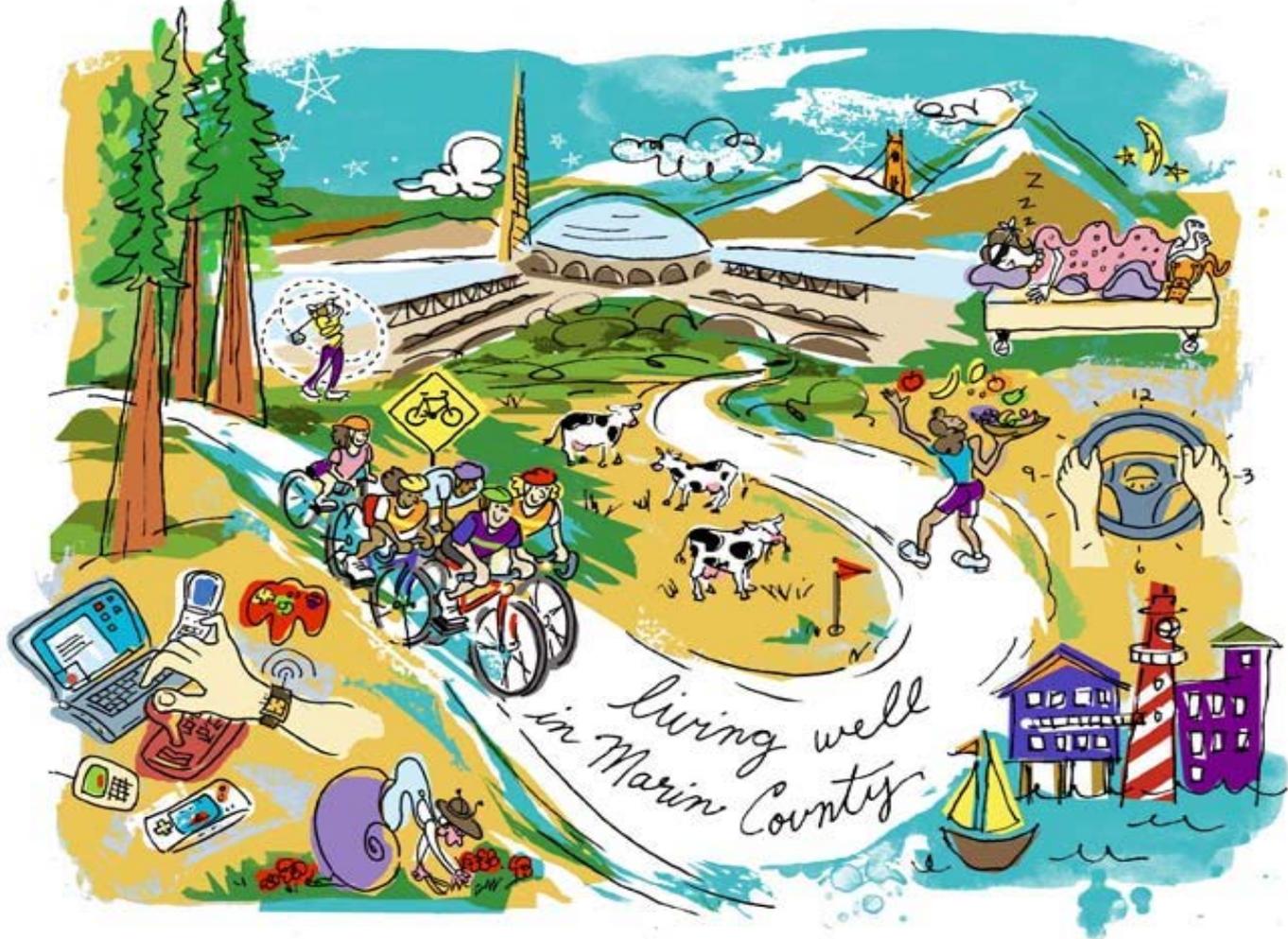


Living Well in Marin County



Chapter 1: Lifestyles

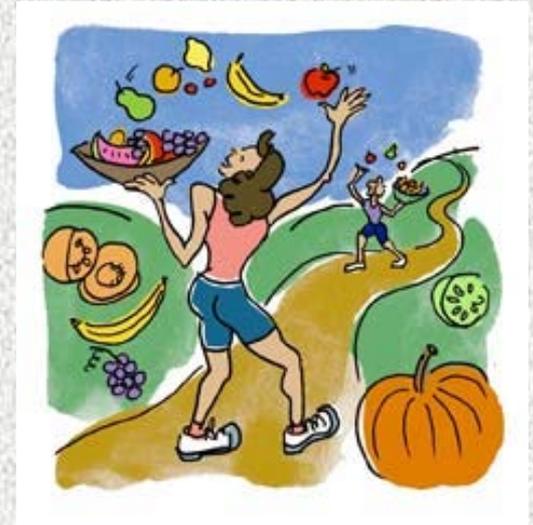
Ergonomics is a people-centered approach to healthy living that emphasizes individual workstyles and *lifestyles* ...designing tools and settings that **fit** people at work and at home to avoid health problems.

