



Weekly Tip:

So how many chocolate bunnies did YOU eat this Easter?

Did you know that not all chocolate is bad for you? In moderation of course!

The darker the chocolate, the more health benefits it has—the lighter (as in white and milk) the higher the fat and sugar content and the less healthy it is.

Dark chocolate (at least 72% cocoa) contains antioxidants and flavonoids—both of which will help remove free radicals from your body and lower blood pressure. Dark chocolate can also help with hormone balance and lower cholesterol. Pretty cool huh?

The trick is to eat it in moderation, buy a bar of dark pure chocolate and eat a square a day as an afternoon treat.

But make sure you stop at one! The endorphin release alone is a benefit to your emotional health!

Look & Feel 20 years younger

Today I was watching Oprah - well actually I wasn't watching I was working and had it on in the background. To tell you the truth, I am not a big Oprah fan but today's topic was something I could definitely relate to.

She had a panel of professionals, discussing how to look and feel 20 years younger working on the 4 basic needs of our body. Sleep, Nutrition, Exercise and Skin Care.

I should have been on Oprah as those are the things that I have always said that everyone needs to focus on. And if you are wondering what skin care has to do with what I talk about—you may now know but I was a Sales Director with Mary Kay earning 3 free cars and 5 diamond rings in the 3 years I was with the company. Skin Care is very important to me and can make you look and feel younger, sexier and healthier!

When it comes to skin care, the basics that you need to do is exfoliate, cleanse and moisturize – every day, twice a day but especially at night before bed. If you do nothing else. These 3 steps will keep you looking your best.

When it comes to sleep, you have all heard me lecture on it and if you haven't, yet, you will now. You can NEVER EVER catch up on missed sleep, if you miss it, it is gone for ever.

A lack of sleep can contribute to obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer— basically any health condition you can think of because it inhibits the body from repairing and replenishing itself.

As an adult you need 7—9 hours of sleep every night. I know it sounds like a lot and if you think it can't be done because you have too much to do during the day— think again. The more sleep you get at night, the more productive you will be during the day. Try it for a week and let me know what a difference it makes in your life.

Obviously balanced nutrition is my specialty. Ideally I would love to say that no one should ever need supplements, that we can get all of our vitamins, minerals and micronutrients from what we eat and the fact is that we absolutely can but most of us don't. A daily multivitamin is never a bad thing and I usually recommend my clients take them.

Using the Canada food guide to make sure we are getting enough of the things we need—choosing low fat, whole grain options and watching portion sizes is the easiest way to balance our nutrition. If you need more help, there are people out there like me that will gladly help you get what you need.

Exercise also is just as important. The specialist on Oprah recommended 200 minutes of cardio exercise a week along with strength training—especially core work. I LOVE this recommendation. The minimum you should be getting based on Health Canada is 150 minutes and this 200 minute guideline will get you as healthy as you need to be.

If 200 minutes seems like a lot—remember that is PER WEEK. Only 4 fitness classes or 30 minutes a day of focused activity. One single sitcom. If it will get you looking and feeling younger and living longer— isn't it worth giving up an episode for?

Balancing these factors will give you the strength, confidence and health you need to be the absolutely bestest you ever!

Recipe Corner

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



Michelle's Hot & Spicy Cocoa

I know, I know—this recipe is probably better for December but with a forecast of snow on April 30—what better way to ward off a chill than with a delicious and nutritious treat that makes you feel like you are doing something naughty?

Heat 1 1/2 cups of skim or 1% milk on stove top or in the microwave for 1 minute or until luke-warm. Pour just enough into mug to fill it 1/3 of the way and return milk to stove or microwave and heat until almost boiling. You don't want to scald it which is why I like to use the microwave for this, another minute or even 2 in the mic depending on how hot you want it will be fine.

To the mug add 1 tbsp. of pure dark cocoa (unsweetened) and 1 tsp. of pure liquid honey - mix well.

Add 1/2 tsp. of ground cinnamon and 1/4 teaspoon of cayenne pepper (yes cayenne pepper), you can adjust the spices to taste—but trust me on the pepper—didn't you read the newsletter saying how good it is for your health??

Mix well

Add the rest of the heated milk until mug is full and stir well. Enjoy this hot and spicy cocoa—your family will never drink that sugar-filled hot chocolate again!

Michelle's Blog:

www.butterflyconsultations.com/blog

Are you a morning person???

Now that the sun is starting to shine, and we have a little more daylight to play with I thought I would motivate and encourage you to start crawling out of bed an hour earlier than you are used to.

I know I said in the front page article that you need 7-9 hours of sleep and I mean that so if you get up an hour earlier, you will have to go to bed an hour earlier. I know it seems like a sacrifice but hear me out.

The benefits of exercise first thing in the morning outweigh the benefits of exercise at any other time of the day. Seriously. If change your routine and do the same work-out at 6am that you do at 6pm, you will see better results! Bigger rewards for the same amount of work!

There is a lot of argument around this claim but the one thing all professionals agree on is that exercise at ANY time of the day is better than no exercise, so if mornings don't work for you, that is ok, you have to do what works.

If you do have a choice, working out in the morning can benefit you in many ways. First thing in the morning after a night's rest, you will have more energy to expend as your body is not fatigued from the day.

People who exercise in the morning often have better success because they stick with it—as there are less life distractions in the early morning as there are other times of the day. It is hard to be interrupted with phone calls or dinner plans as soon as you wake up.

The best part of an AM workout is that it sets the pace for the rest of the day. Your workout releases the endorphins in your brain, you know those natural antidepressants that we all have? These little buggers give us a feeling of well being and reduce stress, helping us cope with whatever the day throws our way.

Regardless of the arguments, after teaching the exact same boot camps at 6:30am and 6:30pm 3 days a week I can say for absolute certainty that those that worked out consistently first thing in the morning saw better results in their body fat and inch loss as well as their muscle gain.

Whether it is going for a run, taking an early morning class, doing Yoga at sunrise or just going for a walk, there is a great reason to get out of bed this summer!

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