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June 1, 2004

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the June 2004 issue of **Eat Right Montana's Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight**. For the next six months, our packets will delve into the theme of "**taking time for health**." This month, we start with the place where all healthy habits begin – **at home**.

In discussing the obesity epidemic, some health experts, including Kelly Brownell at Yale University, refer to the "toxic environment," a world where supersize eating is easy (and cheap!) and physical activity is unnecessary. Reversing the weight trends of American families means taking time to create **healthy environments** in homes, schools, work places, restaurants, hospitals, and communities across the USA.

The good news is that environments are beginning to change, like new menu items in fast food and family restaurants and a resurgence of physical activity in some school systems. We plan to share many of these exciting developments – along with practical resources to help your clients take **simple steps toward a healthy weight**.

Eat Right Montana is able to offer free monthly materials through the generous donations of our sponsors. This month's packet is thanks to **Western Dairy Council**, an affiliate of National Dairy Council. In terms of health and weight, the dairy industry has great research and news to share. For the latest information and resources on dairy, calcium, weight, bone health, and blood pressure, check these sites:

- **Healthy weight with dairy**
www.nationaldairycouncil.org/healthyweight/index.asp
- **Nutrition materials and health education kits**
www.nationaldairycouncil.org/health/materials/index.asp
- **Nutrition info for parents, educators, & school foodservice**
www.nutritionexplorations.org/

Thank you for your past and future support of **Eat Right Montana**. Feedback is always important to us; please let us know what you think.

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**Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight: #6. Take time for health at home.
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Healthy Families 2004: Home is where lifelong habits begin (6th in a series of 12)

You've probably heard the old expression "home is where the heart is." Home is also the place where healthy habits, like eating well and being active, are centered for American families.

"Filling your home with wholesome food is a wonderful gift for you and your family," says Judy Barbe, RD (registered dietitian) with Western Dairy Council. "The time investment is quite small – and the benefits for your weight, your health, and your energy level can be really big."

There are three simple steps to healthy food at home – planning, shopping, and making nutrition easy. Each one takes just a little bit of time, especially if you let everyone help just a little bit.

The first and most important step, according to Barbe, is planning. "Taking just half an hour to plan your family's food for a week can save you time and money. You can plan specific menus for specific nights or just make certain that you have all the basic ingredients in your fridge and cupboards."

If you're concerned about your health, make sure that your shopping list includes low-fat dairy products. Recent research confirms that eating at least three dairy foods per day does more than build strong bones and beautiful teeth. People who consume milk, cheese, and yogurt – and get plenty of physical activity – are more likely to enjoy a healthy weight, lower body fat, and normal blood pressure.

Once you have made a plan and a list, the next step is shopping. The best tips for smart shopping have been around for a while, but they are tried and true, notes Ms. Barbe. "Never go grocery shopping when you are hungry – and make most of your purchases from the outer perimeter of the store. Your best nutrition buys are always the whole foods in the produce, dairy, meat, and bread departments."

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges all Montanans to take time for more meals at home. Surveys show that home-cooked meals, even simple ones, provide more nutrients for less money.

"The third step to eating well at home is to make it as easy as possible," says Barbe. "A whole melon may go uneaten, but a cantaloupe cut into bite-size pieces will disappear quickly. Having a bag of grated cheese in the fridge makes it easy to sprinkle some in a salad or to make a microwave quesadilla."

ATTACHED: *Delicious Dairy Foods at Home and Easy Fitness at Home*

12 Delicious Ways To Enjoy Dairy Foods At Home

Everyone knows that dairy foods are a delicious way to build strong bones and beautiful teeth – with plenty of calcium, magnesium, potassium, vitamin D, and other nutrients.

Did you know that dairy products can also help you maintain a healthy weight, lower your blood pressure, and prevent cancer, diabetes, and gout? Milk, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese aren't just kids' stuff – 3 servings a day are important for everybody.

