Changes to Benefits Outside of Annual Enrollment

By: Tammye McCollum

Did you know that a qualified change of status event can allow you to make changes to your benefits during the year instead of having to wait until annual enrollment? The most important thing to remember is that you only have 31 days from the date of a change in status event to contact your Benefits Office and make changes to your benefits. If you go beyond the 31 days then you will be required to wait until the next annual enrollment which will require evidence of insurability on certain plans.

Below is a list of examples of qualified Change of Status events:

- Marriage, divorce, annulment, legal separation, or spouse’s death
- Birth, adoption, medical child support order, or dependent’s birth
- Significant change in residence if the change affects you or your dependents’ current plan eligibility
- Starting or ending employment, starting or returning from unpaid leave of absence, or a change in job status (e.g. from non-benefits eligible part-time to full-time)
- Change in dependent’s eligibility (e.g. marriage or reaching age 25)
- Change in coverage or cost of other benefit plans available to you and your family

If you are not sure if something qualifies as a change in status, call your Benefits Office at ext. 7784.

Yoga Classes

Yoga is a great wellness tool for the mind and body. The Yoga Class is taught by Debbie Tompkins. Classes are held on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 5:15pm to 6:30pm. The cost is $30 a month. Contact Caryl Vorsas for more information at ext. 7293.
National Wear Red Day February 5, 2010
http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/educational/hearttruth
Celebrates National Wear Red Day® this February with The Heart Truth®!

Although significant progress has been made in increasing awareness among women that heart disease is their #1 killer (from 34 percent in 2000 to 69 percent in 2009) most fail to make the connection between its risk factors and their personal risk of developing heart disease. In fact, this disease kills one out of every four American women. Join The Heart Truth campaign on Friday, February 5, 2010—National Wear Red Day—to help spread the message that "Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear, It's the #1 Killer of Women.®"

The Heart Truth created and introduced the Red Dress as the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness in 2002 to deliver an urgent wake-up call to American women. The Red Dress® reminds women of the need to protect their heart health, and inspires them to take action.

While heart disease risk begins to rise in middle age, heart disease develops over time and can start at a young age, even in the teen years. It's never too early, or too late, to take action to prevent and control the risk factors for heart disease. The Heart Truth is building awareness of women's heart disease and empowering women to reduce and prevent their risk. It is reaching women with important heart health messages in community settings through a diverse network of national and grassroots partner organizations.

The Heart Truth campaign is sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in partnership with The Office on Women's Health (OWH) and other groups committed to the health and well-being of women.

Community organizations across the country are joining The Heart Truth campaign and using its Red Dress symbol to raise awareness about women and heart disease. Educational materials are being distributed at local events and presentations emphasizing women's health issues.

To find out more about women and heart disease, visit The Heart Truth Web pages at www.hearttruth.gov or call the NHLBI Health Information Center at 301-592-8573.

(New Special Edition Pin)


®, ™ The Heart Truth, its logo, The Red Dress, and Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear—It's the #1 Killer of Women, are trademarks of HHS.

©National Wear Red Day is a registered trademark of HHS and AHA.
February: National Cancer Prevention Month

One of the most dreaded words in the English language. No one ever wants to be sitting in a gown in his or her doctor's office and hear the "C" word. A cancer diagnosis is made scarier by the fact that it is not often heard in the same breath as another "C" word: cure. Cancer sneaks up on you, and leaves doctors, researchers, surgeons, and patients wanting to know more: the how, the why, the when. With February being National Cancer Prevention Month, we can finally see cure and cancer next to each other by putting our efforts into finding cures for those cancers previously thought to be incurable and increasing survival rates for all cancers.

Cancer is a very confusing disease because it cannot be defined as one specific symptom. When you have shingles or strep throat, chicken pox or the flu, there are specific symptoms and specific ways to cure them. The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center describes cancer as, "a large and complex family of malignancies that can affect virtually every organ in the body." Cancer is the second largest killer in the United States after heart disease, with over 1 million new cases diagnosed each year, and is predicted to overtake the #1 spot by 2010 [1]. Cancer isn't specific to any age, race, or gender and can strike at any time.

Cancer is most often characterized by tumors. Benign tumors are not cancerous and are not fatal but can cause problems with health relating to their size and location inside the body. Tumors are essentially just a growth of cells that multiply and divide to replace old ones. When the cells divide too much they form excess tissue that becomes a tumor and malignant—or cancerous—they tend to grow rapidly and impede other tissues, organs, and can sometimes travel through the bloodstream. When the cancerous tumor or tumors spread to different parts of the body from their origin point it is called metastasis.