In order for ergonomics to work, the individual at the center of the equation must be reasonably fit.

Consider your risks...

- Obesity is a known risk factor for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- An extra 20 pounds on your waistline equates to an added 80 pound load on your spine and causes wear and tear on hip, knee and ankle joints
- A sedentary lifestyle and poor eating habits can increase your risk of Low Back Pain syndrome and/or chronic disease by as much as 40%

If you want ergonomics to work for you, you'd be smart to apply a people-centered approach to your lifestyle... *shape it up a bit!*



Lifestyles...*just remember 2 things!*

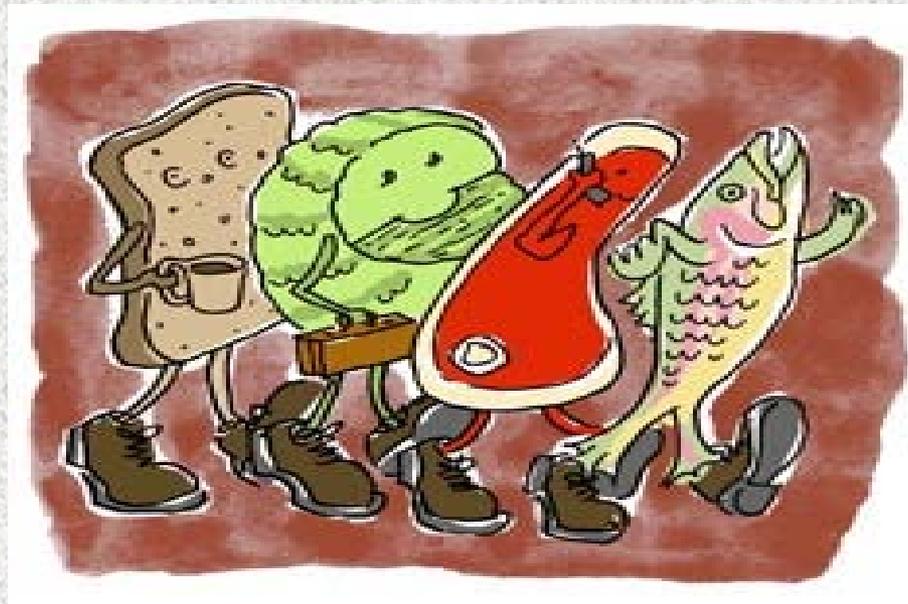
Every major health study points to 2 simple *lifestyle* changes that can significantly reduce your risk of musculoskeletal disorders or chronic disease...

1. Eat Well

You don't have to give it up... *just mix it up!*

2. Move More

You don't have to over exert your body... *just move it!*



Lifestyles...*just 2 things!*

1. Eat Well

You don't have to give it up... *just mix it up!*

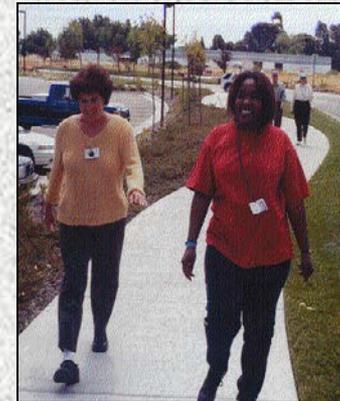
- *substitute fruits or veggies for chips and dip*
- *substitute whole grains for "white stuff"*
(*white bread, pasta*)
- *substitute fish and poultry for red meat*
- *have a great big salad for dinner once a week*



2. Move More

You don't have to exercise your body... *just move it!*

- *walk to the store instead of driving*
- *climb the stairs instead of using the elevator*
- *walk around the building instead of taking a coffee break*



