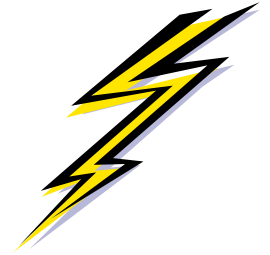




# HOT FLASHES



Newsletter of the Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan

August 2010 Edition

## Choose Your Best Diet Plan

By Donnelly Morris, RD

"I lost 10 pounds in just 10 days!" Does this sound familiar? How about this one? "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." North Americans spend approximately \$50 billion dollars on weight loss products and programs every year. So why would people spend money on these products if they don't work? Some of them do. They promise weight loss and they deliver. People will lose weight on many of the popular "diets", but the biggest problem people have is maintaining their weight after the initial weight loss. A lot of diets just aren't sustainable over long periods of time for a number of reasons.

So before partaking on any of these diets, there are a few questions you should ask.

### 1. Is it healthy?

Diets that eliminate or restrict certain foods or food groups may put you at risk for deficiencies in certain micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) or macronutrients (fat, carbohydrate, protein). Our bodies need a variety of foods to function at an optimal level. A study by Dr. Jayson Calton, published in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*, analyzed the micronutrient content in daily menus of four popular diet plans (Atkins, South Beach, DASH Diet and The Best Life Diet). He compared the analysis to the USDA recommended dietary intake (RDI) for 27 micronutrients. What he found may surprise you: the four diet plans were sufficient in only 12% of the 27 micronutrients analyzed. Dr. Calton concludes that people following these diet plans as suggested, with food alone, have a good chance of becoming micronutrient deficient. Some diets, including the ones listed above, restrict macronutrients such as carbohydrates or fat. These nutrients are essential. Carbohydrates

provide energy for our bodies and our brains, and foods that contain carbohydrates are also our key sources of fibre. Fat is also important to our bodies. Every cell in our body has an outer membrane



made from fat! As mentioned in a previous article, it's the type of fat that is the most important. Diet plans that include sources of unsaturated fats and restrict sources of saturated fats are better than ones that restrict fat altogether.

### 2. Does it fit into your lifestyle?

Some diet plans require you to purchase their pre-portioned food, meal replacements or supplements. Before investing your money in these plans, it's important to make sure your lifestyle can accommodate these restrictions. What are you going to do if you go on vacation? How will you handle your friend's birthday party or your office Christmas party? Are you prepared, or willing, to say no to the temptations in order to stick to the diet plan? A good plan allows for flexibility and takes into account your personal eating habits. It is hard to avoid places and occasions where food will be served.

The important thing to remember is portion control and moderation. If a diet plan does not fit into your lifestyle, the chance of reverting back to previous eating habits is greatly increased.

### 3. Does it promote healthy lifestyle changes like increasing physical activity or behaviour modification?

Physical activity is an integral part in getting to and maintaining a healthy weight, not to mention improving your overall health status. Diet plans that claim you can lose weight without exercising are not going to help in the long run. Even if you can stay on the diet plan, you are missing out on all the other benefits of physical activity. Many diet plans are "mindless". They tell you exactly what to eat and when. While this may seem helpful in the beginning, as mentioned above, it might not be able to help you deal with unexpected circumstances. It is important to be able to make healthy choices on your own. If you have to follow the same eating plan day after day, you probably will become bored and there is a greater risk of going back to old eating habits.

A good diet plan should help you learn how to identify healthy foods and healthy portions; be flexible to fit your lifestyle; and provide a variety of foods representing all four food groups. **Successful weight loss involves making permanent changes to your lifestyle.** It is very important to keep that in mind should you choose to begin a diet plan. Make sure you discuss the plan with your physician. Discussing any medical conditions or special needs with your doctor will help reduce risk to your health. A **registered dietitian** can also help you set realistic goals and design a plan for sustained weight loss and a healthy lifestyle.

# Mindfulness: essential for mid-life women

By Shveta Suryavanshi, MD, CCFP, NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner

**Mindfulness** means paying attention to or being aware of ourselves, our surroundings and the present moment. It is the direct opposite of taking life for granted.

Initially, when I was introduced to this philosophy, I thought it was all theoretical, but as I read more about it I started using it in my day-to-day life.

Naturally, the human mind will go on “auto-pilot” where we lose touch or awareness of what we are actually doing. We do our daily chores, house work, routines of getting up, going to work or school on an unconscious level. We don’t even realise that part of what we are doing is worrying about the next step.

The stream of thoughts flowing through our mind leaves very little room to actually be able to enjoy what we are doing right at this moment.

