



November 1, 2002

Dear EAT RIGHT MONTANA Friend:

This month our packet focuses on **healthy weight during menopause, soy, sugars and other sweeteners**, and **gyms and fitness centers**. In addition to three new consumer handouts, we have also included an updated copy of our 2001 handout called the **"Straight Scoop about Sugar on Labels."**

Today's health and nutrition topics can be complicated and confusing – for both consumers and professionals. Several of our November topics (menopause, sugar and soy) clearly fall into this category. As nutrition communicators, our task is to clarify complex issues and to provide positive recommendations for consumers – even when research is ongoing and definitive answers are not available. We hope that the monthly **Eat Right Montana** materials help make your job easier.

Millions of menopausal women are currently struggling with questions surrounding the safety of hormone replacement therapy (HRT). While there may be no specific, one-size-fits-all answer about the medications, the lifestyle recommendations are unambiguous: Nutrition and physical activity can help all women move gracefully and healthfully through the menopausal period. For more on this timely topic, you can visit the North American Menopause Society @ www.menopause.org/.

Sugar and artificial sweeteners always seem to be involved in one controversy or another. The ongoing debate about the root causes of the US obesity epidemic (fat vs. carbohydrate) has been further clouded by the new Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs). Many nutrition experts disagree with the recommendation to consume no more than 25 percent of calories from simple sugars and suggest that the USDA Dietary Guideline of 10 percent is more reasonable. Using either number, Americans need education and practical advice on making smart choices to lower their sugar intake. For details on the DRIs, go to www.nap.edu/books/0309085373/html/. The October 2002 **Tuft's University Health & Nutrition Letter** has an excellent discussion of sugar issues (excerpts available @ www.healthletter.tufts.edu/).

As always, we appreciate your support and welcome your suggestions.

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What about SOY?

Menopause miracle food or over-hyped supplement?

Soy foods are sprouting up everywhere – from the produce department and the dairy case to the candy aisle and the frozen dessert section. On the supplement shelves, soy comes in every form imaginable from pills and powders to bars and shakes.

The claims for soy are nothing short of miraculous. Soy foods and supplements are being touted as the anti-aging, anti-cancer, anti-heart disease, anti-osteoporosis, anti-menopause super substances that every body, especially aging baby boomers, needs to consume.

The real question is whether soy actually lives up to all the hype. To get the real scoop on soy, it is important to check the science and listen to the researchers – rather than to only read the advertising slogans on packages and in magazines.

Potential benefits of soy

- ✓ The one proven benefit is that soy can help lower blood cholesterol. The only health claim approved by FDA is that soy protein can help reduce the risk of heart disease.
- ✓ It takes a lot of soy protein, about four servings a day, to get the cholesterol-lowering effect. The soy isoflavones found in supplements do not provide the same benefit.
- ✓ The most popular claim is that soy reduces menopause symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats. Most studies show that soy has a minimal, if any, effect on symptoms.
- ✓ When it comes to preventing cancer and osteoporosis, most scientists agree that it is still too early to tell. Preliminary studies look promising, but more research is needed.

Concerns about soy supplements

- ✓ Because Americans prefer to pop a pill rather than eat healthy foods, soy supplements are all the rage. Supplements contain isoflavones extracted from soy and other plants.
- ✓ The first problem is that isolated isoflavones may not have the same effect as they do in whole soy foods. Expensive supplements may, in fact, be a waste of your money.
- ✓ Safety is another concern. Experts say that taking high doses of isoflavones may not be safe, especially for women who have breast cancer or are at high risk of cancer.
- ✓ Quality control is also a serious issue for supplements. Product analysis has shown that labels often do not accurately reflect how much active ingredient they contain.

Soy food savvy

- ✓ Bottom line on soy: Skip the supplements – and enjoy whole soy foods. Read labels carefully – and pick products that offer great taste and good health in every bite.
- ✓ Soy is not naturally a good source of calcium. Make certain that soy milk, soy cheese, and soy yogurt are fortified with calcium, vitamin D, and other critical nutrients.
- ✓ Your best bet is to learn to cook with more traditional Asian soy foods – like tofu, tempeh, and edamame. For recipes and information, go to www.soyfoods.com.

