



Wellness Newsletter

Augusta Technical College

Be 100% Fad Free

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Diet fads come and go, and some may help you lose weight – in the short term. For National Nutrition Month® 2007, the American Dietetic Association says the most effective long-term way to achieve a healthful lifestyle is to be *100% Fad Free*.

“You can lose weight on virtually any diet,” said registered dietitian and ADA spokesperson Roberta Anding. “If you eat less, you will lose weight. The question is, can you maintain a healthy lifestyle over the long term – your life? The real key to reaching long-term goals is to focus on your overall health.”

Through National Nutrition Month, created in 1973, the American Dietetic Association promotes healthful eating by providing practical nutrition guidance and focusing attention on making informed food choices and developing sound physical activity habits. National Nutrition Month also reminds consumers that registered dietitians are their most valuable and credible source of timely, science-based information. Anding encourages everyone to keep in mind these National Nutrition Month key messages to enjoy a *100% Fad Free* lifestyle:

Develop an eating plan for lifelong health. Too often, people adopt the latest food fad rather than focusing on overall health. Get back to basics and use the new *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPyramid* as your guide to healthy eating.

Choose foods sensibly by looking at the big picture. A single food or meal won't make or break a healthful diet. When consumed in moderation in appropriate portions, all foods can fit into a healthful diet.

Learn how to spot a food fad. Unreasonable or exaggerated claims that eating (or not eating) specific foods, nutrient supplements or combinations of foods may cure disease or offer quick weight loss are key features of fad diets.

Find your balance between food and physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

Food and nutrition misinformation can have harmful effects on your health and well-being, as well as your wallet. Registered dietitians are uniquely qualified to communicate current and emerging science-based nutrition information and are an instrumental part of developing a diet plan that meets your individual needs.

With approximately 65,000 members, the American Dietetic Association is the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA serves the public by promoting optimal nutrition, health and well-being. To locate a registered dietitian in your area, visit the American Dietetic Association at <http://www.eatright.org>.

National Health Observances

- *American Diabetes Alert Day (27th)*
- *Brain Awareness Week (12th-18th)*
- *Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month*
- *Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week (18th-24th)*
- *Multiple Sclerosis Education & Awareness Month*
- *Nutrition Month*
- *Problem Gambling Awareness Week (5th-11th)*
- *Save Your Vision Month*

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Wellness Fair 2007 Coming in April!

Nutrition and Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is an acquired ocular disorder and a leading cause of legal blindness in persons over sixty. AMD affects the macula, the central part of the retina, which is responsible for providing clear, sharp vision needed for reading, writing, driving and other visually-demanding activities.

The nature and severity of this condition varies with individual patients, with many experiencing some degree of loss of central vision in one or both eyes. Approximately 90% of patients with AMD have a non-exudative (or dry) form of the disease, which results in the development of dry, atrophic scars in the macular area. Non-exudative AMD patients typically experience slower, more gradual loss of vision. Only 10% of patients develop an exudative (or wet) form, which results in the leaking of fluid beneath the retina, and a greater and more rapid loss of central vision. Effective laser photocoagulation treatment for the disease is limited to small numbers of patients with exudative AMD who are identified early in the disease process. Other treatment modalities include photodynamic therapy and surgical transplantation of the macula.

Research has now suggested that the development of AMD is linked to a depleted level of macular pigment. This retinal layer efficiently filters out harmful blue wavelengths of light, and also reduces the amount of free radicals, which are compounds found in high concentrations in the macular area and can cause oxidation of cell membranes. It is theorized that certain antioxidant compounds reduce the effect that these free radicals have on the macular pigment, and consequently may have an impact on the development of AMD. These antioxidants have demonstrated their effectiveness in building and maintaining the thickness of the retinal pigment layer, and are known as carotenoids, a family of colored compounds found in fruits and vegetables. Beta-carotene is an example of a carotenoid; altogether we consume and utilize fourteen different carotenoids in our diet. Two other carotenoids were found to have effectivity in the retinal pigment layer. Lutein and zeaxanthin are carotenoids found in many vegetables and fruits; they are found in the highest concentration in dark, leafy green vegetables such as spinach, collard greens, and kale. Studies have shown that a diet high in these materials have some effect on delaying the advancement of AMD. The use of synthetic sup-

plements that contain these carotenoids, along with the vitamins C, E, and zinc, have been proven to be an effective means of limiting the disease in patients with advanced signs and symptoms of AMD.

