

Healthwatch: Are You a Couch Potato?

Ann Pinning, Parish Nurse

March was National Nutrition Month. Nutrition for good health includes a balanced diet—lots of fruits and veggies and fiber rich whole grains. Check out the Health Ministries bulletin board in the hallway for an interesting pictorial on how fruits and veggies benefit our bodies. Along with adding the right foods to our diet, we need to remember to EAT IN MODERATION!

Now that you're making small changes in your diet, it is equally important to add exercise to your routine. The benefits of exercise for all ages are numerous, including decreasing blood pressure and cholesterol, preventing diabetes, improving brain function, minimizing osteoarthritis, improving balance and flexibility, and keeping your weight under control. **Children should be active several hours per day. Adults should include some form of exercise in their daily routine (try to get 30 minutes on most days),** even if it is done in 10 minute increments. In addition strength training and stretching should be part of your exercise regimen. This does not mean that you have to sweat it out in the gym but do make an effort to *get moving!* If you have a desk job, try to get up every 1-2 hours to move—walk around, climb a flight of stairs, stretch your back and limbs for a few minutes. If you stay at home, turn off the TV and get off the couch!

National TV-Turnoff Week begins April 20th. The average American household has their TV on over 7½ hours per day. Pediatricians recommend less than 2 hours per day of screen time (this includes TV, video, computer, etc.) for children over 2 and no screen time for those under 2. Studies show that cutting back on TV can help reduce the risk of diabetes and other obesity-related diseases. A Harvard study revealed that men who spend 40 hours per week watching TV are more than twice as likely to develop diabetes as those who watched less than two hours weekly. Equally important is that excessive TV can prevent us from positive relationship building activities with family and friends. Consider, too, that much of what is viewed on TV stands in contrast to our faith and values. "Garbage In, Garbage Out!" Our thoughts and actions are affected by what we see and hear.

New habits take 21 days to develop. Begin developing your exercise habit today! Its part of being a good steward of your health.

Beverly,

Married couples' will be Saturday, April 5 at the Italiano's.

BP Checks: I will not be available for regular blood pressure checks until June 8! Unfortunately I now work every other Sunday (why I sneak out early) and I have several trips planned (Grandma duty) in April and May. I can make arrangements with individuals if there is a special need—just ask!

Can you please also put a blurb in the bulletin in April re: the above no BP checks til June?

I don't think I had you put this on the calendar yet:
Lifeline Screening returns to RLC on Wednesday, June 18. Watch for details.

Thanks and Happy Easter!!
Ann