The best way for cancer prevention to be spread is by having regular cancer screenings. Men over the age of 50 should have a prostate cancer screening [2] once a year and women after a certain age are also recommended to have breast cancer screenings [3] and continue to have pap smears to rule out cervical cancer once every twelve months. Due to the persistence of health care providers and the widespread media coverage of cancer prevention techniques, including screenings and adopting a healthier lifestyle, the death rates of cancer in the past few years has decreased especially among men.

Cancer comes in many different forms but is characterized into four categories: Carcinomas, Sarcomas, Leukemias, and Lymphomas. Carcinomas are tumors originating in the tissues of the organs, which makes up about 80 percent of all cases. Sarcomas are found in the bone, fat, muscle, or cartilage. Leukemias are found in the blood-forming organs or generally inside the blood, and Lymphomas account for 20 types of cancers that affect the filters of the body.

If cancer is detected in an early stage, surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation are options for shrinking tumors and/or making them disappear altogether. When tumors disappear the final stage is called remission, following up with the patient to make sure the tumors don't grow back in the same (or different) spots.

With 80 percent of cancers having no known cause, the time for prevention is now. By enjoying a diverse and healthy diet and keeping an active physical routine can help ward off stresses and possibly other environmental factors that can lead to the development of cancer. Besides being over 50 years old and indulging in a high-cholesterol and fat diet, among the rest of the factors are: obesity, cigarettes, long-term chemical exposure, unprotected sun risk, certain viruses and immune disorders, and radiation. The other 20 percent are hereditary. Take advantage of free advice and try to adjust your lifestyle accordingly—and not just during February—so you or your loved ones don't hear the “C” word at the next doctor's visit.

For more information, visit the American Cancer Society website [4].
The Top 6 Weight-Loss Lies


Are you being honest with yourself about weight loss?

What lies are you telling yourself as you travel the path of weight loss? Maybe more than you realize. It's time to get honest, because those untruths may stand in the way of you reaching your goals.

"People may set unrealistic goals or deprive themselves in extreme ways that are very difficult to maintain," says Bethany Teachman, PhD, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Virginia. "It's no wonder so many people lose weight initially but then have difficulty keeping the weight off."

Here we address the most common myths that undermine a healthy approach to weight loss — and offer tips to overcome them to achieve success.

1. I need to go on a "diet" - "The whole concept of a 'diet' sets us up to think we will be 'on a diet' then 'off a diet,'” says Teachman. Instead, think of your weight-loss plan as a lifestyle commitment to healthy eating and exercise, for the long haul.

2. I'll get back on track on Monday/after the holidays/when the sun comes out - There's no day like today. If you slip, just pick up where you left off. Persistence works wonders.

3. All my problems will be solved when I lose weight - Dropping pounds may leave you feeling healthier and happier, but it won't make you more lovable or turn you into a runway model. Be clear about why you want to lose weight, and set realistic goals. "It's far more motivating to strive toward being fit and energetic than it is to strive toward being a size 2," Teachman says.

4. Heavy people don't deserve to eat - Do you forgo the office pizza because you're afraid people will think you shouldn't be eating? Seeing yourself through others' eyes in a harsh, critical way "is a surefire way to blow a weight-loss plan," says psychologist Debra Mandel, PhD, author of Healing the Sensitive Heart (Airleaf Publishing, 2005). Instead, she suggests, it's more effective to focus on developing a more loving relationship with your body. A study published in the Journal of Behavioral Medicine (Winter 1998) found that those who started out accepting their bodies were more than twice as likely to lose weight than those who felt dissatisfied or ashamed.

5. I shouldn't wear a bathing suit (shorts, a tank top) until I've lost all the weight - People of all different sizes and shapes enjoy sexy clothes. "When you love yourself, you start enjoying life," says Mandel. Break big goals into smaller ones, and reward yourself along the way. Rather than saying, "I need to lose 25 pounds," say, "I'll buy a new swimsuit, one size smaller."

6. The less I eat, the faster I'll lose - Wrong. "The less we eat, the slower our metabolism gets, and the slower we lose the weight," says Mandel. "Deprivation also makes us unhappy and actually causes us to overeat and overindulge." Increasing your caloric restriction in reasonable amounts can increase weight loss, but cutting back to an unrealistic intake will likely backfire. A slow and steady approach — including treating yourself to your favorite foods, in moderation — is your best bet for building a healthy relationship with food and reaching your long-term goals.