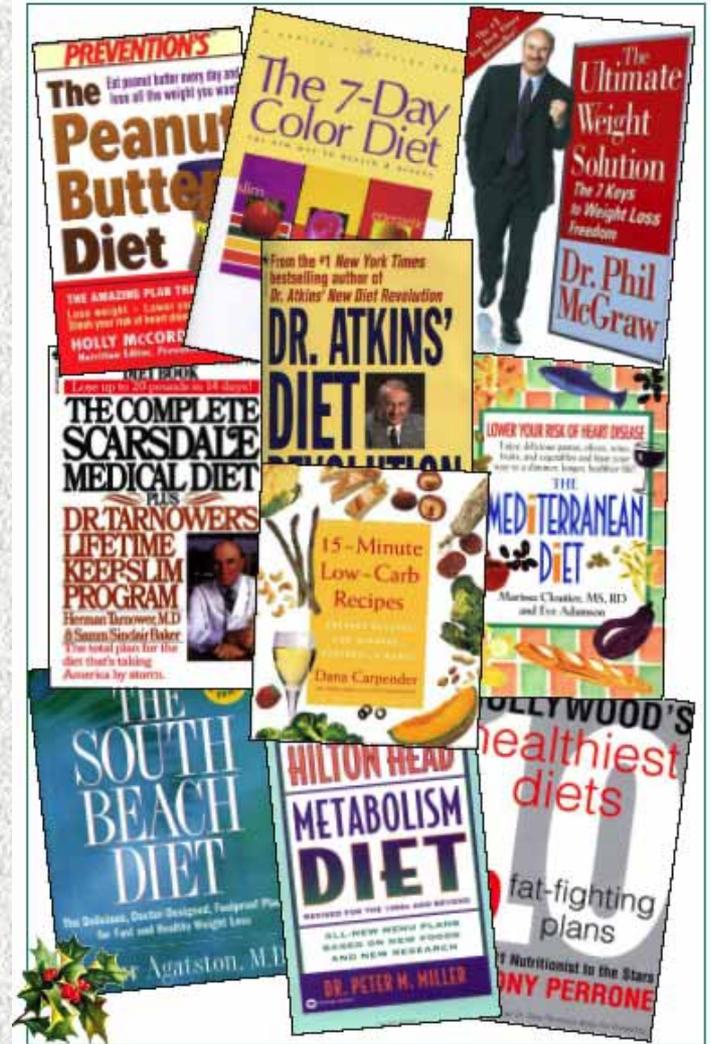
Healthier foods and more movement work in combination to burn fat and reduce body weight. You will also feel better, sleep more soundly and be better equipped to ward off health problems.

Eating Well

It's not about weight on a scale or fad diets, it's about a healthier long term *lifestyle* ...eating well and staying active rewards us with a richer and fuller life.

While fad diets often permit people to lose weight in the short term, experts point out that fewer than 1 in 10 people maintain the weight loss. Many of these diets can have a detrimental affect on your long term health and increase your risk of developing chronic disease.

In contrast, people who make a commitment to eat better and take on a moderate daily activity are 4 times more likely to stick with it over the long haul than fad dieters.



Essential Tips for Eating Well

“The first wealth is health.” - Emerson



- Nutrition experts agree that good eating and weight control is not about counting calories and weighing in, it's about changing behaviors for life...eating healthier and seeking a better *lifestyle*.
- Set small, realistic goals for yourself: Add one new challenge each week...
 - Week 1-** Learn about healthy foods to help you make better food choices
 - Week 2-** Cut down on the “white stuff” refined starches like pasta and potatoes
 - Week 3-** Cut down on saturated fats like cheeses, butter and red meats.
- Avoid weighing yourself everyday...do it at one month intervals. Body weight can fluctuate as much as 5 pounds a day! Instead focus on the benefits of a better *lifestyle*.
- Prepare and eat meals at home where you can control the content and portion size. Make a little extra to take to work the next day...eat healthier and save money.
- Avoid the temptation of the convenient fast food or drive through.

More Essential Tips

- **Read food labels** for calorie content, serving sizes and if it contains any amount of “trans fats,” put it back on the shelf.
- **Eat slowly**, only when you are hungry and enjoy your meals
...remember it takes 15 minutes for your stomach to signal your brain that you're full so plan on at least 30 to 40 minutes for large meals.
- **Don't give up** if you fall off your healthy eating regimen...forgive yourself and eat a little healthier the next day or boost your physical activity to compensate for it.
- **Get your family and friends** to support your effort and keep you on track...find a like-minded “buddy” to have lunch or dinner with.
- **Balance calories** with daily activity- if you expend a little more energy and consume a few less calories, you lose weight...skip that mid-morning donut with your coffee and you could save 5 pounds a year - you won't miss it!

