

MARCH 2014 - TOPS Norfolk and Bristol Counties

Gail Lewis - Area Captain

Hey Everyone.....We are finally in "Transition Month", the month we begin to have warmer days and less snow.....let's hope I am right. Hope to see everyone at SRD on the 28th and 29th. If you have not signed up and want to, let me know and I can get you in. Thanks....have a great month.

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

"If you don't step forward, you're always in the same place."

Nora Roberts

INSPIRATION WORKSHOP

Thank you to everyone who made the time for themselves to come to Inspiration Workshop. These workshops are full of great chapter ideas and inspiration to all. The next workshop will be in May - date and place to be announced next news letter. When ever and where ever, it will be a doozie.

AREA CAPTAIN PROGRAM FOR 2014

Thank you for the quick response from everyone - still waiting for a few chapters but all looks great for April, May and June (and I will be busy). It will be a great program - I know all will enjoy.

TOPS WEB site:

Make sure you visit the Massachusetts WEB site - www.MATOPS.com - lots of great things posted out there.

SRD

SRD will be at the Sea Crest Hotel in Falmouth on March 28 and 29. If you haven't signed up yet, it's not too late. Give me a call or email me - we'll get you in.

CHANGE OF ELECTION TIME

Just wanted to make sure everyone knew about the change of election month from March to July. Rosie sent all leaders the information on that

back in December. If you are scratching your head and don't remember it, let me know and I can resend it to you. Thanks

TOPS WALKING CHALLENGE OF ONE MILLION MILES

I would like everyone to pull out their TOPS News from August/September of this year and check out this challenge. It's on pages 25 - 28. It's a great program AND you can log your miles walked. Walkers are encouraged to track their miles from IRD in Calgary to IRD in Milwaukee. Can we count on you? Please send your miles to Rosie Smith - she will add them all together for our state. Thank You.

INSPIRATION

Vegetarian Diet: A Healthy Choice

The vegetarian diet is a healthy lifestyle followed by more than four million Americans. It tends to be low in cholesterol, total fat, and saturated fat, which may help reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and coronary artery disease. Sound promising? Try it, you may like it. Just another suggestion – why not go meatless one day a week? Here are some great suggestions. Enjoy

Vegetarian Diet: Getting Started

There are many types of vegetarian diets. By definition, vegetarians do not eat meat, poultry, or fish. Some vegetarians eat eggs and milk products. Others eat dairy, but skip the eggs. Finally, vegans eat only plant foods. They do not eat anything derived from animals, including milk, eggs, and honey. Whichever path you choose, you'll want to make protein, iron, calcium, zinc, and vitamin B-12 a priority.

Pick Your Proteins

Meat protein contains all the essential amino acids the body needs, but vegetarian sources often don't. Protein needs can easily be met by eating a variety of plant-based foods. To get the full range of proteins, vegetarians must eat a wide variety of nuts, seeds, legumes, and grains. For example, beans are high in an amino acid called lysine, but low in sulfur-rich amino acids. The opposite is true of grains. So eating a meal of black beans and rice is one way

to get a balanced set of proteins.

Substitute With Soy

Soy products are a versatile source of protein. They work well as a meat substitute. Try making tofu kebabs the next time your meat-eating friends fire up the grill. Even if tofu leaves you cold, there are plenty of other soy foods on the market today. Soy is the prime ingredient in most meatless hot dogs, chicken nuggets, and breakfast sausages.

Tweak Your Favorite Recipes

One of the easiest ways to transition to a vegetarian diet is to create meatless versions of your favorite recipes. For example, make vegetarian lasagna with spinach and/or tofu instead of ground beef. Keep clicking for more meatless favorites.

Vegetarian Stuffed Peppers

Stuff bell peppers with a blend of rice and veggies. Instead of ground beef, add beans or meatless sausage crumbles. Season as usual.

Veggie Omelet

Eggs in a vegetarian diet provide a reliable and convenient source of protein. It's easy to whip up a veggie omelet instead of the standard ham-and-cheese. Try carrots, mushrooms and spinach for a colorful and nutritious alternative.