The use of antioxidants cannot reverse the damage caused by AMD; however, its use may prevent or slow the progression of AMD in certain patients. If dietary supplementation of antioxidants taken along with Vitamins C, E, and zinc is undertaken, this therapy may be most appropriate for individuals who:

- Show early evidence of AMD
- Are over 50 years of age
- Have family history of AMD
- Receive insufficient dietary intake of vitamins and minerals

Additional studies and data are needed to further define the nutritional and antioxidant therapies and their relative dosages for the prevention of AMD. Other risk factors, although not thoroughly understood, may include smoking, alcohol intake, excessive sunlight, and elevated total cholesterol levels. Until further study results are available, the American Optometric Association recommends patients reduce their risk of AMD by wearing appropriated sun protection to limit ultraviolet exposure, stopping smoking, moderating any alcohol consumption, maintaining a nutritionally balanced diet, increasing consumption of foods or supplements that contain antioxidants, and seeking periodic optometric retinal examinations.

<http://www.aoa.org>



National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week

They're all over your house. They're in your child's school. In fact, you probably picked some up the last time you went to the grocery store. Educate yourself. Find out about inhalants before your children do.



Most parents are in the dark regarding the popularity and dangers of inhalant use. But children are quickly discovering that common household products are inexpensive to obtain, easy to hide and the easiest way to get high. According to national surveys, inhaling dangerous products is becoming one of the most widespread problems in the country. It is as popular as marijuana with young people. More than a million people used inhalants to get high just last year. By the time a student reaches the 8th grade, one in five will have used inhalants.

What is inhalant use? Inhalant use refers to the intentional breathing of gas or vapors with the purpose of reaching a high. Inhalants are legal, everyday products which have a useful purpose, but can be misused. You're probably familiar with many of these substances -- paint, glue and others. But you probably don't know that there are more than 1,000 products that are very dangerous when inhaled -- things like typewriter correction fluid, air-conditioning refrigerant, felt tip markers, spray paint, air freshener, butane and even cooking spray.

Who is at risk? Inhalants are an equal opportunity method of substance abuse. Statistics show that young, white males have the highest usage rates. Hispanic and American Indian populations also show high rates of usage.

What can inhalants do to the body? Nearly all abused products produce effects similar to anesthetics, which slow down the body's function. Varying upon level of dosage, the user can experience slight stimulation, feeling of less inhibition or loss of consciousness. The user can also suffer from **Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome. This means the user can die the 1st, 10th or 100th time he or she uses an inhalant.** Other effects include damage to the heart, kidney, brain, liver, bone marrow and other organs. Results similar to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome may also occur when inhalants are used during pregnancy. Inhalants are physically and psychologically addicting and users suffer withdrawal symptoms.

What can I do if someone I know is huffing and appears in a state of crisis? If someone you know is huffing, the best thing to do is remain calm and seek help. Agitation may cause the huffer to become violent, experience hallucinations or suffer heart dysfunction which can cause **Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome.** Make sure the room is well ventilated and call EMS. If the person is not breathing, administer CPR. Once recovered, seek professional treatment and counseling.

What should I tell my child or students about inhalants? It is never too early to teach your children about the dangers of inhalants. Don't just say "not my kid." Inhalant use starts as early as elementary school and is considered a gateway to further substance abuse. Parents often remain ignorant of inhalant use or do not educate their children until it is too late. Inhalants are not drugs. They are poisons and toxins and should be discussed as such.

For more information go to <http://www.inhalants.org>



BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK®

More than 1,875 organizations in 65 countries will be participating in Brain Awareness Week activities from March 12-18, under the auspices of the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives. Introduced in 1995 with 160 organizations in the U.S., Brain Awareness Week was expanded worldwide in 1997 with the European Dana Alliance for the Brain. It is now a regular calendar fixture for a variety of partner organizations, including the Society for Neuroscience, major universities and research centers, patient advocacy groups, and K-12 schools.

