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BROWARD County Public Schools

Wellness Newsletter

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Live.Life.Well.

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October is **Breast Cancer Awareness** Month

Nutritious Foods Women Over 40 Need to Eat

I have many clients in their forties, and they all seem to be struggling with the same issues when they come to me for advice. They tell me that their clothing does not fit the way it used to and that they have lost the energy the once had in their twenties and thirties. They don't understand why these things are happening when they haven't changed their diet and exercise routines. But that, in fact, is the problem. Once you hit your forties, loss of muscle and hormonal changes cause you to burn fewer calories at rest. Due to the decrease in metabolism, your body can change rapidly if you don't make adjustments to your lifestyle.

Here are the four nutrients you should stock up on when updating your current diet. (Hint: they are all plant-heavy.) In order to get the nutrients that are most essential to you at this age while also maintaining a healthy weight, you might want to consider adopting a vegetarian diet. It may help to minimize or stave off weight gain caused by a decrease in metabolism.

This type of diet will also ensure plenty of calcium to combat the increased risk of osteoporosis. Here, the powerful nutrients every 40-year-old woman needs most:

1. Calcium/Vitamin D

Due to changes in your hormones, vitamin D levels tank around age 40 and absorption of calcium decreases. That's why it's so important to make sure you're taking vitamin D along with your calcium. Proper levels of vitamin D will ensure the best absorption of calcium. The best sources of calcium include sardines (you'll get omega 3s through the fish and calcium through the bones), spinach, broccoli, kale, tofu, calcium-fortified cereals and animal-based sources such as low-fat milk, Greek yogurt and buttermilk. Most experts believe that the amount of vitamin D absorbed through food is inadequate and that supplements are really your best way to go. However, it's important to discuss vitamin D supplementation with your physician to find out the right amount for you.

2. Omega-3s

Now more than ever, you'll want to protect your heart. Eating foods high in fatty acids is a great way to do this. Most of us know that salmon and other marine animals provide a great source of fatty acids, but we can also consume plenty of plant-based omega-3-rich

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foods as well. A few of my favorites: hemp seeds, walnuts, cabbage, chia and tofu. You can also consume omega-3 fortified foods such as eggs or lean meats. If you can't work enough fatty acids into your diet, consider supplementing with DHA.

3. Low-Fat and High-Fiber

Metabolic rate significantly decreases when you hit your forties, and weight may creep up without warning even though your overall eating and exercise habits have not changed. Think plants! Grains such as quinoa, farro, spelt, buckwheat, oats, millet, amaranth and Freekeh are high in fiber and protein and lower in carbohydrates. Also consume plenty of fruits and veggies, especially raspberries, split peas and artichokes as well as legumes such as nuts, beans and lentils.

4. Zinc

Finally, you may want to determine if you're getting enough Zinc in your diet as well. Zinc has been found in several studies to protect immune function in aging. Zinc can be found in oysters, baked beans, cashews, fortified breakfast cereals (go for 100% whole grain cereals), low-fat yogurt, lean meat, poultry, eggs and legumes.

Remember to fill your kitchen with these highly nutritious foods so that they're there when you need them. Then go out and enjoy being active!

By: Kristin Kirkpatrick, MS, RD, LD

Reduce your risk of breast cancer with smart steps for whittling your middle.

While maintaining a healthy weight helps to protect against breast cancer, watching your waistline specifically may be one of the best ways to reduce your risk. Women who went up a skirt size between their twenties and age 50 were 33 percent more likely to get breast cancer after menopause than those whose waists didn't expand, according to a large study. Smart strategies that counteract the underlying problem, a condition called insulin resistance, can help you whittle your waist.

Go for slow food: "Shift your diet in the direction of high-fiber and protein-rich foods that you absorb more slowly," says Roxanne B. Sukol, MD, medical director of Cleveland Clinic Wellness. Get your carbohydrates in the form of vegetables, intact grains, legumes and fruit; avoid carbs that have been stripped of their fiber and nutrients (e.g., white breads and sugar); and include protein and nutritious fat at every meal.

Muscle up: Cardio-focused exercise is essential for overall weight loss, but resistance training is critical for insulin resistance. Start with two or three times a week.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

Night moves!

Get your body and mind ready for sleep with this relaxing yoga pose.

Donning pj's, brushing teeth, and dimming lights are a good start. But to really get your relaxation on before bed, turn upside down. Legs Up the Wall pose — exactly what it sounds like — is a gentle inversion that calms the nervous system. "By actively disengaging the body mechanics required for forward motion, you signal to your body and mind that it's time to rest and relax," says Cleveland Clinic yoga therapist Judi Bar.

