

The TOPS Reminder

A newsletter for Western Massachusetts Counties

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Yearly Goal

I'm having a difficult Time this past year and continue to gain weight. I'm telling you this because I'm looking for someone to be my weight loss buddy, you help me and I can help you.

Chapter Visits

MA 0383 Easthampton
MA 0395 Greenfield
MA 0344 Southwick
MA 0229 North Adams

Is Your Diet Making

Tired

Nutrition Tips for Increased Energy

Persistent mild fatigue or a chronic lack of energy due to day-to-day stressors or hectic schedules can often be addressed with simple preventive steps. In addition to regular exercise, quality rest, and a supplement routine designed to promote energy, try these dietary tips for a natural energy boost:

1. **Eat a wide variety of fresh vegetables and fruits** (preferably organic) for their protective photochemical and micronutrients needed for optimal metabolism.
2. **Become a grazer.** A large meal can trigger the body to

release more insulin, resulting in low blood sugar levels and a fatigue-inducing slump. Eating smaller meals or healthy snacks throughout the day can help keep blood sugar levels steady.

3. **Stay hydrated.** Dehydration is a common cause of fatigue - drink purified water or other healthy liquids throughout the day.
4. **Snack right.** Choose healthy snacks that contain some protein, carbohydrates, and beneficial fats or select whole foods that are low in fat. Good options include a handful of unsalted nuts, fresh or dried fruit, yogurt, vegetable sticks, and whole grain bread or crackers.
5. **Eat more fiber.** Navy beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, and lentils are all rich in fiber, which slows the release of insulin and helps maintain a steady supply of energy.

Reasons to Eat Raspberries

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If you want a delicious way to add fiber and antioxidants to your diet, look no further than raspberries. One of my seasonal favorites, raspberries is an aggregate fruit, meaning that smaller sections with seeds

and fruit create a larger whole. Raspberries have significant nutritional value - they:

1. Are a good source of vitamin C and fiber?
2. Provide [foliate](#), vitamins B2 and B3, magnesium and other essential nutrients.
3. Contain ellagitannins, natural health-protective compounds that appear to have potent anti-cancer activity.
4. Have considerable antioxidant activity (50 percent more than strawberries).
5. Place in the top 15 of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition's* best antioxidant sources.

For a quick and simple nutritional boost, top your oatmeal with raspberries, add some to a smoothie or salad, use them in sauces and baked goods, or enjoy them on their own. As with other berries, because commercial strains may be heavily sprayed with pesticides, I recommend buying only organic varieties.

BEWARE OF FAT FREE FOODS

Fatty foods may be on your "do not eat" list, but if you're replacing them with foods labeled as fat-reduced, slow

down. These products often contain high glycemic carbs and chemicals to make up for the lack of fat. With fat-free salad dressing, you'll take in fewer calories in the short term, but you'll eat more in the long term. Your blood sugar will spike up and down, and you'll be less satisfied. Test how natural your "healthier" food is by asking yourself, "Does it make sense for this item to be low in fat?" For peanut butter, probably not. And low-fat granola has only 12 percent fewer calories than regular granola, but when Cornell researchers gave it to subjects, they ended up eating 192 extra calories.

IS NAPPING GOD FOR YOU

courtesy of [Dr. Weil on Healthy Aging](#).

Studies on sleep and the opinions of sleep experts are convincing: napping has value. People who nap generally enjoy better mental health and mental efficiency than people who do not. The quality of their nighttime sleep tends to be better as well. Unfortunately, finding opportunities to rest during daylight hours in our society is not so easy - the North American culture is actively opposed to the whole concept, bombarding us with stimulation in more and more places and times.

If you want to embrace the concept of napping - as many

cultures worldwide do - consider the following:

1. **Accept napping as a positive thing.** Remind yourself frequently that napping can make a day more productive - it is actually the opposite of being lazy.
2. **Do not fight the body's desire to nap.** This will result in unpleasant or unproductive naps.
3. **Take naps when you can.** If your schedule does not permit a nap every day, consider taking productive naps as a passenger in cars, trains, and airplanes.
4. **Consider time and duration.** Napping for too long, too often, or at the wrong time of day can be counterproductive. See what length and schedule works best for you.
5. **Napping can mean just taking a break.** Lying on a hammock or just staring into space is the

FOUR FOODS FOR HEALTHY BONES

Did you know that you can help promote bone health no matter what your age? It's foods to your diet:

1. **Dairy products.** They are a good source of calcium, an essential mineral that is important to bone health. They can also be a good source of vitamin D, also helpful for bone health. Choose organic, hormone-free versions when possible.
2. **Non-dairy calcium-rich foods.** Sardines, canned salmon (with bones), dark

leafy greens, whole soy foods like tofu, and calcium-fortified products such as soymilk and orange juice are good calcium-rich options for those who don't eat dairy.

