

JANUARY 2010

HEALTHY WOMAN™ TODAY

Happy 2010! Thank you for being part of the **Healthy Woman** program. We're your source for up-to-date, relevant and useful health and lifestyle information that can have an immediate and positive impact on you and your loved ones. Please be sure to look for this newsletter every month.

Thanks to you, the **Healthy Woman** program now has more than 105,000 members! You're part of a special, dynamic, growing group of women across the country wanting to make informed health care decisions for themselves and their loved ones. Our monthly programs can help. So grab a friend and join us for our next event.

Healthy Living in 2010

You made it through the holidays and are ready for 2010, full of gusto and armed with goals for a great year ... and a few extra pounds. Most of us want to live a healthier lifestyle but sometimes we don't know where to start. Here are some tips:

- 1. Set reasonable goals.** If you gained 10 pounds during the holidays, don't expect to lose it in a week. Instead, aim for a gradual loss of two pounds a week, using these simple strategies: reducing or eliminating high-calorie foods, exercising regularly, and drinking more water.
- 2. Establish better eating habits.** Easier said than done when you're on the go, but some good "fast food" choices that require little or no preparation include nuts, fruits and chopped vegetables. Stick with low-fat, high-fiber choices.
- 3. Keep active.** Exercise doesn't have to be at the gym or fitness center. Just walking 30 minutes a day can make a difference. If your schedule doesn't permit, break your walk into two 15-minute sessions.
- 4. Eat breakfast.** A hearty breakfast of oatmeal or whole wheat toast, fruit and coffee or tea will give you energy to start the day, jump-start your metabolism and help control the urge to overindulge later.
- 5. Drink more water.** Water is good for you, and it makes you feel full. While opinions vary on the right amount to drink, a good starting point is 64 ounces a day – or more, if you're exercising or it's a hot day.
- 6. Practice portion control.** Use smaller plates at home. Studies show that the smaller the plate, the less you'll eat. When eating out, ask for a take-out container and put half of the meal in the container to take home. It can help keep the weight off, stretch the meal for another time and save some money too.
- 7. Manage stress.** Good stress relievers include exercising, eating right, getting enough rest and spending time around positive people.
- 8. Partner with your doctor.** Involve your doctor in helping to establish individual goals and health habits that work best for you.

For more information, talk with your health care professional or your **Healthy Woman** coordinator.



Dark Chocolate: Indulge ... Just a Little

Are you sticking to your resolutions? Or, was that jelly donut just a little too tempting this morning? How about that bacon cheeseburger you wolfed down at lunch the other day? Forgive yourself – then get back to those healthy habits.

Still feeling guilty but wanting to indulge? There's a treat you might have thought was bad that could actually be good for you ... in moderation, of course: chocolate, specifically dark chocolate.

Chocolate actually originated in the Amazon region of South America and Central America where it was found by the Mayans. The Aztecs attributed the existence of the cacao plant to their god, Quetzalcoatl. Understandable, since many of us see chocolate as a heavenly delight.

In fact, cacao beans were considered food for the gods (the Aztecs were way ahead of their time, weren't they?). The beans were so highly valued that for a time, they were used as form of currency.

So, next time those cravings strike, eat a bit of dark chocolate. Besides antioxidants, dark chocolate is good for your heart. A small serving (20 grams or a little less than an ounce) every day can help keep your cardiovascular system running well. Two heart- healthy benefits of dark chocolate are:

- Lower blood pressure. Studies have shown that consuming a small bar of dark chocolate every day can reduce blood pressure in individuals with high blood pressure.
- Lower cholesterol. Dark chocolate has been shown to reduce LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) by up to 10 percent.



Egg Yolks: No Joke

In last September's issue of Healthy Woman Today, we talked about eggs and cholesterol. If you're trying to lower your cholesterol, talk to your doctor about your egg consumption, especially your consumption of egg yolks.

Eggs – especially yolks – are a good source of vitamin D, something we all need especially during these darker winter months. Yolks also contain other key nutrients such as choline and vitamin B-12. Many experts suggest limiting yourself to no more than one egg per day. But should you eat eggs at all? Check with your doctor or a health care professional about what's right for you.

