

Walk Kansas

celebrate healthy living

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In This Issue

Building Strength

Move of the Week: Upper Body Resistance Training

Should You Eat Like a Caveman in the 21st Century?

Recipe: Our Best Pizza

Coming Next Week

What to Do When it Hurts

Squats to Strengthen

Sugar Sense

Recipe: Brownie Bites

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Building Strength

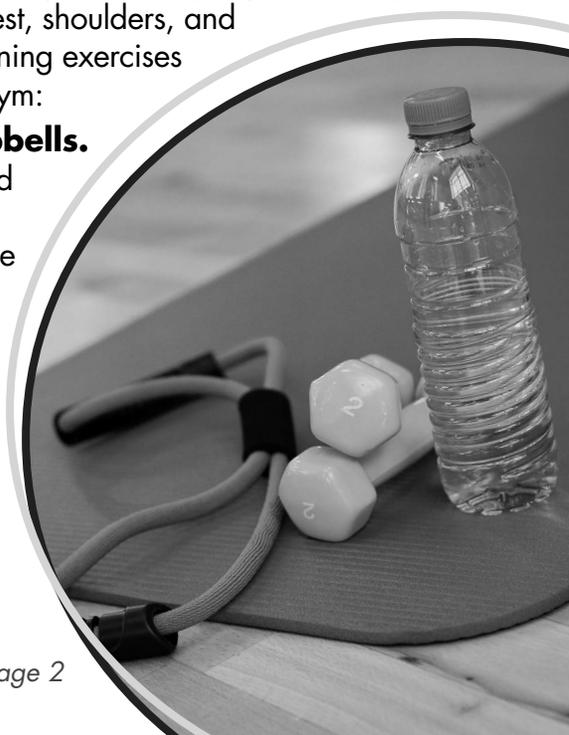
Strength training is included in the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* for a very good reason. People start losing muscle around age 30, and the rate of muscle loss accelerates around age 50. Some muscle loss is part of the aging process, but inactivity accounts for the rest. Progressive strength training can prevent muscle loss and increase strength in adults and older adults. Strength training can also increase bone density.

Walking and other types of aerobic activity provide many health benefits, but they don't make your muscles strong. Strength training does. You can feel a difference when your body is stronger. Strengthening exercises also improve your balance, coordination, and agility, allowing you to perform everyday movements much easier.

Do muscle-strengthening activities two to three days a week, with a rest day between. Work all major muscle groups including the legs, hips, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, and arms. Following are strengthening exercises you can do at home or in a gym:

- **Free weights or dumbbells.**

These are classic tools used to strengthen your upper body. They are inexpensive and available in many sizes. Start with 2-, 3-, or 5-pound weights and gradually work up. You can make your own free weights with milk jugs or plastic beverage bottles filled with water or sand. Weigh the jug or bottle on



continued on page 2

Building Strength

continued from page 1

a household scale and secure the tops with duct tape. Adjust the weight as your fitness level changes.

- **Body weight exercises.** These require little or no equipment since they use your body weight for resistance. Try push-ups, pull-ups, abdominal crunches, and leg squats.
- **Resistance tubing or bands.** These offer weight-like resistance when you pull on them. They are inexpensive and good for building strength in arms and other muscles, and they are available in varying degrees of resistance.

If you are new to strength training, start slowly. Make sure you warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of stretching or walking. Choose an appropriate weight or resistance level that will challenge you.

Each exercise set should include 12 repetitions, meaning you will lift the weight the same way 12 times in a row, then rest. Aim to perform 2 to 4 sets of 12 repetitions with each exercise.

Work opposing muscle groups with each set. For example, if you start with a set of exercises using your right arm, switch to the left and perform the same set. Then repeat with your right arm, and then switch back to the left again.

Move of the Week: Upper Body Resistance Training

This week, add upper body resistance training to your activity routine. If you are already doing strengthening exercises, challenge yourself a bit more. Practice good form while doing these exercises. A variety of "how-to" videos on resistance training are available on the Walk Kansas website:

www.walkkansas.org/p.aspx?tabid=66&itemid=8&cmd=view#8. Using resistance bands, hand weights, and a stability ball are demonstrated.

Remember to take a rest day between workouts so your body can repair and strengthen itself. Next week, you will add lower body resistance exercises.