3. **Whole vegetables and fruit.** They provide potassium, magnesium, vitamin C and beta-carotene, all of which have been linked to higher total bone mass.
4. **Food sources of [magnesium](#).** Spinach, tofu, almonds, broccoli, [lentils](#), pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds are good sources of this essential mineral, which is vital for healthy bones.

In addition, avoid too much protein intake - excessive dietary protein can promote calcium loss from bones - and cut back on caffeine and sodium as well, as too much of either can promote calcium excretion

Are Your Cholesterol Levels Healthy?

Published: 6/3/2013

This is the first article I found that explained it so you I could explain it to others.

Wondering what the difference is between high density lipoprotein (HDL) and low density lipoprotein (LDL) - and why your levels matter? HDL is popularly known as the "good" cholesterol, because in this form, cholesterol is transported out of the arteries and back to the liver for eventual elimination from the body. LDL is called the "bad" cholesterol because it

combines with other substances that can accumulate in the walls of arteries to form plaque. Over time, this plaque builds up within the arterial walls, causing them to narrow and harden. The rough surface of plaque can also provide a site for blood to clot, sometimes completely blocking an artery.

Both HDL and LDL levels are influenced by diet, weight, exercise, age, gender, alcohol consumption, stress, and in some cases, heredity. According to the guidelines from the National Cholesterol Education Program, HDL levels of 60 mg/dl or above are classified as high and considered protective against heart disease, while levels below 40 mg/dl are classified as low and associated with a higher risk of [coronary heart disease](#).

As far as your heart is concerned, low LDL is good - for people at risk for heart disease, an LDL level of under 100 is the current government recommendation. A marker that seems to shedding more light on heart risk and diet is VLDL (very low-density lipoprotein). VLDL is a marker of denser LDL, known to be a bigger risk of plaque formation than lighter density LDL. VLDL is increased by the overconsumption of sugar, sugary beverages and refined carbohydrates.

Keep in mind that it is possible to have heart problems even with "healthy" cholesterol levels. A single-minded focus on cholesterol levels may be

obscuring other heart disease risk factors in the public mind, such as lack of fitness, [chronic stress](#), smoking, inflammation, poor diet and diabetes. The best approach to heart health is to monitor and manage all of these risk factors.

Take a look at the charts below. They will give you an idea of what your cholesterol levels mean.

Total Cholesterol Level (mg/do)	Category
Less than 200	Desirable
200-239	Borderline high
240 and above	High

LDL Cholesterol Level (mg/do)	LDL Cholesterol Category
Less than 100	Optimal
100-129	Near optimal/above optimal
130-159	Borderline high
160-189	High
190 and above	Very high

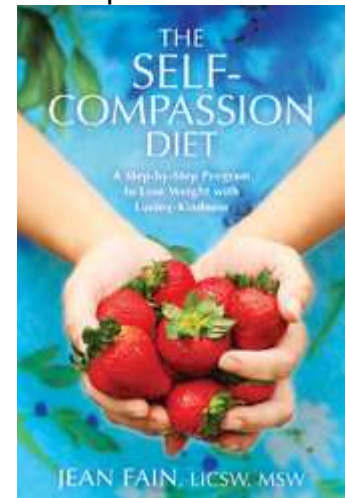
Source: The National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP).

According to nurse practitioner Liz Cory of Easthampton cutting 500 calories from will help. Try not to eat foods that come from animals with '4 legs and eat 2 no meat meals a week. Taking Metamucil in the morning will help you also. Some type of exercise, anything small. This was recommended by my nurse

practitioner, I'm on the fence to having a problem the first time ever in my life. Talk to your Dr before you try something new.

Compassionate Approach to Dieting

"We're here for you" Better week next week" " We're Pulling for you" "Glad you came" " All things we hear at our TOPS meetings, signs of compassion to a gain or that 4th stay the same .As individuals we need compassion for ourselves because as we know and this years AC program states "no one is or needs perfection."



By Diane Petrella, MSW

Many diet plans miss the mark on the emotional needs of dieters. If you struggle with keeping weight off, you probably know that punishing self-criticism can trigger emotional eating. When you make a slip, you may scold yourself, believing you need more self-discipline. You then slide into a guilt-ridden binge. To stop that

cycle, retire from diet boot camp and add some self-compassion to your weight loss plan.

The Compassionate Approach

[The Self-Compassion Diet: A Step-by-Step Program to Lose Weight with Loving-Kindness](#), by Jean Fain, MSW, LICSW, a Harvard Medical School affiliated psychotherapist, teaches a compassionate approach to weight loss. Her four step plan includes loving kindness practices, self-hypnosis, mindful eating strategies, and guidance on developing social support. While self-hypnosis and mindful eating are not new, Fain offers a creative toolbox of inspiring exercises. You also learn why this program works. Each approach is supported by psychological theory and cutting edge research.

