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August 1, 2004

Dear Colleagues:

Greetings and welcome to the August issue of **Eat Right Montana's Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight**. This month we focus on the **importance of taking time for health on vacations**, on the **benefits of whole grains**, and on **how to create physically active holidays**.

If you've been waiting for the current low-carb craze to go the way of the grapefruit and Scarsdale diets, there's been some good news in the media lately. Here are a couple of those tidbits:

- **The Wall Street Journal reports that low-carb sales growth has slowed markedly.** "For the 13 weeks ended March 13, sales of "carb conscious" products rose 95% to \$336.1 million, according to market-research firm ACNielsen. But for the more recent period that ended June 12, they grew at less than half that rate, or 42%, reaching \$478.3 million." (July 12, 2004)
- **CBSMarketwatch.com says that low-carb diets and products are "losing luster."** More than half of individuals who tried a low-carb diet are no longer on it, and less than one in 10 are currently sticking to one." From a survey of 500 people by InsightExpress, a market research firm in Stamford, Conn. (July 15, 2004)

As Americans return to the goodness of grains, nutrition educators have a delicious opportunity to steer them in a positive direction.

Here are some carb-smart facts for your upcoming communications:

- American average only one serving of whole grains per day. Enjoying more whole grains (see handout) is a tasty way to pump up your daily intake of phytonutrients and fiber.
- Enriched grains are also important for good health. Fortifying US grain products with folic acid has been credited with reducing the incidence of neural tube birth defects by 27%, as well as reducing heart disease deaths by 17,000 per year and strokes by 31,000.

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

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Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight: #8. Enjoying outdoor activity.
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Healthy Families 2004: Taking time for health on vacation (8th in a series of 12)

It's vacation time – time for millions of American families to hit the highways or fly through an airport in search of holiday excitement. It's also a wonderful time to enjoy fun, outdoor activity – and to get physical anywhere from your neighborhood park to a faraway wilderness area.

“Taking time for physical activity can make a good vacation even better,” says Linda Melick, registered dietitian (RD) at Central Montana Hospital and president of the Montana Dietetic Association. “Participating in outdoor activities gives families a sense of accomplishment, an escape from life's pressures, and a chance to connect with each other. Plus, you can get fit and healthy at the same time!”

Some families plan their whole vacation around outdoor activities. Multi-day hikes, bike rides, and river trips can be exciting adventures – whether you plan them yourself or go with a guide. Since strenuous vacations demand a certain level of fitness, getting in shape for trips like these also provides months of physical activity opportunities at home.

However, you don't have to be a fitness fanatic to enjoy outdoor fun. According to Melick, all you have to do is fit some physical activity into every vacation day. “If you're on a family road trip, check the map for interesting sites to explore on foot. Give each family member a chance to choose the activity of the day. County, state, and national parks are all great places to take a walk or short hike.”

Urban locations also provide plenty of paths to healthy outdoor activities. Today, many cities and towns have scenic trails for walking and pedaling. In some parks, you can rent bikes, rollerblades, or even people-powered surreys with fringes on the top. Lakes, rivers, and canals have become popular destinations as well. At these, you can often rent canoes, kayaks, rafts, inner tubes, and paddle boats.

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges Montana families to get outside and moving this month. It's easy to enjoy outdoor activity in Big Sky Country – with incredible opportunities for walking, hiking, pedaling, paddling, fishing, and golfing.

“The easiest way to be active on vacation is make it fun,” says Melick. “Even a highway rest area can add a few minutes of outdoor fun. All you need is a Frisbee for the kids and a ball for the dog.”

ATTACHED: *12 Ways to Enjoy More Whole Grains and Active Vacation Time*

12 Smart Ways to Enjoy More Whole Grains

Looking for smart ways to enjoy more high-energy carbs? Nutrition experts and diet gurus all agree – whole grains are the tastiest place to start. These naturally nutrient-rich foods are easy to find on supermarket shelves. Choose products with a **whole** grain as the first ingredient. Look for whole wheat, whole wheat flour, whole rolled oats, brown rice, barley, or some of the more exotic grains like triticale, amaranth, spelt, or kamut.

