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Calories and Exercise – Get Moving!

Balancing calories for weight loss is like balancing your chequebook! A pound of fat is 3500 calories & a safe level of weight loss is 1 lb per week – thus 500 calories less per day. If you consume 250 less calories each day and burn 250 calories via exercise, you will start to see the weight come off. The trick is being completely honest in your daily calorie transactions; most have good success with using a food/exercise diary.

Where are your calories hiding?

Do you know where significant calories are hiding? The top offenders (in order) are: desserts (especially baked goods and dairy-based), yeast breads, chicken dishes, soda/energy drinks/sports drinks/juices, pizza, alcoholic beverages, pasta dishes, Mexican dishes, and beef dishes. Since some of these foods can be a nutritious part of a healthy diet, ensure you are watching the portion sizes you consume.

Many people don't understand the caloric "cost" of the foods they choose. A study out of Texas compared menus which included: 1) no calorie information, 2) calorie counts, or, 3) how many minutes of brisk walking was required to burn-off the food item. Hands down, knowing the value of the exercise required resulted in reduced consumption of calories! It might be time to be counting exercise minutes instead of calories?

Get moving

Aerobic exercise may be tops for burning calories, but strength training maintains lean body mass and strengthens bones. Warm up (walk) before and cool down (stretch) afterwards. Good form is the key to ensuring no injuries. Start with light weights to learn your routine then add weight gradually over time as the work become easier. Finally, work out 2-3 times per week – with 2 days rest between to give your muscles a chance to recover.

Many chronic conditions are complicated by being overweight and inactive – and even with all our medical advances, there's still no substitute for the tried and true: watch what you eat and get moving! Ask our pharmacists about how you can get back into exercise and the kind of exercise which may be right for you.