

# Eat right: March into National Nutrition Month

By Frankie Cox

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March is National Nutrition Month and this year's theme is "Food & Fitness: Health for a Lifetime."

Proper nutrition and physical activity are important at every stage of life. Healthful eating and physical activity go hand in hand with good health. The major themes for this year are:

■ Healthy eating fuels physical activity at every stage of life.

■ Food and physical activity choices are personal.

■ Staying fit improves your chances for a higher quality of life.

■ Keeping fit can improve your mood, reduce stress, and increase energy; reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes; help you look and feel your best; and give you strength and endurance to do the things you want to do.

Healthy eating fuels physical activity at every stage of life. Healthy eating is all about what's right for you. You need to make good healthy choices that fit into your stage of life and lifestyle. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans offer bottom-line advice. The seven guidelines represent the most current thinking of today's health professionals. They are meant to help all healthy people, ages two and over, make food choices that maintain and/or improve health. Decisions you can control over a lifetime can promote your health and quality of life. The sooner you start the better.

All foods fit into a healthful eating plan. There is no "bad" food -- all foods can fit. Make sure you consider variety, balance and moderation as keys to eating healthy.

It is important to eat a wide variety of foods because no one food or food group supplies all the nutrients your body needs. Each week try one new food, recipe, or when eating out order something you've never tried before. Having a good balance of your nutrient intake means eating enough, but not too much. Moderation means controlling the number of calories along with your intake of total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, sugar, and alcohol.

Food and activity choices are personal. Choose nutrient-dense foods that are flavorful and ones that match your own preferences, needs, and lifestyle -- even if and when your life and family situation changes. Good nutrition

## Nutrition and Your Health:

### Dietary Guidelines for Americans

- Eat a variety of foods.
- Balance the food you eat with physical activity -- maintain or improve your weight.
- Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables, and fruits.
- Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
- Choose a diet moderate in sugars.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

(Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1995)

starts with you. Whether at home, at work, or dining out, good nutrition can and should be a part of your life style.

It's important to balance healthful eating and physical activity. Each day participate in physical activities that you like to do. You have to like what you're doing in order to stick with it. At least 30 minutes a day is recommended but it need not happen all at once. Think about ways you may be able to incorporate more activity into your life. Even a few small changes in your eating and exercise habits can make a bit difference in how your look and feel.

Food is a source of pleasure. We eat for many reasons and many factors influence our choices of foods, such as culture, family, friends, surroundings, emotions, what is available, celebrations and how we feel about ourselves. Good nutrition can add pleasure to eating. If you are used to eating healthy then you are likely to do it more often.

Staying fit improves your chances for a higher-quality life. What does the term "fitness" mean? To many people it means different things, however fitness refers to your optimal health and well-being. It is your good health, at its very best. Being fit (physically, emotionally, and mentally) gives you a better chance at a higher quality of life and perhaps a longer life.

No one would argue the value of fitness to overall health. The health benefits of fitness are physical, mental, and lower the risk for some diseases. Fitness can help increase longevity and improve your self-esteem and

ability to manage stress. You'll be more productive, safe at work, and better equipped to go through life. You never reach a point where it's too late to start leading a more active life. You can improve your quality of life at any point in your life by getting into the habit of regular physical activity.

Try to fit exercise/physical activity into your daily routine by also using the variety, balance, and moderation keys.

Variety: try different types of physical activities because you use different muscle groups. Balance: use weight bearing activities to strengthen bones, stretching and bending for flexibility, resistance exercises for muscle strength, and aerobic activities for cardiovascular endurance. Moderation: have a minimum goal of 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity over the course of the day, on most, if not all days of the week. However, if your goal is weight loss, you may need to exercise longer or at a higher intensity.

You can benefit by charting your course toward achieving overall fitness. Learn and acquire eating and physical activity habits that you can live with for a lifetime. Gradual changes for health are often easier and more effective in the long run than trying to change everything at once. Take one month at a time - or even one day at a time.

Start now by tracking your eating patterns and your physical activities over the next month by keeping a eating and physical activity record. Stop by the Health and Wellness Center and pick up a month's worth of eating and activity record forms to help you track your progress. One month is long enough to see some results, but not too long to feel tedious.

At the end of a month look over your records, evaluate your progress, and reevaluate your plan. See how you've moved toward fitness and decide what your next steps will be. Focus on the positive aspects of how good you feel, having more energy, feeling less stressed, being in a better mood, and even sleeping better.

As an added incentive or motivation - during March the first 30 people to turn in at least one full week of completed food/activity records will receive a free T-shirt promoting fitness.

Stop by the Health and Wellness Center and see what we have to offer, or call the HAWC at 963-4007.

## Sports Line

### Golf tourney

The 437th Communications Squadron will host a St. Patrick's golf tournament March 17 at Wrenwoods Golf Course, with a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. Cost will be \$10 plus green fees, which includes soda, lunch, range tokens, and a lot of door prizes.

For more information contact Tech Sgt. Michael Heckendorn at 963-3982 or Airman 1st Class Erik Sonnenberg at 963-3269.



### Basketball playoffs

As the regular intramural basketball season ended, 437th Medical Group was ranked number one with a 17-1 record. A double-elimination championship tournament is under way. Results from Tuesday's games were:

- CRS defeated 437 AGS 3, 61-52
- LSS/CPTS beat the Flyers, 48-44
- EMS defeated CES, 56-40
- SUP 2 over Navy Hospital, 57-54

See next week's *Airlift Dispatch* for the latest on the championship tournament.

### HAWC News

Do you know your numbers? You can still sign up at the HAWC Monday - Thursday for a cholesterol screening on Friday. For more information, call 963-4007.

## Youth Sports: CAFB Lakers finish season undefeated

By Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe

437 AW Public Affairs

The Charleston AFB Lakers, a 9-10 year old Youth Programs basketball team, recently finished their season with a flawless 12-0 record.

The team is made up of both boys and girls and competed against other base teams and two off-base basketball squads from Harvest Baptist Church.

"I'm really proud of them," said head coach Rodney Gaines, a technical sergeant with the 437th Equipment Maintenance Squadron. "They play well as a team and they are a very energetic group. They're well-disciplined."

Gaines also thanked his assistant coaches, Gorge Vasvari-Toke and Terrence White. "They worked really well with the kids and helped them stay focused," he commented.

The team celebrated with a recent outing to Frankie's Fun Park, according to Gaines..

Members of the undefeated Lakers are:

Eric Grimes, Tyrone Ellison, Lindsey Hollabaugh, Kara Eatman, Jordan Pearson, A.J. Vasvari-Toke, Martin Deas, William Watson, Benjamin Blake and Benjamin Kinzer.

Gaines also thanked Youth Sports director Don McArthur and "team mom" Angela Blake.