



Weekly Tip:

One of the biggest mistakes you can make while exercising in cold weather is to dress too warmly. Exercise generates a considerable amount of heat — enough to make you feel like it's much warmer than it really is. Yet, once your sweat starts to dry, you can get chilled. The solution? Dress in layers that you can remove as soon as you start to sweat and then put back on as needed. First, put on a thin layer of synthetic material, such as polypropylene, which draws sweat away from your body. Avoid cotton, which stays wet next to your skin. Next, add a layer of fleece or wool for insulation. Top this with a waterproof, breathable outer layer. A heavy down jacket or vest may cause you to overheat if you're exercising hard. If you're lean, you may need more insulation than someone who is heavier. If it's very cold, consider wearing a face mask or scarf to warm the air before it enters your lungs.

Rehab your taste buds!

I recently conducted a dietary analysis of a single meal in a local restaurant. This meal consisted of drinks, apps, entrée and dessert at a sit-down full-service establishment and included NO alcohol.

Keeping in mind that the average person should be looking at consuming an 1800—2000 calorie a day diet with no more than 40-45gr of fat, 2000mg of sodium and 40gr of sugar MAXIMUM in a single day.

Now the analysis of this meal (which was an actual meal ordered by an actual person) contained a total of 4266 calories with 161gr of fat, 68gr of sugar and over 8500mg of sodium. That is the equivalent of 3 or 4 days worth of calories, fat, sugar and salt consumed in a single meal.

Is your stomach turning yet?

If you are wondering how someone could eat such a thing—you might be surprised to learn that this type of dietary abuse is not uncommon at all. In fact it is more common place in our society than any of us would like to admit—especially as we become more and more dependent on restaurants and convenience foods on our lives.

Speaking of dependence, were you aware that on top of the usual addictions that we think of like cigarettes, drugs and alcohol that your body can actually become physically addicted to salts, sugars and fats? Yep—the fast food industry counts on it.

If you eat a high-fat, high sugar and high-sodium diet and suddenly decide to turn over a new leaf and switch to low-fat, non processed and complex instead of simple carbs—you may have a very difficult time because your body will actually rebel! Just like very other addiction, you will need to physically detoxify your system from the poisons it has become accustomed to. Unfortunately food, unlike other addictions cannot be quick cold-turkey. You cannot just stop eating fats, sugars and salts as we actually do need them—just not quite they want that we have been using them.

It is a hard process but it is very simple. Gradual changes in your diet will cleanse your system and slowly start re-training your taste buds and quiet your body's physical rebellion. If you suddenly just switch from Big Macs to carrot sticks, you may be setting yourself up for failure and putting yourself through misery—for nothing.

Now don't be running around saying that Michelle said it was ok to eat Big Macs—that isn't my point. What I am trying to say is that for some people, food addictions re a very real problem and need to be dealt with in a very specialized way. For other people, eating 'crap' is not an addiction, it is a habit and it can be dealt with like any other bad habit—by replacing it with another.

So how can you tell the difference? How do you know if your health issues are due to bad habits or an actual addiction? Well, your body will tell you.

If you are used to eating fast food every day and you suddenly stop—you will crave it, it is a habit and that is a normal response BUT if your craving is accompanied by physical and emotional responses that are irrational for the circumstances like: Mood swings, headaches, sweats/shakes, obsessive thinking about the item you are craving—these are signs that you don't have a simple habit that you need to break. You may have a food addiction an you will need help to overcome it, professional help. Just like an alcoholic seeking refuge in AA, don't get frustrated if you can't overcome your food addiction alone. Not many can and you don't have to—you are not alone and there are people that understand and can help!

Recipe Corner

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



A Healthier Bannock

INGREDIENTS: 4 cups whole grain flour; 1/4 cup baking powder; 1-1/2 tsp. salt; 1/3 canola oil; 2 cups water

DIRECTIONS: In large mixing bowl, stir flour, baking powder and salt. Pour oil and water over. Stir with fork, then form by hand into a ball. Add more flour or water as needed to get a non-sticky, workable product.

Turn dough onto lightly floured surface. Gently knead 10 times; transfer to greased baking sheet. Pat into large, flat oval that's about 3/4-inch to 1-inch thick. Bake in preheated 350F oven until golden and puffy, about 25 to 30 minutes.

Break off rustic pieces, or cut into small triangles. Serve warm or at room temperature on its own, or with stew or soup!

You can also try adding dried cranberries or blueberries or even some grated cheese for a different take on an old tradition!

What's in your bucket???

This morning I was informed by my 6-year-old that there are only 5 more sleeps until Halloween. I swear there is more excitement over this holiday than any other in my house—why? Probably because of the easy access to candy!

So with only a few more days until the barrage of trick or treaters trample your semi-frozen lawn half to death, have you decided the ultimate question - what's will be in your bucket this year? When my little Vampire Bride and her daddy knock or your door next Monday night—what treats will they be bringing home to me? Chocolates? Caramels? Licorice? Chips? Pop? Well if you haven't decided yet—let me give you a few suggestions of things you can give out this year that will save your waistline and the teeth of your little ghouls and maybe even your pocket books!

People always ask me what we hand out on Halloween night and you know what? My answer is always the same - juice boxes!

Yep, 100% juice boxes or bags go out. I choose these for a few reasons - mostly because I think kids get too much at Halloween as it is, between the candy and the cookies and cupcakes at parties, one less house handing them can't be a bad thing. The other reason is that we live at the end of a dead-end street on a very dark block—we never get many trick-or-treaters and it can vary greatly. By choosing a treat that I can re-incorporate into my pantry and use for school lunches, I am not going to waste money buying more than I need or even be tempted to finish off the leftovers like I would if I had a bucket of chocolate! Now if you are at my house this scary night remember that I am NOT the one doing the shopping this year—who knows what treats hubby will buy!

If you live in a city you are probably used to not giving homemade treats but in small towns like ours, bags of popcorn and trail mix and even caramel apples may be a good choice if you label them with your name so your neighbors know they are safe.

Gum and gum balls are healthier than chocolates and soft candy—hard candies are also a better choice than caramels and other chewy goods. Remember that whatever is added to keep a treat 'soft' is an additive that our bodies just don't need. Now don't get me wrong, I am not a Halloween Nazi, I don't mind treats and love the holiday—but I do know that sometimes we can use this day as a way to over-indulge ourselves and our children. Moderation is always key.

Full-size pop, chips and chocolate bars are just not necessary and neither is letting your kids eat unlimited amounts of what they bring home. While my kids get to keep their candy, it is on a shelf and they have to ask for treats and get only a couple at a time depending on the time of day.

Eventually I end up throwing out most of what they collect as they forget about it soon after the excitement of getting it wears off.

Whatever you choose to do next Monday—remember that moderation is always key whether it is in the giving or the eating!