



Wellness-Fitness Program Newsletter

July 2008



We all Scream for Ice Cream

National Ice Cream Month has been celebrated during the month of July since 1984, when the late president Ronald Reagan designated this national observance.

President Reagan also appointed the third Sunday in July to be National Ice Cream Day.

But we don't need a special day to appreciate ice cream. For decades, ice cream has been celebrated unofficially throughout the hot days of summer because most everyone loves this ice-cold creamy treat.

What is that Frozen stuff?

Ice cream is usually made from milk or cream and sugar, combined with different ingredients to add flavor, such as fruit, chocolate, vanilla, and so forth. French style ice cream has a custard base, and is made with eggs.

Gelato is like ice cream in that it's made with milk, sugar, and other flavorings, but gelato is denser than ice cream because less air is whipped into the mixture. It is a misconception that gelato is made with gelatin. The word gelato means "frozen" in Italian.

Sorbet is a frozen dessert that is typically made without dairy products, while sherbet has some dairy, but not as much dairy as you'd find in ice cream.



Frozen yogurt is similar to ice cream and has less fat. But, because of its sugar content, frozen yogurt may contain about the same total calories as ice cream.

How nutritious is ice cream?

There are healthy ingredients in ice cream but ice cream is not a health food. Sure, ice cream, gelato, and frozen yogurt do provide protein, calcium, vitamins, and minerals, but the high fat and sugar content don't give it status as a preferred food for the health-conscious.

And while there is less fat in sherbet, its calorie content is often the same as ice cream because of sherbet's higher sugar content.

The calorie and fat content of frozen desserts depend on the type of milk used and the addition of cream, egg yolk solids, and sugars.

Try these healthful alternatives. Freeze some fresh fruit. Grapes, strawberries, and blueberries are delicious frozen. Also, try frozen fruit bars (make sure they're made real fruit). They're tasty and about half the calories of ice cream. You can also choose from the reduced fat and sugar options.

If you love ice cream, go ahead and enjoy it, but only in moderation. And remember, a single serving of ice cream is one half cup (that means there are four servings in one small pint).

Take heed. Read the nutrition label. Depending on the product a half cup serving can range anywhere between 150 and 450 calories.

Tick Season Is Here

All summer long, people flock outdoors to enjoy activities like gardening, hiking, fishing, and camping. Outdoors, you get to experience wonderful fresh air, warm sunshine, and itchy bug bites!

Enjoying the outdoors is fantastic, but some activities increase your chances of coming in contact with biting bugs like ticks, those small insects that love to feed on blood. Ticks usually prefer animal hosts, but they will sometimes bite humans.

Areas to avoid

You'll want to avoid areas where ticks live. They can carry diseases like Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness, Lyme disease and Tick Bourne Relapsing Fever. These diseases are actually types of bacteria that some (not all) ticks harbor.

Ticks prefer wooded areas or fields. Other risky areas include yards surrounded by dense woods, birdbaths, birdfeeders, woodpiles, brush piles, stone or rock fences, swing sets, and tree houses in dense woods.

Take precautions

Be prepared. If you're going outdoors near high-risk areas, take these precautions to protect yourself and your family from ticks:

- Wear light-colored clothing (it will make ticks easier to see).
- Wear long pants tucked into socks.
- Avoid tall grass and shrubby areas.
- Remove brush piles from the yard.
- Keep turf grass mowed.
- Wear a tick repellent.
- Keep pets that spend time outdoors on a flea *and* tick repellent.
- Shower after outdoor activity.
- Check your body and clothing thoroughly paying close attention to the armpits, groin, and neck.

If you find a tick on your body, remove it with tweezers (bent, "needle-nose" tweezers are best). Do *not* use alcohol, nail polish, hot matches, petroleum jelly, or other methods to remove ticks. These methods may actually traumatize ticks causing them to regurgitate and spread more toxins.

For more information, visit the National Agriculture Safety Database (NASD) at www.cdc.gov/nasd.

Get more summer safety tips from the Red Cross at www.redcross.org/services/hss/sumsafety.

"Problems are only opportunities in work clothes."

- Henry J. Kaiser

Don't let fat

Sneak up on you

Have you gained a few extra pounds over the past ten or so years and wondered why?

The physical component

You may have become progressively less active over time but you hadn't noticed it.

As we age, the combination of physiological changes and the tendency to be less active often results in less muscle mass. Since muscles are your most effective calorie-burning tissue, less muscle mass means that you burn fewer calories while at rest – and the pounds creep up.

