

JANUARY 2023 | WINTER EDITION | VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 1

DIETITIAN'S DISH

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
YOUR MGH WEIGHT CENTER REGISTERED DIETITIANS



Evaluating Popular “Fad” Diets
Building Healthier Habits this New Year
Beat the Winter Blues
6 Tips to be Active in Colder Months
Winter Recipes on Repeat

The content presented in this newsletter is to provide information on health and nutrition for information purposes only. This newsletter is not an attempt to provide specific medical/nutrition advice. Always consult with your health care provider, and follow their advice with regards to your individual care.

New Year Resolution & Fad Diets

Feel like you need to start a diet in the New Year? If so, you're not alone! The most popular New Year's resolutions for 2022 were living healthier (23%) and losing weight (20%). Often times, New Year's resolutions around improving health and weight loss include restrictive diets. These diets may work, but once we stop doing them, they can result in unwanted outcomes. This could be why only 9-12% of people keep their resolutions, as they are hard to maintain and too restrictive! Let's take a look at a couple popular fad diets and why they may be hard to sustain long-term:

Juice Cleanse:

What is it? Intake of fruit, vegetable & herb juices

Claims: "give digestive system a break", "eliminate toxins", "boost immunity", rapid weight loss.

The Facts: there have been few clinical trials on human subjects. In healthy adults, the digestive track works daily to remove toxins and doesn't "need a break". They can be expensive and weight loss is due to unsustainable calorie deficit.

Whole 30:

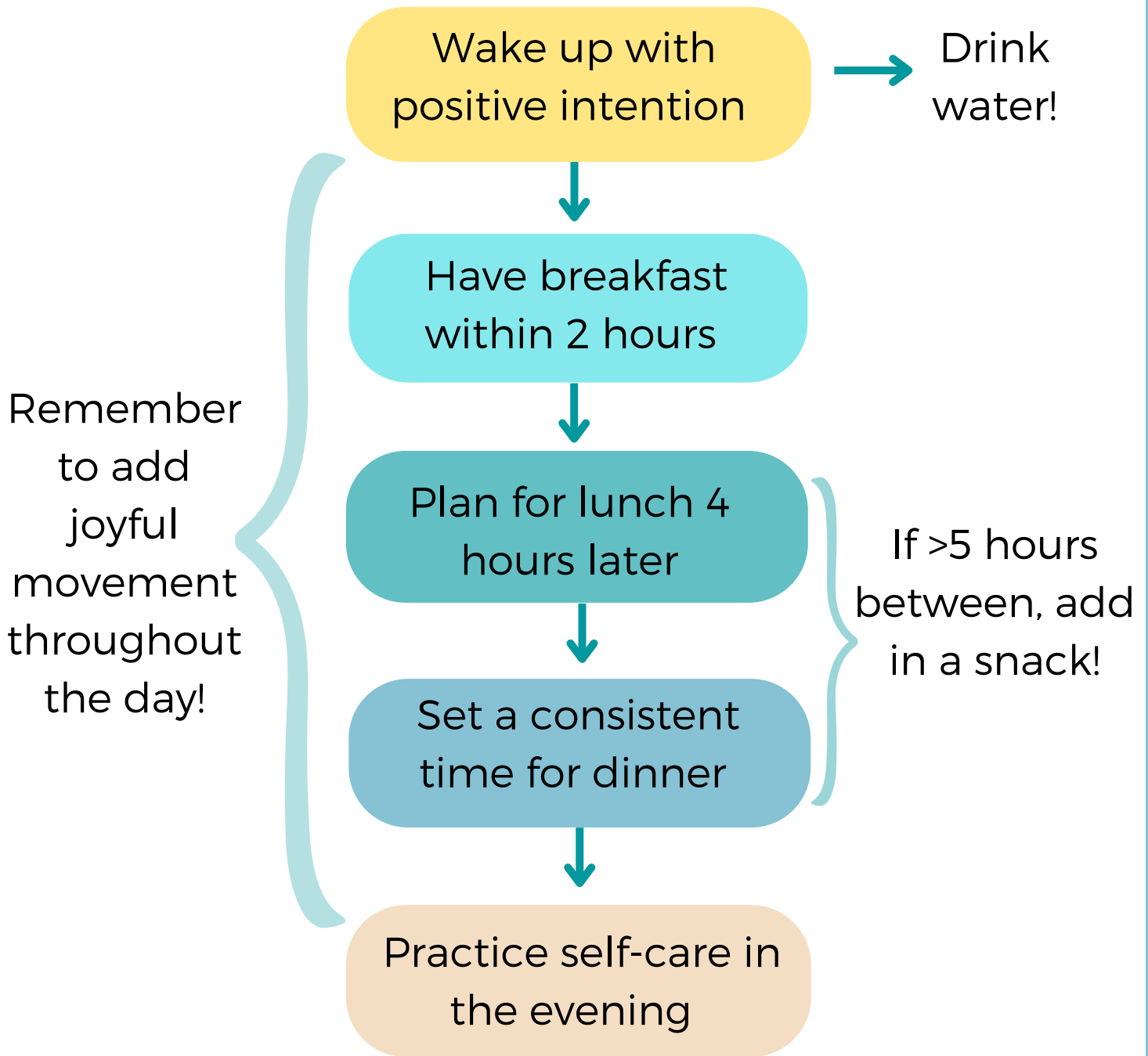
What is it? 30 day elimination diet to reduce inflammation

