

Food and Fitness



Chocolate—the New Weight Loss Phenomenon!



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Now if that doesn't pique your curiosity, nothing will! Since a healthy weight is reported to be the best defense against cancer and Type 2 diabetes it's no wonder the world is celebrating the new report that chocolate eaters have a lower body mass index!!

A recent article in the March 26 Archives of Internal Medicine entitled "Association Between More Chocolate Consumption and Lower Body Mass Index" created a media firestorm that continues to rage

on! Chocolate lovers around the world are stocking up on chocolate Easter bunnies now on sale everywhere!

For starters the word "association" simply means the observation of a link. It doesn't confirm a cause and effect relationship. The possibilities of why this observation occurred are many. Let's speculate about it!

Perhaps regular chocolate eaters:

- Are more health conscious.
- Eat fewer calories overall.
- Don't like fried

foods.

- Don't eat any other sweets.
- Don't like biscuits and gravy.
- Exercise more.
- Were never overweight to begin with.
- Have higher incomes.

The point is there's no evidence that eating chocolate will help you attain a healthy weight or make you lose even an ounce. If this

were the real deal the recent Valentine and Easter holidays



Websites of Interest:

- my.clevelandclinic.org/heart/prevention/nutrition/chocolate
- nihseniorhealth.gov
- nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news

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would have made a profound impact upon the obesity epidemic in our country. Wouldn't it be wonderful if it were so!

Maypoles Are for Dancing

Dancing around a pole decorated with flowers, greenery and ribbons has been a May Day tradition for many, many years. Originally thought to be



a pagan fertility ritual, the maypole has now become part of a traditional day of festivities for the celebration of Spring. For farmers in the northern hemisphere, May Day was celebrated to mark the end of the winter months during which farming was not possible.



Dancing, as a form of art, is movement of the body in a manner that is rhythmical. Dancing is most often accompanied by music. Dancing



has long been a form of ceremony, ritual, celebration, and

entertainment. From ancient Egyptians to native Americans to present day hip-hop aficionados, people have moved to music as part of their culture.

On a physical level, dancing can be a great workout. Physical activity is important to help keep both your body and your mind healthy. Seniors should perform aerobic exercise for at least

30 minutes daily. Aerobic exercise is exercise that increases your heart rate. Dancing increases your heart rate and dancing is a good low impact aerobic exercise.

It doesn't matter what



kind of dancing you do, you can reap the benefits. You can Square Dance, Clog, Swing, Folk Dance, or Line Dance. You can Ballroom Dance or Belly Dance! How about Salsa, Flamenco, Jazz, Jitterbug or Tap. Adding dips and



turns to your dance helps with

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Maypoles Are for Dancing

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flexibility. You can even dance in a chair! The main thing is to get moving.

Dancing has many benefits. Dancing:

- burns calories to aid in weight loss
- helps strengthen muscles
- helps to improve bone



- mass
- enhances posture and balance
- increases your stamina



- strengthens your heart and lungs

Dancing is good for your memory too. A 2003 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that ballroom dancing at least two times per week made people less likely to develop dementia.



Where can you dance? Many health clubs offer dance aerobics classes. Some of them have classes for seniors that offer chair dancing. If your town has a community center, they may have classes and dances on a regular basis.

You can organize dances at the senior center in your town. Many localities have ballroom dancing clas-



ses you can take. You can use dance aerobics DVD's at home. You can even crank up your own stereo and dance around your living room to your favorite tunes like you did when you were a teenager! Keep moving and make it fun!

Sources:
AARP:
Let's
Dance to
Health



Livestrong: Dance Exercise for Seniors



A Taste of Italy

“When the moon hits your eye

Like a big-a pizza pie

That's amore.”

“When the world seems to shine
Like you've had too much wine
That's amore!”

Picture an intimate corner of your favorite quaint little Italian restaurant... table covered with red-

checkered cloth. Perhaps an aged wine bottle holding a dripping candle... strains of a romantic serenade. If you've made it to age sixty you know that it's important to appreciate family, good friends, and great food. As the saying goes, you're not getting older--- just better!

So take every opportunity to enjoy

life at this stage. And what



could be more enjoyable than a tasty Italian dinner with a loved one, family or

friends? Fine, Italian food and healthy living—can these two images co-exist?



What

usually comes to mind when you think of Italian food?



Rich sauces with lots of meat... layers of cheese covering mounds of pasta? It is true that too much of these may not promote a long and healthy life. There are, however, a number of good and healthy food choices from the Italian palate if you know what to look for. This month's Recipe Corner



presents several light, healthy options for those who want to appreciate fine foods at a cost that is significantly less than eating out at a “fancy restaurant”.

Once you get used to putting together healthier “cleaner” Italian food at home you will feel more empowered to go out and make healthier choices at your neighborhood Italian hot spot.



It can be as simple as putting together a few plant foods, a cracker or breadstick and a dab of cheese. Now that's amore!



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Recipe Corner

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To focus on cutting costs and on healthy eating, include lots of plant foods—



vegetables, whole grains,



beans, olives— with light sauces or none at all. Add a small portion of lean meat or



fish.

