

FAIR WINDS TO FITNESS

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MOVING IT!

by CDR Deborah Thompson

Happy New Year! As we make resolutions for 2009, many will focus upon weight loss goals and/or a healthier lifestyle. Just one change is a stepping stone to better overall health.

One program of interest was developed by the Department of Veteran's Affairs. Called the MOVE! Program (Managing Overweight and/or Obesity for Veterans Everywhere), it is a three-pronged approach that focuses on food intake, physical activity and behavioral patterns. The program consists of five levels with a goal of keeping motivation and support at the forefront. The program has been so successful that Tricare has adopted the model for use in certain areas. For more information on MOVE! Go to www.move.va.gov.



Another program, sponsored by the US Department of Health and Human Services', is based upon the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. The basic message of the guidelines (for adults) is: 1) some activity is better than none, but more is better 2) for substantial health benefits, do at least 150 minutes each week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, or 75 minutes each week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity and 3) all adults should include muscle strengthening activities that work all the major muscle groups on two or more days per week. For more information on physical activity guidelines for Americans, go to <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/>.

Both programs provide good motivational information and support. The bottom line message here is if you move it, you will lose it!

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Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Maintenance & Logistics
Command Pacific (k)
1301 Clay Street Suite 170N
Oakland, CA 94501
Phone: 510-637-1350
Fax: 510-637-1227
E-mail: D11-PF-FWTF@uscg.mil

Mediterranean Diet- A Healthier Way to Eat

By CAPT Theresa Wade

The “Mediterranean” diet has a long history of being associated with improved health outcomes. Beginning in the 1950’s a researcher from the University of Minnesota, Ancel Keys, studied the relationship between diet and cardiovascular disease in 13,000 men from Finland, southern Italy, the Greek islands of Corfu and Crete, Japan, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, and the US. He found that the Italians and the Greek islanders ate a diet that got 40% of its calories from fat, but they had the lowest rate of heart disease and lived the longest. Finland and the US had the highest rates of heart disease. The Japanese also had a low rate of heart disease, but also a very low fat diet. This was the first study to associate the type of fat eaten to heart disease; unsaturated fats, from olive oil and fish vs. saturated fats, from meat and animal products. Since this original study, additional health outcomes have been associated with eating a Mediterranean diet.

- **Women eating a Mediterranean-type diet lost 13 pounds more than women on a low-fat diet and 8 pounds more than women on a low carbohydrate diet. (New England Journal of Medicine, July 17, 2008).**
- **Over an 18 year period, women in the Nurse’s Health Study who ate a Mediterranean-type diet were 28% less likely to die of heart disease or stroke than women eating a more traditional Western diet. (Circulation, July 15, 2008).**
- **A study of 13,380 Spaniards who ate a Mediterranean diet found they were 83% less likely to develop Type 2 Diabetes! (British Medical Journal, July 14, 2008).**
- **A 4 year study of 2,258 Americans found a 40% reduced risk for Alzheimer’s disease in those who most closely adhered to a Mediterranean-type diet. (Annals of Neurology, June 2006).**

(Reference: Harvard Health Letter, January 2009)

What is a “Mediterranean” diet? Traditionally people in the Mediterranean area have eaten lots of fruits and vegetables, fish and seafood, olive oil, breads, beans and legumes, and pastas. Typically the serving sizes are smaller but they eat a wider variety of foods at each meal. The main focus of the meal is not necessarily the protein; rather it is the meal as a whole that is important.



What can we do to move toward a more Mediterranean-type diet? Moving away from butter, margarine, and other fats and toward olive oil is one way. Focusing our meal-planning around the grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables and using the protein- fish, seafood, beef, chicken, lamb, pork- as the side-dish is really the point. And, of course, portion size is a key component to a healthy diet. It is really not that complex, but it does take some thought and planning to move away from our focus on meat as the basis of the meal and instead make the foods that we generally consider the “side dishes” the main focus.

With all the hype and advertising about food nutrients, phyto-nutrients, and nutrition supplements it is easy to get frustrated and confused. Also, there is very little data, if any, to support the health claims of many diet plans and supplements. This is not true of the Mediterranean diet- there is a long track record of studies showing that it is a healthy, life-affirming way to eat.

