habits.

Here are 10 ways to lead your children toward a healthy lifestyle:

1. Eat at least one meal a day as a family

Eating at least one meal a day as a family ensures that your child is making healthy choices during that time of the day. This also gives you the opportunity to lead by example and teach your children about food choices and healthy portion sizes. By modeling healthy cooking habits in the home, you are helping transfer your choices into your child's lifelong habits.

2. Get your children outside and involved

Play games in the yard, go on hikes, and just get outside. Playing ball with your kids or involving them in sports not only helps instill a healthy lifestyle, but it also helps them develop coordination and important social skills they can't learn by sitting in front of a television. Teaching your children the joys of sports early can help them find their talents and teach them to appreciate exercise as a form of fun, not something to be abhorred.

3. Turn off the technology

With technology at every turn, it's hard to pull your family away from the tube, the computer screen, the phones, the video games, the iPads, and all of the other gadgets that are such a part of everyday life. But getting your children out of their seats and aware of the world around them helps them become more self-aware in mind and body. Communicating in-person with other children and adults establishes social skills that can't be learned online and are essential for a successful future.

4. Stack on the support

Talking positively, encouraging your children, and rewarding them for good behavior helps reinforce healthy habits. When your children choose to be active,

learn about a topic, choose a healthy snack, or get involved with others, positively reinforce these actions by supporting your child and making sure that their good choices are noticed and applauded. This helps build your child's self-confidence and can help create a strong future leader.

5. Ask them to participate

Teach your children healthy lifestyle habits by having them help create them in your own home. Let them help grocery shop for healthy lunches, help keep up the house, and make decisions. Teaching your children to make the right choices for the family can help them understand everything that goes into creating a positive atmosphere.

6. Focus on extracurricular activities

Extracurricular activities give your children a chance to make new friends, explore new skills and talents, and increase their self-confidence. A healthy lifestyle includes socializing, enhancing skills, learning new talents, and achieving goals. Extracurricular activities allow your child to explore these areas of healthy living in a safe and nurturing environment with children of their own age. They can also develop lasting friendships and learn from other children.

7. Teach them responsibility

Giving your child responsibilities early teaches them ownership, and how to complete tasks required of them, as well as consequences. Giving your child the responsibility of planning their snacks or lunches, or planning breakfast for the family gives them the opportunity to take ownership, and also allows you the opportunity to correct their choices along the way.

8. Minimize using food as a reward

With obesity on the rise, it's incredibly important these days to watch how your children are relating to food. Without the built-in exercise of yesteryear and technology creating a sedentary lifestyle as the norm, making sure that you are instilling a healthy relationship with food starts with making good choices in the way you present it to your children. Using food rewards excessively is one way to create food motivation, which can be detrimental if not limited to occasional healthy snacks and eating out on special occasions.

9. Expose them to good influences

The more positive your child's environment, the more positive your child's outlook will tend to be. Exposing your child to a positive environment with positive role models, healthy food options, outside activities, and intriguing mental challenges can help them become more positive individuals, which in turn will help them make choices that perpetuate a healthy outlook and a healthy lifestyle.

10. Lead by example

One of the best ways to instill a healthy lifestyle in your children is to lead one yourself. Children are constantly picking up on our habits and behaviors, and parents are seen as role models whose habits should be taken after. Make sure that you are active, healthy, and also explore activities, socializing, and other interests outside of work. ❖

Healthy **Habits**

Living a healthy lifestyle will only deprive you of poor health, lethargy, and fat.—Jill Johnson

If you don't do what's best for your body, you're the one who comes up on the short end.—Julius Erving

Every living cell in your body is made from the food you eat. If you consistently eat junk food then you'll have a junk body.
—Jeanette Jenkins

Fast food is popular because it's convenient, it's cheap, and it tastes good. But the real cost of eating fast food never appears on the menu.—Eric Schlosser

Let thy food be thy medicine and thy medicine be thy food.
—Hippocrates

Most of us think we don't have enough time to exercise. What a distorted paradigm! We don't have time not to. We're talking about three to six hours a week—or a minimum of thirty minutes a day, every other day. That hardly seems an inordinate amount of time considering the tremendous benefits in terms of the impact on the other 162-165 hours of the week.—Stephen Covey

Those who think they have no time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness.—Edward Stanley

When it comes to eating right and exercising, there is no "I'll start tomorrow." Tomorrow is disease.—V.L. Allinear

We do not stop exercising because we grow old—we grow old because we stop exercising.—Dr. Kenneth Cooper

The difference between someone who is in shape, and someone who is not in shape, is the individual who is in shape works out even when they do not want to.—Unknown

Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live.—Jim Rohn