• *2013 Success Stories*

- My daughter invited me to be on her work team. In doing so, we did strength training together at least twice a week. It was a great opportunity to keep in contact and keep in shape. I am grateful for the time we have spent and look forward to continuing our workouts for as long as we can. I didn't lose any significant amount of weight but lost inches and gained a closer friend. It was a win-win deal!

— Central Kansas District

- Making sure that I get up from my desk — even if it's just for a minute or two — helps relieve me from lower back pain.

— Woodson County

Should You Eat Like a Caveman in the 21st Century?

In the last few years, "Paleo" or "Caveman" diets have received media attention. Advocates of this lifestyle propose that people today should eat like people did during the Paleolithic era, otherwise known as the Stone Age. They recommend eating fish, meats, eggs, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and mushrooms, and avoiding grains, dairy foods, cooked dry beans, oils, salt, and refined sugars. They believe that since it has "only" been within the last 100,000 years that agriculture came into being, human metabolism has not yet evolved to digest well the kinds of foods grown on farms.

Is there any health truth behind this hype?

Early human ancestors were hunters and gatherers. Supporters of the Paleo diet contend that cavemen were strong-boned, hearty, and healthy. And if they died young, it was not because of disease, but because of accidents and a difficult environment.

Paleo diet promoters say that modern-day health problems (such as arthritis, osteoporosis, cancer, heart disease, and other chronic diseases) did not exist during the Stone Age. But no one alive now can be sure of what diseases occurred then. And if those diseases were not present, is it because of the differences in diets or because of other differences?

continued on page 3

Should You Eat Like a Caveman in the 21st Century?

continued from page 2

A one-size fits all approach to diet does not work well. For individuals who are diagnosed with food sensitivities and intolerances, yes, their health will improve if they avoid the foods they cannot tolerate.

Overall, though, people living in the U.S. now live longer and enjoy fewer years of disability than ever before. And nutrition experts agree that the rise in obesity and obesity-related diseases over the past 30 years is not because Americans are eating too many whole grains, low-fat dairy products, or cooked dry beans. Research supports the opposite: eating these foods improves health for most people. Everyone can learn some important lessons from humans' more primitive ancestors. "Think like a

caveman" to improve your health by following these guidelines:

- Most of the time, eat foods that are less processed, are low in added salt and added sugars, and are naturally rich in nutrients.
- Avoid long periods of sitting and be at least moderately physically active for 30 to 60 minutes on most days. Although people no longer scavenge and hunt for most of meals, their bodies were designed to be moved often.

Source: "Dining on a Dime" October 2012, Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., FAND (Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics) Associate Professor, K-State Research and Extension Specialist

Our Best Pizza

Makes 10 slices

Compared to a similar take-out pizza, this recipe offers great taste with fewer calories, fat, and sodium, along with a fiber boost. Dough can be frozen for later use.

Crust:

- 1 cup warm water (100°F to 110°F)
- 1 envelope (2¼ teaspoons) active dry yeast or pizza crust yeast*
- 2 cups white whole-wheat flour
- ½ to 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon whole-grain cornmeal (plus more to dust pan)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons canola or olive oil

Sauce:

- 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper

Toppings:

- 1½ cups chopped or thinly sliced vegetables (onion, sweet peppers, mushrooms)
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella or pizza blend cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. In a medium-sized bowl, dissolve yeast in water and let stand 5 minutes.
3. Stir in flour, sugar, cornmeal, salt, and oil; turn onto lightly floured surface and knead until mixture forms a ball easily (about 3 to 5 minutes).
4. Place dough in a small, greased bowl; cover and let rise in a warm place for 10 minutes. Pat dough onto a greased 15-inch pizza pan or roll dough and place on a stone dusted lightly with cornmeal. Fold dough over to make edge of crust.
5. Spread tomato sauce over crust; sprinkle with dried seasonings; add vegetable toppings; sprinkle cheese on top.
6. Bake at 400°F for 20 to 25 minutes. Let stand for several minutes before cutting and serving.

Nutrition Information per serving: 190 calories; 5 g fat; 20 g carbohydrates; 8 g protein; 4 g fiber; 520 mg sodium.

*Pizza Crust Yeast is formulated with dough relaxers that keep the dough from pulling or snapping back when shaping it. For best results with this yeast, use water that is 120° to 130° F.

More variations of pizza sauce, make-your-own pizza seasoning, and a gluten-free crust recipe are available at www.walkkansas.org/p.aspx?tabid=71.

