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Reach Up

Choose Full Life by Dennis Smith. As do the previous 40 Days devotionals, this study encompasses a broader mission. It’s not God’s plan for us to keep to ourselves the knowledge of His Word. We are called to reach out to others with His love and share His promises so that they too may watch and be ready.

Eat Right, Feel Better

March is the National Nutrition month, and thus we are highlighting the importance to “Choose Full Life” by choosing to eat more plant foods and a balanced diet. As a church we have been blessed with much information and the scientific world is supporting the benefits of a vegetarian diet.

Last month I attended the 6th International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition in Loma Linda where nearly 900 researchers and health professionals joined other lay people to learn the recent research findings on vegetarian nutrition. Much was discussed there. Studies suggest that the closer we get to God’s recommended diet of plant foods, the less risk for illness and the best chance for longevity (see p. 4). Sadly, studies also report that the great majority of people do not follow the recommended healthy diet of a minimum of 5 fruits and vegetables a day. Harvard School of Public Health stated in a recent report that 80% of Americans do not eat the recommended servings of fruits (5 daily), 90% do not eat the recommended servings of vegetables (5), and 99% do not eat the recommended amount of whole grains (at least half of the grains should be whole grains = 3 to 5 servings). In addition, they recommend that people should “cut back on or eliminate refined grains, sugary snacks, soda, potatoes, cheese, butter, and red meat” (http://www.hsph.harvard.edu).

During the Congress we heard of new research findings showing that 1) Plant-based diets with nuts and virgin olive oil can reduce risk of heart disease by 30%; 2) Mediterranean diet can help prevent cardiovascular diseases such as cardiovascular death, heart attack and stroke. It also offers a “preventive efficacy that was also assessed on secondary variables, including death from all causes, and incidence of diabetes and metabolic syndrome,” according to Dr Martinez, a physician, epidemiologist and nutrition researcher from Spain.

One of the highlights was the need for total vegetarians to ensure supplementation of Vitamin D, B12 and calcium as many are deficient in these nutrients. We are reminded that we must continue to learn and make healthy choices when it comes to ‘eating right’. A new “Vegetarian My Plate” was launched and is available from the Adventist Nutritional Council. This can be found at www.nadhealthministries.org under resources.

As we approach the last days, it is not only about “healthy bodies”, but more importantly, “healthy minds.” Inspiration says “Few...understand how much their habits of diet have to do with….their health, their characters, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny.” CDF, p. 51, because our food choices make a difference in our brain health.

To learn more how your food can affect your brain tune in at www.choosefullife.org and listen to Dr Nedley share via free streaming video March 14-16, 2013 from 7:30pm-9:00pm. Invite friends and neighbors to learn as well. Let us commit ourselves to learn and continue to grow in our understanding of “choosing a balance diet each day.”

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"...I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.”
Deuteronomy 30:19, NIV
• Adventists InStep for Life Mobile Apps are available for download for android and iPhone users. You must first register at the website listed above then download the app (INSTEP or ADVENTIST INSTEP), and start recording your physical activity right on your phone.

• NAD HEALTH SUMMIT 2013 Online registration ends March 7, so hurry up! This regional Summit is connected with the NY13 initiative and will take place in New York City March 13-17 for a limited number of registered attendees (300 max). Several seminars are full. Register today to reserve your seat and get equipped for health evangelism. Dr Neil Nedley will present evening outreach on optimizing brain health (see www.ChooseFullLife.org). We will also have hands on health expos, a track for pastors, a track for nurses, a track for community services, the Adventist Recovery Ministries training and the official NAD Health Ministries training. Register today and secure your hotel at www.NADhealthsummit.com.

• March is National colorectal Cancer Awareness Month Colorectal cancer saving lives. If everyone who is 50 years old or older were screened regularly, as many as 60% of deaths from this cancer could be avoided. Among cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer screenings saves lives. However, many people are not being screened according to national guidelines. If you’re 50 years old or older, getting a screening test for colorectal cancer could save your life. For more information and a toolkit you can use in your church health ministries go to: http://healthfinder.gov/nho/MarchToolkit.aspx.

