

TOPHEALTH®

We Care About Your Health

The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter

OCTOBER 2011



ENERGY IN, ENERGY OUT

Looking for easy ways to change your energy balance? Turn the page.

Whether you gain, lose or stay at the same weight depends on your **energy balance** (the number of calories you burn versus the number of calories you eat and drink). If they're the same, your weight won't really change.

If you burn more than you take in, you'll lose weight.

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans offers a guide to calories taken in versus calories burned through physical activity for various ages. We feature a few here. A more complete chart is available in our online toolkit.

WOMEN Age (years)	Sedentary	Moderately Active	Active
19-30	1,800-2,000	2,000-2,200	2,400
31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
51+	1,600	1,800	2,000-2,200
MEN Age (years)	Sedentary	Moderately Active	Active
19-30	2,400-2,600	2,600-2,800	3,000
31-50	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,600	2,800-3,000
51+	2,000-2,200	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,800

How active are you really? Find out on the other side.



'Goblin' Up Some Sweet-Free Treats

Looking for some novel Halloween treats to hand out this year? Younger children will be thrilled with stickers, juice boxes, mini bottles of bubbles, plastic rings, small puzzles, pretzels, popcorn, finger puppets, bouncy balls or small containers of Play-Doh. Older kids will be "goblin" up

Germ Season Ahead

When you wash your hands often with soap and water — especially after using shared objects — you're doing a pretty good job of stopping cold and flu germs.

Did you know? Those most vulnerable to the flu and its complications (e.g., pneumonia) include seniors; young children; people with heart or lung disease, diabetes or other chronic medical conditions; smokers; and health care or child care workers. In fact, it's the potentially life-threatening complications for these high-risk groups that spark the annual push for vaccinations.

Do you need a flu shot this year? People with egg allergies have long been cautioned about the flu vaccine. New advice is emerging. Find info at www.flu.gov or check with your health care provider about what's right for you.



LONGEVITY CORNER

Try Tai Chi. Tai chi, like yoga, is becoming increasingly popular. A recent study looked at people suffering from congestive heart failure (CHF) — a condition where your heart can't keep up with its demands and you become short of breath. Patients who practiced tai chi improved markedly — they reported better moods and quality of life, and were more likely to engage in exercise, such as walking and swimming. Tai chi — it could be the new yoga.

— Zorba Paster, MD

Quick Guide to Processed Foods

People have "processed" foods for centuries, from pickling cucumbers in vinegar to sweetening fruit jam with sugar. Today, thousands of food additives are used to maintain or improve the freshness, taste, texture, appearance or nutritional value of products. Vanilla or yeast are well-known, while others have hard-to-pronounce names. Federal agencies determine whether an additive is "GRAS," which is short for generally recognized as safe.

(continued on next page)

'Goblin' Up Some Sweet-Free Treats

items like temporary tattoos, mini bottles of nail polish, glow sticks, jewelry, spooky pencils and erasers, sugar-free gum and haunted key chains.

"Witch" treat is best? Kids get candy at other houses — chances are, they'll be delighted to receive something different when they visit you.

Straight Talk About Medications



The more you know about your prescription drugs, the more likely you will be to use them safely and effectively.

Questions to Ask:

① Is medication my only choice?

Non-drug therapies, lifestyle changes and prevention measures can reduce or eliminate the need for medication — and may be safer options.

② What side effects should I watch for?

Pharmacies generally include an information sheet with each prescription. This can help you identify any possible side effects.

③ Is this new drug a better way to treat my condition?

The latest therapies can improve treatment. However, unknown side effects may appear once drugs have been on the market. Seek unbiased, reputable information about any new medication before you take it.

④ Can I reduce the number of medications I need?

Ask your doctor or health care provider if one medication could do “double duty” to treat your health concerns. Avoid taking one medication to treat the side effects of another.

ENERGY IN, OUT ... *(continued)*

Easy Ways to Change Your Energy Balance

- ❖ Swap cream for skim milk in your coffee, or take it black.
 - ❖ Skip mayo on your burger or sandwich; try mustard.
 - ❖ Walk to your co-worker's desk down the hall instead of sending an email.
 - ❖ Order a small — not medium — serving of fries.
 - ❖ Drink water instead of soda.
 - ❖ Walk two miles.
 - ❖ Do 30 minutes of yard work.
 - ❖ Switch to tuna packed in water instead of oil.
- Consistently making small changes over the course of a year could help you lose as much as 10 pounds.

Lifestyles Defined

- ❖ **Sedentary** means no exercise beyond day-to-day activities.
- ❖ **Moderately active** means walking 1.5 to 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 mph, in addition to the physical activities associated with typical day-to-day life.
- ❖ **Active** means the equivalent of walking more than 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 mph, plus usual daily activities.

Smart moves for your personal wellness program are at www.personalbest.com/extras/oct11tools.



Shopping for Best Bites

Looking for some easy ways to fill your cart with healthier foods? Here are some nutritionist-recommended strategies that just might work for you.

Shop the Outer Aisles First. Have you noticed that the perimeters of many grocery stores often house the simplest and healthiest foods — produce, dairy products, and fresh meat and fish? Use these items as the foundation of your meal planning.

Shop the Inner Aisles Last. Choose canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, herbs and spices, beans, and 100% whole grain cereals and baked products that are high-fiber and low-sugar. Avoid temptation by skipping the aisles containing candy, cookies, soda and snacks.

Before You Check Out. Take a look at your cart. You may want to return impulse purchases or any items with low nutritional value.

NEXT MONTH: EMOTIONAL EATING

Processed Foods ... *(continued)*

But safe is not the same as desirable:

Many processed foods contain added fat, sugar and salt, which can contribute to health problems. In addition, individuals who are sensitive to certain additives may experience negative reactions. For example, someone who is allergic to soy may have a reaction to soy-derived lecithin or hydrolyzed vegetable protein.



On the radar ...

- ➔ **Sulfites** can trigger asthma attacks.
- ➔ People with phenylketonuria (PKU) should avoid foods sweetened with **aspartame**.
- ➔ Monosodium glutamate (**MSG**) and **nitrites** can cause headaches and chest pain.
- ➔ **Artificial fats** can cause stomach upset.

Though controversial, some parents insist that artificial colors and flavors cause hyperactivity in their kids.

Best approach? Read labels carefully and call the product manufacturer if you have concerns. If you have unpleasant symptoms after eating certain foods, keep a log to determine the common additives. If you have a health condition, ask your doctor if you might react to particular additives (for example, tyramine in cheese for migraine sufferers).

Bottom line: If the ingredient list on a product is extremely long and hard to read, you may want to find a less-processed alternative.