What Do Your Cholesterol Numbers Mean

Source: National Institutes of Health

Everyone age 20 and older should have their cholesterol measured at least once every 5 years. It is best to have a blood test called a "lipoprotein profile" to find out your cholesterol numbers. This blood test is done after a 9- to 12-hour fast and gives information about your:

- Total cholesterol
- LDL (bad) cholesterol--the main source of cholesterol buildup and blockage in the arteries
- HDL (good) cholesterol--helps keep cholesterol from building up in the arteries
- Triglycerides--another form of fat in your blood

If it is not possible to get a lipoprotein profile done, knowing your total cholesterol and HDL cholesterol can give you a general idea about your cholesterol levels. If your total cholesterol is 200 mg/dL* or more or if your HDL is less than 40 mg/dL, you will need to have a lipoprotein profile done. See how your cholesterol numbers compare to the tables below.

Total Cholesterol Level	Category
Less than 200 mg/dL	Desirable
200-239 mg/dL	Borderline High
240 mg/dL and above	High

- Cholesterol levels are measured in milligrams (mg) of cholesterol per deciliter (dL) of blood.

LDL Cholesterol Level	LDL-Cholesterol Category
Less than 100 mg/dL	Optimal
100-129 mg/dL	Near optimal/above optimal
130-159 mg/dL	Borderline high
160-189 mg/dL	High
190 mg/dL and above	Very High

HDL (good) cholesterol protects against heart disease, so for HDL, higher numbers are better. A level less than 40 mg/dL is low and is considered a major risk factor because it increases your risk for developing heart disease. HDL levels of 60 mg/dL or more help to lower your risk for heart disease.

Triglycerides can also raise heart disease risk. Levels that are borderline high (150-199 mg/dL) or high (200 mg/dL or more) may need treatment in some people.

Resources

For more information about lowering cholesterol and lowering your risk for heart disease, write to the NHLBI Health Information Center, P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD, 20824-0105 or call 301-592-8573, or visit the Web sites listed below:

- "[Live Healthier, Live Longer](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/chd)"-- information on cholesterol lowering (www.nhlbi.nih.gov/chd)
- "[Aim for a Healthy Weight](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)" (www.nhlbi.nih.gov)
- "[Your Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp)" (www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp)

Everyone age 20 and older should have their cholesterol measured at least once every 5 years.

Happy Birthday To Your Hands

By David Bonachea

The main way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. But germs also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.

Some viruses and bacteria can live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like tables, doorknobs, and desks.

You can help stop the spread of germs covering your cough or sneeze and then washing your hands.

The "Happy Birthday" song keeps your hands clean?



Not exactly. We recommend that when you wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. That's about the same time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice!

Source: FDA/CFSAN Food Safety A to Z Reference Guide, September 2001: Handwashing.

"But Seriously....."

What others have to say about health & exercise.

In the midst of everyone taking health, fitness and nutrition so seriously why do we always remember the wisecrack that somebody throws into the conversation? Here are a dozen quotes from people with sharp wits and an interesting point of view.....

"Fitness - if it came in a bottle, everybody would have a great body." (Cher)

"Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon." (Doug Larson)

"A healthy body is a guest chamber for the soul: a sick body is a prison." (Francis Bacon, Sr.)

"If it weren't for the fact that the TV set and the refrigerator are so far apart, some of us wouldn't get any exercise at all." (Joey Adams)

"The only exercise some people get is jumping to conclusions, running down their friends, side-stepping responsibility, and pushing their luck!" (Author Unknown)

"A man's health can be judged by which he takes two at a time - pills or stairs." (Joan Welsh)

"I have to exercise in the morning before my brain figures out what I'm doing." (Marsha Doble)

"Aerobics: a series of strenuous exercises which help convert fats, sugars, and starches into aches, pains, and cramps." (Author Unknown)

"If your dog is fat, you're not getting enough exercise." (Author Unknown)

"Exercise is a dirty word. Every time I hear it, I wash my mouth out with chocolate." (Author Unknown)

"I really don't think I need buns of steel. I'd be happy with buns of cinnamon." (EllenDeGeneres)

"Living a healthy lifestyle will only deprive you of poor health, lethargy, and fat." (Jill Johnson)

We want to hear from you.....



If you have a favorite healthy recipe, an informative website or a suggestion that would be of interest to others for a healthier lifestyle, please submit it to us. We have set up a an e-mail ad-

dress and we would greatly appreciate your submissions.

D11-PF-FWTF@uscg.mil

We hope to hear from you soon!