• March is National Endometriosis Awareness Month Endometriosis is a painful illness affecting an estimated 176 million women and girls around the world. Mistakenly stigmatized as merely “painful periods”, the disease is far more than just simple “killer cramps”. The far-reaching effects of endometriosis negatively impact all of society – indeed, staggering costs associated with the illness soar near an estimated $119 billion annually (EndoCost Consortium, WERF). Endometriosis can interfere with the quality of a woman’s life, especially if she is in extreme pain two or more weeks out of the month. Sometimes, endometromas develop in cases of endometriosis. These are large cysts that can form outside the uterus. If not removed, they can rupture, which is life-threatening. www.endometriosisassn.org.

• National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign sponsored annually by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The campaign is designed to focus attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. NNM also promotes the Academy and its members to the public and the media as the most valuable and credible source of timely, scientifically based food and nutrition information. More info at: http://www.eatright.org/nnm/#.UTQ2Y3xASBU.

• Diabetes Alert Day is a one-day “wake-up call” asking the American public to take the Diabetes Risk Test to find out if they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Held on the fourth Tuesday of every March, this year’s Alert Day will be held on Tuesday, March 26, 2013. http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/programs/alert-day/

• Health Calendar Emphasis –MARCH

Canada: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/2013/index-eng.php
USA: http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp

March 2013
• National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
• National Nutrition Month
• 3 - 10 National Sleep Awareness Week®
• 10 National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
• 18 - 22 National Youth Violence Prevention Week
• 20 National Native American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
• 24 World Tuberculosis Day
• 26 American Diabetes Alert Day

Looking Forward (April 2013)
• Alcohol Awareness Month (USA)
• Parkinson’s and Cancer Awareness Month (Canada)
• 2 – Sexual Assault Awareness Month Day of Action
• 7 – World Health Day

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REACH OUT

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

In February NAD Health Ministries director, Katia Reinert, joined health ministries leaders in Brazil as the South American Division (SDA) held its first ‘Health Summit’ in Cotia, Sao Paulo. Modeled after the NAD Health Summit, the SAD Health Summit offered 4 simultaneous seminars and plenary sessions where nearly 200 attendees learned from topics such as ‘mental and emotional health’, ‘lifestyle and disease prevention’, ‘nutrition and healthy cooking”, among others. Attendees where thrilled to learn from presenters from around the world and are looking forward to the next Summit. Several of the organizers attend NAD Health Summits regularly and will be coming to New York in March for the upcoming health summit event.

CHESAPEAKE CONFERENCE

Berkeley Springs SDA Church

Supper Club has been a community outreach of the Berkeley Springs, WV, Seventh-day Adventist Church for about seven years. It began as the brainchild of health ministries director Juanita Prindle and the health ministry team, as follow-up from a Lifestyle Matters seminar. Once a month (except for summer months), community friends are invited through phone calls, newspaper articles, and radio announcements to come to the church fellowship hall for a free vegan/vegetarian meal prepared by church members, followed by a health topic discussion or demonstration. Recipes for many of the dishes served are available, along with free printed health materials and DVDs. A door prize drawing ends the evening. Lisa Shingleton, an elementary school teacher who presently serves as health ministries director, says the program averages 25-35 community visitors each month. Not only do they enjoy the meal and fellowship, some bring their own vegetarian dishes to share, and several have now attended worship services. One regular attendee wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper recently, applauding the Adventists’ Supper Club for being “a voice in the wilderness” in a state where health is so poor. The Berkeley Springs Adventist Church has about 100 members and is located in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Article by Ruth Wright, Communication secretary for the church. Photos by Joel Springer.