If your relationship with food is fraught with anxiety and stress, this book will calm you. Laying the groundwork, Fain applies Buddhist meditation and mindfulness practices to help you cultivate self-compassion. Since I meditate daily, I was inspired to see these powerful tools woven into a diet program. If you're unfamiliar with these practices, this beautifully written book teaches you, in a simple, easy to follow

manner, how to use these approaches to help you stop overeating.

For example, one loving kindness suggestion is a [guided visualization](#) whereby you view yourself through a pair of eyeglasses with compassionate lenses. Many dieters have a distorted perception of who they are and what they look like. This negative self-image often fuels shame induced self-sabotaging behaviors. The 'Compassionate Glasses' visualization gently guides you to see yourself and your body through the eyes of love. Your weight loss journey becomes much easier when you shift your perspective in this way.

Fain also demystifies [self-hypnosis](#) and teaches you short, simple practices to instill positive suggestions to eat more healthfully, develop confidence, and manage challenging situations. For example, the 'Imaginary Triggers' exercise helps you develop solutions to risky situations for overeating. The book also comes in a user friendly audio format to guide you.

The Power of Community

Fain emphasizes the importance of relationship to facilitate your progress. She helps you navigate the

many professional and social avenues available for dieters. There's a quiz and writing exercise to assess whether your current weight loss support team is helping you or holding you back. For example, does your "best" friend encourage you to overindulge on a food you want to avoid, or suggest sharing a nutritious meal?

Informative and practical strategies help you develop a winning team, ranging from professional group therapy, self-help groups, on-line communities, or a single trusted friend. I like this emphasis on support, such as offered by the [Calorie Count Forums](#), because it honors a universal human need for positive connection.

Does the Self-Compassion Diet Work?

Whatever plan you're using to release excess weight, adding self-compassion will most likely guarantee success. A 2007 [research study](#) at Wake Forest University applied self-compassion strategies to restrictive and guilty eaters. The results indicate that even a mild dose of self-loving thoughts can curb emotional eating.

The Self-Compassion Diet isn't a quick fix. Fain's approach and strategies encourage lasting lifestyle

change, essential to sustainable weight loss. If you've been having a hard time losing weight and keeping it off, chances are it's not that you lack self-discipline. You probably just need more self-compassion. Don't worry. This doesn't mean you'll overindulge in unhealthy behaviors; most likely you will begin to indulge yourself with kindness. And when you do that, you naturally will be drawn to foods and choices that reflect back to you the compassion you feel for yourself.

Your thoughts....

How will being more self-compassionate help you to release weight and make peace with your body? (Great discussion for your chapter meeting)

MOTIVATION FOR WEIGHT LOSS

sent in by Judy Valente

M - Make short term goals

O - Out with negative thoughts

T - Think of why you want it

I - Imagine how you will feel

V - Visualize the future you

A - Acknowledge your successes

T - Treat yourself with respect

I - Investigate new ideas and foods

O - Observe your healthy lifestyle

N - Never give up

Author unknown

From TOPS Headquarters

Membership and Awareness campaign.

TOP MEMBER COMPLAINTS
Chapter is boring and emphasis is on games, contest, business meeting, personal problems (aches and pains) fundraising instead of on weight loss support and wellness education.

New members do not always receive My Day One, TOPS terms, bylaws etc., which is particularly frustrating for the younger and professional people wanting to join. (Send out renewals and new members registrations the same week they join.) If you don't have any My Day Ones, give Rosie a call.

Members feel pressured to join at the first meeting they attend and do so even though they are not comfortable. They never show up again, no one calls or follows up with them. They do not know that all chapters are different and they have a choice.

Members do not believe that TOPS has the tools necessary to do the program. They are unaware of the online and print offerings that we have. They get frustrated and quit.

There is too much paperwork and it is too hard to deal with and understand. Many chapter officers seem unaware of the tools we have to help them, such as the new leaders 'Outline'.

KOPS of MA 0411 Westfield are honored at Ceremony

Sent in by Leader, Sharon Marks



Big SHOUT OUT TO CHAPTERS

I want to give a shout out to South Hadley 423 & Greenfield 395 who are doing a **GREAT job** so far this year.

YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE TO LOOSE! These two chapters have decided this is their year.

Freezer Order

I have my own system for labeling homemade freezer meals.

Forget calling them "Veal Parmesan" or "Turkey Loaf" or "Beef Pot Pie."

If you look in my freezer you'll see "Whatever," "Anything," "I Don't Know," and, my favorite, "Food."

That way when I ask my husband what he wants for dinner, I'm certain to have what he wants."

Workshop August 10th in Greenfield hold this date

Remember I Care, Terri