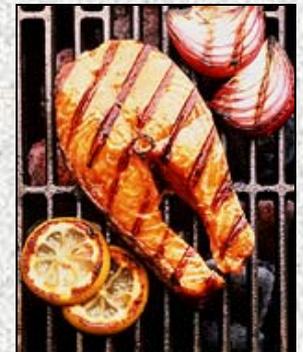


More Essential Tips



The Right Foods- mix it up a bit

- Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and substitute them for less nutritious foods like French fries, chips or cookies
Fruits and vegetables significantly reduce your risk of heart attacks, strokes, a variety of cancers just to name a few of the many benefits.
- Eat foods that are high in fiber, i.e., nuts, whole grain bread, cereal, beans, and brown rice ... *lose the “white stuff”*, those refined starches like white bread, potatoes, white rice and pasta
High fiber/complex carbohydrates are our main source of body energy. They help to moderate blood sugar and insulin levels and they may also lower the risk of Type 2 Diabetes and heart attacks.
- Eat more fish, poultry and eggs and reduce red meat consumption to once or twice a week to reduce saturated fats.



More Essential Tips



The Right Foods- mix it up a bit

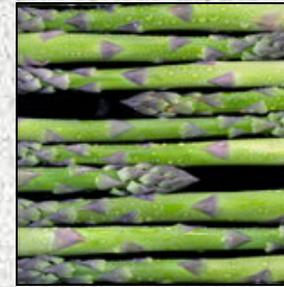
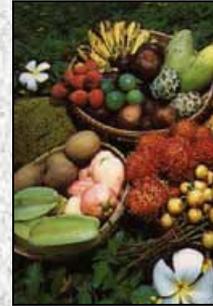
- Use plant oils for cooking/preparing foods instead of butter or margarine...corn, olive, canola, sunflower and peanut oils have 80% less saturated fat and zero cholesterol
- Substitute water and fruit juices for soft drinks to reduce sugar and calories
- Dairy foods and cheeses contain high levels of saturated fats and salt (comparable to strips of bacon)...if you love dairy products and cheeses go for low-fat/low sodium varieties or just eat less of it.

Learn what the experts say about the revised

Δ My Food Pyramid Δ

slides 27 through 29 at the end of this section

Healthy foods can be beautiful!



Moving More

There is a ton of evidence that people who are inactive can improve their health by becoming moderately active. Making this *lifestyle* change can substantially reduce your risk of musculoskeletal disorders and chronic disease and it will also help...

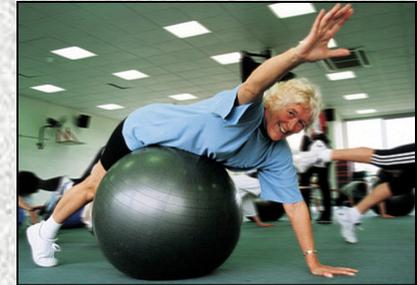
- Control weight
- Build healthy bone, muscle and joints
- Relieve pain of arthritis and musculoskeletal disorders
- Reduce anxiety and depression

20 minutes a day 3 to 4 times per week

- Walk at lunch or on breaks
- Bicycle, treadmill or stationary cycle
- Substitute stairs for the elevator
- Swim or exercise in a pool



Moving More



If vigorous sports or exercises are more your style, check out **Section 5. Sports & Exercise** ...but be careful!



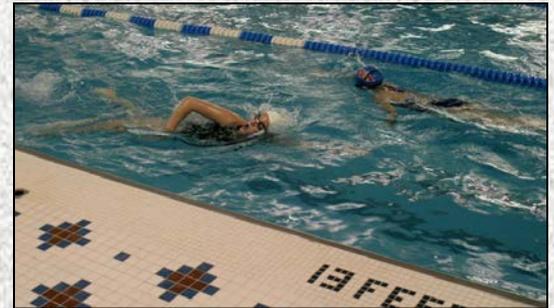
Moving More- Swimming

Swimming laps in a pool is a great form of physical activity and it's extremely low impact, i.e., easy on your joints since body weight is lessened by buoyancy: ...only 10% of your land weight.

Swimming is different than bicycling or walking in that it primarily conditions the upper body versus the lower extremities...if your focus is improving upper body strength and physique then swimming might be right for you.

Water aerobics classes are great for overall body conditioning and a great place to start...particularly if you have low back or joint problems.