- 1. Enjoy MILK with meals:**
Make 1% or skim beverage of choice for all meals – morning, noon, and night – makes 3-A-Day.
- 2. Enjoy MILK on cereal:**
Combine a whole grain cereal with low-fat milk for breakfast or a snack – and your heart will thank you.
- 3. Enjoy MILK in hot beverages:**
Lattes, mochas, Chai tea, or old-fashioned hot chocolate are all delicious ways to drink dairy.
- 4. Enjoy YOGURT to-go:**
In a cup or in a portable squeeze-tube, low-fat yogurt makes a sweet and easy-to-eat treat.
- 5. Enjoy FROZEN YOGURT:**
Looking for a cool summer dessert? Top your favorite flavor of frozen yogurt with fresh or dried fruit.
- 6. Enjoy YOGURT smoothies:**
Blend up one at home with fruit and milk – or pick up a bottled smoothie in the dairy case.
- 7. Enjoy COTTAGE CHEESE:**
Combine low-fat cottage cheese with fruit or nuts for a high-protein snack – any time of the day or night.
- 8. Enjoy a string CHEESE snack:**
Perfect for eating on-the-run, enjoy string cheese in standard mozzarella, Cheddar, and a swirled combination.
- 9. Enjoy melted CHEESE:**
Cheese pizza with veggies, grilled cheese on whole wheat, or a quick quesadilla with beans and salsa.
- 10. Enjoy sprinkled CHEESE:**
Sprinkle blue cheese on a salad, Parmesan cheese into tomato soup, or feta cheese on cooked vegetables.
- 11. Enjoy CREAMY soups:**
There's no need for cream; just make home-cooked or canned soup with low-fat milk for flavor and calcium.
- 12. Enjoy dry MILK powder:**
Use non-fat powdered milk to add an easy protein boost to smoothies, soups, casseroles, and other dishes.



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**Celebrating
Healthy Families
2004**

12 Easy Ways To Get Fit Around Your Home

Chances are the number one obstacle to your fitness is TIME. All of us are busy – and physical activity is missing in our hectic schedules. Want a quick way to be more active and get fit without a big time investment – do it at home! Fitness at home is a huge time saver – no driving to and from the health club, no changing clothes and showering before going back to work. Here are 12 easy ways to start a healthy lifestyle at your front door.

- 1. WALK around the block:**
Two or three 10-minute walks in your neighborhood can add up to some serious health benefits.
- 2. BIKE down the street:**
Keep your bikes (and helmets) ready to go at a moment's notice, like for a quick jaunt to the grocery store.
- 3. GARDEN in the yard:**
A veggie garden, even a small one, is the most delicious way to get active and eat better at the same time.
- 4. MOW or RAKE the lawn:**
Forget a fancy riding mower; a push mower, even an electric one, helps with extra steps for a healthy weight.
- 5. JUMP in the driveway:**
Jump rope, jump shots with ball and hoop, or even jump with a pogo stick (good for your balance too!).
- 6. STRETCH with a band:**
Keep a resistance band next to the remote – so you can stretch your arms and legs while watching TV.
- 7. LIFT a weight:**
Keep a weight near the telephone; pick it up when you get a call and pump your arms while you talk.
- 8. DANCE with a DVD or video:**
Turn a TV room into a fitness center with your favorite flavor of music. Salsa? Country? Disco? Rock?
- 9. PUMP with a machine:**
Exercise machines can be a fitness bonus – IF you keep them in an accessible place and use them often.
- 10. STEP with the stairs:**
You don't need a fancy machine to build beautiful legs and thighs; just go up the stairs as often as you can.
- 11. PUSH with a broom or mop:**
It's not a real glamorous way to get fit, but it works! Housework burns as many calories as golf without a cart.
- 12. LAUGH and PLAY together:**
Add some laughter and play into your life. Research shows that they can have powerful health benefits.



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**Celebrating
Healthy Families
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HEALTHY FAMILIES 2004

Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight

JANUARY 2004

1. Keep a record.

FEBRUARY 2004

2. Develop a routine.

MARCH 2004

3. Balance food and activity.

APRIL 2004

4. Take a daily dose of moderation.

MAY 2004

5. Enjoy variety every day.

JUNE 2004

6. Take time for health every day – at home.

JULY 2004

7. Take time for health every day – at work.

AUGUST 2004

8. Take time for health every day – on vacation.

SEPTEMBER 2004

9. Take time for health every day – at school.

OCTOBER 2004

10. Take time for health every day – around town.

NOVEMBER 2004

11. Take time for health every day – at organizations.

DECEMBER 2004

12. Celebrate the joy of health every day.



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