Eggplant Parmesan

Here's a tasty replacement for chicken parmesan – where your recipe calls for chicken, use thin slices of eggplant instead. If you decide to exclude dairy, you can use a soy-based cheese substitute instead of real parmesan.

Vegetarian Chili

When you're craving a warm, spicy bowl of chili, simply replace the ground beef with ground tofu. With ample seasoning, you may not even notice the difference.

Portabella Burger

It's not quite a cheeseburger in paradise, but a grilled portabella mushroom on a whole-wheat bun comes close. Top with lettuce, tomato or cheese, just as you would a hamburger.

Veggie Burger

If you're looking for something closer to the texture of a real hamburger, try a veggie burger. Most supermarkets now have several brands of frozen veggie burgers to choose from. These are often made with a blend of vegetables, soy,

and grains, providing a well-balanced source of protein.

Vegetarian Diet Perks

Vegetarian diets tend to be lower in or free of animal products, and lower in total and saturated fat and cholesterol. Many studies have shown that vegetarians have a reduced risk of developing certain diseases. A vegetarian diet also boosts your intake of phytochemicals. These are compounds found in colorful fruits and vegetables, such as the lutein in broccoli and the lycopene in tomatoes. Phytochemicals are powerful antioxidants and may help protect against cancer.

Vegetarian Diet Drawbacks

Without a well-rounded diet, vegetarians may become deficient in certain vitamins and minerals, such as iron, vitamin B-12, zinc, calcium, and vitamin D. Vegans are especially at risk. Keep reading to learn which nutrients may be lacking in a vegetarian diet and how to compensate.

Calcium & Vitamin D

If you eat milk, cheese, or yogurt, you probably get enough calcium to keep your bones strong. But if you go the vegan route, you'll need alternate sources of calcium. These include fortified soy milk and orange juice, seeds, nuts, and some green vegetables. People who avoid dairy products also miss out on vitamin D. The body can make this vitamin in response to sunlight, but vegans who don't get enough sun exposure may need a supplement.

Zinc

Although zinc is found in many vegetarian foods, it is not as well absorbed as meat-based zinc. Eating plenty of zinc-rich foods can help you maximize the amount your body absorbs. Good sources include milk, cheese, whole-grain breads, nuts, soy foods, and legumes, such as chickpeas. Hummus on a whole-grain pita is one tasty snack that does the trick.

Iron

Red meat may be the most obvious source of iron, but this vital mineral is plentiful in leafy green vegetables, cooked dry beans, and fortified cereals or grains. Like zinc, plant-based iron is not as well absorbed as iron from meat. The solution is to eat iron-rich foods regularly and in combination with foods that contain vitamin C. Vitamin C improves the absorption of iron.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are good fats that lower blood pressure and contribute to heart health. They are found mainly in fatty fish, as well as eggs. If you don't eat

either of these foods, you need to include other sources of omega-3 fatty acids in your diet. Pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, walnuts, and soybean oil are all good options.

Vitamin B-12

Low levels of vitamin B-12 can cause muscle weakness and fatigue. This vitamin is found only in foods derived from animals and some fortified foods, including meats, eggs, and milk products. So vegans either need to eat foods fortified with vitamin B-12 or take supplements.

Vegetarian Kids

Some parents wonder whether a vegetarian diet is safe for their kids or teenagers. Experts say it is not only safe, but probably beneficial. In a study of 5,000 children, researchers concluded that the typical vegetarian diet is significantly healthier than the typical non-vegetarian diet. Just be sure kids get enough fats to meet their needs -- nuts, peanut butter, avocado, milk products, and eggs are all good sources.

Part-Time Vegetarian

You don't need to be a vegetarian seven days a week to reap some of the benefits. Going meatless one or two days a week can reduce your intake of saturated fats and cholesterol, while giving your body plenty of beneficial plant-based nutrients. Eating satisfying, meatless meals is getting easier and more convenient. Many restaurants and supermarkets now offer items specifically for vegetarians.

That's it for March - have a great month!!!

Gail Lewis - gailstops@verizon.net