

October 2006

Nutrition Notes

A Monthly Newsletter About Health and Nutrition



Descending from the Plateau

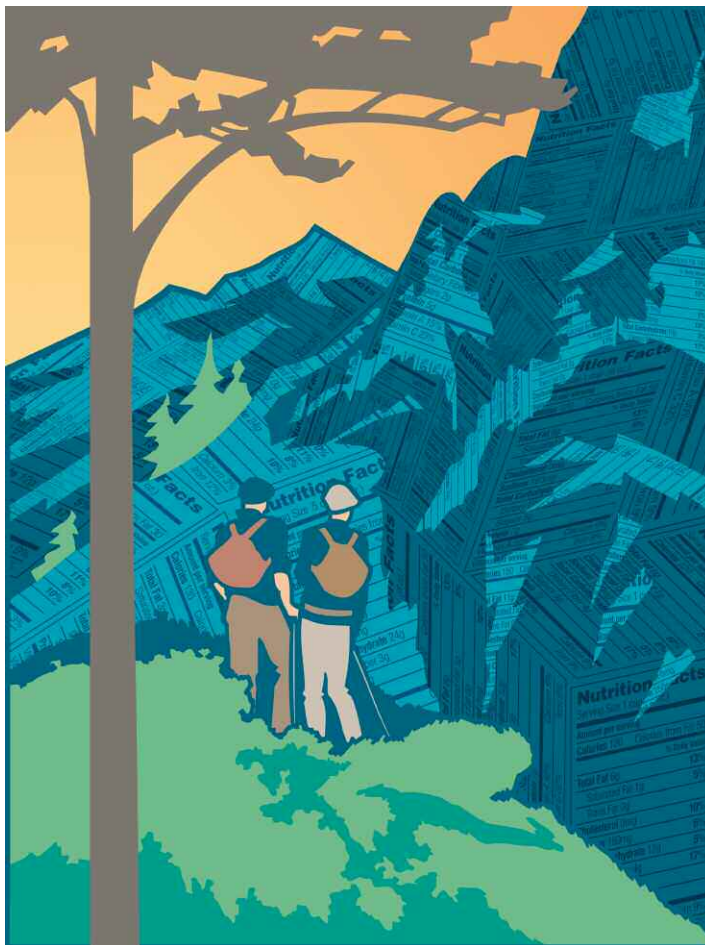
It's now ten months into the New Year and I'm checking in to see how you're doing with your New Year's resolution to eat more healthfully. You may recall that back in January, I proposed that, as your sole New Year's resolution, you resolve to simply be healthier by informing every dining and activity decision with the goal of making the healthiest choice. I suggested small changes such as choosing whole-grain bread over white bread when ordering a sandwich and turning off the television earlier so that you could get a little extra sleep. My thinking was that if you could motivate yourself with the valued and benign goal of health, as opposed to using fear, guilt or deprivation to determine what you eat for dinner, then you could more successfully make important changes in your life.

So how are you doing? Have you made any changes? Have you lost any weight? I've spoken with many of you over the last ten months and I know that you've lost some weight and made some excellent lifestyle changes. But perhaps things are stalling for you now. Fall is typically the time of year that I hear the most complaints about hitting a weight loss plateau, meaning that despite continuing the eating and activity patterns that were bringing about weight loss, the scale just won't budge. How frustrating! What gives?

Simply stated: The more you weigh, the more calories you need to maintain your weight; as you lose weight, your body requires fewer calories to maintain your new weight. Although you may be eating the same number of calories and exercising the same amount that helped you lose weight initially, you will need to eat fewer calories and/or increase your activity if you want to lose more weight. With every 15 or 20 pounds you lose, you will need to recalibrate your calorie intake.

Sounds simple enough, but there are many factors to consider when you reevaluate your current plan. How many calories are

you eating daily on average? If you keep a food journal, you may already know, or you may need to look up the calories of the foods you've journaled and then add them up. If you don't keep a food journal then I suggest you start, since it is one of the most helpful weight loss tools. If you would like to start keeping a record of what you eat, come visit me at your local Gelson's this month and



I'll give you a Daily Food Journal that I created to help you make healthful changes in your diet. The process of tracking your eating and adding up your calorie intake should take a few days. Use a calorie counter book or visit a website that give you free access to a foods database that allows you to analyze your calorie intake. Try www.nutritiondata.com, www.mypyramidtracker.gov, or some combination of things that work for you. By the way, if you find that you are eating under 1,200 calories, then that is too few and you will need to increase your calorie intake if you want to lose more weight.

Don't put your calculator away yet! Get out a piece of scratch paper and let's calculate how many calories you actually need to maintain your current weight:

Step 1

Calculate your weight in kilograms by dividing your weight in pounds by 2.2.