Claims: promote weight loss, increase energy and "sharp mental focus".

The Facts: cuts out major food groups (grains and dairy), risk for vitamin and mineral deficiencies, time consuming reading labels for the restricted foods, can lead to an increased desire for foods eliminated.

Ditch the Diet this New Year

Try and implement these sustainable healthy habits:



Daily Checklist

- ___ Consistent meals
- ___ 5 servings of fruits & veggies
- ___ Protein with each meal
- ___ 7-8 hours of sleep
- ___ 60+ oz of fluid
- ___ 30 mins of movement

Beat the Winter Blues

As winter approaches and we lose more daylight, 64% of people report experiencing seasonal affective disorder (SAD). The drop in temperatures and the increased darkness during the winter season can lead to less physical activity, outdoor activities, time to meet up with friends and desire for healthier foods. **How can you beat the Winter Blues?**

Develop a Routine

- Set a consistent sleep schedule and get 7 - 8 hours of sleep per night
- Aim to have a consistent meal pattern
- Make a simple to-do list to help you feel accomplished at the end of the day
- Start a new hobby

Increase Intake of Vitamin D

- Add a supplement to your routine
- Increase food sources high in Vitamin D such as salmon, tuna, and mushrooms
- Try to spend more time outdoors
- Try light therapy during the day using a Light Box

Continue Healthy Habits

- Set a realistic expectation for yourself to exercise regularly
- Make reasonable time for yourself, but don't isolate from friends and family completely
- Participate in activities you enjoy doing and help you relax
- Limit alcohol intake
- Incorporate fruits and vegetables into your meals and snacks
 - Focus on variety to obtain adequate nutrition
- Find a good support system or consult with a therapist
- Limit screen time
- Practice adequate hydration by drinking at least 60 oz of non-caloric beverages daily

Vitamin D

What is Vitamin D and Why Do We Need it?

Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin (meaning that we need some fat to absorb it!) that is important for bone health and helps absorb calcium and phosphorus in the body. Vitamin D also has anti-inflammatory and neuro protective properties that help support better immune health, muscle function and brain cell activity.

How Much Do We Need?

RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance)

- Adults >19 years: 600 IU (15 mcg) daily
- Adults >70 years: 800 IU (20 mcg) daily.

