

Completely Well



Insurance Agency

November 2016

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Nutrition

Lean Proteins

To be healthy, we all need to eat good sources of carbohydrates, fats, and protein. Carbohydrates are to be complex; fats are to be healthy; and proteins are to be lean! But what are lean proteins and how much do we need? Here is what you need to know!

A lean protein is defined as having less than 10 grams of fat per serving, including limited amounts of saturated fat and cholesterol. If applied to animal products, a lean protein would include white meat turkey and chicken, sirloin, top loin, flank steak, pork tenderloin, and fish. A serving of meat or fish is approximately 3-4 ounces, the size of a deck of cards. Other animal products that provide lean protein are low fat dairy products, such as low fat milk, yogurt, and cheese. There is some thinking, however, that full fat dairy is actually a healthier choice. Discuss what's best for you with a nutritionist.

While lean proteins include many animal products, there are also plant-based proteins. Beans and legumes are great sources of lean protein. Nuts, nut butters, and edamame also provide a good amount of protein, ranging from 2-10 grams per serving. Seeds – such as chia, sesame, and sunflower – contain protein and are easy to add to yogurt, cereal, and salads. And leafy greens and grains add protein to your diet, with broccoli and quinoa containing 8-10 grams, more than cheese and eggs.

No matter what protein you prefer, choosing lean proteins helps to reduce the amount of cholesterol and saturated fat you consume. Both cholesterol and saturated fat raise blood cholesterol levels, which are associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease.



How much protein do you need?

Though protein needs change depending on age, activity, and health, adult men need 56 grams and adult women need 46 grams. Double this amount if you are highly active, pregnant or breastfeeding.



There are few vegetables as common and undervalued as carrots. Carrot shavings decorate many salads, and they are on nearly every “veggie and dip” tray. For many of us, childhood memories of carrots include round, mushy slices of cooked

carrots on our dinner plates. But carrots are full of health benefits and can add a sweet crunch to meals and snacks. Carrots are low in calories and a good source of fiber and vitamins. The vitamin A in carrots is known to protect against macular degeneration (the leading cause of blindness) but is also associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and improved lung health.

The Basics: Though most of the carrots we see are orange, carrots come in a variety of colors, including yellow, purple and even white. Carrots are a root vegetable and can vary in size, since there are over 100 different varieties. Carrots can be bought bagged or loose. Many bagged carrots are called “baby carrots,” though most of them are larger carrots cut into small “baby carrot” sized pieces. Actual baby carrots are picked before they have had a chance to mature. Fully-grown carrots are available bagged or loose and will need to be washed and peeled before eating. Choose carrots that are deep in color and are not highly cracked. Store carrots in a refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Prepare carrots (washed and peeled) according to your favorite recipe.

Try This: Carrots make a great snack for kids and adults alike. Though there are many salad dressings on the market that can be used for dip, try making one of your own with plain Greek yogurt, fresh dill, lemon juice and zest, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Or try adding carrot to your favorite raisin muffin or raisin bread recipe. Carrots and raisins go great together!

The Facts: One cup of carrots has approximately 120 calories and is high in vitamin A, K, C, potassium and fiber.



Great American Smokeout 2016

On November 17, 2016, the American Cancer Society is sponsoring the Great American Smokeout, a day set aside to encourage smokers to quit! The Great American Smokeout hopes to show smokers that, by quitting even for one day, quitting is possible and the best thing you can do to prevent disease and premature death.

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Preventive

November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month. The greatest risk factor for lung cancer is smoking and exposure to second hand smoke. It is estimated that nearly 85% of all lung cancer cases are related to tobacco exposure. This warning includes e-cigarettes, which contain a variety of toxic chemicals. New studies have found that the vapor causes cell damage that increased the likelihood of cancer. Another cause of lung cancer is radon, a naturally occurring gas in the air that can be trapped in buildings at higher than acceptable levels.

To reduce your risk for lung cancer, don't smoke or quit smoking. Avoid secondhand smoke. Finally, have your home tested for radon. Information about radon testing can be found on the epa.gov website and through your state government offices. Buildings that have unsafe measures of radon can be fixed using a venting system. Be sure to use reputable and licensed contractors who are experienced in radon venting.



Lungs - Did You Know?

While we know that tobacco smoke is dangerous for lungs, there are other irritants that can trigger lung problems, including asthma. These triggers include

- Traffic exhaust- especially true if you live in a high traffic area
- Wood burning fireplace or stove – the smoke contains small particles and toxic substances like benzene, formaldehyde, acrolein and methane. Install a vent or limit your exposure.
- Candles – those that are paraffin based (not soy or beeswax) emit chemicals that can be irritating in unventilated spaces. Scented candles may also contain chemicals such as toluene and benzene.



Lifestyle

The Power of Creativity

A review of research published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that the creative arts – art, music, dance, and writing – have a positive impact on our emotional and physical health. The benefits of creativity include using art for healing during times of illness as well as a way to manage chronic pain.

The data is clear. Music can be calming and actually changes activity in the brain. A study published in *Oncology Nurses Forum* reported that music can help cancer patients feel less pain and feel more control of their treatments. The *American Journal of Critical Care* published a study that demonstrated lower heart and respiratory rates in cardiac patients who listened to music. Playing music is also good for your health. A report published in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* indicated that playing music lowered the stress hormone cortisol. This hormone is linked to an increased risk of high blood pressure and heart disease.