A good example is Sunday morning for lot of us, especially for people who have to go back to work on Monday. Many of us hate the thought of a new week starting. That’s when I started thinking about mindfulness. It made me aware that living in the moment gives you 12 to 18 hours of Sunday to enjoy. So why not enjoy the present emotions and don’t worry about Monday morning? By this I don’t mean eat, drink and be merry with no worries for the future. It’s more about being in tune with the present moment and actually enjoying it.

Memory problems are becoming more and more common not only in perimenopause but also for younger age women. For a busy woman who is juggling between home, children’s activities, aging parents and work, being aware of everything that is going on around her is not possible. It’s very common for my kids to say “mom you are not listening!” In fact they have started quizzing me, after they say something, to check that I am paying attention.

Generally, I am listening but not with my mind or any awareness. Much of the time, daily mundane tasks are done without much thought so forgetting occurs much easier. It is good to **self talk** and remind yourself what you are actually doing, so when you go to a room to do something you actually remember why you are there.

By being more aware of the present moment we can understand how what happens now influences what happens next. This is important in the context of stages of life, especially midlife.

Age 50 is a decisive age for midlife women. From age 40 our body is undergoing changes that become obvious at age 50:

- Metabolism is decreasing which causes weight gain, especially around the abdomen;
- Body temperature control becomes more sensitive;
- Mood changes may become more pronounced.

Risk increases for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis and some cancers.

It’s important to be aware of this stage of life so that **necessary lifestyle changes can be made to continue with a happy, healthy life.**

Risky health behaviours are the leading cause of preventable chronic disease and premature death. These behaviours include the use of tobacco, excess alcohol, caffeine, drugs, lack of exercise, and poor nutrition.

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of premature death. It increases risk of cancer, coronary heart disease, lung conditions and may double the risk of Alzheimer’s disease. Smokers tend to reach menopause 2 years earlier than non smokers and they also have lower bone mineral density and higher fracture risk. It also increases the number and severity of hot flashes.

Excess alcohol (more than seven drinks per week – 12oz beer, 4 oz wine, 1 oz liquor) increases risk of high blood pressure, stroke, coronary artery disease, falls and hip fractures.

Being mindful of our own behaviours enables midlife women to reinforce health enhancing changes: being more active, decreasing food portion size, moderate use of caffeine and alcohol, and definitely quitting smoking. Practice relaxation techniques to cope with stressful situations, take time for hobbies, laugh more and spend time with families and friends.

In the words of Jon Kabat-Zinn, author of Wherever You Go, There You Are, you need to focus your attention on whatever is happening in the present moment.

The question is **what now for you?** This is where you have to start working.



## Black Bean and Corn Summer Salad

1-540 ml can	Black beans, rinsed and drained
2 cups	Frozen corn niblets, thawed
¼ cup	Fresh cilantro
¼ cup	Lime juice
2 medium	Tomatoes, chopped
½ cup	Onion, chopped
1 tsp	Ground cumin
	Salt & pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Serve immediately or allow to marinate for more intense flavour.

Nutrition Facts (per ½ cup serving):  
Calories 111 kcal; Protein 6 g; Fat 1 g;  
Carbohydrate 22 g; Fibre 5 g

Recipe adapted from Pulse Canada ([www.pulsecanada.com](http://www.pulsecanada.com))



## Take a Deep Breath .... Now Relax

By Laura Harris, The Studio at Oshun House

When you're feeling stressed by life, taking personal time to rejuvenate is easier than you may think.

Here are two techniques to help you turn on your body's natural relaxation response:

1. Sit with your feet flat on the floor, legs uncrossed, and rest your hands on your thighs. Close your eyes. Imagine your eye-balls are like two stones (this will slow eye movement which slows brain activity). Take even, slow breaths in through your nose and out through your nose. As you continue breathing, you may notice your breath feels cool as it enters your nose and warm as it leaves your nose. You might become aware of the rise and fall of your rib cage and belly. Allow your thoughts to flow but don't chase after them. Just notice your thoughts and let them go. Try this for a few minutes and take note of how you feel.
2. Lie flat on the floor on your back on a blanket, towel or yoga mat. If your lower back bothers you, tuck a rolled up towel under your knees or bend your knees, place your feet about shoulder width apart, then allow the knees to come together. Rest your arms, palms up, beside your body with about 6 inches of space between your elbows and your waist. Close your eyes and imagine they are like two small stones sitting in your eye sockets. Breathe evenly in through your nose and out through your nose. Allow your body to be fully supported by the surface beneath you. Feel the heaviness of your body as it sinks into the floor. Notice how your breath moves your body. Try this for a few minutes and take note of how you feel.

Why this technique works - this technique turns on your body's natural relaxation response, which decreases your heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, muscular tension, and level of stress hormones. What's really wonderful is the relaxation response is the opposite of the stress response! Your body can't be in "fight or flight" mode when your deep, relaxed breathing tells your brain that you aren't in any real danger.