- 1. Whole grain breads and rolls:**
7-grain or 9-grain, honey wheat or rye – they all add chewy goodness to toast and your favorite sandwiches.
- 2. Whole grain hot cereals:**
Instant or regular, oatmeal and other multi-grain hot cereals help kick start your energy level into high gear.
- 3. Whole grain cold cereals:**
Make a morning parfait – with layers of crunchy cereal, fresh or canned fruit, and low-fat vanilla yogurt.
- 4. Whole grain muffins:**
Bran muffins are just the beginning. Try whole wheat with blueberries or oatmeal with bananas and nuts.
- 5. Whole grain pancakes:**
Multi-grain or buckwheat pancakes are a luscious morning treat with fresh or frozen strawberries.
- 6. Whole grain pasta:**
Check out what's new in the pasta aisle – new shapes and flavors made with whole grain goodness.
- 7. Whole grain veggie burgers:**
Most veggie patties are made from soybeans with cracked wheat, brown rice, barley, and other yummy grains.
- 8. Whole grain crackers:**
Crispy crackers made from whole wheat flour are perfect with peanut butter or your favorite soup.
- 9. Whole grains in soups:**
Barley may be the best in soup, but whole brown rice is also very nice – especially with a variety of veggies.
- 10. Whole grains in salads:**
Cracked wheat makes a super salad called tabouleh. Leftover brown rice goes great with raisins and walnuts.
- 11. Whole grains in snacks:**
Create your tasty trail mix with whole grain cereal, dried fruit bits, sunflower seeds, and almonds.
- 12. Whole grains in desserts:**
Oatmeal is an ideal companion for fruit – in home-baked treats like apple crisp or oatmeal-raisin cookies.



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**Celebrating
Healthy Families
2004**

12 Fun Ways to Enjoy Active Vacation Time

The goal of most vacations is to rest, relax, and rejuvenate. Wherever you are vacationing this year, make sure to plan plenty of time for outdoor activities. Being more active is a wonderful way to reduce your stress, improve your mood, and enhance your fitness level at the same time. The best physical activities are those that combine moving outside with having a good time. Fun and fitness are the ideal combo for family vacations!

- 1. Dig into some sand:**
Build sand castles, splash in the waves, or see how many different seashells you can collect.
- 2. Discover a local tourist site:**
Sometimes we forget about places that are close to home. Make a list of local sites you've forgotten to visit.
- 3. Explore a historical site:**
Battlefields, monuments, and memorials are all interesting and educational places to explore.
- 4. Hunt for unusual activities:**
Many places have unique, fun ways to be active – like four-person, pedal powered surreys or boats to rent.
- 5. Investigate a riverbank:**
Rivers are the obvious place to fish and paddle. Many also have walking and biking paths along their banks.
- 6. Learn about birds or wildlife:**
Take a walk with a birder or a hike with a wildlife ranger. Get active and learn about the world around you.
- 7. Search online for outdoor fun:**
Go online before your vacation to learn about local playgrounds, parks, paths, and other places to be active.
- 8. Seek active competitions:**
Walking, running, biking, or combo races can be serious vacation fun – whether you are at home or away.
- 9. Survey the world from a hill:**
Climbing to the top of a hill (large or small) lets you see the world from a new, active perspective.
- 10. Toss a Frisbee:**
Frisbees are fantastic – for tossing at a highway rest stop or for an active game of folf (Frisbee Golf) at a park.
- 11. Walk around a museum:**
Many museums now have cool stuff outside too. Check out opportunities to use your ticket for even more fun.
- 12. Wander around a meadow:**
The path to fitness doesn't have to be a straight line. Enjoy wandering in a mountain meadow or at a local park.



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**Celebrating
Healthy Families
2004**

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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