

the healthy swimmer



Linda Steward

No Butts About It

Junk in the trunk? Fear not. A recent study by the Harvard Medical School says fat found under the skin, particularly around the buttocks, may help reduce the risk of developing diabetes. The study, published in the journal, *Cell Metabolism*, compares subcutaneous fat, or fat found just beneath the skin, with visceral fat, which is typically wrapped around the organs. Other studies have connected visceral fat with health risks, but the Harvard study may link subcutaneous fat to the production of hormones known as adipokines, which boost the metabolism.

"The surprising thing was that it wasn't where the fat was located, it was the kind of fat that was the most important variable," says lead researcher Professor Ronald Khan.

When researchers working with mice transplanted subcutaneous fat to the animal's abdominal area, there was a decrease in body weight, fat mass and blood sugar levels. The animals also became more responsive to insulin, which controls the way the body uses sugar. Moving abdominal visceral fat to other parts of the body had no effect. <<<

Could You Save a Life?

If a choking person is coughing forcefully, what should you do? What steps should you follow if a friend experiences an emergency involving sudden cardiac arrest? Are you prepared to save a life in the event of an emergency requiring CPR? The American Red Cross saves lives through health and safety education and training. To learn more about Red Cross training on how to save a life, go to www.redcross.org. Under the header "Preparing for Emergencies," click the link to "Get trained." <<<

Spring Clean Your Medicine Cabinet

The medicine cabinet may not be at the top of everyone's spring-cleaning list, but it's a good idea to take inventory, dispose of expired products and prepare for medical needs seasonally.

To help consumers analyze and improve the health of their home medicine cabinets, mymedcab.com, sponsored by the makers of Tylenol and Johnson & Johnson-Merck Consumer Pharmaceuticals, suggest they follow the three Rs:

- Read labels and expiration dates. Check instructions before administering any medications. Following directions is crucial.
- Remove items that are beyond their expiration dates or no longer used. Expired medications may lose their potency.
- Restock expired medications as a way to meet the health needs of everyone in the home. <<<

Readers Ask:

Q: I know my way around the kitchen, but this week I'm stumped. Two of my swimming friends are coming for dinner, and they are strict vegans. What's veganism all about, and what should I make for dinner?

A: "If you are vegan, you eat nothing that has a face or a mother, or comes from anything that has a face or a mother," says Masters swimmer and celebrated vegan firefighter Rip Esselstyn, author of the recently published book, "Engine 2 Diet." Esselstyn, a 2008 USMS national champion, All-American and USMS record holder in the men's 45-49 200 back, says vegans do not eat beef, chicken, fish, pork, eggs, milk,

cheese, ice cream, yogurt and sour cream.

"By avoiding these foods, vegans eliminate the big three dietary villains found on most Americans' plates that promote disease: dietary cholesterol, saturated fat and animal protein," says Esselstyn, but he adds that being a vegan doesn't necessarily mean your diet is perfect.

"A diet of white toast, jelly beans, Coke and white pasta is vegan but misses the mark of dietary excellence," he says. "Instead I recommend a diet of whole, nutrient-rich, plant-strong foods centered around whole grains, fruits, vegetables and legumes. Your health will flourish, your swim times will drop and your recovery between workouts will improve. There is

an absolute smorgasbord of delectable foods waiting to pass through your lips."

"Engine 2 Diet" contains more than 125 recipes, including many familiar dinner categories: pasta, pizza, soups, Tex-Mex, big salads, burgers, comfort foods and dinner plates. "Your vegan friends will love you and so will the pace clock as you cruise through 10 X 100 on the 1:10," he says.

Esselstyn offers the knowledge and tools to transition from the typical American diet of meat, dairy and refined foods to a plant-strong, diverse, performance-enhancing diet based on dietary excellence. "Engine 2 Diet" (ISBN: 9780446506694) is available at your local booksellers and through online vendors. <<<

Dive Safely

Diving is a common fear among Masters swimmers, and for good reason. Diving into shallow water, five feet deep or less, can cause a broken neck, spinal injury and paralysis. A 1995 survey by the National Spinal Cord Injury Association found 14 percent of spinal injuries resulted from sporting activities, and 66 percent of those were diving accidents. More recent surveys indicate a decline in spinal injuries from sporting activities, but it's still important to remember

the key to safe diving – follow the rules of the road.