1. Sit on the floor with your left side against the wall. If you have any lower-back discomfort or general stiffness, place a folded blanket or firm bolster between your left hip and the wall.
2. Gently turn your body to the left, bringing your back to the floor and your legs up onto the wall. If you're using a blanket or bolster, adjust it so that it supports your lower back. Rest your head and shoulders on the floor. Use your hands for balance as you shift your weight from side to side, and scoot your bottom close to the wall.
3. Let your arms rest open at your sides, palms up. Encourage your hips and buttocks to relax, allowing the lower back to disengage. Close your eyes. Hold for 5 to 10 minutes, breathing deeply.
4. To release, slowly push yourself away from the wall and slide your legs down to the right side. Stay here for a moment, and then, moving slowly, use your hands to press yourself back up into a seated position.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

Healthy Recipe: Minestrone with Farro

This recipe takes a classic Minestrone soup and turns it into a scrumptious one-dish wonder! We love this recipe's addition of delicious farro for its heartiness and nutty flavor. But even better is the mighty combination of cabbage, kidney beans, carrots, onion and tomatoes! That's a whole lot of cancer-fighting, cholesterol-lowering, energy-boosting ingredients packed into one super tasty meal. Serve it for dinner (it's a satisfying main dish) and watch how quickly everyone asks you to make it again!

By: Sara Quessenberry for Cleveland Clinic Wellness

Ingredients:

1 large yellow onion
2 cloves garlic
4 ribs celery
4 large carrots, peeled
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons tomato paste
15-ounce can whole tomatoes
6 cups water
½ cup farro
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
½ of a head of savoy cabbage
15-ounce can (no-salt) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
¼ cup chopped fresh flat leaf parsley
¼ cup grated Parmesan

Nutrition Info Per Serving:

(1 cup): 330 calories, 9 g protein, 52 g total carbohydrates, 9 g fiber, 18 g sugars, 0 mg cholesterol, 10 g total fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 390 mg sodium

Instructions:

1. Chop the onion and garlic. Slice the celery in half lengthwise, then slice crosswise into small pieces. Do the same with the carrots. (You may have to quarter them lengthwise if the carrots are especially fat).

2. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Add the garlic, celery, and carrots and cook, stirring often, until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes.

3. Stir in the tomato paste and let cook for 1 minute. Then add the tomatoes (break them up with your spoon as they cook), water, farro, thyme, salt, black pepper, and red pepper. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and let the soup simmer until the farro is tender, about 30 minutes.

4. Split the cabbage in half and remove the core. Then slice one-half of the cabbage head into ½-inch wide strips (about 4 cups). Add the cabbage and beans to the soup and simmer until the cabbage is tender, about 15 minutes. Stir in the parsley and serve topped with grated Parmesan.

Yield: 4 servings

Reduce Your Risk of Breast Cancer

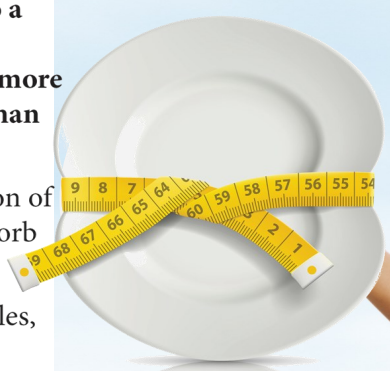
Smart Steps Toward Reducing Your Risk:

Get Screened Regularly: **Mammograms can't prevent cancer, but they can reduce your risk of dying from it. The sooner it is caught, the better your chances.**

The American Cancer Society recommends screening every year beginning at age 40, while others say to start at age 50.

Be familiar with your own breasts- if you find something that wasn't there before, and it doesn't disappear within a few weeks, have it checked by your doctor.

Whittle Your Middle: **According to a large study, women who went up a skirt size between their twenties and age 50 were 33% more likely to get breast cancer after menopause than those whose waists didn't expand.**



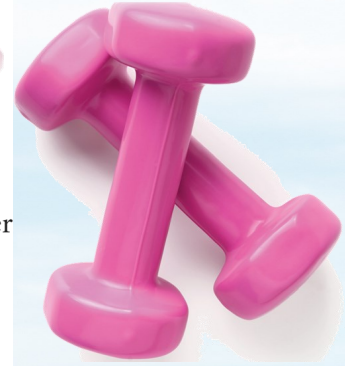
Go for slow food: shift your diet in the direction of high-fiber and protein-rich foods that you absorb more slowly.

Get your carbohydrates in the form of vegetables, intact grains, legumes and fruit.

