Continued Progress to Wellness

It’s January, and we have made it through the holidays! Many of us may be a few pounds heavier—no doubt due to all the cheerfulness and celebrations we have probably been engaging in. Nearly half of us have made New Year’s Resolutions with the best of intentions, and yet 75% of us will abandon these newly-made goals within the next month (Marist Poll, 2013). Wellworks For You is committed to helping you remain focused and achieve your goals. Let’s take a look at some things you can do to ensure continued progress!

Weight loss always seems to be at the forefront of our collective Resolution lists. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2013), 69% of adult Americans are overweight or obese—no small wonder that weight loss borders on national obsession. Our culture in America has become one of instant gratification: we want it bigger, better, faster…and we want it now. Of course we want to lose weight now, and we don’t want to have to work at it…we can take a supplement, or a shake, or wear a neoprene body suit and achieve that elusive goal of looking like a movie star.

Actually, none of those things will help you achieve your goal. There is no magic solution. What will help you is good old-fashioned diet and exercise. For our purposes, “diet” is not a time-limited plan that you follow, reach your goal, and then discontinue. Merriam-Webster defines “diet” as “Habitual Nourishment” (December, 2014). This is our definition of “diet”—what you eat every day, day in/day out, for the rest of your life. Last month we touched briefly on some easy diet changes. Another simple change is portion control. Americans are guilty of over-eating simply because the portions placed in front of us are oftentimes enormous. We feel it necessary to consume the entire meal, even though we are eating past the point of satiation. Be mindful. Paying attention to your consumption can go a long way in reducing the number of overall calories. Weight loss is a simple mathematical equation: burn more calories than you consume, and you will lose weight.

Continued on the next page...
8 Natural Tips to Prevent a Cold

#1. Wash Your Hands
Most cold and flu viruses are spread by direct contact. Someone who has the flu sneezes onto his or her hand and then touches the telephone, the keyboard, a kitchen glass. The germs can live for hours only to be picked up by the next person who touches the same object. So wash your hands often. If you can't get to a sink, rub an alcohol-based hand sanitizer onto your hands.

#2. Don't Cover Your Sneezes and Coughs with Your Hands
Because germs and viruses cling to your bare hands, muffling coughs and sneezes with your hands often results in passing along your germs to others. When you feel a sneeze or cough coming, use a tissue, then throw it away immediately. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow.

#3. Don't Touch Your Face
Cold and flu viruses enter your body through the eyes, nose, or mouth. Touching their faces is the major way children catch colds and a key way they pass colds on to their parents.

#4. Do Aerobic Exercise Regularly
Aerobic exercise speeds up the heart to pump larger quantities of blood; makes you breathe faster to help transfer oxygen from your lungs to your blood; and makes you sweat once your body heats up. These exercises help increase the body's natural virus-killing cells.

#5. Eat Foods Containing Phytochemicals
"Phyto" means plants, and the natural chemicals in plants give the vitamins in food a supercharged boost. So put away the vitamin pill, and eat dark green, red, and yellow vegetables and fruits.

#6. Don't Smoke
Statistics show that heavy smokers get more severe colds and more frequent ones. Even being around smoke profoundly zaps the immune system. Smoke dries out your nasal passages and paralyzes cilia. These are the delicate hairs that line the mucous membranes in your nose and lungs, and with their wavy movements, sweep cold and flu viruses out of the nasal passages. Experts contend that one cigarette can paralyze cilia for as long as 30 to 40 minutes.

#7. Cut Alcohol Consumption
Heavy alcohol use suppresses the immune system in a variety of ways. Heavier drinkers are more prone to initial infections as well as secondary complications. Alcohol also dehydrates the body -- it actually causes more fluid loss from your system than it puts in.

#8. Relax
If you can teach yourself to relax, you may be able to rev up your immune system. There's evidence that when you put your relaxation skills into action, your interleukins -- leaders in the immune system response against cold and flu viruses -- increase in the bloodstream. Train yourself to picture an image you find pleasant or calming. Do this 30 minutes a day for several months. Keep in mind, relaxation is a learnable skill, but it is not doing nothing. People who try to relax, but are in fact bored, show no changes in blood chemicals.

References: http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/11-tips-prevent-cold-flu

Along with a healthier diet, exercise is a must. Perhaps “exercise” is too strong a word for some, particularly those of us who have never set foot in a gym. “Movement” would be a better descriptor. Movement is essential. The single key feature is to determine activities that you actually enjoy doing. For example, if you hate running but your trainer insists you run the treadmill 3 times a week, you are likely going to quit. If you HATE swimming but force yourself into the pool 3 times a week, you are likely going to quit. Bottom line: if you hate the movement, you are NOT going to stick with it. Before abandoning your goal, examine all options available to you. Perhaps you have recently joined your local fitness club but do not enjoy the solitary aspect of the Fitness Center. Try a group exercise class instead! If you hate to run but enjoy biking...go with biking. We are so much more inclined to succeed when we enjoy the activity.

Each day, consider these three simple tips:

- Drink more water. ½ your body weight in ounces!
- Be mindful of your portion sizes.
- Commit to movement. 150 minutes per week (ACSM, 2011) is the minimum required to maintain health. This translates to 10,000 steps per day.

Most importantly, do not abandon your goal. Don’t quit! Staying on the path to wellness requires determination and commitment. If you had a less than stellar day today, put it behind you and begin anew tomorrow. We all struggle...sometimes the chocolate and pizza win. One or two days like this are minor mishaps. The key is to not let these days string together to the point where the “bad” days outweigh the “good” days. Refocus on the activities you enjoy! Remember that increasing your overall wellness is a work in progress and will take some time. It won’t happen overnight, but it will happen!

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References: http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/11-tips-prevent-cold-flu
January is National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Whether or not you are a woman planning a pregnancy, now is the time to prevent birth defects. The steps below are key in helping to prevent birth defects:

- Take a vitamin with 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day
- Don't smoke or drink alcohol
- Talk to your doctor about vaccinations (shots)
- Wash your hands often with soap and water to prevent infections
- See your healthcare professional regularly

Featured Recipe:
Slow Cooker Barbeque Pulled Chicken

Yield: 8 servings

Each month, Wellworks For You features a healthy recipe! If you wish to submit a healthy recipe, please email your recipe to Wellworks For You at info@wellworksforyou.com by February 1st in order for it to appear in next month’s Newsletter!

Ingredients
- 1 8-ounce can reduced-sodium tomato sauce
- 1 4-ounce can chopped green chiles, drained
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon sweet or smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon ground chipotle chile
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed of fat
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Preparation
1. Stir tomato sauce, chiles, vinegar, honey, paprika, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, ground chipotle and salt in a 6-quart slow cooker until smooth. Add chicken, onion and garlic; stir to combine.
2. Put the lid on and cook on low until the chicken can be pulled apart, about 5 hours.
3. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board and shred with a fork. Return the chicken to the sauce, stir well and serve.

Nutrition Content
Per serving: 364 calories; 13 g fat (3 g sat, 5 g mono); 93 mg cholesterol; 32 g carbohydrates; 4 g added sugars; 30 g protein; 4 g fiber; 477 mg sodium; 547 mg

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References: http://www.fooducate.com

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