- When visiting any pool facility, observe the water depth and signage. Many pools have water depth markings on the deck, including “No Diving” signs, and most have rules about diving.

- Check the water before diving. Make sure the water is clear in front of you. Once you have finished, clear the way for other divers.

- Swimming coaches are generally well qualified to teach swimmers how to dive safely. <<<



The Dirty Dozen

“An organic apple a day keeps the doctor away.” It may be time to rewrite Benjamin Franklin’s famous quote, as the common apple is listed in the Environmental Working Group’s Dirty Dozen – a list of the top 12 most contaminated produce items. The list is published as a guide for consumers seeking to prioritize organic food purchases when also buying nonorganic foods.

Organic produce is among the fastest growing segments of United States agriculture products, but when it comes to purchasing organic produce, many consumers are still learning. The “Dirty Dozen” includes nonorganic apples, celery, potatoes and sweet bell peppers, while the list of least contaminated includes bananas, broccoli, cabbage and onions. <<<

>>> **Learn more and download a free shopper’s guide at the Environmental Working Group’s Food News website, www.foodnews.org.**

12 Most Contaminated

Peaches
Apples
Sweet bell peppers
Celery
Nectarines
Strawberries
Cherries
Pears
Grapes (imported)
Spinach
Lettuce
Potatoes

12 Least Contaminated

Onions
Avocado
Sweet corn (frozen)
Pineapples
Mango
Asparagus
Sweet peas (frozen)
Kiwi fruit
Bananas
Cabbage
Broccoli
Papaya

Source: Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org) and Food News (www.foodnews.org).

reader recipe

This recipe comes courtesy of Austin, Texas, fireman and Masters swimmer Rip Esselstyn, who created the dish with colleague Matt Moore. Featured in Esselstyn’s new book, “Engine 2 Diet” (see Readers Ask on facing page), the Tex-Mex dish was on the firehouse’s menu for dinner the same day Moore told co-workers he had a dream about a raging fire.

Right as Moore put his dish into the oven, the tone sounded for a church fire. It turned out to be a tough call, generating intense heat and requiring the firefighters to use air and later, go to rehab. But they recovered quickly. “When we made it back to the station, we finally got around to eating,” Esselstyn says. “But before any of us took a bite, we all offered a toast to Matt and his tasty meat-free enchiladas, as well as his dreams.”

Matt Moore’s Enchilada

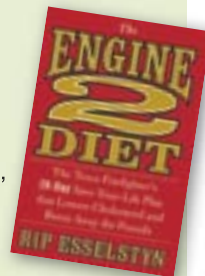
- 16 ounces mushrooms, sliced
- 32 ounces frozen spinach, thawed and drained
- 30 ounces fat-free, frozen hash-brown potatoes
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 8 ounces canned diced green chilies
- 18 corn tortillas
- 3 16-ounce jars fat-free enchilada sauce*
- 12 sprigs of cilantro, rinsed

* “Whole Foods’ ‘Religious Experience’ enchilada sauce is excellent,” Esselstyn says.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Sauté mushrooms and spinach on medium heat in large nonstick skillet for five minutes, or until mushrooms are soft. Drain liquid, and remove to large bowl. Cook potatoes on high heat in sprayed skillet for 10 minutes until lightly browned on both sides. Sprinkle potatoes with cumin and chili powder. Gently combine potatoes, green chilies, mushrooms and spinach. Line the bottom of a sprayed 9” by 13” casserole with six tortillas. Place half of the vegetable mixture over tortillas and cover with one jar of sauce. Repeat the process: tortillas, vegetables, sauce. Top with the remaining six tortillas and jar of sauce. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes. Allow enchiladas to sit for 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with cilantro sprigs, and serve with a starter salad. <<<

Servings: 6

>>> **Do you have a recipe our readers would enjoy?** Send it to editor@USMS.org, or mail to: Reader Recipe, c/o Bill Volckening, 1220 NW 119th Place, Portland, OR 97229.



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