Start by contacting your local YMCA or JCC to find out what's available in your community.



Moving More- Bicycling

- Cycling is another great form of low impact exercise that's easy on the joints.
- Cycling is great for conditioning the lower body since it's all in the legs.
- Cycling can also be an all-weather activity which is essential for developing a good routine. In good weather you can cycle outside and in rainy weather you can use a stationary bike indoors- at home or at a gym.
- Cycling is also a great family activity to spend quality time with your kids

Keep in mind these basic safety rules:

- *Be sure your bike is in good working order*
- *Be sure it is adjusted to fit you*
- *Wear a helmet*
- *Select your terrain carefully - avoid busy streets and traffic*



Contact the County Parks Department for maps of bike trails.

Look into a local cycling club where you can get tips on good places to ride and on good cycling technique.

Moving More- Walking

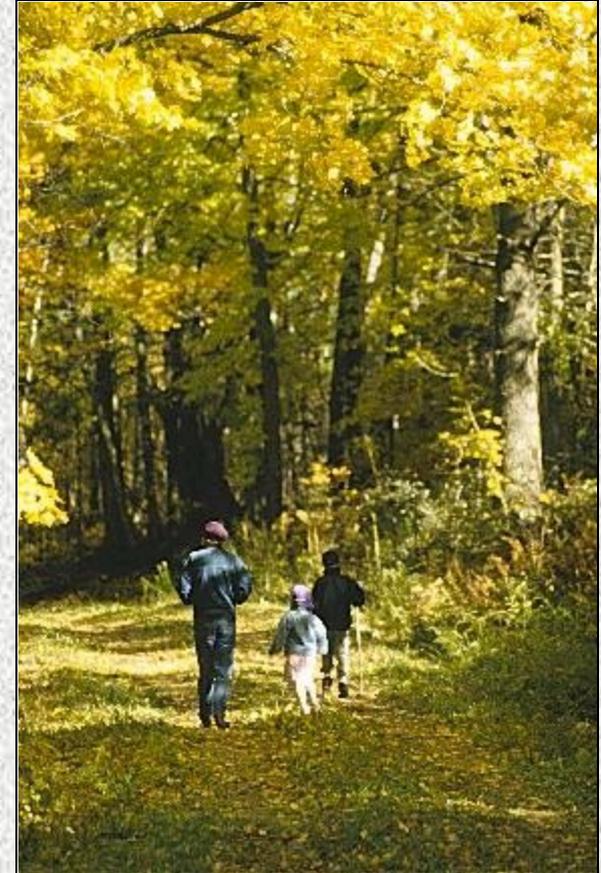
The most common denominator of every diet book, every self-help or *lifestyle* guide, every fitness program and every consumer health research study is

Walking ...just putting one foot in front of the other and walking out the door.

It's a low impact activity that anyone can do and is recommended for even those recovering from heart conditions.

It's convenient and economical since all it requires is a comfortable pair of walking or athletic shoes that are well-cushioned.

A simple 20-minute walk done regularly could change your life forever!



Essential Tips for Moving More

“The victory is not always to the swift, but to those who keep moving”



Getting Started Walking

- If you're reasonably fit and are not suffering from any major medical problem that prohibits you from exercising, you can probably walk out your front door without a doctor's recommendation or guidance.
- Get a pair of comfortable and well-cushioned shoes or sneakers. If you have sensitive feet or joints, you might want to invest in a pair of cushioned walking socks for added protection.

Many smart dress shoes made by companies like Ecco, Rockport and Clarks are highly suitable for walking during business hours.

Week One- Start out slowly to allow yourself time to condition your body and increase your stamina. Take a 5 to 10-minute circuit around the block along a familiar route at a normal, comfortable speed then turn around and come home.

Week two- Increase your walk to 15-20 minutes and pick up the pace a bit...moderate pace.

Week three- Increase your walk to 30 minutes and try a brisk pace – a pace that requires a little more exertion than your normal walking pace as though you were walking quickly to catch up to a friend 20 feet ahead.

