

TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

May 2012

season's best

What Is a Locavore?

A movement has sprung up to eat food produced locally, reducing the miles from garden to table.

By eating vegetables grown nearby, for instance, locavores believe they are supporting local farmers and businesses, getting fresher food, and being green by reducing the amount of fuel required to transport food over long distances.

Some critics have argued that locally produced food is not always more eco-friendly because it is sometimes more efficient to grow food and transport it from a more distant location — for example, if it is grown on a larger scale or if the climate is more suitable for farming elsewhere.

LIKE THE LOCAVORE APPROACH?

- **Shop at farmers' markets and request local produce.**
Your supermarket may start buying more locally grown food if enough shoppers request it.
- **Join a local CSA (community supported agriculture).**
These programs allow you to purchase a share of the crop at a nearby farm and get a weekly allotment of fresh produce.



Photo courtesy of Rosedale Youth Garden

HUNGRY FOR MORE?

Fresh from local farmers, frozen or canned, more fruits and vegetables on your plate is a best choice in good nutrition. Test your taste buds and see if you notice any differences.

In This Issue:

- **Meds that raise blood pressure**
- **Food additives 101**

City Events

Lowering Your Cholesterol — Real Solutions with Nutrition

Wednesday, May 9
12 noon - 1:00 pm
SMT 4050

SSA and Deferred Compensation — Joint Q & A Session

Wednesday, May 23
12 noon - 1:00 pm • SMT 4080
Register at 206-447-1924

Parenting Your Teen Webinar

Tuesday, May 15
12 noon - 1:00 pm
Registration Required - TBA

Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, May 30
Stop by 10:30 am - 1:30 pm • SMT 4096

Generational Investing

Wednesday, May 30
12 noon - 12:45 pm • SMT 4020
Registration: Call 447-1924

Fun Fitness Fact

Did you know ...

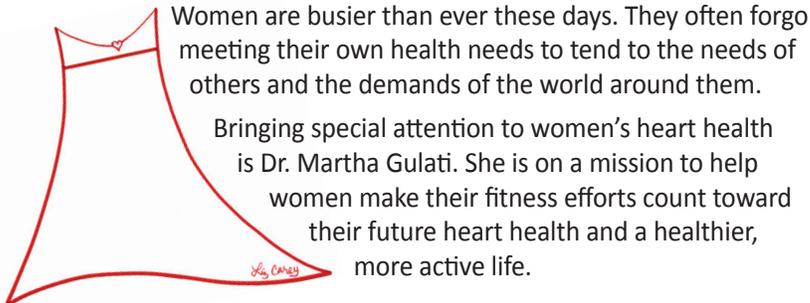
The oldest person to finish a full-length marathon was **100 years old.**

For more fun fitness facts, see Page 3.



in and out: wellness

Live a Healthier, More Active Life



Women are busier than ever these days. They often forgo meeting their own health needs to tend to the needs of others and the demands of the world around them.

Bringing special attention to women's heart health is Dr. Martha Gulati. She is on a mission to help women make their fitness efforts count toward their future heart health and a healthier, more active life.

Food for thought ... "Research shows that exercise capacity, or fitness level, is among the best measures for predicting the presence of coronary artery disease in women," Gulati says. "By understanding exercise capacity as early as possible, we can work with patients to identify easy things they can do to improve their fitness level."

For your consideration: Gulati's book, *Saving Women's Hearts*

Introduce Kids to Mother Nature

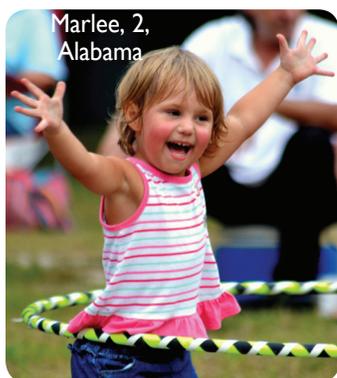


Photo courtesy of Michelle Stancil

Did you know that American children spend 50 percent less time outdoors than they did 20 years ago? Spending time in nature gives kids the chance to explore and use their imaginations, discover local plants and animals, and have time for unstructured and adventurous play. Help your children get in touch with their "wild side" by taking them to a nearby green space.

See www.discovertheforest.org.

Food Additives 101

People have been enhancing their food for centuries — think salt and spices — and today there are thousands of food additives. **Whether we should eat these altered foods is hotly debated.**

THE PROS

Only additives "generally recognized as safe" by the U.S. government (FDA) are permitted, and many improve food in some way. Vitamins increase the nutritional quality of foods, and preservatives increase food safety and shelf life — reducing food cost and making a wider variety of food available. Some added ingredients make food look and taste better.