Like music, the visual arts, dance, and writing offer the opportunity to both communicate and experience emotion. A study in *Arts Psychotherapy* reported that patients who participated in art programs experienced more positive emotions and a decrease of negative emotions. Dance helps in both the expression of emotion and the benefits of physical movement. Writing is a known way to lower the risk of depression and promote positive emotions.

Being creative helps by requiring focus of an individual and promoting belief in self. Creativity requires both looking inward for inspiration and working outward to create. The physical act of creativity grounds you in a tactile world that can distract from negative or unhealthy thoughts. The accomplishment of finishing a creative work builds self-confidence and is motivation to continue.

Whatever your interest, finding opportunities to be creative is healthy. It is also one of the most important ways that we interact with others. Being creative as adults keeps alive the youthful creative urge that helps us learn about ourselves and our world.



Ways to be Creative

Take an art class or go to a local art museum.

Join the church choir, a local community choir, or take voice lessons.

Learn to dance – either solo or with a partner!

Take photos – look for inspiration all around you. Consider light, shade, and shape as you look for subjects.

Consider writing poetry or fiction. You can find ideas in your everyday life, the news, and through creative writing groups. Check your local library to see if they have any writing groups who meet there!

Sew, knit, crochet, or cross-stitch. Don't know how? Contact your park district or local sewing supply store to ask about classes.

Like to work with tools? Consider woodwork or refinishing woodwork.

Fitness

Tracking Your Fitness

Keeping a record of how we care for our bodies is key in developing an awareness of what our body needs and how we are making progress toward our health goals.



Leading an active life is essential to preventing weight gain and chronic disease, in addition to feeling good each day. Increasing the amount you move or starting a new fitness regimen may seem daunting, but there are several fitness devices on the market proven to help keep you motivated and help you reach your fitness goals. Wearing a fitness device has been shown to increase a person's activity by 40%. A recent study found that those who saw the greatest results from an eight-week program aiming for 10,000 steps daily were those who set daily goals and tracked their activity.

Perks of using a Fitness Tracker

Fitness trackers offer accountability as many devices connect you with a social network where you can learn and support one another, and if you like a little friendly competition, you can challenge your family, friends, or co-workers.

Fitness trackers calculate your step count, the duration of your workouts, and calories burned, helping you track your accomplishments and track progress toward your fitness goals – both are important in boosting confidence and maintaining motivation.

You can find everything you need with devices that track steps, sleep, heart rate, and more. Most devices will sync to your favorite fitness app, making it simple to manage your wellbeing all in one place and make participating in workplace wellness challenges easy!

Fitness trackers are designed to monitor your movement. So whether you lift weights, bike, play, run or simply want to decrease the amount of time you are sedentary each day, there is a device that is right for you. Even for individuals who are already motivated to be active, wearing a fitness tracker can help you take an honest look at how sedentary you are outside of your structured workout.

Finding a fitness tracker that is right for you

Set your spending limit, choose whether you want a bracelet, clip-on, or watch, and decide what you want the device to do. Check out the array of popular fitness devices on our wellness portal.

When using a fitness tracking device, remember they're not exact and wearing one is not the end all to being fit. Losing weight or reaching your goals still requires a strong desire for change and a commitment to bettering yourself. For some, seeing the device on their wrist is a constant reminder of their commitment, and connecting with others through the device's app may maximize your tracking experience. Making a small investment in a fitness tracking device may be one of the biggest investment you can make for your health.

Ask the Trainer, by Erin M. Long, B.S., NSCA-CPT

Q: Hi Erin. My question for you is how long do I need to do cardio to see results? I haven't worked out consistently for a few years and want to get back into it. I have no problem doing the strength training, but I hate cardio, so I want to know how long I really need to do it to get results.

~Sara M

A: Hi Sara! Thank you for the question. This hits very close to home because I am much like you. I could strength train every day. I love it. But when it comes to cardio, it's just not my favorite thing. However, I do know how important it is. With that being said, you really only need to do 30 minutes, 3-5 times a week at a moderate to high intensity. Research even states that you could even do segments of 10 minutes, 3x during the course of the day, and it's just as effective as 30 straight minutes. This is great if you are short on time. If you haven't done cardio in some time and 30 minutes sounds like a lot, start with 10-15 minutes and work your way up. Once you are at that 30 minutes you can always go a little longer if needed. I truly believe that if you did the 30 minutes 5 days a week and are really pushing yourself, you will see results in just a few shorts weeks.

One of the big things I've found that helps me when it comes to cardio is to really find something that you enjoy. I love teaching/taking a spin class or throwing 1-2 minutes cardio bursts into my strength training workouts. This could be something like jumping jacks, burpees, jump squats, etc. There are many different workout DVDs that are all about cardio. I like TurboFire and T25 (search the on the internet if interested.)

Continue to strength train 2-3 times a week and to make sure you are eating/fueling your body correctly. Nutrition is always important when it comes to seeing results. Let me know if you need anything along the way!

~Erin

Want to Know More?

Contact TCU Insurance for information on wellness programs. We can help you reduce healthcare costs and improve employee well being.



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