More Essential Tips



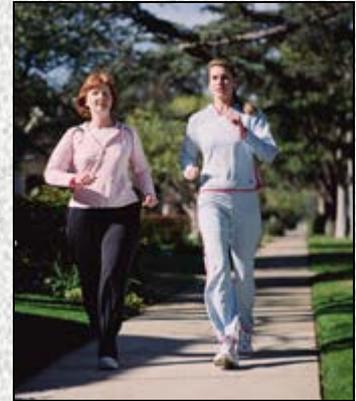
Getting Started Walking

- **The Talk Test** - If you can't talk aloud as though you were holding a conversation without losing your breath, you're going too fast ...slow it down a notch so you don't overexert.
- **Warming up**- Start the first 5-minutes of your walk at your slower, normal walking pace to get your circulation going that will warm up your muscles and lubricate your joints.
- **Cooling down**- just gradually reduce your brisk pace over the last 5-minutes of your walk. This lowers your heart rate and blood pressure and gets the blood flowing at an ideal rate for removing lactic acid to avoid problems such as cramps or muscle soreness/stiffness.
- **Always wear something bright** and colorful so you will be seen by drivers. For early morning and evening walks a flashlight and reflective vest or other gear is advised.
- **Take every safety precaution** to walk on sidewalks or on the left side of the street facing traffic. Watch for traffic all around you. Carry ID and a cell phone. Use caution when wearing music headphones...go for a single earpiece to be alert for vehicle noises.

More Essential Tips

Walking Technique

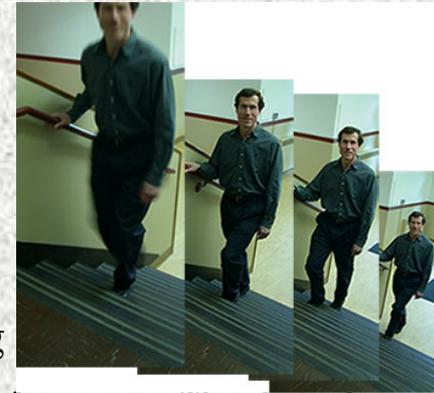
- Stand tall, keep your head up focusing on the horizon, your shoulders back and your stomach tucked in.
- Take quicker steps not longer ones. Focus on your pace and your stride will lengthen as you limber up. Forcing your stride can cause muscle strains.
- Use your arms- keep elbow angle at about 120 degrees (slightly open), pump your arms up and down as you walk as though you were using ski poles...*fast arms make faster feet.*
- Push off with the ball of the foot. You should feel as if you were showing the sole of your rear foot to someone behind you. Experiment with this technique and you'll find that your pace picks up naturally and you add a bit of bounce to your walk.
- If you walk on uneven terrain you might want to use a walking stick to help keep your balance.



More Essential Tips

Make walking a habit

- Walk to and from the store rather than drive
- Take your dog for a brisk walk each morning or evening
- Take a walk around your building for 10 minutes rather than a coffee break
- Walk up/down the stairs rather than taking the elevator
- Get out of the office and take a walk around the building at lunch time
- Get a group of friends together for a weekend morning walk
- Walk in place while watching TV or use a treadmill
- Plan an outing or picnic to include a walk on the beach or hike in the park
- Go on a walking tour on your next vacation
- Go window shopping in the city or the mall...but leave your credit cards at home
- Go on a museum or art tour in the city...but avoid the restaurant tours
- Buy a \$10 pedometer and keep track of the distance you cover in a day
...you'll be surprised and it might become addictive



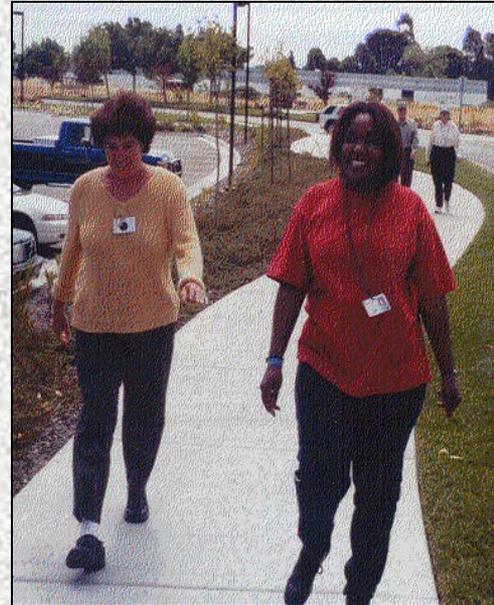
Take a guided walking tour on your next vacation



Take a hike with a friend



*Take a walk around the office building,
around the lake or around your complex*



Walking can be a great stress reliever- research has shown that a brief 2-minute walk in times of conflict significantly reduces harmful stress chemicals in the body, giving you a greater ability to cope. Consider it an adult time-out!