Provided by Eat Right Montana



**Moving Montana Toward a Fit Future: Healthy weights for menopause
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Healthy Families 2002: Midlife choices for strong women (11th in a series of 12)

Millions of American women are struggling with questions about menopause and hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Results of the Women's Health Initiative, released in July 2002, suggested that long-term HRT may predispose women to heart attacks, stroke, blood clots, and breast cancer.

"Experts agree that decisions about hormones are best made by individual women and their health care providers," says Dayle Hayes, MS, RD, nutrition consultant in Billings, and member of the Council on Women's Nutrition Solutions. "They also agree that simple lifestyle changes can make a big difference in menopausal symptoms, like hot flashes, and reduce the risk of disease at the same time."

Best of all, the same exact changes are also the best ways for women to maintain a healthy weight during midlife. Being active is the place to start. Daily physical activity, like brisk walking, water aerobics, or dancing, provides an astounding list of benefits: weight management, stress reduction, and fewer menopausal symptoms, as well as the prevention of diabetes, osteoporosis, cancer, and heart disease. If physical activity were a medicine, it would be the most prescribed treatment in the world.

According to Hayes, nutrition can also make a big difference in how women feel at midlife and how they cope with menopausal changes. "Smart food choices are the same at any age," she says. "Whole grains, colorful fruits and veggies, lean meats, fish, and low-fat dairy products are just what the doctor ordered for youthful vigor. Healthful eating is an all-benefit, no-risk strategy for menopause."

Eat Right Montana (ERM), a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges all Montana women to make their health a priority. Making a commitment to a healthy lifestyle is the best investment that women can make – for today and tomorrow.

"Midlife can be an exciting and wonderful time," says Hayes. "Eating wisely and being active can help women have power surges instead of hot flashes. It's all about taking good care of yourself."

ATTACHED: *"Eating sweets the healthy weigh"* and *"Using a gym for fitness"*

Eating SWEETS the Healthy Weigh

It's a fact: Humans like sweet treats. There's nothing wrong with enjoying sweet foods – in moderation! The problem is that we tend to go overboard on sugar, especially empty-calorie, “liquid candy” beverages. Here's how to have your sweets – and stay healthy too!

1. Go natural with fruit.

Fruit – fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or juiced – is nature's sweetest treat. Satisfying your sweet tooth with fruit means you get some real nutrition benefits – like fiber, vitamins, minerals, and disease-fighting phytonutrients – along with great taste.

2. Enjoy sweets with other foods.

Timing is everything. The best time to enjoy a sugary food or beverage is along with other foods at a meal. You'll tend to consume less if you are satisfied with other foods (especially protein foods) and the sugar you eat will have less effect on your blood sugar.

3. Resize your portion size.

Many sweets – including candy bars, cookies, and soft drinks – have been super-sized. Choosing smaller portions, like a Halloween-size candy bar rather than a king-size bar, will be far better for your health. Smaller portions can also be equally as satisfying.

4. Get exactly what you want.

One way to be satisfied with a smaller portion is to get exactly what you are craving. Some people eat through piles of treats trying to stay away from the one thing they really wanted in the first place. Take a few minutes to focus on what you really want to eat.

5. Relax and enjoy.

People often feel guilty about eating sweets, so they sneak around and wolf them down. However, eating quickly and guiltily means that you feel less satisfied. The goal is to eat less and enjoy it more. Pick a small portion of your favorite sweet, then savor every bite.

6. Use 'sugar-free' wisely.

Being sugar-free does not guarantee that product is fat-free or calorie-free. Sugar-free also does not guarantee that something is packed with protein, vitamins, or minerals. Read before you eat – and check Nutrition Facts labels to get the most nutrients per bite.



**Celebrating
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Straight Scoop about Sugar on Labels

How to read and understand information about added sugars

Sugars are carbohydrates, which serve as an energy source for the body. There are many types of sugars. They occur both naturally and as ingredients in many foods.