During Brain Awareness Week, participating organizations worldwide plan activities exploring the brain's relevance in everyday life, emphasizing audience participation. These focus on children and educators, include essay competitions, school workshops, and teacher trainings, as well as brain-related art exhibits, concerts, book discussions, and film screenings.

The Dana Alliance hosts a Brain Awareness Week Web site for the public at <http://www.dana.org/brainweek>, which includes an international calendar, education resources, downloadable graphics, puzzles, publications, and general information. The Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives is a nonprofit organization of more than 250 leading neuroscientists. The Dana Alliance is committed to advancing public awareness about the progress and benefits of brain research.

Diabetes and Family History

Learn how family history fits in. Like they say, you can pick your friends but you can't pick your family. The same goes for your family history. Because of this, it's important that you know and understand any conditions that run in your family, including diabetes and heart disease. Talk to your parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, and uncles about who has had diabetes, a heart attack, stroke, or other serious health problems.

Based on this information, you and your doctor can work together to develop a plan to help improve your overall cardiometabolic health.

Here are a few questions to help you get to the bottom of your family history:

- Is there a family history of diabetes? If yes, who?
- Have family members developed type 2 diabetes after a certain age?
- Do you have a history of high blood pressure in your family?
- Have any of your family members had serious cardiovascular complications, including a heart attack or stroke?

Most importantly, make sure you share this information with your doctor during your next visit so he or she can help you make a plan for keeping tabs on your cardiometabolic health.

You can't change your genes, but you can lower your cardiometabolic risk by knowing what runs in your family. For example, if you know diabetes runs in your family, you can lose a few pounds and stay active to lower your risk.

Start by making healthy food choices. Knowing what to eat can be confusing. Everywhere you turn, there is news about what is or isn't good for you. Some basic principles have weathered the fad diets, and have stood the test of time. Here are a few tips on making healthful food choices

for you and your entire family.

- Eat lots of vegetables and fruits. Eat non-starchy vegetables such as spinach, carrots, broccoli or green beans with meals.
- Choose whole grain foods over processed grain products. Try brown rice with your stir fry or whole wheat spaghetti with your favorite pasta sauce.
- Include dried beans and lentils into your meals.
- Include fish in your meals 2-3 times a week.
- Choose lean meats like cuts of beef and pork. Remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Choose non-fat dairy such as skim milk, non-fat yogurt and non-fat cheese.
- Choose water and calorie-free "diet" drinks instead of regular soda, fruit punch, sweet tea and other sugar-sweetened drinks.
- Choose liquid oils for cooking instead of solid fats that can be high in saturated and *trans* fats. Remember that fats are high in calories. If you're trying to lose weight, watch your portion sizes of added fats.
- Cut back on high calorie snack foods and desserts like chips, cookies, cakes, and full-fat ice cream.
- Eating too much of even healthful foods can lead to weight gain. Watch your portion sizes.

Want more information on foods that are healthier, or how to establish a plan for eating healthy foods? Let the American Diabetes Association help point you in the right direction.

<http://www.diabetes.org>

CheckUp America

Know Your Risk, Lower Your Risk
for Diabetes and Heart Disease

Corned Beef & Cabbage

3 carrots, cut in 3" pieces
2-lb corned beef brisket, trimmed of all fat
2-3 medium onions, quartered

$\frac{3}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of water
Half a small head of cabbage; cut in wedges

Layer all ingredients except cabbage in slow cooker. Cover. Cook on Low 8-10 hours, or on High 5-6 hours. Add cabbage wedges to liquid, pushing down to moisten. Turn to High and cook an additional 2-3 hours. Makes 12 servings (Ideal slow cooker size: 4-5-quart)

Calories 159, Total Fat 10 gm, Sodium 624, Total Carbs; 6 gm, Fiber 2 gm, Protein 11 gm

Variations:

1. Add 4 medium potatoes, halved, with the onions.
2. Top individual servings with mixture of sour cream and horseradish.

<http://www.weightwatchers.com>

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