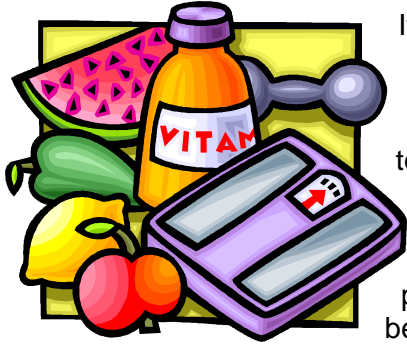


Tips for a Healthy Lifestyle



It took the government quite awhile to finally realize they needed to step in and do something about tobacco advertising and its impact on the health and well being of consumers. With the tobacco issue you could direct your focus on one thing, tobacco and its harmful effects on health. With the obesity epidemic there is not one thing that we can point our finger to. We do know individuals need to be more active and our food choices need to improve. But we can't say it's this one particular food as being the culprit or one activity as being most beneficial. This has placed many health care authorities in a quandary as to how to advise individuals. It's just not as simple as advising someone to stop eating a particular food.

Research and pilot studies are being done to try and discover how to best approach different subsets of the population on how to live and embrace a healthier lifestyle. The following are some preliminary findings or tips that appear to be helpful.

- **Eat Breakfast.** Those who skip breakfast tend to select calorie-dense foods later in the day than those who regularly eat breakfast. Individuals on weight loss programs lost significantly more weight when they ate breakfast.
- **Eat smaller more frequent meals throughout the day.** This helps shrink the stomach capacity and individuals feel more satisfied with less food throughout the day.
- **Use snacks to curb hunger and meet your nutritional needs.** If you are not hungry don't snack since this will increase your caloric intake but not necessarily help curb your appetite later in the day.
- **Increase your variety of whole foods.** Those that have been minimally processed, high in fiber and low in fat such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains. These foods tend to fill you up on fewer calories than high fat refined foods. Limit your variety of processed foods such as baked goods, desserts, chips, candy, sauces, dressings, fast foods and processed meats and cheeses.
- **Stay active no matter what your weight is.** It's better to be fit and fat than just fat. Fitness however does not counter all the risk of excess flab but it certainly helps. Ideally those who are active and not overweight have the lowest risk of dying.

These are just a few of the many small steps you can take to achieve better health. Take some time to reflect on where you are at when it comes to your physical activity and eating habits. Is there one thing you could do that would help improve your well-being? Make that change since you are worth it! If you are having trouble getting started seek the advice of a health care provider, registered dietitian and/or certified fitness trainer.