GUAM – MICRONESIA

Ebeye SDA School

Students at the Ebeye SDA School joined thousands in NAD who participate in Adventists InStep for Life. They participated in the Lets Move Day event and recorded dozens of miles. Mr Francisco-Diaz reported the day started with some rain but then it cleared out and the kids and teachers enjoyed their time together as they walked miles and enjoyed physical activity. After the event they also tasted some ‘post-run soup’ for those who had participated and fellowshipped together. Recipients received certificates for their participation.

OREGON CONFERENCE

Poulsbo SDA Church

Members of our church joined patients from Heritage HealthCenter, a medical practice owned by one of our members, to walk the Great Continental Divide Trail. Members of the team kept track of their exercise which was converted to miles walked in the Adventists InStep for Life initiative. The group completed the 2940 miles between September 1 and December 15, 2012 and the enthusiastic team is laying plans for our next group trek. The leader, Betty Bennet, hands out regular awards to participants such as Jun Patalot. His average distance was 148 miles a month (Platinum InStep award). This year (2013) the church is walking through the Lower 48 States. So far they have gone from Poulsbo WA, a Ross. OR and are in ID. They are reporting monthly.
FACT Are you taking heart medicines? A study of more than 31,000 adults found that you can substantially reduce cardiovascular recurrence beyond drug therapy alone by eating a diet rich in vegetables, fruits and fish and low in meats. People who ate a heart-healthy diet reduced their risk of dying from cardiovascular disease by 35 percent, a new heart attack by 14 percent, heart failure by 28 percent and stroke by 19 percent.¹

HOPE Medications can give us a false sense of security. But even if a person takes heart medicines, eating a lot of saturated or trans fats, fast and junk foods, red and processed meats, sweets, and refined and processed foods will still increase inflammation and make cardiovascular disease worse. Don’t neglect the medicine God has provided—a healthy diet!

FACT A diet high in carotenoid-rich fruits and vegetables may reduce breast cancer risk. Researchers from Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School analyzed data from thousands of women who took part in eight previous studies on carotenoid levels and breast cancer. They found a statistically significant association between higher circulating levels of α-carotene, β-carotene, lutein+zeaxanthin, lycopene, and total carotenoids and reduced breast cancer risk.²

HOPE You don’t need to take an expensive supplement to get the benefits of carotenoids. These micronutrients are found in fruits and vegetables, such as carrots, spinach, kale, tomatoes, bell peppers, sweet potatoes, butternut squash and pumpkin. Remember those foods your Mom told you to eat because they were good for you? They are!

FACT Fruit and vegetables improve immune function in older adults. In The Aging and Dietary Intervention Trial, 83 participants aged 65-85 with low fruit and vegetable intake were assigned to continue their normal diets or to consume ≥5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily for 16 weeks. Those with higher fruit and vegetable intake had a better antibody response to the Pneumovax vaccine.³

HOPE Older bodies’ natural defense systems tend to decrease, which places older people at greater risk of pneumonia. Vaccines can ward off or at least weaken the severity of these viruses. But for even greater immune function, don’t overlook the importance of a healthy diet.

FACT Eating whole grains is associated with a decreased risk of prediabetes, a blood sugar elevation that can precede diabetes. Researchers examined the 8–10-year incidence of prediabetes in 5,477 participants aged 35 to 56 years old who kept food diaries of how much whole and refined grains they ate. A higher intake of whole grain was associated with a 34% lower risk of developing prediabetes, even after adjustments for age, family history of diabetes, BMI, physical activity, smoking, education, and blood pressure.⁴

HOPE The American Diabetes Association estimates that one in four Americans older than 20 have prediabetes. You can lower your risk by making the switch from refined wheat products to eating more steel cut oats, brown rice, whole wheat, popcorn, and other grains in which the entire kernel is consumed.

References:

“...I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” Deuteronomy 30:19, NIV

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EVERY CHURCH A CENTER FOR HEALTH, HEALING AND WHOLENESS IN THE COMMUNITY