Try these techniques when you need to de-stress at work or to help you fall asleep. They take practice and you may find you need a more dynamic or active approach to relax. If so, try 15 or 20 minutes of gentle yoga first to be able to sit quietly for a meditation.

Laura Harris teaches yoga to people of all levels of fitness, Monday- Friday at The Studio at Oshun House. ([www.oshunhouse.com](http://www.oshunhouse.com)). Laura has a Master of Science in Physical Education and a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology. Skilled and trained in adult learning, Laura has been guiding people towards healthy lifestyles for over 20 years. Her mission is bringing wellness into people's lives.

### WMLHC MetSyn Project – Still Recruiting!

Do you have 3 or more of the following 5 risk factors for Type II Diabetes and Heart Disease?

- Abdominal obesity (waist measurement of more than 80 cm)
- High blood pressure (more than 130/85) or being treated for hypertension
- Impaired fasting blood sugar (fasting blood sugar more than 5.5 mmol/L)
- Low HDL cholesterol (less than 1.3 mmol/L)
- Elevated triglycerides (more than 1.7 mmol/L)

If so, you may benefit from a new program offered by the WMLHC. We are offering a free 1-year nutrition and fitness intervention that uses a new telephone/computer technology to motivate women to maintain healthy lifestyles. The program involves group support sessions and consultations with a dietitian and exercise therapist from the Saskatoon Health Region. The goal of this



exciting project is to prevent the type 2 diabetes and heart disease in women who are at risk. Not sure if you are at risk? Ask your doctor for your numbers and a referral to the project!

We need 200 women to participate! Sign up and bring a friend who also meets the criteria! Contact Wendy at 716-5248 or [metsynproject@gmail.com](mailto:metsynproject@gmail.com) for information on how you can become involved.



Are you suffering from discomfort, heatrash, chafing, or other irritating, often painful skin conditions under your breasts? Then **Swoobies** can help you. Swoobies are 2 layers of soft, naturally antibacterial fabric designed to absorb moisture between your bra and your breasts.

**Swoobies** are ideal for menopausal women who are experiencing hot flashes, seniors, pregnant or nursing mothers, and for use during exercise. Once you have worn your Swoobies all day, you will discover what other women have already found out, that Swoobies are truly **Discreet, Comfortable & Absorbent**.

If you would like to learn more about Swoobies, order online, or find the local retailers who carry them, visit [www.swoobies.com](http://www.swoobies.com) or call (306) 384-0265



# Centre Plans Double-Header September 30



Women's Mid-Life Health Centre  
of Saskatchewan

## 2010 Annual General Meeting

Women's Mid-Life Health Centre  
of Saskatchewan

Thursday September 30, 2010

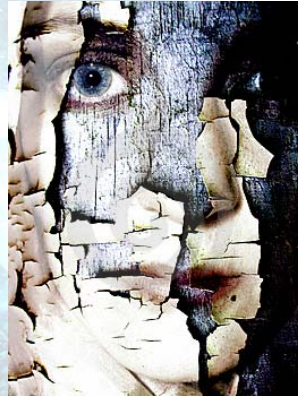
6:00 p.m.

Elim Tabernacle, 3714 8<sup>th</sup> Street East

*Presentation of financial statements/auditor's  
report; election of directors; and  
appointment of auditor*

All Members Welcome!

## Headaches and Skin Changes at Mid-Life: Common or Alarming?



7:00 p.m. Thursday, September 30

Elim Tabernacle

3714 8<sup>th</sup> Street East, Saskatoon

No cost to attend

Donations gratefully accepted

### Speakers:

Dr. Sheila Savedia-Cayabyab,  
Neurologist

Dr. Laura Lee McFadden,  
Medspa Director, Oshun House

Dr. Carolyn Duval, Plastic Surgeon



A partnership of Cameco Corporation and  
Saskatoon Community Foundation



## Dinner and Auction Culinary Pleasures, Creativity & Treasures

Proceeds to the Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan

Date: October 23, 2010  
Location: TCU Place  
Reception & Preview: 5:30 p.m.  
Dinner: 6:00 p.m.  
Auction: 8:00 p.m.  
Evening Tickets: \$100.00  
Phone: (306) 978-3888  
Fax: (306) 978-7801  
Mail: 227 - 230 Avenue R South  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 2Z1

Charitable Receipt Issued for a Portion of the Ticket Price



SUPPORT INFORM INSPIRE  
Women's Mid-Life Health Centre  
of Saskatchewan

227-230 Avenue R South  
Saskatoon SK S7M 2Z1  
P: (306) 978-3888  
E: [info@menopausecentre.org](mailto:info@menopausecentre.org)  
F: (306) 978-7801

*Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the  
authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the  
Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan.*

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