

For healthy, energetic and radiant women

Diet Dilemmas – and Ideas!

We'd all love to swallow a magic pill tonight and wake up pounds thinner tomorrow. But weight loss doesn't happen while we sleep (in spite of the promises of fad diets). Besides, if all of these diets really work, why are 50% of the adult women in Anne Arundel County overweight?

The problem with diets is they have a beginning and an end. If you change the way you eat, you will have a better chance of keeping the weight off for good. A healthy eating plan includes:

- Balance – Eat foods from different food groups. Most of your calories should come from fruits, vegetables and grains.
- Variety – Eat different foods from within each food group. Instead of just corn, for example, choose peas, carrots, beets or cauliflower.
- Moderation – Eat just a little of everything. The bigger the serving, the more calories it has.
- Don't add fat and sugar to your healthy choices.

Don't be fooled by fad diet plans and books. If it sounds too good to be true, it is! Watch out for these potential pitfalls:

- Phrases like “Breakthrough, miracle or secret formula”
- Promises like “Melts fat away”
- Rigid menus with “good” and “bad” foods
- Diets that eliminate one or more food groups



Tips to Remember:

- A calorie is a calorie. If you eat more than you need, it's stored as fat.
- You don't need special diet foods. Choose regular, unprocessed foods in smaller portions.
- Water is the ideal drink. It has no calories. Drink lots, especially while exercising.
- The most effective weight loss programs include physical activity every day.



Breast Health – and Controlling Your Risk.

Women of all ages need to be aware of the importance of breast health. While breast cancer is relatively uncommon in women under the age of 40, other factors can increase a woman's risk – at any age.

What can help to reduce your risk?

- **Diet.** Studies show that women who eat a balanced diet have a reduced risk for breast cancer. Balanced diets are high in fiber, low in fat and contain many fruits and vegetables.
- **Exercise patterns.** Regular physical activity also reduces risks. Just 30 minutes a day, most days of the week, have been shown to make a difference.
- **Pregnancy and breast-feeding** also appear to reduce the risk. The more time a woman has spent breast-feeding in her life, the lower her chance for breast cancer.

To detect breast cancer as early as possible, women should have a regular physical exam — including a clinical breast exam — by a health care provider. The health care provider checks the breasts for lumps or other changes. Checking your own breasts for lumps or other unusual changes should not take the place of a clinical breast exam.

If you're under the age of 40, regular mammograms are not recommended. This is because younger women have denser breast tissue, which makes it difficult to take a clear mammogram.

So take control of your breast health. To find out what screenings are best for you, discuss breast changes, risk factors and early detection testing with your health care provider. A great time to talk about this is when you go for your clinical breast exam.

Secondhand Smoke and Women

Are people who are concerned about secondhand smoke “overreacting”? No! Exhaled smoke – as well as the smoke released from a burning cigarette – contains a high concentration of cancer-causing substances. In fact, secondhand smoke often has more of these substances than the inhaled smoke.

Just look at some of the harmful chemicals in secondhand smoke: acetone (paint stripper), ammonia (floor cleaner), arsenic (ant poison), butane (lighter fluid), carbon monoxide (car exhaust), hydrogen cyanide (gas chambers) and more than 3,000 others.

Breathing in these chemicals can trigger a runny nose, itchy eyes, sneezing and coughing. But secondhand smoke also causes long-term problems, many of which don't show up until later in life. *(Continued on the back)*



Get Moving

We've all heard, "You should exercise 30 minutes a day, most days of the week." It sounds easy enough, but where do you begin? Start by asking yourself:

- What physical activities do I enjoy?
- Do I prefer group or individual activities?
- What programs best fit in my schedule?
- Do I have physical conditions such as asthma, diabetes or bad knees that limit my choice of exercise?

Once you know the type of exercises you'd enjoy most, here are some tips:

- With any new exercise program, it's always a good idea to consult a physician before starting.
- Dress for the weather conditions. Wear appropriate shoes.
- Include a five-minute warm-up with stretching before any exercise. Have a five- to ten-minute "cool down" after the activity.
- Exercise at a steady pace. Keep a pace that lets you talk during the activity.
- Start slowly. Gradually build up to 30 minutes of activity on most or all days of the week.
- Exercise at the same time of day so it becomes a regular part of your life.
- Don't get discouraged if you miss some days. Get started again gradually and work up to your old pace.

There are lots of ways to to get exercise. Grab some friends or family members and have fun with some of these activities:

- Bike riding
- Walking your dog
- Hiking
- Washing your car
- Tennis
- Raking leaves
- Rollerblading
- Bowling
- Dancing
- Gardening

Remember, start easy, have fun and know that you are taking steps to a healthier future. For more ideas, check out activities offered by the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks on their Web site at www.aacounty.org/RecParks.



For example, 3,000 nonsmokers die of lung cancer each year in the U.S. as a result of breathing someone else's cigarette smoke.

Secondhand smoke has also been linked to 35,000 heart attacks each year. Additional problems can include asthma, ear infections, premature birth, cancer of the nasal cavity, breast and bladder cancer, and oral cancer (especially when combined with alcohol).

How can you limit your exposure to secondhand smoke? *Make your home and your car smoke-free.* Rolling down the windows in your car or limiting smoking to just one room in your house doesn't work. If you can smell the smoke, you are being affected.

Here are more ideas for limiting your exposure:

- Let people know when their smoke is causing immediate problems (coughing, sneezing, eye irritation).
- Insist that relatives and caregivers not smoke around your children.
- Ask to sit in the nonsmoking section in a restaurant.
- Ask smokers to take it outside – guests too.
- Support legislation to restrict smoking in public places.

Secondhand smoke is a threat to your health, whether you're at home, school, restaurants, bars or at work. So take action today – limit your exposure – and improve your chances for a healthier future.

Good Health

Now Available in an Easy-to-Use Kit.

Call the Anne Arundel County Department of Health at **410-222-7979**. Choose from 11 FREE Learn To Live kits filled with ideas on living a healthier life.

- Healthy Eating Kit
- Quit-Smoking Kit
- Quit-Smoking Kit in Spanish
- Women's Health Kit
- Safe in the Sun Kit
- Colorectal Cancer Information Kit
- Fifty-Plus Health Kit
- Smoke-Free Kids Activity Kit For Parents
- Teen Quit-Smoking Kit
- Breast and Cervical Cancer Health Kit in Spanish
- Clean Lungs Kit, A Quit-Smoking Resource For African Americans

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For more information, call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979. Operators are on duty Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Leave a message at other times.

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