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Weekly Tip:

Does the Easter Bunny come to your house? Do mommy and daddy eat half of his treats before he even gets them hidden? That's what happens in my house!

This year, try something different because none of us, including our little ones need that much chocolate and candy, no matter how much we like it! In addition to hiding a few chocolate bunnies and candy eggs, try hiding some other toys, games and even clothes! Easter is a great time for the Easter Bunny to get your kids those special things they have been asking for since Christmas. As soon as my son was old enough to read, and now that my daughter is, the Easter Bunny will only be hiding written clues taking her on a scavenger hunt leading to the grand prize of a giant basket.

What will be in it?

Only the bunny knows but you are safe to bet that it won't be full of sugar!

Not a week goes by that I am not asked in person, by email, on Facebook or even in a private message on E-Brandon, what my opinion and thoughts are on the latest weight loss craze to hit the market—Body by Vi. So I decided to put pen to paper or at least fingers to keyboard and get on the record.

Body by Vi is a multi-level marketing program, which I am very familiar with from my days in Mary Kay. Is it a pyramid scheme? Not at all, but sales people are encouraged to recruit new members to sell and everyone involved makes money from the sales the one below them make. Money or free product—people get something out of convincing others to not only buy the product but to sell it as well. With so much at stake and so many people looking to gain from your purchase—can you really believe anything or everything they tell you about the product? Do they even know? Nope.

These salespeople are not trained nutritionists or dieticians—they are salespeople taught about the product from those higher up, looking to make money. They are taught to say whatever will sell like - Body by Vi is a miracle weight loss product!!! Is it? Nope.

What it is is a vitamin enriched meal replacement shake. Very similar to what you can buy at Wal-Mart (Boost, Ensure) for a quarter of the price and no sales pitch.

Body by Vi

You will hear all sorts of testimonials promoting the magic weight losing benefits of the product. People will tell you how much better they feel, how much energy they have and how much weight they have lost. Are they lying? Nope. Is the Body by Vi product the miracle worker responsible for their good results? Nope.

Anytime you replace a regular meal with a low-calorie replacement, you will lose weight. Why? Because you are restricting your calories. It isn't magic, it is math. If that low calorie replacement is packed full of vitamins, you will increase your energy and physical well being because you are giving your body what it has been missing from your diet but instead of eating properly to get these nutrients, you are taking a supplement. It may be in the form of a drink and not a pill but it is exactly the same thing.

So you may be thinking that if these shakes decrease your calorie intake and pump you full of vitamins that they are as great as they are reported and you should rush out right away and sign the cheque for a year's supply right? Nope.

The problem with an meal-replacement diet is that it does nothing to teach you how to eat properly and manage your weight and metabolism with a balanced diet, so unless you plan on drinking those shakes the rest of your life, you will eventually revert back to your old ways, gaining back everything you have lost and probably even more.

Why more? Because any time you lose weight based on diet and calorie restrictions, you change your metabolism and the way your body works. Your body is not designed to get it's nutrients through a powder or a pill—supplements don't work long-term. Your body is designed to work on food. And when you don't give it what it needs, it will hold on stubbornly to every morsel it gets.

Surprisingly though, that isn't my biggest problem with Body by Vi and its salespeople. My biggest problem is that there are unqualified people giving weight loss advice, even medical advice on what people should and shouldn't eat and what their bodies need. The worst part is that they are doing it to make money, they are preying on the desperate to line their own pockets—that is what I HATE about this and all other weight loss fads.

If you want the same results as all of those forking out the big bucks for Body by Vi products in order to make a profit for others, try this: Start on a daily multivitamin. Drink a shake every morning—no special powder required. Add yogurt, milk, peanut butter, a banana and a tablespoon of ground flax or hemp seed or powder. Voila! A nutrient dense meal shake full of complex carbs, fiber, and protein .

If you really want to try a calorie restrictive, meal replacement diet, there is nothing that will stop you, but just remember this—if you could buy weight loss in a magic potion—wouldn't Oprah be skinny?

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

Michelle's Miraculous Granola Bars

These nutritious and delicious bars are the perfect snack for lunches and to get you through that 3 o'clock slump. They can be customized to meet your family's tastes, frozen for later use and depending on what you add to them and how big you cut them, only about 100 calories each!!

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9x13 baking pan with parchment paper, letting it over-hang the sides enough to use as a handle later.

In a large mixing bowl, add 2 cups of whole grain rolled oats and a can of sweetened condensed milk. Add a total of 2 more cups of 'additives' some of our favourites include dried cranberries, all bran buds, hemp seed, sunflower seeds (shelled of course), pumpkin seeds, raisins, chocolate chips (no more than 1/2 cup), almonds, hazelnuts... the list is endless.

Mix well.

Press mixture firmly into baking pan and bake for 20 minutes. When you remove from oven, use a clean spatula to press bars down again. Let cool for 5 minutes and then using the parchment paper handles, lift out of pan and let cool for 20 minutes. Cut into 18 or 24 bars. Store in a sealed container or freeze.

Enjoy!!!

Is organic better?

So you have decided to eat better, healthier and as you are walking through the produce aisle at your local supermarket, you are torn between the regular fruits and vegetables and that specialty counter marked 'organic'. What do you do? Are organic vegetables worth the extra cost? Are they healthier? Do you need them? Surprisingly my answer to this one is no, not they aren't and no, no you don't. Organic produce is called organic because it is grown, picked, packaged and shipped without the use of any chemicals, pesticides or fertilizers that aren't found in nature. That is all that makes them organic—it isn't a quality rating. Many people are turning to organic foods for many reasons but one of those reasons shouldn't be because they are healthier in and of themselves, because they are not. A carrot is a carrot, organic or not. What many believe makes an organic carrot healthier is that when you eat it, you are not consuming any chemical

compounds.

What many people don't take into consideration, is the reason why we use those chemicals in the first place. The world has changed from the days of our ancestors and the ability to eat right out of the ground, knowing what was in that ground, have passed. Hyper-population, super-bugs, and changes in our environment has made the use of chemical manipulation in the food industry is a necessary evil.

These chemicals help produce higher quality, disease resistant and all around safer foods. Organics have their place but whether they are safer is arguable. They may not have chemical additives but they are also not resistant to illness causing micro-organisms. And because of the cost of their production and the crop loss due to disease, their purchase cost is high. Organic farmers often fertilize with manure, an age old practice for sure but also a practice that without chemical involvement) can promote food born illness.

Now if you are an organic farmer and ticked right off at me at this point—calm down, I am not bashing your profession or your food. Like I said, it has its place and there are many reasons why people will choose organics, and there is nothing wrong with any of them. But from a weight loss and health perspective, there is no reason to fork out the big bucks and start shopping the organic-only section. It is just not necessary.

Now I must admit that there is nothing better than the taste of a fresh-picked bean or a carrot right out of the ground. I love my garden and will take home and locally grown produce over mass-produced packaged produce any day of the week and twice on Sunday. But fresh, local and even home grown doesn't necessarily mean organic.

Regardless of whether you eat corn right off the cob, standing in the middle of your garden, eat it from a can or from the organic farm down the street, produce and veggies are good—eat more of them, no matter where they come from!