Using fruits and vegetables in their freshest, simplest forms keeps the cost and



the calories down. For example, salad greens and tomatoes are always a simple yet nutritious and colorful addition to any Italian meal.

A package of lean veal can serve three or four people for about \$6.00 if you limit the serving size to about 4 ounces. Lemons, basil and rosemary can be used to season and garnish your food without compromising the calories. Even if you're "on a diet" you can still have the checkered cloth and the red wine bottle. You might want to skip the chocolate cake, though, and substitute an Ital-

ian ice for dessert!

Veal in Lemon and Caper Sauce

3 Tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed

12 oz. thinly sliced veal steaks

Juice of one lemon

¼ cup capers, drained

Salt and black pepper to taste



Add oil to skillet. Lightly brown veal for about two minutes, then add garlic. Sauté for a few minutes then add lemon juice. Throw in capers and cook an additional minute. Reserve juice from skillet to pour over meat or angel hair pasta. Watch portion size. Twelve ounces of

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Recipe Corner

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meat should feed three persons!

Tomato Basil Tapenade



2 cups fresh tomatoes, diced finely---3 medium-sized

Five small basil leaves, chopped finely

2-3 stems green onions, finely chopped

2 Tablespoons olive oil

1 Tablespoon red wine vinegar



1 clove fresh garlic, minced
Mix all ingredients together and marinate for several hours at room temperature. Finely sliced, toasted French bread makes the perfect host for this tapenade. It can also be served with olives, and pita bread, or crispy, seeded crackers.

Green Beans Provencal



Touching borders, France and Italy share some simple tasteful ideas that blend very well. Provencal is French for "rural" or "of the provinces". There's really no substitute for fresh vegetables from a country garden!

½ pound "haricots verts" (French for thin green beans), trimmed

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon white wine vinegar or lemon juice

Salt and black pepper

Lemon slices for garnish

Cover fresh beans in boiling water and cook about two minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain. Plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process; drain again. Place in zip lock bag and chill until ready to serve.

Prepare vinaigrette with olive oil and vinegar, salt and pepper to taste. Driz-



zle beans with dressing and

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serve with lemon slices. Serve beans with veal, potatoes, and a whole wheat bread stick for an elegant yet simple meal!

Strawberry Italian Ice

Italian ice is so simple to make, yet not many people think to prepare it at home. When you make it yourself you can more readily count carbohydrates and reduce the sugar content. Add your favorite fresh fruit and enjoy this cool, refreshing, and relatively healthy treat.



If you just can't bring yourself to make the ice simply serve the fruits on a pretty plate with a garnish of fresh mint!!

3/4 cup thawed unsweetened apple juice concentrate
1 to 3 tablespoons fresh lem-

on juice
2 pints fresh strawberries, hulled and halved

2 kiwis, peeled and sliced
Fresh mint, optional

Directions:

In a blender or food processor, combine the apple juice concentrate, lemon juice, kiwis and strawberries; cover and process until blended. Pour into an ungreased 8-in. square dish. Cover and freeze for 1-1/2 to 2 hours until partially set.

Spoon or pour the semi-frozen mixture into a large mixing bowl. Beat on medium speed for 1-1/2 minutes. Return to dish; freeze for 2-3 hours or until firm.

Remove from the freezer 10 minutes before



serving. Swirl in blender and spoon into crystal goblets.

Garnish with mint if desired. Makes 5 servings with about 27 grams carbohydrates each.

(Recipe modified slightly from <http://www.tasteofhome.com/Recipes/Strawberry-Italian-Ice>)

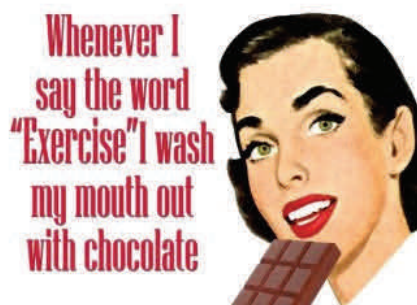
Remembering that chocolate is not really a



weight loss food you might sometimes feel like you just have to have it! Keep it lighter by making an angel food cake and frosting it with chocolate icing for that irresistible urge to indulge! Decorate with flowers or flags for fun!

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Just kidding!! We know we have to get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days !

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News You Can Use

Nutrients for Seniors

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends that seniors focus on getting enough calcium, Vitamin D, B12, fiber and potassium through fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy products, whole grains and fortified foods. Replacing solid fats with liquid fats and eating

fish is also good advice.

Nutrition and the Brain

Age-related changes in the brain's white matter connections may be related to the decline in our decision-making ability as we age.



Studies show that white matter connections may be improved with cognitive train-

ing such as playing bridge or chess.

Surgery for "Diabetesity"

A new study from Italy confirms what previous studies have shown—Type 2 Diabetes associated with obesity can be improved or reversed over time with gastric surgery. Forced weight loss from eating less was caused by surgical removal of 85% of the stomach in the study.