After the age of 30, muscle mass is reduced by approximately 3-5% per decade in people who are inactive, with a similar percentage loss of strength. The combined loss of muscle mass and strength also contributes to a tendency to be less active because many activities simply become more tiring and unpleasant.

One way to combat this loss of muscle is strength training. Strength training can help you maintain – or even increase – muscle mass.

Check with your FOH fitness center staff for information about strength training.

The dietary component

Your diet may also factor in on that insidious weight gain. You may be taking in more calories than you think.

Why? Because *portion distortion* has taken over the American plate. Since the 1990s, the rates of overweight and obese individuals have doubled – in part because portion sizes have steadily grown.

The concept of “super-sized” foods was introduced in the 90s, and it rapidly gained popularity. Eventually, nearly every fast food chain began offering their version of the “value-sized” option. Consumers loved it. For just a few pennies more, they could nearly double the size of their order. And triple the calories.

Coincidentally, dining out at restaurants has increased from about 36% to 48% since the 90s. When people eat out, they usually consume about three to five times more calories per meal because of the large “restaurant” sized portions. A few extra meals out a month can add up to an extra few pounds a year.

The solution

How do you reverse this slow weight gain? The answer is simply to eat less and exercise more. Easier said than done? Here are some ideas.

Learn to “eye-ball” accurate portions

- One portion of pasta and rice is equal to 1/2 cup, or half a baseball.
- One ounce of cheese is the same size as one domino.
- One serving of meat is 3 ounces, or the size of a deck of cards.

Tips for dining out

- Out of sight, out of mind. Get a take-out container with your meal. Before you start eating, put half away.
- Try sharing. It's worth it even if restaurants impose a sharing charge.
- Get it on the side. Ask for sides of sauces/dressing and dip your fork tines into the dressing rather than pouring it on your salad.

Whether you are dining in, dining out, or just thirsty, forgo unnecessary sugar and calories from soda or alcoholic drinks. Instead, go for beverages without calories like water, coffee, and unsweetened tea.

Test your knowledge of portion sizes at <http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/portion>.

Note:

Always remember to check with a doctor and make sure that your health status allows lowering your caloric intake and increasing your physical activity.

Keeping it Cool

When the Heat's on

Many people take their workout outside in the summer. Whether your sport is a high-intensity basketball game or 18-holes of golf, outdoor activities in hot weather can potentially lead to heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and even heat stroke.

Exercising in hot weather can quickly increase your core temperature. When the ambient air is cool, your body can regulate its internal temperature. But, in the high heat and humidity of summer days, you'll dehydrate faster, and your body's natural cooling systems become less efficient.

To help your body do its work to reduce core temperature, you need to replace fluids lost through dehydration, so drink plenty of fluid and stay well hydrated.

Keep it cool with these tips:

Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate

Plan ahead to stay well hydrated. If you feel thirsty, it's usually too late to prevent dehydration. Thirst is your body's way of telling you that you are already dehydrated.

Ward off dehydration by drinking 24 ounces of *water* about two hours before exercising. Then drink 6 to 8 ounces every fifteen to twenty minutes during exercise. After exercising, drink

another 24 to 48 ounces to replace fluids lost through perspiration.

Check the Temperature

When the temperature is above 90 degrees, it is best to delay your workout. Consider working out early in the day before the temperature reaches its peak, or later in the day after sunset.

The heat stress index can help you determine if it is safe to exercise outside at different temperature and humidity levels.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has information about heat stress index on its Website. Visit their site at www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml.

Clothing matters

Wear lightweight, loose fitting and light colored clothing while exercising outside. Dark colored clothing absorbs heat, and may increase your risk of overheating and injury. Also, wear a light colored hat to decrease a buildup of heat from exposure to the sun on your head.

Take a break

Know when to stop or slow down. Listen to your own body. If you feel tired or dizzy, take a break. Find a cool shady area, sit down, and rehydrate.

FOH, the Occupational Health Provider of Choice for the Federal Government

The mission of FOH is to improve the health, safety, and productivity of the federal workforce. Created by Congress in 1946, FOH is a non-appropriated service agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Program Support Center.

Federal agencies throughout the U.S. and overseas can access FOH services. FOH provides worksite health services, Wellness/Fitness, Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), Work/Life, Environmental Health and Safety, Organizational and Professional Development, and Training and Education.

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