Next, determine your height in centimeters by multiplying your height in inches by 2.54.

Remember:

- 5 feet=60 inches
- 6 feet=72 inches
- 1 inch=2.54 centimeters
- 1 kilogram=2.2 pounds

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- Healthy Tricks for Curbing the Halloween Treats
- Research Update: Spare Tire Risks
- Storing Nuts and Dried Fruits

Descending from the Plateau continued...

Step 2

Calculate your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR), which is the number of calories your body needs just to stay in bed all day and do nothing but run itself.

For women, use this equation:

$$\text{BMR} = 655 + (9.6 \times \text{weight in kilograms}) + (1.8 \times \text{height in centimeters}) - (4.7 \times \text{age in years})$$

For men, use this equation:

$$\text{BMR} = 66 + (13.7 \times \text{weight in kilograms}) + (5 \times \text{height in centimeters}) - (6.8 \times \text{age in years})$$

Step 3

Hang in there!

Step 4

Select the activity factor from the Physical Activity Chart that most closely represents your weekly activity level (be honest!).

Activity Level	Description	Activity Factor
Sedentary	Mainly sitting, reading, typing, driving, lying down, sleeping, standing	1.2
Lightly active	(no more than 2 hours/day) light housework, grocery shopping, leisure activities, light exercise 1-3 days a week	1.375
Moderately active	Heavy housework, gardening, dancing, brisk walking, moderate exercise 3-5 days/week	1.55
Very active	Labor-intensive job, such as construction work, hard exercise 6-7 days/week	1.725

Multiply your BMR from Step 2 by your activity factor.

$$\text{BMR} \times \text{Activity Factor} = \text{Total Calorie Needs}$$

The number you come up with should be a very good estimate of the number of calories you need to eat to maintain your current weight. If you need to lose weight, you can subtract 500 calories from your total calorie needs for a weight loss of one pound per week. To lose two pounds per week, subtract 1,000 calories per day.

Now that we've got the hard numbers, let's discuss some practical ways to put them to work for us. You could take a couple of different routes. First, you could simply keep eating the same foods you are eating, but eat less of them. This strategy works well for a lot of people, especially for those who don't cook or for those who eat at restaurants very often. However, if you've already

employed this trick to lose weight initially, then it might be difficult to trim more food off your plate. A second strategy would be to shake things up and do a few things differently for a week or two. For example, if you were eating a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet, then you might want to try exchanging your high-protein breakfast for a whole-grain breakfast with moderate protein. If you're eating a high-carbohydrate, low-fat diet, you may want to try substituting some protein for some of the carbs in your meals. Making changes like these can be helpful when you're trying to descend from your plateau. If you have been keeping a food journal, you may want to look back at what you were eating when you were losing weight and compare it to what you are doing now—you may have strayed from your original plan more than you think! The one factor that should not change much is your fruit and vegetable intake. They're your best friends in weight loss and in health. Aim for at least three cups of vegetables and at least two cups of fruit a day. If you're still hungry after meeting your protein and carbohydrate goals, then munch on some naked vegetables. Also, take a look at your sodium intake. That might be a good thing to track along with your calories. If you eat a lot of packaged or processed foods or if you eat at restaurants, then your salt intake could be causing you to retain water. Try to cut sodium wherever you can by comparing products, choosing minimally processed versions of your favorite foods, and by not using the salt shaker. Also, be sure to drink plenty of water to help flush out any excess salt.

The other factor in the calorie equation is the number of calories you burn. This one is difficult to change, too, because it may mean more time spent exercising. For most of us, though, it's hard enough to set aside the little time we do have for exercise. Even if you can't devote more time to exercise, you still have options: spend more time on aerobic exercise than on resistance exercise; emphasize weight-bearing aerobic activities, such as jogging, walking, dancing, and stair-climbing rather than non-weight bearing activities like swimming and bicycling; increase the incline of your workout instead of using a flat surface; increase the intensity of your workout by using your arms more or by moving faster.

I know that hitting a weight-loss plateau is frustrating, but I don't want you to be discouraged. Many people successfully lose weight in stages, with periods of weight maintenance in between. Some people call it a plateau, but you could also see it as a temporary weight maintenance stage before you start losing weight again. Maintaining your loss can be more difficult than actually losing the weight, so think of this time as an opportunity to practice holding your weight steady. Good health should still be your main focus, but being at a healthy weight is an important factor in your health. Don't give up on your goal of being healthier simply because you stopped seeing results. Take a new approach to help perfect the wonderful changes that you've already made in your life. Combine a change in your diet with a shake-up in your exercise routine and that should finally push you off of that frustrating plateau.