So stop telling yourself lies that sabotage your efforts. Instead, start living your life with a weight-loss plan that works for you. You'll feel better about yourself, your confidence will grow, and you'll keep the weight off. © 2010 Weight Watchers International, Inc. © 2010 WeightWatchers.com, Inc. All rights reserved. WEIGHT WATCHERS and POINTS are the registered trademarks of Weight Watchers International, Inc. and are used under license by WeightWatchers.com, Inc.
Valentine's Day Indulgences Can Be Heart Healthy

By: Tammye McCollum (For more information go to www.medicalnewstoday.com)

The sweet delights of Valentine's Day are thought of as indulgences, but fruit, chocolate, wine and romance can be good for your heart. The key is moderation when enjoying food and wine, but there are components in tart cherries, grapes and wine that can lower blood pressure and protect heart muscle. And a glass wine and massage can do wonders for lowering stress and anxiety.

Valentine's Day is associated with many fruits, one of which is cherries. Cherries contain compounds called anthocyanins, which can be very good for your heart. A great heart-healthy Valentine's snack would be to dip them in dark chocolate because it contains flavonoids which have been said to be good for the heart. Tart cherries are best. It has been shown that a "tart, heart-smart diet" has proven to be beneficial in heart health and function of the heart. It also has been proven to reduce belly fat and changing metabolic obesity syndrome.

Red wine is better for you than white wine. Red wine has specific agents, perhaps in the dark skin of red wine grapes that are heart-healthy and can help reduces stress and anxiety. Research was done on the benefits of grapes which showed grape intake lowered blood pressure and improved heart function in lab rats. The high level of phytochemicals -- naturally occurring antioxidants -- is thought to be the benefit of the grapes. In the study, the animals that received powdered tart cherries in their diet had lower total cholesterol, lower blood sugar, less fat storage in the liver, lower oxidative stress and increased production of a molecule that helps the body handle fat and sugar. Cherries were found to alter these factors that can lead to heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

A heart-healthy activity that is great for a Valentine's Day gift is a massage. Massages are used to help your loved one relax and reduce anxiety. Reducing stress and anxiety has long been linked with benefiting the heart. Some hospitals use massage therapy to help patients and their families reduce stress and anxiety. There is proven research that indicates that massage itself is beneficial in the post-operative state, in hospitalized patients to reduce stress and anxiety and even probably to reduce blood pressure.

It's possible to set the mood for a romantic and heart-healthy Valentine's Day. Although, these indulgences don't have to be limited to Valentine's Day itself and certainly will lead to a much better heart-health status if we practice them every day.

Heart-Healthy Valentine's Day Recipes

Be good to your heart and your stomach this Valentine's Day with healthy, romantic recipes from EatingWell

Main Dish Recipes
- Roast Duck with Dried Cherry Sauce
- Chili-Rubbed Steaks and Pan Salsa
- Poached Salmon with Creamy Piccata Sauce
- Steamed Mussels in Tomato Broth
- Apple-and-Fennel Roasted Pork Tenderloin
- Prosciutto-Wrapped Scallops with Spinach

Side Dish Recipes
- Sautéed Green Beans and Cherry Tomatoes
- Roasted Snap Peas with Shallots
- Mixed Greens with Grapes and Feta
- Sautéed Spinach with Pine Nuts and Golden Raisins
- Maple-Roasted Sweet Potatoes

Dessert Recipes
- EatingWell's Tiramisu
- Chocolate Truffle Cheesecake
- Mini Molten Chocolate Cakes with Mocha Sauce
- Pomegranate Poached Pears
- Raspberry-Chocolate Chip Frozen Yogurt
- Chocolate, Cherry and Almond Bread Pudding
HEALTHY SUPER BOWL SNACKS

Avocado-Corn Salsa
http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/avocado_corn_salsa.html

A fresh salsa of avocado and corn is great with simple sautéed fish or just about anything Mexican-inspired—huevos rancheros, a quick quesadilla or atop rice and beans.

Ingredients
- 1 medium avocado, diced
- 3/4 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1/2 cup quartered grape tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

Preparation
1. Toss avocado, corn, tomatoes, cilantro, lime juice and salt in a medium bowl. 4 Servings.

Nutrition: Per serving: 101 Calories; 7 g Fat; 1 g Sat; 4 g Mono; 0 mg Cholesterol; 11 g Carbohydrates; 2 g Protein; 4 g Fiber; 75 mg Sodium; 339 mg Potassium  Exchanges: 1/2 fat

Tortilla Chips without Hips
http://www.foodfit.com/recipes/recipe.asp?rid=1212

4 yellow corn tortillas
4 blue corn tortillas
spray olive oil (optional)
salt
freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Cut each tortilla into 6 wedges. Arrange the wedges in a single layer on non-stick baking sheets. Lightly spray the chips with oil (if using) and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
2. Bake the chips until lightly browned and crisp, 10 to 15 minutes, turning with a spatula. Make sure not to let them burn. Transfer the chips to a cake rack to cool. Serves 8.