THE CONS

The FDA can never be absolutely certain about safety and has recalled some additives. The American Academy of Pediatrics and other groups are concerned about risks to children. Some people react to substances such as dyes, and people with phenylketonuria (PKU) can have life-threatening responses to foods with phenylalanine (example: aspartame). Manufacturers color food purely for marketing purposes, and "natural flavorings" can be as processed as artificial ones. Additives can mask low-quality food and are even in "fresh" products such as meats. Many food additives used in combination have not been tested for safety. **A good approach might be to learn more about additives, then decide which you think are acceptable them.**

ONLINE RESOURCES:

www.fda.gov/food/foodingredientpackaging/ucm094211.htm

www.cspinet.org/reports/chemcuisine.htm

A dietitian, your doctor or your health care provider may be able to help too.

awareness

Meds That Raise Blood Pressure?

Did you know that some prescription and over-the-counter medications can raise your blood pressure and even interfere with antihypertensive medications? **Know more:**

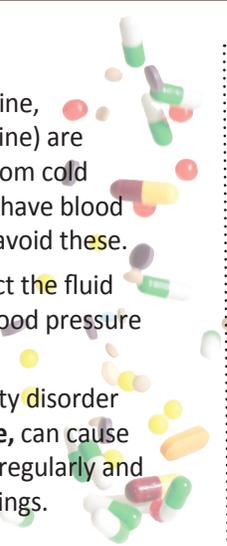
Acetaminophen can increase your risk of developing high blood pressure when taken daily. Occasional use may be fine. The same is true for nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (**NSAIDs**) such as ibuprofen, meloxicam, naproxen and some migraine medications.

Antidepressants such as venlafaxine, bupropion, desipramine and phenelzine can raise blood pressure.

Decongestants (pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine and oxymetazoline) are often contained in multi-symptom cold and allergy medications. If you have blood pressure concerns, it's best to avoid these.

Immunosuppressants can affect the fluid balance in the body, causing blood pressure to rise.

An attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (**ADHD**) drug, **methylphenidate**, can cause your heart to beat faster and irregularly and negatively affect pressure readings.



➔ **TAKE THE PRESSURE OFF**
Develop a plan with your wellness team. The goal? Keep your blood pressure readings in the safe zone. This may mean regular checks, medication changes, lifestyle changes or using other forms of pain relief.

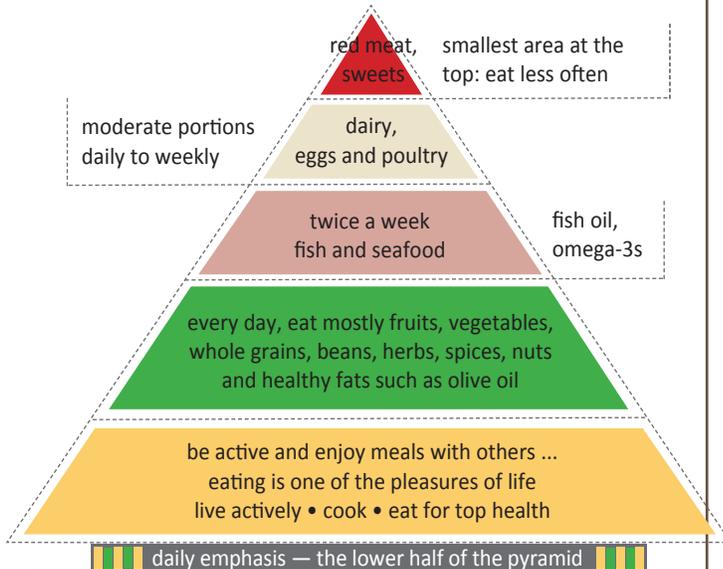
Brain Food

For years we've known that the Mediterranean diet — largely fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts — is good for the heart. People in countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea are among the healthiest. They eat small quantities of dairy and limit red meat. They like fish and poultry.

Even better news is a recent study in the Archives of Neurology showing that those eating a more Mediterranean diet were also less likely to have small vessel damage (small strokes) in the brain. Large strokes often cause major disability, but small strokes can still lead to falls and memory loss.

Bottom line: Eating more fruits and vegetables and reducing animal fat is good for your heart and your brain. **Learn more about the Mediterranean diet below.**

— Zorba Paster, MD



Watch Your Eating Patterns

Breakfast, lunch, dinner and some snacking: Sounds simple, right? Think again. If your eating patterns include mindless eating in front of the television, during computer or phone time (work or fun), or in the car on the go, your stomach may not be “talking” to your brain like it should. Your body’s food processor and appetite control systems work best when you sit down, relax and enjoy bite by bite.

Sit down, relax and savor each bite.



Know Your Numbers

DAILY VALUE (DV)

The Daily Value section on the Nutrition Facts label tells you the amount of certain nutrients (as a percentage) in one food serving. This can help you choose foods that are healthiest for you. The nutrients are total fat, saturated fat, sodium, carbohydrate, fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron (DV for cholesterol is optional). There are no DVs for sugar, protein and trans fat.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container about 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 18g	18%
Saturated Fat 15g	15%
Trans Fat 1g	2%
Cholesterol 10mg	10%
Sodium 180mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	15%
Dietary Fiber 4g	4%
Sugars 2g	2%
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%

• 5% DV or less is low

• 20% DV or more is high

Note: Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your needs may be higher or lower. Ask your health care provider how many daily calories you need.