Avoid carbs that have been stripped of their fiber and nutrients (e.g., white breads and sugar) and include protein and nutritious fat at every meal.

Muscle Up: **Cardio-focused exercise is essential for overall weight loss, but resistance training is critical for insulin resistance.**

Women who exercise between 10 and 19 hours per week are 30% less likely to develop breast cancer than less active women.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast Cancer Awareness Month celebrates the energy, passion and power we have to band together to rally around our survivors. According to the Susan G. Koman Foundation, the five-year survival rate for women diagnosed with breast cancer is 90%; early detection and education are the keys.

Breast cancer affects everyone in a family, including our work family here at Broward County Public Schools. In an effort to continue to increase awareness of breast cancer in both men and women, three of the District's survivors and their testimonials are featured below. We know that their stories of survival and success will inspire and encourage all of us to live healthier lives. Know your risks and schedule your mammography screening today. Boca Regional Hospital's mobile mammography van can visit your school site. Please contact Tina Severance-Fonte via e-mail (tina.severance@browardschools.com) for more information and scheduling options.

Elaine Heyler - Teacher, Coral Springs Middle School

When told that she should not be worried about unusual activity in her breast tissue, Elaine decided to get a second opinion. In 1994, at the age of 42, she was diagnosed with breast cancer; however, Elaine continued teaching her students throughout her treatment. Through the years, she has undergone 13 surgeries. It was a long and painful journey, but Elaine continued to focus on the final destination. Elaine shares that with a positive mindset, faith in God, a supportive & loving family, and students that need her, she continues her fight to stay cancer free. Her advice to all women is to do self-examinations, be proactive if you suspect anything, do your homework to find a doctor that is competent, and believe that you will survive!

Debbie Theaman: Teacher, Silver Shores Elementary School

Debbie was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 32. At the time, she had three small children. She discovered a lump and was scheduled for a simple lumpectomy; however, after surgery she was told that a mastectomy was necessary because the cancer had unknowingly spread. Debbie wants to encourage all women to do breast self-examinations. She did get through the treatments with the help of supportive friends and family. Debbie feels very fortunate to have had such phenomenal doctors and has been miraculously cancer-free for 28 years.

Carol Cascio, Safety Department

Carol felt a lump. After having a biopsy, the results came back positive for stage 3 breast cancer. She had surgery removing two masses and 15 lymph nodes. She took two weeks off of work for the initial surgery. She had 8 rounds of intensive chemo and 31 days of radiation. Carol and her family continued to do everything that they normally did, even going to the beach on Sunday afternoons, bald. Carol has had numerous reconstructive surgeries and has gotten "inked" over most of her "survivor" scars. Carol has been cancer-free for six years now and feels blessed to be vertical. Ms. Cascio believes that if you have a positive attitude, then you can accomplish anything. She wishes to remind women to do their monthly self-exams.

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EMPLOYEE WELLNESS
A PROACTIVE APPROACH

BRING YOUR brave.

BREAST CANCER IN YOUNG WOMEN

Cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. When cancer starts in the breast, it is called breast cancer. Except for skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer in American women.

Most breast cancers are found in women who are 50 and older, but breast cancer also affects younger women. About 11% of all new cases of breast cancer in the United States are found in women younger than 45 years of age. While breast cancer diagnosis and treatment are difficult for women of any age, younger women may find this experience overwhelming.

WHO HAS A HIGHER RISK?

Some young women are at a higher risk for getting breast cancer at an early age compared with other women their age. If you are a woman younger than age 45, you may have a higher risk if—

- You have close relatives who were diagnosed with breast or ovarian cancer (particularly at age 45 or younger).
- You have changes in certain breast cancer genes (BRCA1 and BRCA2).
- You are of Ashkenazi Jewish heritage.
- You were treated with radiation therapy to the breast or chest in childhood or early adulthood.
- You have had breast cancer or other breast health problems such as lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS), ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), atypical ductal hyperplasia, or atypical lobular hyperplasia.

If you think you are at higher risk, talk to your doctor. Your doctor may refer you to a genetic counselor, recommend that you get screened earlier and more frequently, and consider medicines or surgeries that can lower your risk.

You have an average risk of getting breast cancer at a young age if the risk factors listed don't apply to you. If you are at average risk, it is important for you to know how your breasts normally look and feel. Talk to your doctor if you notice any changes in your breasts. Aside from genetics, little is known about what causes breast cancer in women younger than 45 years of age.

Benefits & Employment Services

INSPIRING A NEW WAVE OF EDUCATORS & EMPLOYEES

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