Nutrition: Per serving: 65 Calories; 12 g Carbohydrates; 1 g Fiber; 2 g Fat; 1 g Protein; 0 g Sat Fat; 76 mg Sodium

Hearty Game day Potato Skins
http://blastmagazine.com/the-magazine/culturefashion/2008/01/superbowl-recipes-from-jerome-bettis/

6 large baking potatoes (about 3-3/4 lbs), unpeeled and baked
3 Tbsp. Promise Buttery Spread
3/4 cup low fat cheddar cheese (about 3 oz.)
2 large tomatoes, chopped
1/2 cup light sour cream
2 large green onions, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 425.

Cut potatoes in half lengthwise. Remove about 1/3 of the potato pulp, leaving 1/2-inch shell (save pulp for another use). Generously brush inside each potato half with Promise Buttery Spread. On baking sheet, arrange potatoes. Bake 15 minutes or until potatoes are crisp. Evenly top with cheese and tomatoes. Broil 1 minute or until cheese is melted. Top with sour cream, then sprinkle with green onions. Serving Size 24.

Nutrition Information per serving: Calories 70, Calories From Fat 15, Saturated Fat 0.5g, Trans Fat 0g, Total Fat 2g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 40mg, Total Carbohydrate 10g, Sugars 1g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 2g, Vitamin A 6 percent, Vitamin C 8 percent, Calcium 4 percent, Iron 2 percent
Jalapeño Poppers
http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/jalapeno_poppers.html
Spicy peppers get a cool down from the creamy bean-and-cheese filling in our healthier version of jalapeno poppers.

Ingredients
- 12-18 whole fresh jalapeno peppers
- 1 cup nonfat refried beans
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack or extra-sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1 scallion, sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup fine cornmeal
- Olive oil or canola oil cooking spray

Preparation
1. Make a small slit on one side of each pepper. Place the peppers in a large microwave-safe dish. Cover and microwave on High until just softened, about 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, combine refried beans, cheese, scallion and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a small bowl.
3. When the peppers are cool enough to handle, scrape out the seeds with a small spoon (a 1/4-teaspoon measuring spoon works well). Fill each pepper with about 1 tablespoon of the bean filling, or until the pepper is full but not over stuffed (the amount will depend on the size of the pepper). Close the pepper around the filling.
4. Preheat oven to 450°F. Coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
5. Place flour in a shallow dish. Lightly beat eggs in another shallow dish. Combine cornmeal and the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt in a third shallow dish. Roll each stuffed pepper in flour, shaking off any excess. Dip in egg and let any excess drip off. Then roll in the cornmeal mixture. Place the peppers on the prepared baking sheet. Generously coat all sides of each pepper with cooking spray.
6. Bake for 5 minutes. Turn each pepper over and continue baking until hot and the filling starts to ooze in a few spots, about 5 minutes more.

Nutrition: Per popper:
- 87 Calories
- 4 g Fat
- 1 g Mono
- 39 mg Cholesterol
- 5 g Protein
- 2 g Fiber
- 419 mg Sodium
- 119 mg Potassium
1/2 Carbohydrate Serving
Exchanges:
- 1/2 starch
- 1/2 high-fat meat

Tips & Notes
- **Make Ahead Tip:** Cover and refrigerate the filling (Step 2) for up to 1 day.
- **Kitchen tip:** Touching hot peppers can “burn” your hands. Wear rubber gloves or wash your hands thoroughly after handling them.

Buffalo Chicken Bites
http://blastmagazine.com/the-magazine/culturefashion/2008/01/superbowl-recipes-from-jerome-bettis/

2 Tbsp. Promise Buttery Spread
1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, pounded 1/4-inch thick (about 2 breasts)
2 Tbsp. cayenne pepper sauce
12 ribs celery, sliced into 2-inch pieces (36 pieces)
36 cherry tomatoes
1/2 cup Wish-Bone Fat Free! Chunky Blue Cheese Dressing

In 12-inch nonstick skillet, melt 1/2 tablespoon Promise Buttery Spread over medium heat and cook chicken, turning once, 8 minutes or until chicken is thoroughly cooked; cut into 3/4-inch pieces and keep warm. In medium microwave-safe bowl, microwave remaining Spread with cayenne pepper sauce 15 seconds at HIGH or until melted. Add chicken; toss to coat. On 36 wooden skewers, alternately thread celery, tomatoes and chicken. On serving platter, arrange skewers and serve with Dressing.