Take a walk with your family



Take a walk on the beach



Take a nature walk

Head a few hours north on 101 and hike in to see the tallest tree in the world- the *Stratosphere Giant* a 370 feet tall redwood in the Humboldt Redwoods State Park



Check out the
teeny-tiny walkers



Take a walk on a treadmill

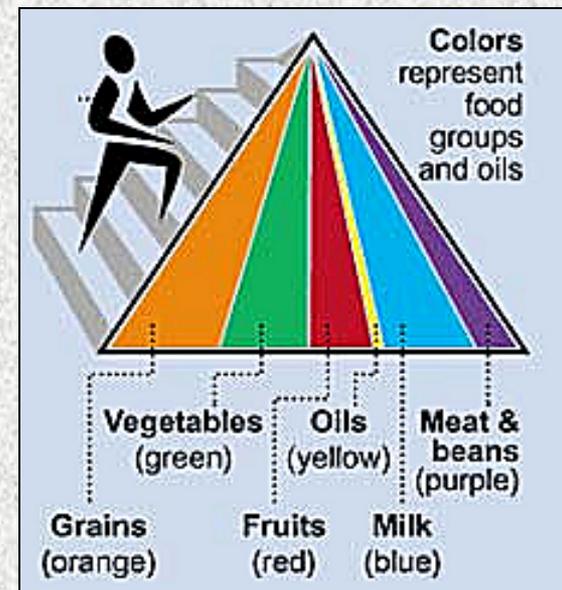


If you're not up for the out of doors or the weather interferes with your walking regimen, get yourself a treadmill or hit the gym.

Eating Well and Δ *My Food Pyramid* Δ

In 2005 the US Department of Agriculture introduced a new set of dietary guidelines for Americans depicted in this graphic. It has been widely criticized by health experts and nutritionists for a variety of reasons::

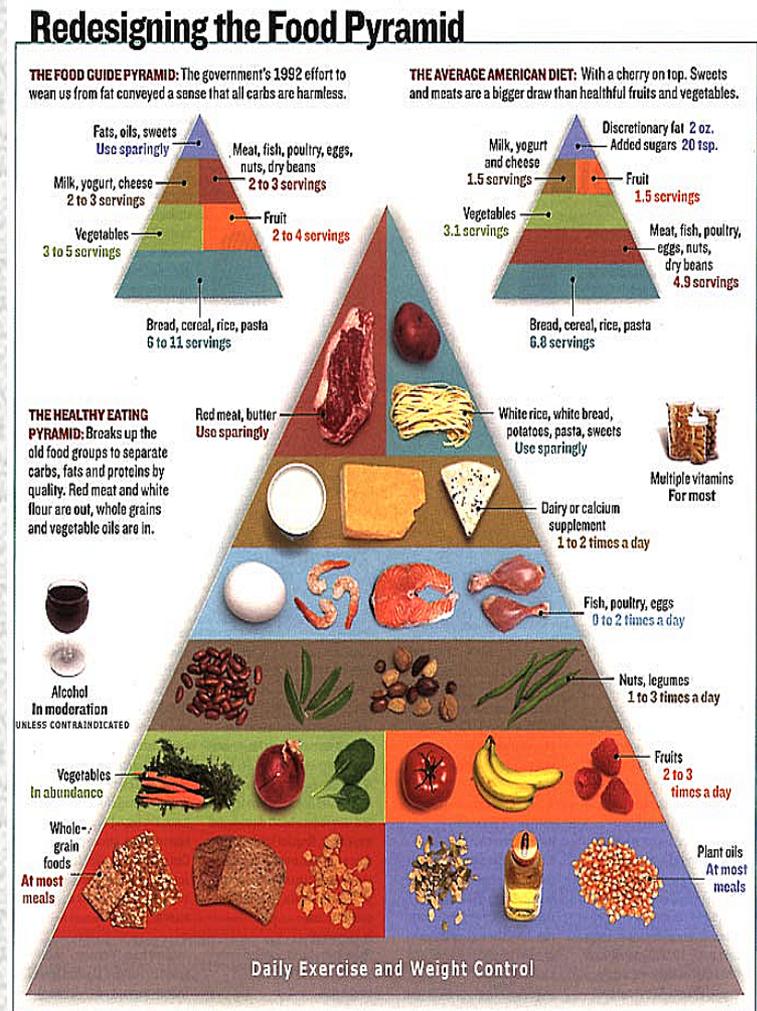
- Insufficient information to make informed choices about good foods, serving sizes and recommended daily consumption.
- Lumps together red meat with fish, soy products and legumes- *very different types/ fat content*
- The Food Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines were designed by a panel that included representatives from the Soft Drink Assoc., the National Cattlemen's Assoc. and National Dairy Council (to name a few) who were certain to have conflicts of interest in deciding what's good or bad despite all the science behind good nutrition...*billions of dollars are at stake.*



