

Natural Healing Express Weekly

Column Volume 26 Weigh Loss Program Week Five

This week our educational topics are related to finding out our weak shots or challenges. By “weak shots” we are referring to the aspects of life holding us back from achieving our weight loss goals. Also, we stress the importance of hydration, breakfast and snacks. We have received feedback about how difficult it is for some folks to even eat breakfast. Reasons mentioned for this difficulty include not feeling hungry upon waking, not being hungry for “breakfast” food, running short on time and simply being too tired to fix anything. Well, and well, well, well. As much as I used to live in that world and still consider breakfast time an opportunity to have a good salad, I can undoubtedly assure you that eating a proper breakfast can make all the difference in the world in jump starting your metabolism and therefore your weight loss. We can list all the chemical and biological reasons for it, but I am intending on keeping this column short so we can include two recipes this week, so know BREAKFAST is your friend.

As for the above mentioned reasons for not eating breakfast, we are all aware that habits and patterns can be difficult to adjust, but I think Albert Einstein said it best – the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. So, if you truly want to make a change and it is in you to do so, you gotta start somewhere and breakfast is as good a place as any. And although the benefits of a good breakfast could fill up an entire column, let’s get a simple breakdown. Breakfast is aptly named because it is when you “break” your “fast”, in awakening from slumber. This is the most urgent time of the day to fill your proverbial tank. It is also of critical importance in jump starting your metabolism. So, even if you do nothing else, get something in the belly within in an hour after rolling out of bed. And as with everything that is consumed, get the biggest bang for the buck! And no, I don’t mean super-size it; I mean be conscious of getting value and benefit from your nutrition. So, enough already, eat your breakfast. Congratulations, you’ve accomplished step one!

One of the other challenges is taking the time to eat 5-6 small meals each day. Your body needs to understand it has access to food. When the body doesn’t think it’s going to be fed, it holds on desperately to its reserves- or in another word—FAT. Once your body adjusts to getting fed frequently, it will begin to release its stored fat and perhaps, even better, it will speed up metabolism. One of the best ways to make sure you can access food frequently is to pack your own cooler. That way, no matter where you are, you can acquire quality food that you (or someone you can talk into cooking for you) have prepared insuring known ingredients. I know this sounds a little daunting, but if you can begin by cooking two days a week (I suggest Wednesdays and Sundays) and freezing some portions if necessary, you will be surprised at how quickly this will become habit. Your body will thank you and the reward is losing those stubborn pounds.

So this brings up good snacking. Great snacks include virtually any kind of nut (preferable raw or unsalted) with almonds and walnuts being top of the list. Fresh fruit and vegetables are fantastic. Homemade trail mix made with dried fruit and nuts are another home run. Almost any meal that falls within the Eat Clean guidelines works, just in a smaller portion.

And finally, hydration, hydration, hydration. Get your water in EVERYDAY. Eight glasses is the goal. If this week seems a little repetitive, well, you're right. These are the main habits that we want to move to towards and I am re-affirming our basic theory in an effort to help strengthen and "bring up" the weak shots, so they are no longer an obstacle for your success. Keep going, you got this!

As promised, we will present two recipes made by Lisa Hanson of Hanson Catering. Thanks again Lisa, great job with all of our samples. Yummy. Enjoy your week.

Chicken Meatballs (Makes about 30 meatballs: Serves 8)

1 1/2 lbs. lean ground chicken or turkey 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, finely chopped
1/4 cup finely chopped onion 2 tablespoons fresh basil, finely chopped
1 egg, lightly beaten 1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 cup breadcrumbs or oat bran 1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon sea salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large bowl place egg and breadcrumbs. Add the spices and mix well. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Form into balls and place on a cookie sheet. Place in oven and bake around 20 minutes or until golden. Loosen from pan while still warm.

These are great as a meal, sliced cold on sandwiches or wraps, or used in spaghetti.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: 137	Carbs: 11 g	Fat: 2 g
Calories from fat: 24	Fiber: 2 g	Sodium: 327 mg
Protein: 30 g	Sugars: 0.8 g	

Havana Salad (Serves 6)

1 cup avocado, peeled and diced	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 cup tomatoes, chopped	4 cups cooked brown rice
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped	15 oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
2 teaspoons fresh cilantro, chopped	1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon cumin	2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

In a large bowl, combine the avocado, vinegar, olive oil, cumin and black pepper. Toss to combine. Add the rice, tomatoes, beans, parsley and cilantro. Mix thoroughly. Let the salad chill in the refrigerator before serving.

Nutritional Value:

Calories: 277 Carbs: 45 g Fat: 7 g Protein: 9 g

Recipe adapted from sparkpeople.com

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ENJOY YOUR WEEK.