Our registered dietitian has a Masters in Public Health. However, she is not a doctor and her nutritional recommendations are general in nature and not tailored to specific health problems. Talk to your physician or other qualified health care practitioners concerning particular health issues or before beginning any nutritional program.

Healthy Tricks for Curbing the Halloween Treats

Candy is the best part about Halloween for most kids, big and small, but it can be difficult to eat in moderation when that bag full of goodies comes through the door. It's even more difficult to maintain your resolve when the Halloween treats show up in September and are still hanging around through November. Halloween is potentially a three-month-long battle of sweet temptations versus strategy and resolve. Don't get spooked by the prospect of shunning all sweets; if you're committed to moderating your intake of sweets, then there are a number of tricks you can use to make Halloween a healthy treat:

🍬 Halloween candy can be a big temptation at work around this time of year. If you're enticed too often, don't keep any at your desk and try to avoid walking past any of the public candy bowls. Make sure to plan your meals and snacks so you don't get a snack attack and resort to eating candy.

▲ Avoid contact with your "trigger treats" for as long as possible. That means don't bring your favorite candy into your house until you absolutely have to.

🍬 If you find that you're craving candy, it's easy to understand why: you're being too strict with yourself. Denying yourself something that you want will only make you want it more, which can set you up for a candy binge. Plan out your indulgences to avoid overindulging. Allow yourself to have your favorite item on a certain day of the week so you can look forward to your treat without having candy on the brain all week.

▲ Understand that you're not craving candy because you're deficient in some nutrient; you're craving it because you associate it with an emotionally positive social event that you have experienced in your past (i.e. Halloweens from your childhood).

🍬 Portion control is always the best strategy when you can't or don't want to avoid eating a high-calorie food. In addition to planning a day of the week that you will eat your treat, plan how much you will eat before that day arrives.

▲ Toast the pumpkin seeds from your Jack-O-Lantern and eat them as a snack or sprinkle them on salads.

🍬 Sugar pumpkins (pumpkins that weigh less than five pounds) are an excellent source of beta-carotene and work great in soups, stews, muffins and breads.

▲ Canned unsweetened pumpkin is almost as nutritious as raw pumpkin, but may have a few more calories. Use it to replace some fat in muffin, bread, and cake recipes.

🍬 Try my low-fat recipe for Pumpkin Seed Cupcakes.

▲ If you want to hand out healthier goodies to your trick-or-treaters, try Sun-Maid raisins mini snack-size boxes, Dove dark chocolate Promises, Tropicana Fruit Strips, Stretch Island Fruit Leather, fresh baby Gala apples, Grimmway Farms baby carrot snack packs, O'Coco's organic baked chocolate crisps, Umeya fortune cookies, Santa Cruz Organic apple-cinnamon apple sauce snack packs, Hansen's Junior Juice packs, or Arrowhead water half pints.

🍬 There's some evidence that kids prefer toys to candy, so consider offering stickers, rings, and little plastic insects and goblins instead of edible treats.

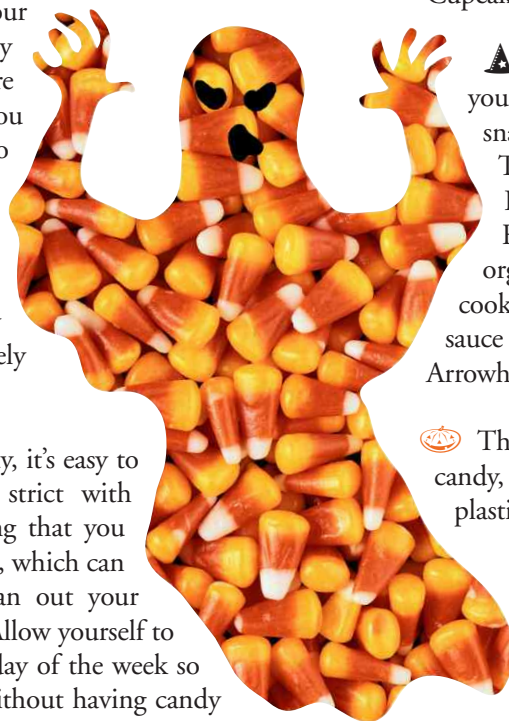
▲ Avoid letting kids eat all of their booty in one sitting—allow everyone 2-3 pieces of candy per day for up to one week and then get rid of the rest.

🍬 To help with portion control, try to eat candy after a meal, rather than between meals.

▲ Remember to brush your teeth after eating candy to remove sticky sugar and help prevent cavities.

Sticking with your healthful eating plan on Halloween, or any holiday, all comes down to planning. You know the temptations are going to be there, so devise your strategy in advance—it'll be good practice, with Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas just around the corner!

