



Weekly Tip:

Many of you have often heard me say that 90% of weight loss has nothing to do with food and I believe that with all of my heart and soul.

We all have a pretty good idea of what we should and shouldn't eat—it is the reasons WHY we make unhealthy choices that determine how quickly and even if we will ever meet our weight loss goals.

The first step to making healthy choices is understanding why you do what you do and the only way to better understanding is through honesty.

Find a friend, a partner, family member or even a professional—someone that you trust completely and start talking about not what you eat, but why you eat it. Sometimes just by talking it through we realize that we have known the answers all along!

Yoga - not just for Yogis!

In the fitness community, the health benefits of Yoga have been well known for centuries but yet it is a recent development to have Yoga accepted into mainstream society.

Maybe it is the mysteries of the ancient civilizations that developed the practices we see today, maybe it is the fact that there are so many variations of the practice that has kept it at arm's length.

You may enjoy traditional versions of Yoga, with meditation, chanting and humming or you may prefer the yoga-fitness version of the practice which seems more like a Pilates class than an ancient art form.

Regardless of which end of the spectrum you prefer, incorporating Yoga into your regular fitness routine can benefit your mind and body in a variety of ways. The obvious physical benefits of Yoga include increased strength and flexibility. You will learn to move and work your body in all sorts of new ways!

What you may not realize is that while you are working to increase your strength and flexibility, you are also improving your posture and balance! These benefits will take you a long way into your senior years and help prevent injury and damage as you age.

The slow speed and focused breathing that is common in every yoga class also improves the oxygen flow throughout your body including your brain. The improved oxygenation helps your organs to function properly, improves memory, concentration and helps remove toxins. Focused and deep breathing also promotes intense total body relaxation and improves brain function helping to reduce stress and battle the effects of aging including dementia and Alzheimer's.

Regular practice of yoga will reduce stress and promote a sense of calmness but even more importantly than mood, yoga helps reduce blood pressure. This physical benefit can help prevent heart disease and stroke in both men and women.

Through improved oxygenation, increased organ performance, lower blood pressure, improved mood and both the physical and mental reduction of stress and tension, Yoga can also help battle insomnia, digestive problems, chronic pain and help promote healing throughout the body.

Many men shy away from yoga thinking it is a woman-focus class, thinking that they need to BE flexible or have great balance and coordination to even start. Many may think that it isn't a very masculine choice of exercise and you know what—they are wrong!

All of the health benefits described are equal for men and women. The physical and mental improvements - improved blood flow, increased energy and reduced stress can benefit men and women in all areas of their life, including the bedroom! So next time you grab your mat and head to class—take him along! Neither of you will be disappointed with the results!

Recipe Corner

Delicious and nutritious snack and meal ideas that are perfect for the whole family!
Straight from Michelle's kitchen!



Michelle's Blog:

www.butterflyconsultations.com/blog

Shrimp Jambalaya

Continuing to find delicious ways to add fish to our diets—here is a spicy Cajun meal that your whole family will enjoy!

Ingredients: Tomato paste, stewed tomatoes, onion, green pepper, celery, kidney or black beans, 2 cups cooked brown rice, garlic, Cajun seasoning, 1/2 pound peeled cooked shrimp, basil, oregano, 1 1/2 pound lean chorizo sausage meat (no casing)

In a deep skillet, brown sausage meat with chopped onions and garlic. Shrimp and rice should be cooked and set aside.. When sausage is done add chopped celery and peppers along with tomato paste—stir well. Add rice and shrimp. Stir in drained and rinsed beans, stewed tomatoes and bring to a boil. Reduce to simmer and add 1 tbsp. Cajun seasoning or sea-son to taste.

Let simmer until liquid is reduced....

For a leaner meal you can skip the sausage, but this meal will easily serve a family of 5, so the amount of sausage included adds enough taste to the meal to make the extra fat and calorie content well worthwhile!!!

TIP: If you have family members who like different levels of spice—split your meal into two or three pots/pans BEFORE seasoning and simmering. You can have hot, medium and mild with very little effort!!!

Hot & Spicy...

Did you know that there are medically relevant health benefits to spicing up the foods that you eat? While some people believe that spicy foods actually speed up your metabolism and improve weight loss—this claim has been widely debated in health circles.

Whether it will or won't help you to reach your weight loss goal, there are many things that spicy foods can do for you—so why not add some spice to your life??

Capsaicin—the active ingredient in hot peppers actually trigger pain receptors in your mouth which in turn trigger your brain to release those feel-good endorphins. These endorphins are your body's natural anti-depressants. Diced chilli's pepper flakes and a few jalapenos on your nachos can actually improve your mood and battle depression.

Curcumin—an ingredient in turmeric and most Indian dishes is actually an anti-inflammatory that can also help repair damaged muscle. It also helps reduce plaque deposits in the brain to help in the battle against dementia and Alzheimer's Disease. Curcumin on its own has also been shown to lower the bad cholesterol in your body and improve your heart health.

Ginger - used for ages to alleviate nausea, ginger has also been shown to help reduce bad cholesterol in the body. Spicy ginger added to meals and drinks also helps prevent the blood from clotting lowering risk of heart disease and strokes. Pregnant women or those trying to conceive should limit their intake of natural ginger.

Cumin - one of the main ingredients in chili powder has been used for centuries as a digestive aid which boosts the liver's ability to detoxify our blood.

Cinnamon— Not usually considered a 'hot' spice, cinnamon adds flavor to almost everything—even the smell induces a comforting 'coming home' type of feeling and there is a reason for that. Cinnamon encourages the brain's release of endorphins improving our mood and boosting feelings of calm but it can also help stabilize blood sugar and reduce cholesterol!

Many people still believe that spicy foods cause ulcers and irritate the stomach lining. While it is true that introducing new or increased spices to an already damaged or sensitive stomach, may cause irritation, the fact is that regular consumption of spicy foods can actually strengthen the stomach and benefit the digestive system.

Like anything else in your diet, spicy food should be introduced and enjoyed in moderation but there is no reason not to enjoy a little more spice in your life!

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