Healthy Eating Pyramid

The *“Healthy Eating Pyramid”* presented by the Harvard School of Public Health is the most widely accepted alternative by most nutrition and dietary experts. It attempts to fix the fatal flaws of the USDA pyramid with the following:

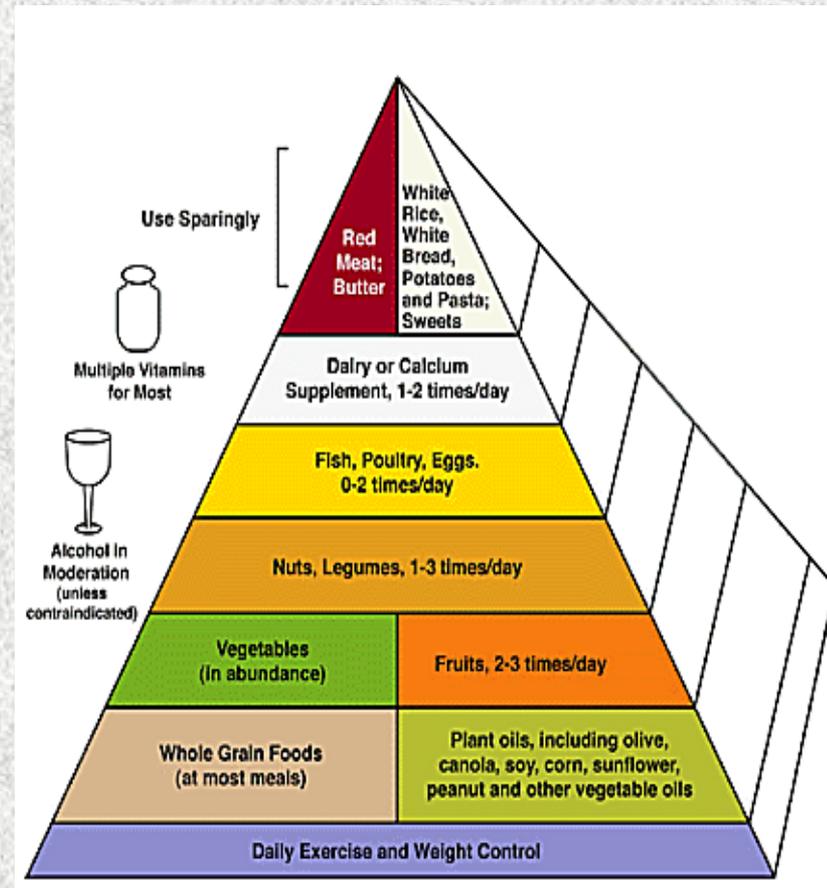
- Minimize consumption of red meats and increase fish, poultry, eggs and soy products
- Minimize consumption of refined starches like white bread, white rice and pasta in favor of whole grains such as oatmeal, wheat-bread and brown rice.



Healthy Eating Pyramid

- Cut back on dairy foods like butter, whole milk and cheese to reduce saturated fats. Instead go for non-fat or low-fat products. If you need an added boost of calcium, use supplements.
- Use plant oils instead of butter
- Consume an abundance of fruits and vegetables
- Consume more nuts and legumes for protein and fiber in place of meats
- Eat eggs in place of refined starches like bagels or donuts for breakfast

The one recommendation that both Pyramids have in common is that the foundation for good nutrition must also include daily exercise and weight control.



Visit www.mypyramid.gov and www.hsph.harvard.edu to learn more.

Lifestyles...sources and resources

Resources - where to find more information

www.healthierus.gov- dietary guidelines

www.cdc.gov- healthy eating tips, physical activity articles

www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/pyramids- healthy eating and exercise

www.walking.org- starting walking tips

www.nutrition.gov- dietary guidelines

www.uc.edu- exercise and mental health articles

www.healthywomen.org- exercise guidelines

www.emedicinehealth.com- walking for fitness

www.claytonparkchiro.ca/tips- health and exercise tips

www.holistic-online.com- exercise and health articles

www.successfulfitness.com- fitness articles

www.ergoweb.com- obesity and ergonomics problems

www.diabetes.org.uk- eating well and exercise tips