We Celebrate the Pursuit of Healthy-Life Styles!

Friendships and a positive sense of community foster healthy lifestyles for kids and grown-ups alike. If you're an experienced athlete, you may remember just starting out. Your experience may inspire beginners.

Smile for your photo when you cross the finish line! Community fitness events offer opportunities for kids and grown-ups at all fitness levels to have more fun and answer the call to move more.

Think you're marathon- or Ironman-ready? Remember, pushing your body beyond its limits can lead to injury. Gradually adding to your workouts and varying activities can help.

Join a group or start a new group that targets moving more, eating well and reaching a new personal best. Full-body fitness feeds the mind, body and spirit.



Fun Fitness Facts

JOY. Active play with your kids, grandkids or friends' kids can burn as many calories as a brisk walk.

LIMITS. You may be training too hard if you can't carry on a conversation while exercising.

BIGGER MUSCLE GROUPS ARE BETTER. To burn the most fat, you should focus your strength building on the major muscle groups in the buttocks, thighs and chest.

WOW! Raising your activity level can lower your blood pressure by as much as 4 to 9 mm Hg — the same reduction in blood pressure delivered by some antihypertensive medications.

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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NEWS AND NOTES

Spring is a great time to re-commit to a healthier lifestyle. Take your next step by considering these programs.

- **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:** You and your household members have up to six in-person counseling visits per issue per year at no cost to you. **Contact:** **1-888-272-7252;**

horizoncarelink.com (user name: city of seattle;

password: city of seattle).

- **WEIGHT MANAGEMENT:** You and your adult dependents on a City medical plan can participate in Weight Watchers and receive special pricing for selected services.

Enroll: **1-866-442-1232;** more information at seattle.gov/personnel/benefits/wellness/physical.asp.

- **TOBACCO CESSATION:** *Quit for Life* is a free quit tobacco program available to you and covered adult dependents.

Enroll: **1-866-784-8454;** see details at quitnow.net.



Spring Vegetable Stew With Chicken

EASY | RECIPE

2 tbsp olive oil from Personal Best®
 4 (4-oz) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut bite-size
 1 cup baby carrots, cut bite-size
 2 cups leeks, white part only, coarsely chopped
 2 tsp minced garlic
 1 cup fresh artichoke hearts (6-7), quartered*
 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped (or ½ tsp dried)
 1 cup freshly shelled (or frozen) green peas
 1 medium lemon, juiced
 Fresh ground pepper to taste
 * You can use canned or bottled artichoke hearts packed in water to avoid added sodium.

- 1] In a large pot, heat oil over medium temp. Add chicken and cook 10 minutes.
- 2] Add carrots, leeks and garlic and cook 5 minutes.
- 3] Add artichoke hearts, broth and thyme; cover and simmer 30 minutes or until carrots are fork tender.
- 4] Stir in peas and lemon juice and simmer 10 minutes. Season with fresh ground pepper. **Options:** Add 1-2 cups baby spinach leaves when you add peas.

MAKES 4 2-cup servings. Per serving:

316 calories | 36g protein | 10.7g fat | 2g sat fat | 87mg cholesterol | 18g carbs | 5.5g sugar | 6.2g fiber | 205mg sodium

3 Ways to Stop Headaches

1. **NOTICE** whether your headaches are triggered by certain foods such as aged cheese, red wine, MSG or processed meats.
2. **RECOGNIZE** possible hormonal triggers for women including birth control pills, hormone replacement therapy, menopause and menstrual periods.
3. **MONITOR** your headaches and their possible triggers. A headache diary can help. Look for the headache diary tool in your online supplement.

Living Well With Arthritis

Nearly 60 percent of those with arthritis are under 65.

Arthritis is a painful condition that can cause stiffness and complicate even simple tasks. **Managing arthritis pain often begins with lifestyle changes:**

- Keep track of conditions that worsen stiffness or pain. Triggers can vary from cold weather to food allergies.
- Obesity is the leading risk factor for osteoarthritis. Each pound of body weight exerts 3-4 pounds of pressure on your knees. Cut 100 calories per day (e.g., 8 ounces of soda) and burn another 100 (exercise for 20 minutes) to lose 20 pounds a year. Aim for a healthy weight.
- Even a little exercise can make a big difference. Low impact

exercise, such as swimming, builds muscles and reduces pressure on joints. The slow, stretching motions of tai chi or yoga can improve flexibility and range of motion.

- Make tasks easier by adding a grab rail to a bathtub or using a bottle-opening device. Splints can also give added support and relief too. A physical therapist can demonstrate how to accomplish tasks or exercise with less pain; a massage may decrease muscle tension. Follow your doctor's recommendations too.
- Cognitive therapy can reduce pain symptoms, as can meditation or guided imagery.