



HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER

August 2013

Welcome to the "Dog Days of Summer" August edition of the Health & Safety Newsletter. Hopefully everyone has had a chance to enjoy the great weather. If not, you still have a few weeks to go, so get out there starting with the Softball Game and BBQ!. In this edition we talk about the importance of breakfast, some tips for health and safe gardening, some great back to school tips for those of you with kids, and Vereena posts a great looking salad recipe. Enjoy!

SOFTBALL GAME & BBQ

We have re-scheduled the softball game and BBQ for Thursday, August 29 @ 5:30 pm. Location is Delair Park (east field), which is on the corner of Old Yale and North Parallel Road. Join us for some a fun game and a yummy BBQ! This event is open to all employees and the \$5 fee goes toward covering the cost of insurance and food. To sign up, see Vereena or Nicole in the office.

Start your Day Right: The Importance of Breakfast

Many of us have had to grab a quick breakfast while leaving the house in a rush. There are many theories and plenty of advice on the most important meal of the day, yet there are also several crucial things every person should know. So, keep on reading to know why breakfast plays an important role in maintaining a [healthy lifestyle](#).

Fuel your body and your brain

Studies show that for a great deal of people skipping breakfast results in decreased concentration and attention span. Essentially, you wake up and start burning calories, which are also required to perform mental tasks, so skipping breakfast can backfire.

From healthy choices to healthier choices

Another side effect of skipping breakfast is an increased likelihood of making unhealthy choices later in the day. After having studied large sample groups, some scientist claim that people who do not eat breakfast will more likely be in hurry to eat lunch and dinner and, thus, will

more likely resort to fast food or meals that are simply not as nutritious. The smaller breakfast is, the more difficult it becomes to avoid cravings later in the day. Basically, if you do eat breakfast, you are starting your day with some nutrients already and so you do not need to rely so much on your other meals to get them.

Tasty ways to get that energy

Without a doubt, eating breakfast has more benefits than not eating this important meal – unless, obviously, you like heavy breakfast that makes you sleepy just right after you get up. For this not to happen, you should know which foods will charge you for a longer time without giving you only quick energy that burns out before lunch. Exchange sugary cereal or pastries for high-fiber, protein-rich products, like turkey, chicken, fish, other lean meats, hummus, whole-grain breads, and egg whites. They will provide you with sustainable energy and alertness that only few people have excess of in the morning. If you have noticed how quickly you become hungry after having eaten breakfast, consider including more of aforementioned products in your [diet](#) and you will feel the change in yourself.

Breakfast and weight loss

Getting yourself a healthy breakfast can also help you with weight loss, if that is your objective. Since nutritious breakfast tends to lead to a more balanced [diet](#) in general as well as fewer cravings, just fixing this aspect of your life can result in losing some extra pounds. Besides, if you eat healthy, your energy levels are not depleted as often and so you might find more energy to exercise or engage in some outdoor activities that will put you in better





shape. It is great to know that a seemingly minor decision – to eat breakfast or not to eat it – can make you much healthier and ready to tackle the tasks the day brings.

Choose wisely

There is no perfect formula for everyone's needs, yet eating breakfast does seem to get very close to that. So dust your toasters, [get your juicers ready](#), and invest some time in improving your health.

Back-To-School Tips

Traditionally, classrooms are breeding ground for germs. Every desktop, pencil sharpener, doorknob and faucet that an infected child touches becomes colonized with germs. Help your child protect him/herself with these reminders:

- Remind your child about the number one rule for germ control: frequent and thorough handwashing at school. Hand sanitizer is a good option if soap and water aren't accessible.
- Talk to your child about covering every cough or sneeze at school. He/she should use a tissue, and then throw it away and clean his/her hands.
- Encourage your child to try to avoid other children who are coughing or sneezing.
- Be aware that moist environments, like the water fountain, can harbor germs. Send your child to school with bottled water, if it's permitted.
- Equip your child's backpack with alcohol-based hand sanitizer and tissues.
- Provide your child with a mechanical pencil and his/her own crayons and art supplies. The pencil sharpener is one of the germiest places in the classroom.

Disinfection of School Materials and Surfaces

- Studies have shown that germs can live on surfaces like desktops and doorknobs for 20 minutes to 2 hours or more. Teach your child to wipe off the desk or work area in class, especially if it is a shared classroom.
- Send anti-bacterial, disposable wipes to school with your child to use through the day, and after lunch if the class eats at their desks.
- As a parent, remain diligent about cleaning and disinfecting tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops and other frequently touched surfaces at home. Sanitize soft surfaces like bookbags. These simple steps will help you to stop the spread of germs your child may bring home from school.

10 Tips for Gardening

There is nothing like the sunshine and warm weather to get us out of our homes in the summer and into the gardens. Whether your garden is a few flowering baskets or a large vegetable garden, there are a few strategies that will help protect your joints all summer long.

1. Start by warming up your muscles. Take a short walk around your yard, gather your tools, and do some easy stretches. As you walk, think about what you can realistically do at one time. Prioritize.
2. Think about your posture. When raking leaves or sweeping up, remind yourself to stand up straight. Handles are available that attach to your rake which allow you to keep your spine vertical. Move with your legs, keeping your back straight. (this works for vacuuming too)





- Remember good lifting techniques when spreading mulch or other materials. Bend your knees, keeping your back as straight as possible and then straighten the knees to lift. If you are “knee challenged” – even a small knee bend will help to take the pressure off your back
- Always avoid lifting heavy loads. Use smaller containers more frequently, especially if you are emptying these loads into larger, higher yard waste bins.
- Use yard waste bins with wheels and roll this container close to where you are working. Push the container in front of you rather than pulling from behind. If emptying into a vegetable garden or similar waste area – tip the container to empty.
- Use a dolly to move flower pots and containers. You can use a dolly inside your house for moving plants too.
- Alternate your activity. Dig, rake, sweep, spread and then frequently stretch your back from a standing position.
- Gardening can be hard on your hands too. Protect your hands when pruning by wearing good gardening gloves. Not only will gloves protect your skin, they also help to take the pressure off your small finger joints. Throughout your gardening, gently and frequently stretch your hands.
- Look for ergonomic tools that reduce the strain on your joints. One of my favorites is an ergonomic pruner with a rotating handle.
- Pace yourself. After 30 minutes of doing one job,

switch to something else. You can come back to continue this job a little later.

Finish by taking another short walk around your garden, a few more gentle stretches and appreciate the work you accomplished.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Beef Stir-Fry with Avocado Salad

Makes: 4 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

12 ounces beef tenderloin, cut into thin strips
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lime juice
1 tablespoon plus 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 medium sweet onion, thinly sliced
1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 poblano, thinly sliced
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 avocado, diced
1/4 cup Cojita cheese, crumbled
1/4 cup cilantro plus more for garnish, chopped
Corn tortillas (optional)

Directions:

- In a bowl, combine beef, 2 tablespoons lime juice, and 1 tablespoon chili powder; set aside.
- Heat oil in a large skillet. Add onion, bell pepper, and poblano and saute 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add beef and marinade to vegetables and cook 3 to 4 minutes. Season with salt and black pepper.
- In another bowl, combine beans, avocado, cheese, 1/4 cup cilantro, and remaining lime juice and chili powder.
- Garnish beef and vegetables with remaining cilantro. Serve with avocado salad and warmed tortillas if desired.

Nutrition facts per serving: 436 calories, 28g protein, 30g carbohydrate, 26g fat (7g saturated), 10g fiber