BOO!



Research Update

Spare Tire Risks

You may know that carrying extra weight around your middle can increase your risk for heart disease and diabetes, but now there's another disease that it may trigger: hypertension.

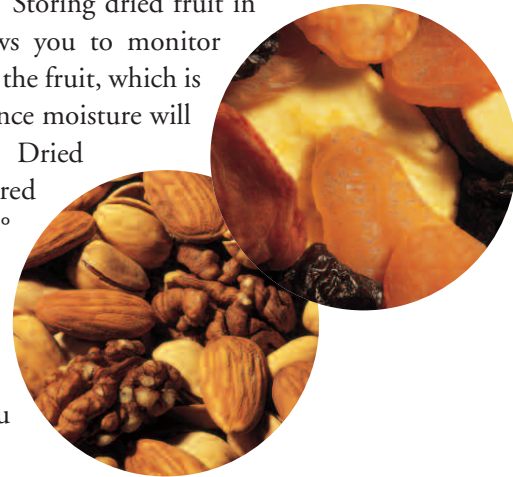
Researchers followed adult men and women for ten years to track their waist size and blood pressure over that period. Those with large waistlines or those that were generally obese started out with a higher risk of hypertension than their slim counterparts, but those who gained weight around their middles also had higher blood pressure by the end of the study. Having a large waist size or an increasing waist size is a predictor of high blood pressure. A waist size of 35 inches or more for women and 40 inches or more for men is considered to be the measure of abdominal obesity, which is strongly associated with hypertension, high cholesterol, type II diabetes and heart disease. Untreated high blood pressure increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, heart failure, and atherosclerosis.

Prevention is the best and easiest route to take. If you are apple shaped, as most men and some women are, you need to be very vigilant about your waist size and any weight gain. Try not to let your waist size creep even close to the obesity line, since being overweight is not healthy either. Healthy eating, regular exercise and plenty of sleep can help you control your weight and prevent weight gain and hypertension.

Customer Question

A customer at Gelson's in Silver Lake asks, "What's the best way to store nuts and dried fruit?"

How you store nuts and dried fruits will determine how long they will last before they spoil. A cool, dry and dark place is important for extending their freshness. After opening their packages, transfer the dried fruits or nuts to airtight glass containers or plastic zipper bags. Shelled nuts can be stored in this manner for up to 4 months in the refrigerator, and up to 6 months in the freezer. As a general rule, nuts in their shell will keep about twice as long as shelled nuts. Always smell your nuts before you eat them; if they smell rancid, like paint thinner, or taste bitter or oily, throw them away. Eating rancid nuts (and rancid oils for that matter) is unhealthy. Storing dried fruit in glass containers allows you to monitor moisture build-up on the fruit, which is important to avoid since moisture will cause rapid spoilage. Dried fruit should be stored between 45° and 50° Fahrenheit in a dark, dry place, such as a cabinet or a pantry. Store trail mix in the refrigerator as you would store nuts.



Jessica's October Store Appearances: Body Fat Testing*

Jessica will be offering complimentary body fat testing and answering your questions about weight loss, food and nutrition.

Westlake Village
Monday October 16, Noon

Calabasas
Monday October 16, 3:00 pm

Century City
Thursday October 17, 5:00 pm

Santa Barbara
Saturday October 21, Noon

Pasadena
Monday October 23, 1:00 pm

Mayfair Hollywood
Monday October 23, 5:00 pm

North Hollywood/Valley Village
Tuesday October 24, Noon

Sherman Oaks
Tuesday October 24, 4:30 pm

Newport Beach
Monday October 30, 3:30 pm

*Testing method is Bioelectrical Impedance and is not appropriate for people with pacemakers or osteoporosis, pregnant women or children. Be well-hydrated for most accurate results.

Gelson's has 18 locations in Southern California

CALABASAS 818-906-6228	ENCINO 818-906-5780	NEWPORT BEACH 949-644-8660	PASADENA 626-535-0190	SILVER LAKE/LOS FELIZ 323-660-0387	WEST HOLLYWOOD 323-656-5580
CENTURY CITY 310-277-4288	IRVINE 949-551-6093	NORTHRIDGE 818-377-4133	SANTA BARBARA 805-687-5810	TARZANA 818-906-5752	WESTLAKE VILLAGE 805-496-0353
DANA POINT 949-488-8147	MARINA DEL REY 310-306-2952	PACIFIC PALISADES 310-459-4483	SHERMAN OAKS 818-377-4140	VALLEY VILLAGE / NORTH HOLLYWOOD 818-906-5743	MAYFAIR HOLLYWOOD 323-464-7316