Nutrition Information per serving:
- Calories 90
- Calories From Fat 20
- Saturated Fat 0g
- Trans Fat 0g
- Total Fat 2g
- Cholesterol 20mg
- Sodium 240mg
- Total Carbohydrate 7g
- Sugars 2g
- Dietary Fiber 2g
- Protein 10g
- Vitamin A 10 percent
- Vitamin C 20 percent
- Calcium 4 percent
- Iron 4 percent
Swirled Cheesecake Brownies
http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/swirled_cheesecake_brownies.html

Made with whole-wheat flour, these decadent-tasting brownies have a beautiful marbled cheesecake topping. Cutting them into bite-size pieces helps to keep the calorie count in check.

Ingredients
Cheesecake topping
- 4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, (Neufchatel)
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon nonfat plain yogurt
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Brownie layer
- 2/3 cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- 2 large egg whites, or 4 teaspoons dried egg whites (see Ingredient note), reconstituted according to package directions
- 1 1/4 cups packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1/4 cup strong (or prepared instant) coffee, or black tea
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Preparation
1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Coat a 7-by-11-inch brownie pan or baking pan with cooking spray.
2. To prepare topping: Place cream cheese in a small mixing bowl and beat with an electric mixer until smooth and creamy. Add sugar and beat until smooth. Add egg, flour, yogurt and vanilla; beat until well blended.
3. To prepare brownie layer: Whisk whole-wheat flour, cocoa and salt in a bowl. Place egg, egg whites and brown sugar in a large bowl and beat with the electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Add oil, coffee (or tea) and vanilla; beat until well blended. Add the dry ingredients and beat on low speed just until well blended, stopping once to scrape down the sides.
4. Scrape about half of the brownie batter into the prepared pan. Slowly pour the topping evenly on top. Drop the remaining brownie batter in large dollops over the topping. Draw the tip of a sharp knife or skewer through the two batters to create a swirled effect.
5. Bake the brownies until the top is just firm to the touch, about 20 minutes. Let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack. Coat a knife with cooking spray and cut into 24 bars.

Nutrition Per bar : 105 Calories; 4 g Fat; 1 g Sat; 2 g Mono; 21 mg Cholesterol; 16 g Carbohydrates; 2 g Protein; 1 g Fiber; 54 mg Sodium; 45 mg Potassium  1 Carbohydrate Serving  Exchanges: 1 other carbohydrate, 1/2 fat

Tips & Notes
- Make Ahead Tip: The brownies will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. (Alternatively, bake brownies in an 8 1/2-by-12 1/2 -inch foil pan, wrap well and store in the freezer for up to 3 months.) Bring to room temperature and cut into bars shortly before serving.
- Ingredient Note: Dried egg whites are convenient in recipes like this one because you don't have to figure out what to do with 4 egg yolks. Look for powdered brands like Just Whites in the baking aisle or natural-foods section or fresh pasteurized whites in the dairy case of most supermarkets.
Turkey and Black Bean Super Nachos

http://blastmagazine.com/the-magazine/culturefashion/2008/01/superbowl-recipes-from-jerome-bettis/

2 Tbsp. Promise Buttery Spread
1 cup finely chopped orange or red bell pepper
1 medium onion, chopped
8 ounces ground turkey
1 can (15.5 oz.) black beans, rinsed and drained
1 tsp. chili powder
2 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh cilantro
1 bag (12.5 oz.) baked white corn tortilla chips
1/2 cup low fat shredded cheddar cheese (about 4 oz.)
1 large tomato, chopped

In 12-inch skillet, melt Promise Buttery Spread over medium heat and cook orange pepper and onion, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until tender. Add turkey, beans and chili powder and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until browned. Stir in 1 tablespoon cilantro.

On oven-safe platter or pizza pan, arrange chips. Top with turkey mixture, then sprinkle with cheese and tomato. Broil until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with remaining cilantro. Serves 12.

Nutrition Information per serving: Calories 230, Calories From Fat 60, Saturated Fat 1.5g, Trans Fat 0g, Total Fat 7g, Cholesterol 10mg, Sodium 500mg, Total Carbohydrate 29g, Sugars 2g, Dietary Fiber 4g, Protein 12g, Vitamin A 15 percent, Vitamin C 30 percent, Calcium 10 percent, Iron 10 percent