



NEWSLETTER

A partnership between the
Heart Institute & Diabetes Education
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WALKING FOR HEALTH

by Jeffrey Kinnunen, MS,
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Sometimes increasing your physical activity is as easy as walking out your door. Walking is a good exercise for many people because it requires no specialized equipment and can be done almost anywhere. Walking provides other benefits as well. It allows you to go with a group or go at your own pace and you can explore new locations or visit a favorite one. Walking can reduce stress and anxiety, and increase self-confidence. However, the most important benefit of walking is that you can improve your health.

Walking is a weight bearing activity, meaning that your body has to support itself as you move. This provides small amounts of stress on your muscles and bones that help to maintain their strength. Walking also challenges your cardiovascular system in a way that can lower blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart disease.

To improve your health, your goal should be to perform at least 30 minutes of walking or other cardiovascular exercise (i.e. biking or swimming) on most days of the week, at an intensity that feels "somewhat hard." However, you can also incorporate extra walking into your daily routine. This will increase your energy expenditure, which can help improve your fitness, regulate your blood glucose, and control your weight. If you walk an extra ten minutes each day, you will accumulate five extra hours of physical activity over a month! Be consistent, keep moving and gradually increase the amount of time that you spend walking.



FOOD CRAVINGS

Submitted by Sherri Rule, RD
Department of Food and Nutrition Services

What are food cravings and what causes them? Webster's dictionary defines a craving as "an intense, urgent, or abnormal desire or longing." A food craving, then, can be considered a strong desire for a certain food or foods. The most common food cravings are pizza and sweets (like dessert foods or chocolate).

There are a number of theories why food cravings occur:

- ◆ **The body may lack certain nutrients.** Due to this, the brain will indicate what foods are required to replenish the missing nutrients.
- ◆ **Hormone level changes.** For example, women often report food cravings during pregnancy or just prior to their menstrual cycle.
- ◆ **Food deprivation.** For example, many dieters report food cravings.
- ◆ **Smells.** The smell of baking bread or chocolate chip cookies may trigger the desire for a sample taste.
- ◆ **An eating regimen that lacks variety in taste or texture.** In one study, subjects were asked to drink a sweet nutritional supplement and water for five days. At the end of the study, the subjects stated cravings for pizza and steak rather than sweet foods like ice cream and cookies.
- ◆ **Emotions.** Food may be used for comfort.

What to do when a craving strikes? Try one or a combination of the following:

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1. Substitute one food for another. A glass of low fat chocolate milk instead of a candy bar may satisfy your chocolate craving. This choice provides more nutritional value, too.

2. Give into your cravings. By giving in, the craving may be less likely to get out of control. If this is your strategy, REMEMBER portion control. For example, if ice cream is your craving, go out for an ice cream cone or buy a small container of ice cream instead of a gallon. Giving into your cravings will work for some but not everyone. If giving into food cravings results in overindulgence, this solution is not for you.

3. Don't be too restrictive. When you are attempting to modify your intake, setting short-term realistic goals and incorporating some of your favorite foods into your plan is the best avenue for success. If your eating plan allows you to attend special events that include food, you will find your plan to be more successful and the food cravings may even diminish.

4. When looking at emotionally based food cravings, you need to investigate the emotional triggers before you can begin to take care of the cravings. Once these emotional triggers are discovered, an eating regimen can be developed to help you over these food craving hurdles.

A Registered Dietitian is a health professional who can assist you with an individualized eating plan. If you are interested in talking with a Registered Dietitian, please call Marquette General Health System, Department of Food and Nutrition Services, at (906) 225-3221, or toll-free, 1-800-562-9753, extension 3221, and ask to set up an appointment with one of our outpatient dietitians.

FRUIT SOUP

- 1 8-oz Can Pineapple Tidbits (Juice Pack)
- 1 Cup Mixed Dried Fruit (any type)
- 1 Cup Water
- ½ Tsp Cinnamon
- Dash Ground Cloves
- 1 Tablespoon Honey (optional)

Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Cut up any large pieces of dried fruit. In a medium saucepan stir together reserved pineapple juice, water, cinnamon, and cloves. Bring to boiling and add dried fruit; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until fruit is tender. Stir in honey (optional) and pineapple tidbits. Serve warm or cover and chill.

Makes 6 servings-about ½ cup each: 92 calories, 25g Carb, 1g Protein, 0g Fat, 0g Cholesterol, 5mg Sodium, 2g Fiber

Tip: This is a great addition to oatmeal or any hot cereal. Sprinkle on a few nuts and enjoy!