Vitamin D Food Sources



- Salmon
- Swordfish
- Tuna fish
- Orange juice fortified with vitamin D



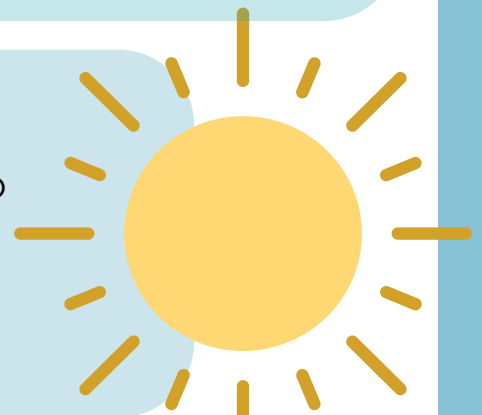
- Dairy and plant milks fortified with vitamin D
- Sardines
- Beef liver
- Egg yolk
- Fortified cereals



For many people, the best way to get enough vitamin D is by taking a supplement - this is because it is hard to eat enough through food. Always consult your healthcare provider when starting new supplements.

Soak in the Sun!

Your body produces a form of vitamin D through a chemical reaction in human skin through the sun's UVB light. Take advantage of the rays while getting in some movement.



6 Tips to Stay Active in Colder Months

You may have heard the phrase "sitting is the new smoking" with regards to the importance of physical activity. Regular physical activity is linked to improved physical, mental and cardio-metabolic health. Movement and physical activity can also play an integral role in weight management. **Follow these tips below to help stay active all winter long!**

1. Utilize online workout resources like Youtube videos, Fitness apps or virtual classes. Many of them are free!



2. A standing or walking desk can help increase circulation, burn calories and even improve posture.



3. Exercise Snacks: Structure your physical activity into short bursts performed multiple times a day, for example on a lunch break. It all adds up!



4. Join a gym or community center for access to specialized equipment, especially for low impact activities like swimming, cycling or elliptical machines.



5. Layer up and take a nature walk on sunny winter days!

6. Volunteer in active ways: You can improve your health and your community by volunteering to help at food banks, walking dogs for the elderly or shoveling snow. You'll feel good in more ways than one!



Winter Salad



INGREDIENTS

- 16 ounces spinach or kale (remove stem)
- 1 medium pomegranate
- 2 tbsp parsley, minced
- 2 tsp mint, minced
- 1/2 sliced red onion, optional
- 1/4 cup toasted pecans, optional

Dressing:

- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp dijon mustard
- 2 tsp honey
- 1/4 tsp salt, to taste

PREPARATION

- In a small bowl, whisk or use a salad dressing shaker to mix all of the dressing ingredients.
- Remove pomegranate seeds from pomegranate and rinse seeds then pat dry.
- Optional: Toast pecans in oven on 350F for 7-10 minutes, toss halfway.
- Add spinach or kale, sliced red onion, minced parsley/mint to a large bowl and pour dressing followed by a gentle toss. Garnish with toasted pecans and pomegranate seeds.
- Serve with grilled chicken for a balanced meal.

Hearty Lentil Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 cups red lentils, dry
- 1 Large red onion, diced
- 1 Large white potato, diced
- 4 medium carrots, diced
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp salt, as needed for taste
- Lemon wedges, optional
- Parsley, garnish, optional
- Toasted mini pita chips, optional

PREPARATION

- Rinse then soak red lentils in a bowl of water for 30 minutes.

After above step complete:

- In a large pot heat olive oil on med-high heat. Add onions, and spices (cumin, turmeric, salt). Stir until the onions have softened.
- Add lentils, carrots and potato to the onion dish, Stir until all have softened.
- Add 8 cups of water to the pot and cook on medium heat for 30 minutes. Stir pot occasionally throughout cooking process. Add additional water should you like your soup less thick.
- Blend lentil soup combination with a handheld blender until soup is smooth.
- Optional: Garnish with parsley and serve with a wedge of lemon. Add toasted Pita chips for a crunch, optional.