The nutrition panel on a food label lists the total amount of sugars in a serving of the food. This amount includes sugars found naturally in foods such as the sugars in milk and fruit. It also includes added sugars. The ingredient list must name all added sugars.

INGREDIENT LISTS

A food is likely to be high in sugars if one of these names appears first or second in the ingredient list, or if several names are listed in one product.

Brown sugar	Fruit juice concentrate	Maltose
Corn sweeteners	Glucose	Maple syrup
Corn syrup	High-fructose corn	Molasses
Confectioner's sugar	Syrup (HFCS)	Raw sugar
Dextrin	Honey	Sucrose
Dextrose	Invert sugar	Syrup
Evaporated cane juice	Lactose	Table sugar
Fructose	Malt syrup	Turbinado sugar

LABEL DEFINITIONS

LABEL TERM ...	MEANS ...
Calorie free	less than 5 calories per serving
Sugar free	less than 0.5 gram sugars per serving
Reduced or less sugar	at 25% less sugar per serving as compared with standard serving size of the traditional food
No added sugars/no sugar	no sugars added during processing or packing including ingredients that contain sugar such as juice or dried fruit

NOTE: The term "low sugar" may not be used as a claim on food labels.

SWEET COMPARISONS

In an attempt to lower both added sugars and calories, the food industry continues to develop a wide variety of non-nutritive, intense, or "artificial" sweeteners. Here are some of the sugar substitutes in use today, along with their sweetness compared to table sugar.

SWEETENER	COMPARATIVE SWEETNESS
Sorbitol	0.5 times as sweet
High-fructose corn syrup	1.5 times as sweet
Aspartame	180.0 times as sweet
Acesulfame K	200.0 times as sweet
Saccharin	300.0 times as sweet
Sucralose (brand name Splenda®)	600.0 times as sweet

Provided by Eat Right Montana

Using a GYM for Fitness

Joining a gym or fitness center is the perfect way for some people to build regular physical activity into their busy lives. Having a safe, indoor place to “play” can be especially important in the winter – when days are shorter and the weather turns cold.

1. Motivation at the GYM

For many people, motivation is the most important reason for joining a gym. If you find it difficult to do regular activity on your own, a fitness center may be just the place for you. After all, your success is their goal, since that’s what creates customer satisfaction.

2. Aerobic activity at the GYM

Having options is one of the main benefits of a fitness center. If you get bored easily and like to do lots of different activities, gyms offers lots of choices, including trendy aerobic moves like spinning, kick-boxing, martial arts, express workouts, and Core boards.

3. Strength building at the GYM

Most well equipped gyms and fitness centers offer both machines and free weights for strength building. They also have staff to help you use equipment safely and effectively. When choosing a gym, make sure that it offers all the equipment and training you want.

4. Flexibility at the GYM

Flexibility is a critical, but often neglected, component of physical fitness. Check gyms for classes, like yoga, tai chi, and Pilates, that emphasize stretching and flexibility. Water classes, pools, and some machines also offer excellent ways to increase flexibility.

5. Companionship at the GYM

Some people enjoy solo activity – and others prefer a more social atmosphere. Joining the right gym can provide companions with similar interests and lifestyles. You also can join a gym with a friend or family member – and bring your own companionship with you.

6. Personal attention at the GYM

Having a personal trainer can make a real difference in your fitness program. Trainers can individualize a plan based on your needs and goals. They can also provide the personal motivation and attention to keep you going when the going gets tough.



**Celebrating
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Moving Montana Toward a Fit Future: Start today for a healthy weight

January 2002

- **The ABCs of a Healthy Weight**

February 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Women**

March 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Men**

April 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Children**

May 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Pregnant Women**

June 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight After Having a Baby**

July 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Babies and Toddlers**

August 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Tweens**

September 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Teens**

October 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Seniors**

November 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight for Menopause**

December 2002

- **Moving toward a Healthy Weight Forever**



EAT RIGHT MONTANA

A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles