

# STEPS

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**Show me the money!**

How Vitality can save you \$\$\$



MEGGITT

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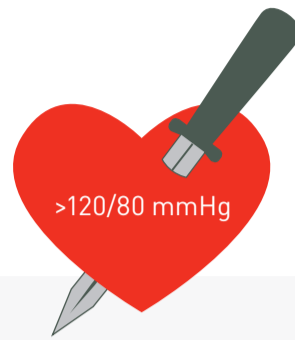
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# Editor's letter



## What worked for you?

This is your magazine, so I'd love to hear what you think of it.

- What would you like to read more about?
- How has Vitality made a difference to your life?
- Could you be the next Meggitt Health Hero?

Whatever your feedback, let me know at [patriciacarswell@gmail.com](mailto:patriciacarswell@gmail.com)

It's wonderful to hear about how so many of you have embraced Vitality since the last edition of Step Up—check out page 24 to find out what's been going down.

Exercising with other people is a huge motivator for lots of people, me included, and Champs like the fun, fit and fabulous five at Suwanee, Georgia, featured on page 19, are making a real difference to people's lives and fitness.

Making a difference is what this edition's all about and we have some amazing stories from our health heroes, like Edel Mena (page 2) who claims Vitality saved his life. If you haven't completed your Vitality Check yet, read his story and you might change your mind. Edel's not the only one to have made big changes to his life, either: Traci Williams (page 9) turned her health around through diet and exercise and is now looking and feeling great.

For health hero Vin Lefante (page 6), getting the whole family involved is the answer to fitting exercise around a busy schedule, whilst Sonya Daw (page 14) finds that earning Vitality points can provide the motivation to get her working out when she's tempted to have a night in on the couch.

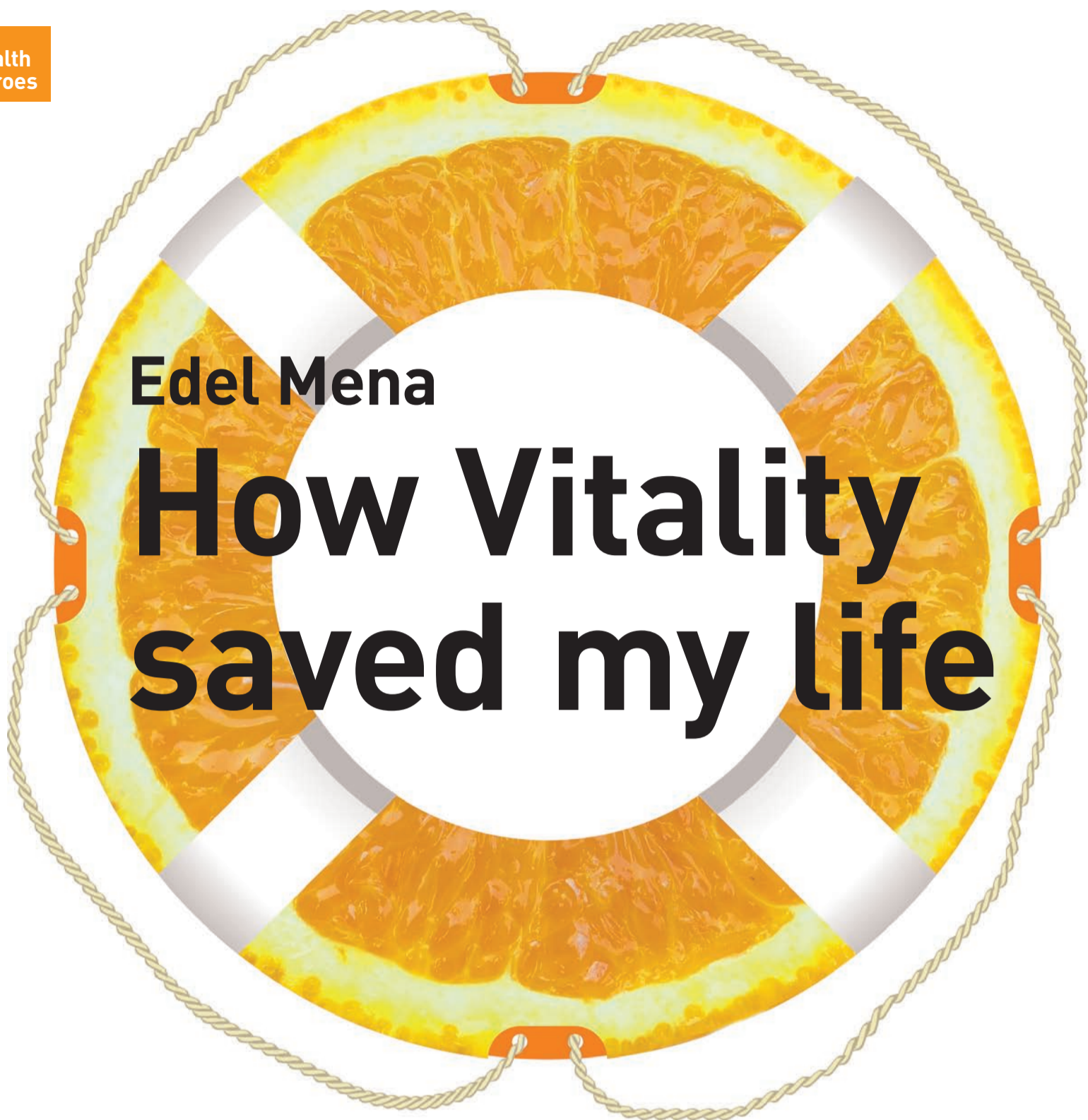
In tough economic times, every cent counts, and the good news is that getting involved in Vitality will make the difference of hundreds of dollars to your finances—check out page 4 to find out how you can make your bank account healthier along with your body.

I promised last time that I'd keep you updated on my own return to exercise. Well, after a few ups and downs I'm definitely back on track now. I've found that mixing it up is the key to staying on course so I've added some cycling into my routine. I'm mostly mud-spattered and aching right now but that's nothing compared with the mud-running Gladiators from MDSI—see page 25! Let's see how I get on when the weather gets really cold and wet.

'Till next time,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Patricia".

Patricia Carswell, health and fitness journalist



Edel Mena

# How Vitality saved my life

Edel Mena, a Senior Account Executive in the Sales Department at Pacific Scientific Aviation Services, Miami, tells Step Up how his Vitality Check was the wake-up call that made him change his life.

I'll never forget the day we had the Vitality Check—it was October 16th, 2012. I was 25 years old and had never gone to a doctor or had any blood work before.

I knew that I had got into bad habits since I had started working. Although I was always active when I was younger, I had started to get so busy at work that I would go home, lay down and watch TV and not do any physical activity. I was really tired all the time and working out was not a priority for me. By the time I did my Vitality Check I was 60lbs above my normal weight. Even so, I wasn't aware of any health problems.

When they did my check they were immediately able to tell me that my blood pressure was high. I thought that was just because I was in a hurry and had rushed to get to my Vitality Check. That weekend

I was at my mother's house and checked my blood pressure again using her own machine. It was still high.

Then the results of the blood draw came through. They were a shock. Not only was my blood pressure high—my glucose levels were high, I had pre-hypertension and high cholesterol. I was not healthy.

It was a real wake-up call. I realised that I was storing up problems for myself so immediately I began to go to the gym, after years of not stepping in one. I went for seven weeks consecutively without missing a day, and lost 12lbs before I reached a plateau. I then started watching what I ate, even on weekends.

I have now lost 42lbs and I feel amazing. I have an incredible amount of energy and I sleep better at night. I no longer get back pains when I'm standing or walking for

long periods of time. Best of all, I had some further blood tests recently and my blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels were all back to normal.

**Not only was my blood pressure high—my glucose levels were high, I had pre-hypertension and high cholesterol. I was not healthy**

It's not always been easy, especially during social activities. I'm young so I go out to clubs with my friends. It's very tempting to grab a drink, but I realised that I had to put a stop to that. My friends were weird about



it at first but when they started noticing changes in how I looked they came to accept it. It's quite convenient, actually—you save money every time you go out.

**I have another 20lbs to go but food no longer takes over my life. I eat to live, not live to eat**

I started a relationship seven months ago and it was difficult at first when we went out to dinner—I stay away from carbs at restaurants—but I've converted my girlfriend now as well! She knows I have my routine.

I have another 20lbs to go but food no longer takes over my life. I eat to live, not live to eat.



CUT OUT AND KEEP

### Edel's top tips

Eat to live, don't live to eat.

Learn to eat every few hours—don't wait until you're hungry.

Learn what different foods can do to you.

Watch out for supermarket advertising.

# Show me the money!

How Vitality can save you \$\$\$



Vitality is all about helping you to get healthy and stay healthy, but the rewards for participating aren't just better health. You can also save big bucks by being involved. And we're not just talking about a quarter here and a dime there—we're talking hundreds of dollars.

#### Up to \$900 off your healthcare plan

You know that Vitality Health Review we're always talking about? The one that involves a simple online questionnaire? Well here's another reason to complete it: you'll be earning a huge credit on your health insurance premiums. This year the credit has increased to \$50 per month—that's a saving of \$600 per year, rising to \$900 if your spouse joins the program.

#### Save as you shop

There are more savings when you shop for groceries, with the new HealthyFoods program, which gives Vitality participants discounts on a range of healthy foods at Walmart.

#### Change your points into bucks

As soon as you've done your Vitality Health Review you can start earning points that you can convert into Vitality Bucks to spend at the Vitality Mall. The Mall is stuffed full of fabulous items from designer sunglasses to mountain bikes. Points will get you additional discounts at the Vitality

Mall and hotels and health clubs, too. Want to find out how to increase your points? Check out our article, Easy ways to earn points, on page 15.

#### Win on-line

You can also play the monthly on-line game, Vitality Squares, and win up to \$500 in eGift vouchers as well as collecting more Vitality points.

With all this cash to save and spend, you'd be crazy not to get started. What are you waiting for?

#### Note:

- To benefit from the spouse's healthcare insurance credits, both the employee and his or her spouse must participate in a Meggitt medical plan.
- All Meggitt non-Union employees are included in the Wellness Program but you must register with Vitality to participate—[www.PowerofVitality.com](http://www.PowerofVitality.com)



Did you know?

Vital facts |  
Breakthroughs |  
Health news |

## Sleep right to shop right

If you're looking for an excuse to hit the snooze button, here's a great one. Researchers in Sweden have discovered that how much you sleep may affect the kind of food you put in your shopping cart.

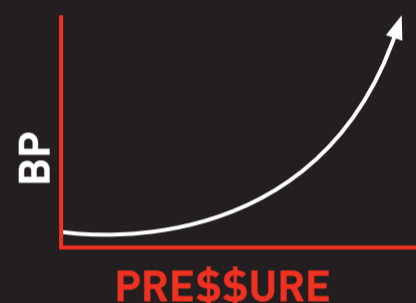
In a study published in the journal *Obesity*, sleep-deprived people purchased more calories and grams of food in a mock supermarket than their well slept counterparts. So if you want to make sure you stock up on healthy fruit and veg, make sure you get plenty of slumber first. Sleep well!



## Under pressure—the true cost of debt

Young people in financial debt aren't just putting their bank balances in danger. A new study by Northwestern Medicine has found that high financial debt amongst young adults is associated with higher diastolic blood pressure and poorer self-reported general and mental health in young adults.

Take a look at the article on high blood pressure to find out why this is a problem. If your debts are getting out of control, get help now before your health suffers.



## On a diet? Hide the candy!

Trying to lose weight? Then you should make a point of keeping sugary and fatty foods out of sight, according to a study conducted by the Universities of Cambridge and Düsseldorf. The researchers found that willpower alone was much less effective than willpower combined with acts of "precommitment" where participants deliberately put whatever was tempting them beyond reach. They found that precommitment activated the frontopolar cortex, a region that was involved in thinking about the future. It seems that out of sight really is out of mind.



## Could Miley Cyrus make your kids smarter?

You might hate her twerking and find her lyrics inane, but according to a British scientist, artists like Miley Cyrus could make your kids smarter. Dr Emma Gray believes that pop songs with 50 to 80 beats per minute (like Miley Cyrus' and Justin Timberlake's hits) help the brain to learn and remember new facts more easily. Emotive songs like Katy Perry's 'Firework' song can enhance creative performance, whilst classical music may help them study math.

So next time you ask your teenager to turn the music down, first check what they're listening to. It might actually be helping them!





# Vin Lefante Family guy

Vin Lefante, Director of Valves and Global Defense at Meggitt Control Systems, talks to Step Up about how his family is the key to maintaining an active lifestyle despite his work and travel commitments.

Vin Lefante isn't an easy man to pin down. Dividing his time between Connecticut and North Hollywood, he spends a lot of his life on airplanes and in airports. Even if you can track him down, you may need to sprint to catch up with him. He is often to be found running and cycling to keep fit and he competes in running events when he can. A Vitality participant, he tracks his workouts via the MapMyRun mobile app and links them to his Vitality account.

Not surprisingly, Lefante has always been keen on exercise.

"I've always been physically active," he says. "It's not like I'm athletically gifted, but I've always been involved in sports. Growing up I played soccer and a little bit of baseball and I continued to enjoy the outdoors. By the time I got to high school and college I took an interest in running and cycling and I've pretty much continued down that path. I'm also very enthusiastic about soccer and I coach soccer today for my girls—I try to maintain that being part of their lives."

A lesser man might have found that a hectic schedule such as his would mean exercise was the first thing to fall away, but not Lefante.

**I'm also very enthusiastic about soccer and I coach soccer today for my girls—I try to maintain that being part of their lives**

"It's a challenge, of course, with scheduling," he admits, "but it's a big part of what I do with my spare time."

What makes the difference is that his whole family is involved.

"They get it, especially with work and travel. If I'm gone for the majority of the week, say, and then I get up early on a Saturday and decide I need to get out and clear my mind and go run for an hour or cycle for a couple of hours, they understand and they know that it's important. My wife shares the passion—there's definitely a support network within our home. We trade duties with the kids!"

**It's a challenge, of course, with scheduling, but it's a big part of what I do with my spare time.**

Fitting exercise around business travel requires a lot of forward planning.

“My running shoes always come with me and I try to pick a hotel that has an adequate fitness facility. Even if there isn’t an adequate facility, oftentimes I will go outside for a quick jog. It doesn’t have to be a long endurance event—it’s typically anywhere between 20 minutes and 40 minutes. The key is to be flexible and not be hard pressed to have it done at the same time every day.”

It also requires a willingness to get out of bed. “When I’m traveling it usually has to be early in the morning.”

Far from making him sleepy, though, Lefante finds that early morning exercise has the reverse effect. “It really helps me to stay sharp,” he says.

Many corporate leaders find that business dinners are their downfall when it comes to healthy living. Lefante finds that moderation and exercise are the answer to staying in shape when faced with lavish meals.

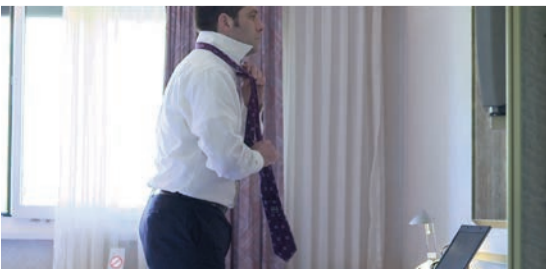
“Sometimes I joke around and say I work out just so I can eat, because I do enjoy a good meal, but I do try to eat sensibly,

**It really helps me to stay sharp**

too, so I don’t always go for the super-big lunch. If I know that there’s a big dinner coming I try to keep it light for lunch and likewise if I’ve had a big lunch—if I’ve had clients out for lunch and we go out, like at the Paris Airshow for example where we have these massive lunches at the Meggitt chalet—then I tend to go real light at dinner and make sure that I get an afternoon workout to work it off.

“It’s being sensible and doing things in moderation. It’s OK to enjoy a good burger or a piece of steak once in a while, but I do try to not go three meals a day, several times a week, in that manner. It’s second nature to me—I know what’s good for me and what’s not.”

To anyone starting out on an exercise regimen, Lefante advises a similarly moderate approach.



“You shouldn’t expect to start from scratch and expect to run a marathon or a 10k, but any kind of movement is advantageous. I’d say find even 20 minutes a day to walk. Park your car further away from the office and walk more. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. We’re all busy and stressed, but take opportunities to move your body.”

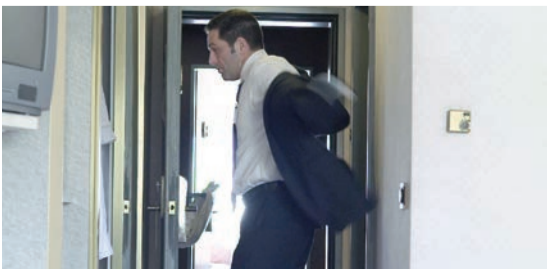
Lefante is passionate about passing on the message about healthy living to the next generation, too. He is keen for his two daughters to be fit and active.

“It’s an important message to get across to the next generation”, he says. “If you don’t instil the value and importance of getting

**My running shoes always come with me and I try to pick a hotel that has an adequate fitness facility**

out there and moving your body, kids would just be so satisfied with sitting in front of the television or playing on their iPods and video games pretty much all day long. There’s so much entertainment available to them without having to even move their bodies or get outdoors, but when you take that away from them and you keep them active and they grow an appreciation for it, they don’t miss all of the video games and the Disney channel.”

His own daughters play football, but Lefante has also found that helping each



one to discover a range of activities that she enjoys is important. Between them, they enjoy soccer, triathlon, swimming, running, cycling, dance and gymnastics, as well as hiking with the family.

**We’re all busy and stressed, but take opportunities to move your body**

“There’s an influence from my wife and me—no question,” he says. “They appreciate getting outdoors and staying fit.”

*If you want to make exercise a family affair, too, why not get them involved in Vitality? Your spouse can sign up for the full Vitality program (they just have to use the last four numbers of your social security number on the registration page), and you can complete a Health Risk Assessment on your kids’ behalf as well as earning extra points by verifying their participation in one sports league per year.*



CUT OUT AND KEEP

**Vin’s top tips**

**Don’t expect to start from scratch and run a marathon or a 10k—any kind of movement is advantageous.**

**Find even 20 minutes a day to walk.**

**Park your car further away from the office and walk more.**

**Take the stairs instead of the elevator.**

**If you’re traveling on business, try to find a hotel with fitness facilities. And bring your running shoes so you can fit in a jog before work.**

# How to eat well at Starbucks

**Y**ou're watching your weight and it's going well. You've been eating carefully at home and you're starting to see the lbs drop off. Then one of your friends suggests going to a popular restaurant that isn't known for its healthy food. How are you going to cope without spoiling everyone's fun?

The truth is that eating out needn't be a problem. Even the trashiest restaurant has something on the menu that is good for you—the trick is knowing what to choose. Thankfully we're here to help. In each edition of Step Up we're going to look at a popular restaurant or café chain and show you the pitfalls, how to avoid them, and what the healthiest options are.

This time it's the coffee shops. We're zeroing in on Starbucks, just because it's one of the most popular, but the rules apply equally to all coffee shops.

## Starbucks in the spotlight

You might be surprised that a coffee shop features in this series. I mean, coffee has no calories in it, right? And the cakes all come in low fat options, don't they?

The fact is that if you're not careful, in one coffee break you can rack up more than half your recommended daily calorie allowance. Take the undeniably delicious Starbucks Double Chocolatey Chip Frappuccino®. A Venti (20oz.) serving comes in at 640 calories. Add a portion of whipped cream and you have a staggering 800 calories in one drink, not to mention 25g of fat.

Those tempting sweet snacks behind the counter can be pretty substantial, too. Think a raspberry scone is a healthy way to get one of your five a day? Think again. It's an eye-watering 480 calories and packs in another 25g of fat.

With one drink and one item of food you've crammed in nearly 1,300 calories and 50g of fat. The American Heart Association recommends that the average sedentary adult female consume 2,000 calories per day (2,500 for a guy) with 56-77g of total fat a day, so that's a pretty hefty chunk of your daily allowance.

It's not all bad news, though. There are plenty of things on the menu that won't have you piling on the pounds. Bagels usually come in at under 300 calories, plain croissants score pretty well and oatmeal is always a good breakfast choice. If you're having a latte or a cappuccino, go for the skinny option—it tastes better than you'd think. And if you have a sweet tooth, you needn't deprive yourself—a tall, nonfat vanilla mocha (hold the whip) is a sensible 170 calories.

Let us know what chain you'd like to us to cover next. Taco Bell? Maccy Ds? Texas Roadhouse? The Cheesecake Factory? We'd love to help.



### Skip the whip

Whipped cream looks pretty and tastes divine, but it adds a whole lot of fat and empty calories. Just say no.



### Step away from the syrups

So sweet, so tempting, so bad for you. They rot your teeth, send your glucose levels sky high and add a serving of calories you don't need. If you can't go without, start with the sugar-free versions, but aim to give them up.



### From muffin to muffin top

Contrary to popular belief, muffins are not a health food. Muffins are cake—end of story. Some of them are more fattening than others (read the label—remember?) but the fact remains that they are still cake. Approach with caution.



### Read the label

Just because something is called low-fat doesn't mean it's a health food. The same goes for fruit. A Starbucks blueberry muffin has more calories in it than a cheesecake brownie! Check the calorie count if it's shown and remember that plain is usually best.



### Care to share

Look, if a muffin is the size of a baby's head, you don't need us to tell you it's bigger than you need. Instead of depriving yourself completely, share one with a friend. It's half the calories, half the price and a whole lot more sociable.



# Traci Williams Making a clean start



**Traci Williams**  
Before (top) and After (bottom)

**M**y Wellness story starts with a headache—a blasting headache on a Saturday morning. I took a couple of doses of Ibuprofen but it just kept pounding. While I shopped for groceries, I stopped at the in-store blood pressure cuff. The reading was 150 over 100. What? High blood pressure? I had never had high blood pressure before. I was careful about what I ate, I already worked out four to five times a week, I didn't smoke or drink.

**My doctor shook her head and laughed and said, “Well then, keep doing what you are doing, it’s working.”**

I saw the doctor immediately—the reading in her office was 165 over 116. She was alarmed and so was I. Of course, she says, “Take this pill.” 30 minutes later, my BP was 140 over 95—still high. So I waited a while longer and finally it came down to 130 over 82. Acceptable, but the doctor started me on medicine to control it with orders to follow up in 30 days for a re-check.

Two weeks into the medication, I was so sick I could barely function. I had a nauseous stomach ache 24/7—like motion sickness. I researched the medicine and what I was experiencing was not a side effect, so I decided to go a day without the medication. The stomach ache eased up on the day I skipped the meds. I decided not to take any more meds but to get healthy my way!

To start, I went semi-vegetarian. No meat products, but I retained dairy, eggs and plant-based protein. I also cut out all artificial

sweeteners. I replaced the foods I eat the most with organic products, including yogurt and eggs. I cut out all caffeine (yep, I gave up coffee!) I began to eat “clean”—consuming most everything in natural state, ate at least one fruit serving at every meal and stopped the “mindless snacking” I was prone to. I chose cucumber slices and carrot sticks over chips when I ate a sandwich for lunch, passed up a cookie for a cup of raspberries and traded my sweet tea for water. Next, I worked on my workouts: I started running again and included two strength training sessions per week.

In January, I returned to the doctor: I had lost 15 pounds in a month! My blood pressure was very near normal and all of my blood work was perfect! When asked if the medicine was still working, I admitted I hadn't taken any since two weeks after my first appointment because it made me sick. My doctor shook her head and laughed and said, “Well then, keep doing what you are doing, it’s working.”

To date, I have lost 70 pounds. My blood pressure is normal, my knees and legs no longer hurt and I run an average of 30 miles per week at a pace of eight minutes per mile. I have participated in four 5ks this year, one in which I took 2nd place for my age group, and one 10k that I ran in 43 minutes. I turned 41 years old June 10th.

I actively participate in the Vitality program, but my number one goal will not be found within the program itself. My personal goal is to remain healthy enough to raise my children and be able to actively participate in their lives. They play sports and I like to play with them. We run, bike, swim, play tennis and hike as a family, I play basketball with my son and jump on the trampoline with my daughter.

I choose to live the way I live because it enables me to be the healthiest me I can be—and I keep myself accountable with the Vitality program. Additionally, being the Wellness Champ at MPC-Rockmart, I like to think I can be a role model for those who are getting started who have no idea how to start. I try to encourage others by using my story and myself as an example—I truly believe “if I can do it, ANYBODY can do it!”

**Traci Williams**  
HR Department, MPC-Rockmart

**NOTE: It is not advisable to cease any prescribed medication or to embark on a radical change in your diet without first consulting your physician.**

**CUT OUT AND KEEP**

## Traci's top tips

- Find a health goal that is important to you—like being healthy enough to raise your children.
- If you're having a sandwich for lunch, replace the chips with raw vegetables.
- Eat at least one piece of fruit with every meal.
- If I can do it, anybody can!

# What is this “clean eating”?

Traci’s in glamorous company with her clean eating—a whole host of celebrities are enthusiastic about following a clean diet. Stars such as Nicole Kidman, Halle Berry and Angelina Jolie all claim to eat clean, thanks to a book called “The Eat Clean Diet”, released in 2007 by fitness and diet guru, Tosca Reno (also endorsed by Katy Perry and Jessica Alba). It has now become a way of life for many people far beyond the celebrity world.

## A clean diet means avoiding anything:

- Refined or processed
- Containing artificial ingredients
- Grown using chemical fertilizers or pesticides
- Bred with hormones and antibiotics

Essentially, it means eating only organic, whole foods—so you would choose organic, brown rice rather than regular white rice, or organic oatmeal rather than Lucky Charms for breakfast. Reno also recommends avoiding processed foods like white flour, sugar, preservatives, artificial sweeteners, alcohol and foods high in saturated fat and trans fats (unhealthy hydrogenated fats found in many processed foods—many shop-bought cookies and cakes contain them).

## Clean eaters also try to:

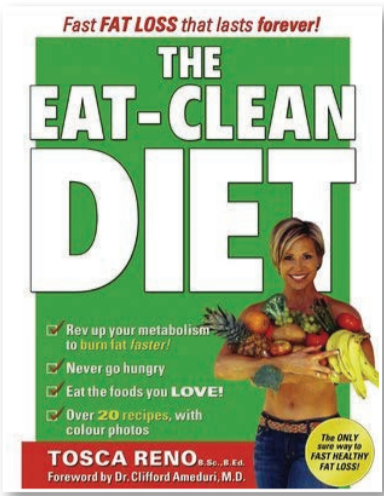
- Eat six times per day to stimulate their metabolism
- Combine lean proteins and complex carbohydrates at each meal
- Include healthy fats into their diet (think nuts, seeds, avocados, olive oil and fish)
- Drink 2—3 liters of water per day
- Eat local produce in season whenever possible

## Is clean eating necessary to achieve optimum health?

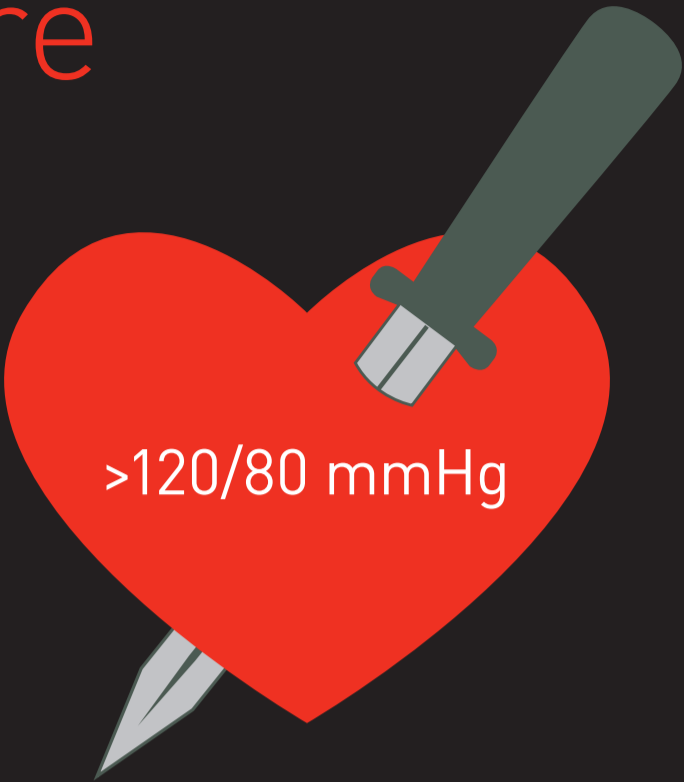
Reducing the amount of processed, sugary and fatty foods in your diet, and eating more fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grains—all packed with health-giving vitamins and minerals—is a great thing to do. It will help you to control your weight, and cutting caffeine and alcohol will help with energy levels and sleep patterns.

Being this conscientious has done wonders for Traci’s health, but plenty of nutritional experts believe there’s nothing wrong with including the occasional “treat” in your diet—in fact many advocate the 80:20 rule whereby you eat healthily 80% of the time and allow yourself the odd indulgence. Making even small changes to your diet can significantly improve your health and wellbeing.

We’d love to know what you think about this. Do you eat clean some or all of the time? Do you have treats in your diet? Have you tried 80:20? Tell us your views by emailing our editor, Patricia, at [patriciacarswell@gmail.com](mailto:patriciacarswell@gmail.com). If we get a good debate going, we’ll publish the best letters in the next edition.



# High blood pressure – the secret killer



Two of our health heroes—Traci and Edel—wisely took steps to change their habits when they discovered that they had high blood pressure, also known as hypertension.

Why is it a problem? The reason why Traci and Edel took the news seriously is that high blood pressure is the main risk factor for strokes and a major risk factor for heart attack, heart failure and kidney disease. People with high blood pressure are twice as likely to die from heart disease and stroke as people with a normal blood pressure.

High blood pressure is known as the “silent killer” as it often has no warning signs or symptoms. Many people do not realise they have it, which is why it’s so important to get your blood pressure checked regularly.

**One in every three American adults has high blood pressure—could you be one of them?**

## So what is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure occurs when your blood pressure is constantly at a higher level than recommended. It develops when the walls of the larger arteries lose their natural elasticity and become rigid, and the smaller blood vessels become narrower. This means your heart has to work harder to pump the blood around your body. Blood pressure is measured as systolic (sis-TOL-ik) and diastolic (di-a-STOL-ik) pressures. “Systolic” refers to blood pressure when the heart beats while pumping blood. “Diastolic” refers to blood pressure when the heart is at rest between beats.

You most often will see blood pressure numbers written with the systolic number above or before the diastolic number, such as 120/80 mmHg. (The mmHg is millimeters of mercury—the units used to measure blood pressure.)

Normal blood pressure in adults is lower than 120/80 mmHg. Hypotension is blood pressure that’s lower than 90/60 mmHg.

The chart below shows normal, at-risk, and high blood pressure levels.

## What can I do about it?

- Get your blood pressure **checked** regularly. It’s one of the tests automatically done as part of your Vitality Check.
- Keep **alcohol** to a minimum.
- Cut down on **salt**. Don’t add it to your food, try to use other flavors such as herbs in your cooking, and go easy on salty foods like bacon and processed meats.
- Try to achieve and maintain a healthy **weight**. Cut down on fatty foods and eat more vegetables, fruit, fish and lean meats, bread, potatoes, pasta and rice.
- Don’t **smoke**. At all. If you need help giving up, there’s a Vitality program to help you.
- **Exercise** regularly. There’s plenty of advice on starting an exercise regimen within the Vitality program.

|                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Normal</b>                    | systolic: less than 120 mmHg |
|                                  | diastolic: less than 80mmHg  |
| <b>At risk (prehypertension)</b> | systolic: 120–139 mmHg       |
|                                  | diastolic: 80–89 mmHg        |
| <b>High</b>                      | systolic: 140 mmHg or higher |
|                                  | diastolic: 90 mmHg or higher |

## NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

# Calories demystified

Health experts often talk about foods in terms of calories and increasingly we're seeing restaurants and coffee shops displaying the caloric value of items on their menus. But how many of us really understand what the numbers mean? I mean, is 350 calories for a burger good or bad? How many calories did I burn off on my run this morning? And are there really that many calories in movie theater popcorn? Really? (Yes—read on!) If you're floundering around in the dark, **here's a handy, cut-out-and-keep guide to everything you need to know about calories.**

### What is a calorie?

A calorie is simply a unit of energy. One calorie is the amount of energy it takes for the temperature of one gram of water to increase by 1°C or 1.8°F.

All food contains calories that fuel our bodies. 60-70% of the calories we eat go towards keeping us alive—the rest go towards physical activity. If you are very active you need more calories to fuel your workouts.

So calories aren't bad in themselves. It's just simple math. If you eat more calories than you burn, you will gain weight. If you eat fewer, you will lose weight.

### How many calories do I need?

To maintain a steady weight, the average sedentary adult female should consume 2,000 calories per day and the equivalent man should consume 2,500. Active people will need more than this—some elite athletes burn as much as twice this.

### So how many calories do I use when I'm exercising?

It's hard to say as it varies according to your height and weight, what the exercise is and how hard you're trying—a gentle jog on the flat won't use up nearly as much as a sprint uphill. Here's a very rough guide to how many calories a 155 lb person burns in an hour of the following activities:

Aerobics: **457**

Cycling (moderate speed): **563**

Running (moderate speed): **950**

Swimming (breast stroke): **360**

Walking (brisk pace): **267**

### Hidden calories

Some of the healthiest-sounding foods can be surprisingly fattening, depending on how they're prepared. Take a look at the hidden calories in these three popular foods:

#### Popcorn

Our favorite movie accompaniment can be healthy if cooked without fat, but the way movie theaters make it will have you piling on the lbs: a large serving of popcorn at a Regal theater, for example, comes in at 960 calories before adding butter (1 tsp of butter will give you an extra 130 bringing you in at 1,090—over half the daily recommended calories for a woman in one tasty snack).

#### Chicken

Don't kid yourself that because it's chicken it's good for your diet. One order of Crispy Honey-Chipotle Chicken Crispers® from Chili's brings you up to staggering 1,790 calories—that's without any drinks. And the Crispy Chicken Costoletta from The Cheesecake Factory sounds so sensible—a lightly breaded and sautéed chicken breast served with mashed potatoes (no French fries!) and asparagus (green!)—but adds up to a hefty 2,610 calories. That's more than the average guy should eat in a day. Remember: chicken is healthy. Breaded, deep-fried chicken not so much.

#### Salad

Oh come ON! Surely salad is virtually calorie-free? Well, yes, by itself, but watch out for calorie-laden dressings. Two tablespoons of many popular ranch-style and creamy salad dressings add up to an astonishing 180 calories. The same amount of Ken's Buttermilk Ranch dressing contains 20g fat—more than a double cheeseburger! Even the fat-free ones can be full of sugar. Pour with caution.

#### Should I start counting calories?

If you're trying to lose weight, being mindful of calories can be a useful tool, but obsessing too much over calories is time-consuming and tiresome. Use them as a general guide without making them your central focus. It's better to get into healthy habits with sensible portion control and healthy food choices than to spend your life attached to a calculator!

# Could YOU be our next Wellness Champ?

Vitality is looking for more Wellness Champs. Have you ever thought about signing up to be a Champ yourself?

*To be a Vitality Champ, you don't need to be fantastically sporty and slim, but you do need to be a Vitality participant and to be enthusiastic about the program.*

## **Vitality Champs are active members of the Vitality program who:**

- Organize, communicate, and lead activities/events such as walks, weight loss challenges, webinars and lunch and learn sessions
- Personally encourage others to participate in the Vitality program
- Gather testimonials from employees who have had a positive experience with the Vitality program

To be a Vitality Champ, you don't need to be fantastically sporty and slim, but you do need to be a Vitality participant and to be enthusiastic about the program.

We asked some Champs to tell us about what was great about being a Champ.

**Traci Williams** (one of this edition's health heroes) is a Champ at Meggitt (Rockmart) Inc. She spends about two hours a week on Champ activities. She has organized a Cystic Fibrosis walk, a Juvenile Diabetes walk, two Vitality Check events, Go Red initiatives including a luncheon and Wear Blue for Men initiatives. She tries to send an email out every week with information on the month's wellness theme. Traci loves seeing others change their lives with advice or suggestions she has offered.

**Gloria Jackson**, a Champ at Pacific Scientific, says that the most rewarding thing about being a Champ is the engaging with employees and helping them to focus on their health and well-being. "Vitality is great," she says. "There is just a wealth of information available to help you."

At MTS in Suwanee, Champ **Carol O'Neal** is equally enthusiastic. "The most rewarding thing about being a Champ is getting employees healthy," she says.

All the Champs are keen to emphasise that you don't need to be superfit and slim to be a Champ. "I'm 61, a Grandma, and have lost 26lbs and still have a lot to lose," says Carol.

Gloria adds, "I think the key is being a role model so others see you are at least trying to get fit with them.

Traci agrees. "You just need to be compassionate and patient and willing to be an example by changing your own lifestyle, no matter what those changes look like for you."

To anyone thinking of becoming a Champ, Gloria says, "If you are interested in improving your own health and have a genuine concern for others, then become a Champion and support the 'Power of Vitality'!"



## Sonya Daw Ice breaker

Sonya Daw, VP, Organization Development and Human Resources at Meggitt Equipment Group, talks to Step Up about cold winters, points, treadmills and the motivating role of friends.

**S**onya Daw is the first to admit that her motivation to exercise has varied at different times in her life. “I’ve gone back and forth on committing and relapsing, depending on work and personal commitments,” she says.

There have been periods when she has found it relatively easy to stay active. During 12 years spent in California, for example, exercise was a big part of her life.

“I was pretty active,” she says. “I had a good circle of active friends there. We ran, we hiked, we went to yoga. It was part of our social life. And of course there was the sunshine.”

A winter in Boston presented more of a challenge.

**I was working remotely and it snowed all the time—or at least it felt like it did. It was a real struggle for me. I found myself gaining weight and getting a bit low.**

“It was my first real winter,” she says. “I was working remotely and it snowed all the time—or at least it felt like it did. It was a real struggle for me. I found myself gaining weight and getting a bit low.”

Her next move, to Michigan, looked set to present similar challenges. “If anything it’s worse here,” she says. “It snows from November to April.”

Sonya was determined not to repeat the pattern of the previous winter, however, and set out to do more. “This year I had a different outlook on the winter,” she says.

What she needed was motivation. This came in several forms. The first was from other people. Several co-workers from

her time working in Portland, Oregon were particularly inspiring, so she started checking in with them to find out what they were doing and keep her enthusiasm going.

“I got inspired by others’ stories,” she says. “I started to think about what I could do.”

It wasn’t just people she knew who kept her going, she says. “I also think that there’s always someone much busier than me working out right now,” citing role models Michele Obama and Sheryl Sandberg (Chief Operating Officer of Facebook and author of *Lean In*), as examples.

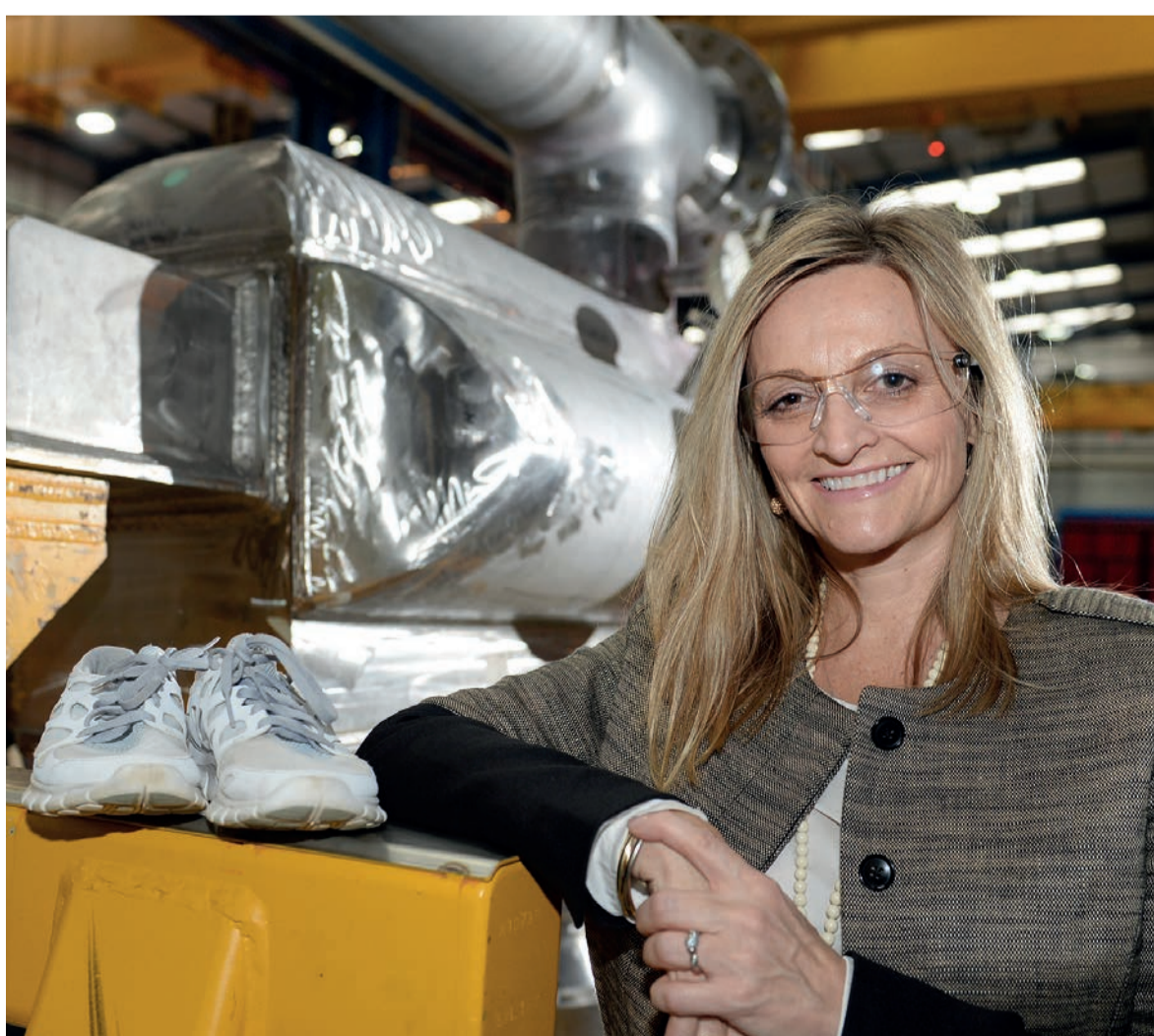
Her membership of Vitality helped, too. “When Vitality came along, I was very excited. We had seen a preview of the program and I couldn’t wait to get started.”

She threw herself into the program, did all the screenings and started using a Fitbug,

**I also think that there’s always someone much busier than me working out right now.**

but initially it took her a while to get the most out of it.

“I went on and off, on and off. Working remotely and traveling and doing lots of time at the computer, I couldn’t get in 10,000 steps a day. I was quite disillusioned by that, but then I figured if I used a heart rate monitor and did my work out at 60% of my target heart rate, I’d get my work-out, I’d get my points and I’d be done and feel good!” A couple of days spent with Diana Fox (Director, Organization Development and Human Resources at Meggitt) also made a difference. “She told me about different



The points are just the fluffy, fun part. They help to keep you motivated but there are also essential tools to help you think about your health in a preventative way. It's not only about exercise. It can be very helpful across the board.



ways to earn points, like if I logged a healthy habit, I could log five points. It didn't seem so overwhelming to begin using Vitality on a regular basis to keep me motivated."

Now Sonya describes herself as addicted to getting Vitality points. "I'm super-excited and hooked on it," she says.

She knows that if she can make it to five verified workouts in a week, she will gain an extra 40 points, and that often makes the difference. She recalls a recent occasion when traveling when she completed a workout at 9.30 p.m., after dinner. "I do think if I wasn't concerned about the Vitality points and getting that fifth work-out in, I would have blown it!" she says.

Sonya is engaged to be married, and the thought of next year's wedding is also a positive motivation for her. She also hopes to use her Vitality points to get hotel discounts, which might make a nice start to married life, though her fiancé has his eye on tickets to sporting events!

In order to keep their regime up through the winter, Sonya and her fiancé have invested in a treadmill and an exercise bike—an investment they didn't take lightly, but felt was worthwhile—and since then Sonya has managed to exercise five times a week without fail.

If she is traveling she will bring her running shoes with her and try to fit in a run first thing in the morning, and is careful to look ahead at her week—what calls she has scheduled and what travel is involved—so she can plan her exercise sessions in advance.

CUT OUT AND KEEP

### Sonya's top tips

Plan ahead—think about what meetings and calls you have in the next week and plan your exercise around them

Think of other people who have a healthy lifestyle and use them to inspire you

Get the most of Vitality—find out how you can earn points and get motivated

Don't worry if you relapse from time to time—you can always start over again

When talking to co-workers about Vitality, she likes to show them how easy and helpful it is. "The points are just the fluffy, fun part," she says. "They help to keep you motivated but there are also essential tools to help you think about your health in a preventative way. It's not only about exercise. It can be very helpful across the board."

"Being active helps me feel better about everything—I can go out into the world feeling better about myself and more prepared for the challenges of the day."

## Easy ways to earn points

One of the things that motivated our Health Hero Sonya Daw was earning Vitality points—and discovering how easy it was to do so. Here are a few suggestions for easy ways to earn Vitality points. Some of them simply involve sitting at a computer!

### Completing your Vitality Health Review

This is a straightforward online questionnaire and wins you a healthy **500 points** with a further bonus of **250 points** if you complete it within the first 90 days of your Vitality program year. If you're brand new to Vitality, you can earn an additional **500 points** for getting engaged with Vitality for the first time.

### Completing your Vitality Check

You earn 125 points for each part of the check, so if you have the entire screening you earn 500 points. Better still, if your results are within range, there are lots more points to earn:

- Body Mass Index (>18.5, <25) **1,000 points**
- Blood glucose (<100mg/dL) **600 points**
- Blood pressure (diastolic <80mmHg, systolic < 120 mmHg) **600 points**
- Total cholesterol <200mg/dL) **600 points**

### Nutrition courses

Complete an on-line course and you'll learn all about healthy eating as well as earning yourself **300 points** per course.

### Flu shot

Make sure you stay clear of bugs this winter and earn yourself a cool **200 points**.

There are lots of other fun ways to earn points—take a look at the Vitality website to find out what's on offer. And don't forget to spend those bucks once you've earned them!

[www.PowerOfVitality.com](http://www.PowerOfVitality.com)

up to  
**1,250 points**

**500 points PLUS**

**300 points**

**200 points**

# The five superfoods that will supercharge your diet

Look inside a slim person’s refrigerator and cupboards and the chances are you’ll find at least some of these fantastic foods. They’re packed full of nutrients, will keep you fuller for longer, help you control your cravings and give you bags of energy.



### Fish and lean meat

Foods that are high in protein will keep you fuller for longer. Choose lean chicken and turkey over beef or lamb and always remove the fat before eating. Sporty types will love pork tenderloin, which is even lower in calories than chicken breast and packs three times the zinc, essential for muscle repair. Fish is low in calories and contains healthy fats that won’t mess with your diet—just make sure you eat it broiled or grilled rather than fried.



### Whole grains

Maybe you’ve heard that the first step to losing weight is to cut carbs, but although this works for some people it’s not necessary and can leave you short of essential nutrients if continued long-term. Whole grains such as wholewheat pasta, quinoa, wholegrain couscous and brown rice are more filling than their white, processed counterparts and contain more nutrients—they also have a slightly nuttier taste that’ll grow on you.



### Squash

This is a great choice for anyone watching their weight. High in nutrients and low in calories, it’s wonderfully filling and can be cooked in so many ways. Try dicing and steaming it, or cutting it in half and roasting it.



### Green, leafy vegetables

You can’t get too much of these. So low in calories they barely count and chock-full of vitamins and minerals, you should aim to have some most days. Be adventurous with lesser-known leaves like curly kale, cavolo nero and pak choi, and if you get tired of steamed greens, try stir-frying them in a small amount of oil with garlic and chilli. If you love your salads, stock up on arugula and baby leaf spinach alongside plain old lettuce.



### Spices

These add flavor without calories and can transform the taste of a low-fat dish. Some, like chilli and turmeric, are thought to help boost metabolism, and cinnamon can be used to sweeten oatmeal—it is believed to help control blood glucose levels, too.

Why not combine all five superfoods with this tasty recipe that is bursting with goodness? Vegetarians can replace the salmon with tofu.

## Spicy salmon with butternut rice and greens (serves 4)

### Ingredients:

#### For the salmon

- 4 salmon filets
- Juice of 1 lime
- Pinch chilli powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- 1 pinch soft brown sugar

#### For the rice:

- ½ onion
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 8 oz. brown rice
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ butternut squash

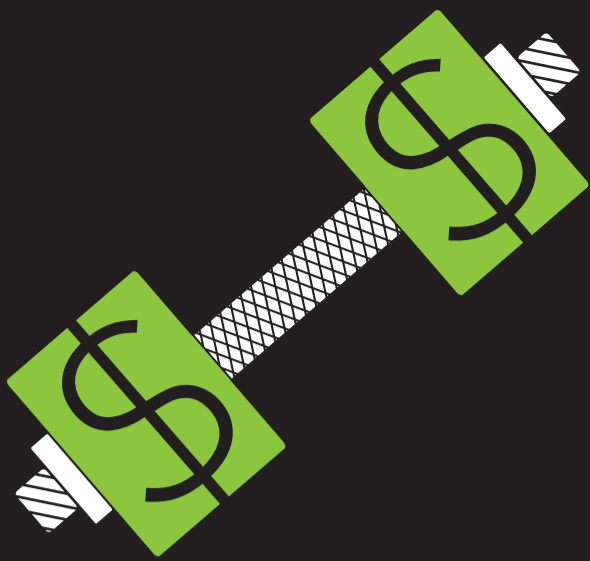
#### For the greens

- 1 head of cavolo nero

### Instructions:

1. Pre-heat oven to 425°F.
2. De-seed, peel and dice butternut squash into 1” cubes. Toss in ½ tbsp oil and bake in oven for about 40 minutes until tender and browned (check at intervals from 30 minutes).
3. Meanwhile heat ½ tsp oil in skillet and add onion and cinnamon stick—cook on low heat until transparent.
4. Add rice to skillet and toss in oil while you boil 16 fl. oz. water.
5. Add hot water to rice and add salt.
6. Reduce heat, cover and simmer on very low heat for 25 minutes. By the end the water should be absorbed and the rice cooked through.
7. Squeeze lime and pour juice over salmon filets. Cover and set aside for five minutes.
8. Combine the spices and sugar. Lift out salmon filets and roll in spices. Cover and refrigerate.
9. Chop and wash cavolo nero and place in steamer.
10. When you have about 5 minutes to go on the rice, heat up your grill or heat a non-stick skillet with a very small amount of oil. Cook the salmon filets until cooked through and are starting to blacken at the edges.
11. Steam the cavolo nero.
12. When the rice and squash are done, gently combine.
13. Pile the rice and squash mixture on to a plate, place the salmon on top and serve with the cavolo nero on the side.

If you have any healthy recipes you’d like to share, email our editor, Patricia, at [patriciacarswell@gmail.com](mailto:patriciacarswell@gmail.com) and they might appear in the next edition.



# A healthy partnership

## Why joining a gym will save you \$\$\$

Joining a gym or health club is one of the best ways to get fit, stay in shape and keep track of your workouts. It can even be a fun way to socialize or meet new people.

If there's one thing that puts people off from joining a health club, though, it's the expense. If you're hesitating about joining a gym, hair-raising membership dues might be all the excuse you need to give it a miss.

The great news is that Vitality makes gym membership affordable—in fact by going to the gym often enough you can even end up better off if you earn enough points to go shopping at the Vitality Mall!

Here's how it works.



### Partner Health Clubs

Vitality has teamed up with a range of health clubs across the country—these are known as Partner Health Clubs. You can find out on the Vitality website which gyms near you are Partner Health Clubs—just submit your zip code into the gym locator and we'll do the rest. The Partner Health Clubs are denoted by the green PTS symbol

#### So, why join a Partner Health Club?

##### 1. Convenience

Partner Health Clubs will track your workout automatically and transmit the information straight to Vitality, so you won't need to use a fitness device or log your workouts.

##### 2. \$\$\$

At Partner Health Clubs your membership will cost you less.



### Discounts

Some Partner Health Clubs offer a discount on membership dues—you'll get a discount form to print off from the Vitality website and to take into the club. Look out for the orange discount symbol.

### Subsidies

In addition, if you join any Partner Health Club you will be eligible for a **subsidy on your membership dues**.

The subsidies:

- Vary in amount according to the club and its membership dues
- Vary in amount according to your Vitality status—the higher your status the greater the subsidy

- Can be as much as \$60/month for platinum members
- Will be paid straight into your bank account
- Are available to your spouse or partner if they participate in Vitality and belong to the Partner Health Club. Their subsidy will be somewhat smaller.

#### To qualify for the subsidy, you need to:

- Have completed your Vitality Health Risk Assessment
- Visit your gym a minimum of 12 times per quarter (approximately once a week)



### Non-Partner Health Clubs

If a club is shown on the gym locator but doesn't display the green PTS icon, it is a Non-Partner Health Club. It will be marked with a blue, heart rate icon. With these clubs you can still get great savings on your membership dues.

#### Logging your workout at a Non-Partner Health Club

At Non-Partner Health Clubs you will need to use a compatible fitness device such as a pedometer or heart-rate monitor—alternatively you can get a printout verifying your workout and log your exercise on the Vitality website.

#### Saving money with a Non-Partner Health Club



##### 1. Discounts

Some Non-Partner Health Clubs offer a discounted membership rate—you'll get a discount form to print off from the Vitality website and to take into the club. Look out for the orange discount symbol.

##### 2. Rebate

If you have been a member of your Non-Partner Health Club (and of Vitality) for four months or more you can apply for a rebate on your membership dues of up to \$200 per year. Once you've submitted details of your membership to Vitality, it will be processed and you can expect a check in the post within 60 days of processing.

To qualify for the rebate, you need to have completed your Vitality Health Risk Assessment

### Other clubs

What if your club doesn't show up on the gym locator? Not a problem—you can still save money!

So long as your club has both cardio and weight training equipment available, and you've been a member of the club and of Vitality for four months or more, you can apply for a rebate, as above. You should log your workouts in the same way as with a Non-Partner Health Club.

### More rewards!

If all that weren't enough, you can earn points by working out, too—whatever club you belong to.

Every time you go to the gym, you need to **log your workout**:

- If your gym does this automatically, just check in normally at your gym when you arrive and then you don't need to do anything else.
- If you have a compatible fitness device, make sure it's linked to Vitality and your workout will be logged without you taking further action.
- Alternatively, get a printout from your club verifying your workout, submit it to Vitality and log your workout online.

#### Workouts mean points!

- For every day you attend the gym you earn 10 points
- PLUS an extra 15 points for the first workout of the week
- AND a further 40 points for the fifth workout of the week
- So you can earn up to 125 points per week if you attend every day.

#### And points mean prizes!

You can convert your points into Vitality bucks to spend at the Vitality Mall. The more points you have, the higher your Vitality status:

- A higher status gets you bigger subsidies on your membership dues
- And gets you bigger discounts at the Vitality Mall!

We can't think of a better reason to get down to the gym and start working out.

**What are you waiting for?**



Top: On the run  
Middle: Stretched out, not stressed out  
Bottom: Was it something I said?  
Right hand page: Thinking out of the box

Meggitt Training Systems were the winners of the Vitality points challenge this summer. We met the MTS Champs to find out the secret of their success.



# We are the Champions

It's lunchtime and a group of between 12 and 20 people are walking purposefully out of the Meggitt Training Systems building in Suwanee, GA. Visitors could be forgiven for wondering if a mass walk-out is going on. In fact, it's a band of employees going for a weekly walk around the building. By circling the facility four times they cover two miles. As the walk counts as an athletic event, participants earn 250 points.

This is just one of the many initiatives organized by the MTS team of Wellness Champs. Determined to get as many of their co-workers—of all levels of fitness and seniority—involved in the program, they have come up with an imaginative range of activities to inspire and motivate employees.

"We try to think out of the box", says Carol O'Neal. "We've done Wear Red for Women and Wear Blue for Men and then we decided to do a Wear Pink or Blue for Children. We ran a healthy lunch covered dish event. Also, several Champs personally contributed to the purchase of two tickets to the "Movie Tavern" as a prize for walking round the building four different times. Another employee does blood drives and we have a lot of participation in the Suwanee Greenway Walk called 'Big Peach'.

"Early on we were able to purchase a Vitality bulletin board," she adds. "We take pictures of events, print them and put them on the bulletin board. It helps to get people interested."

There was certainly plenty of interest in the facility's Biggest Loser contest. About 20 people signed up, many lost significant amounts of weight and some are still attending regular weigh-ins.

And then of course there's the walking. As temperatures frequently get into the 90s, with high levels of humidity, they rearranged the time of the walk to later in the day and modified it to accommodate one employee who had to carry oxygen. The emphasis is on making things as attractive and convenient for employees as possible.

One of the main messages the team has been trying to get across is that Vitality isn't just about going to the gym.

"There's a big misunderstanding with Vitality and the way it works," says John Fox, a recent addition to the Champs team. "Most people on the production side of things assume it means you have to work out, you have to lift weights, in order to get healthy and earn points."

John is keen to dispel this myth. "I explain that as soon as you sign up and take the Health Risk Assessment you get enough points then and there to take you and your spouse to a free movie. Lots of people like free stuff."

Earning points and getting free stuff is, explains John, much easier to achieve than most people imagine.

"We have a 300,000 square foot facility here. Just coming to work and doing your job and walking around the building as most of us in production do, you get free things for it."

This tactic has been a startling success: one employee did nothing more than wearing his Fitbug to work to clock his daily steps as well as a few on-line courses, and managed to achieve platinum status two months before the year end.

Once they have got people signed up and interested in Vitality, it would be tempting to think they had done their job, but the Suwanee Champs don't just leave it there. That's when they really go out of their way to help them up their game.

John has been known to accompany new participants to the gym, even when it means visiting a different gym from his usual one, and goes running with others. "It's just healthy habits," he says.

Is your facility organizing great Vitality activities, too? Let us know and you might feature in the next edition of Step Up!

## This edition we're talking about...

In each edition of Step Up we're going to be focusing on a different form of exercise. This time it's Pilates. You've probably heard of it, but we're guessing a lot of you don't really know what it is. That's a shame as it's a fantastic way to get in shape for people at all levels of fitness, so here's the low-down.

### What is Pilates?

Pilates is a physical fitness system named for its founder, Joseph Pilates, who developed the method in the 1920s in order to build flexibility and strength in the entire body.



It involves a series of very precise, controlled movements, emphasizing spinal and pelvic alignment, breathing, and developing a strong core or center, as well as improving coordination and balance. The movements are typically performed on exercise apparatus—traditionalists use apparatus as designed by Joseph Pilates, but many classes now use equipment such as exercise balls, resistance bands and foam rollers.

### What's so great about it?

For a start it's low impact, so it is easy on the joints and great for anyone new to exercise. It works your entire body and makes you stronger and more flexible, which also helps safeguard against injury. Many athletes do Pilates to support their sport and avoid injuring themselves. As a plus, it helps with your posture and builds long, lean muscles rather than bulky ones. Many people find it very energizing and relaxing, too.

### What if I have a bad back?

Actually, Pilates is great for strengthening all of the core muscles that support your back. As with any class, be sure to tell your instructor about any injuries or health issues.

### How many calories does it burn?

In a beginner workout the average, 165lb adult could expect to burn off about 270 calories in an hour long session. That's the equivalent of ½ cup Ben & Jerry's Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough ice cream—or, for a much healthier snack, a bowl of vegetable soup with a small wholegrain roll.



Can I learn it from a video?

There are lots of Pilates videos on the market, but you’re better learning from a certified instructor who can correct your posture and make sure you’re getting the most out of the class.

Do I need any special clothes or equipment?

All you need is some loose-fitting, comfortable clothes. Some classes will ask you to bring your own mat (a yoga mat is ideal) but ask before you buy one—your instructor may supply them.



Easy on your joints



Energizing & relaxing

tes

270  
cals/hour



Standing up for Pilates in Suwanee

Meggitt Training Systems Wellness Champ, Marita Castro, and her husband, Emilio, are big fans of Pilates.

“The benefits are incredible,” says Marita. “My husband plays soccer twice a week and practices SUP (stand up paddle board) every weekend at Lake Lanier. I play in three tennis leagues and run or walk 5k once a week.

“Pilates is the perfect complement to our stretching time. We use it before and after every sport we do and it makes a huge difference when we don’t do it. It also gives us endurance by strengthening our core. Pilates prepares the muscles and ligaments for a long, tough match and releases them when we’re exhausted after a match. We’d recommend it to everyone.”

As an additional bonus, Marita’s Pilates class at her gym has earned her Vitality points and a rebate on her membership dues. “I got \$200 for working out for more than four months continuously at my gym,” she says.

# 10 reasons to lose 10

We've all heard stories of people who've lost half their body weight, and for someone who's got a huge amount of weight to lose, that's great. But losing a moderate amount of weight—between five and 10 percent of your body weight—can bring significant benefits to both your health and happiness.

A 10% goal is manageable for most people. For someone weighing 200lbs that's 20lbs. If you weigh 250lbs it's 25lbs. Here are 10 powerful reasons to drop 10%.

# 1 Live longer

Losing between five and 10 percent of your body weight can bring about dramatic improvements in your blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels. You'll significantly reduce your risk of life-threatening illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes.

# 2 Give yourself more energy

Carrying around excess weight takes its toll on your body and, coupled with a poor diet and lack of exercise, can make you feel lethargic. Many people report increased energy levels after losing even a modest amount of weight.

# 3 Sharpen your mind

Studies show that obese people tend to perform less well in executive functions, like meeting goals, making decisions, and planning ahead, compared to those at a normal weight. 12 weeks after significant weight loss, participants in a Kent State University study reported improved memory and confidence.

# 4 Save \$\$\$

According to The Lean Belly Prescription by Travis Stork, MD, and Peter Moore (editor of Men's Health), slashing just 100 calories a day from your diet will save you an average of \$175.20 a year.

# 5 Save your knees

Being overweight puts a lot of stress on your knee joints. If you are obese and have osteoarthritis in your knees, losing between five and 10% of your body weight will make a difference in how easily you can move your joints.

# 6 Sleep tight

Sleep apnea, a condition that causes people to stop breathing for short periods throughout the night, has been linked to obesity, as extra fat around the neck can obstruct airways when you snooze. In a study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine, obese adults diagnosed with sleep apnea who lost an average of 24 pounds also experienced fewer pauses in breathing and 14% had complete remission of their sleep apnea.

# 7 Breathe easy

If you're overweight you may have difficulties breathing, especially when you move around or have a sudden burst of activity such as running across the road. If you lose even a modest amount of weight you should start to see improvements in your breathing.

# 8 Ease your back

Overweight and obese people often suffer from back pain, from lower back issues caused by excess weight pulling the pelvis forward, to sciatica and pinched nerves. Losing weight will ease the pressure on your back and make you more comfortable.

# 9 Better bladder control!

In a Brown University study, women who lost between five and 10% of their body weight significantly reduced their number of urinary incontinence episodes.

# 10 Win points

Each time you work out you can earn Vitality points to spend at the Vitality Mall, and if weight loss is one of your Vitality goals, there's a whole lot of points to win once you achieve that goal.

If that's not enough, there are stacks of day-to-day ways in which your life will improve if you reach a healthy weight. Here's what a bunch of people who've lost weight said about their new, slimmer selves.

"My rings look bigger on my slimmer fingers."

"The tray table on the airplane fits better."

"Giving myself a pedicure is easier."

"My kids can hug me all the way round my waist."

"I can cross my legs when I sit down!"

"I can jump and dance around and be goofy with my kids."

"I can wear high heels for longer."

"I have cheekbones!"

"I get to shop from the clearance rack."

We hope some of these encourage you to keep going with your weight loss program. If you need help losing weight, make it one of your Vitality goals and check out the Vitality Living Lean on-line course on the Vitality website, [www.PowerofVitality.com](http://www.PowerofVitality.com).

# Events

Right across the Meggitt group you've been getting together in a huge range of Vitality events, earning points and often raising money or awareness. There are far too many to mention them all, but here are just a few to give you a flavor.



## Golf scramble

MABS in Kentucky held their 2nd Annual Golf Scramble in September. In teams of four, the team members would each take a shot and choose the best one for their next position. Meggitt provided food and prizes for participants.

"It was a huge success," says Wellness Champ Tammy Fox, who organised the event. "All 28 participants had a great time, with prizes going to first, second and third place teams and prizes for the longest drive and closest to the pin. We also had several door prizes."

It wasn't just a fun day out. According to Tammy, "Vitality members are going to receive 250 Vitality points for participating."



## Extreme points challenge

Congratulations to Meggitt Training Systems in Suwanee for winning the Extreme Points Challenge, achieving the highest number of points per person across the group in July and August. They achieved a total of 125,065 points as a unit, which broke down to an impressive 172 points per person. Close runner ups were Meggitt Services with 126 points per person, and Thomson Aerospace & Defense with 110 points per person. Well done to everyone for participating.

## Turkey trot

It may not have been Thanksgiving, but that wasn't enough to put off MPC Oregon employees when it came to participating in the Turkey Trot in July.

"There was a lot of interest in it," says HR manager Jason Jarred, "and we had over 50 employees participate in it. The success of the event was due to Diana Kroehnert, our Finance Assistant, who had the passion and the thoughtfulness to organize with the Turkey Trot staff and with our employees to get such an impressive turnout. Mike Fenske took care of the sponsorship fees and the Team Meggitt shirts for the participants. A lot of the participants were very pleased that they were able to keep the shirts for causal days or future events."

Plans are afoot for more events like this in MPC Oregon in the year to come. Keep it up!



## Wear Blue for Men

Lots of you supported the National Men's Health Month in June by wearing blue and doing fun walks. Men often avoid visiting their physician and ignore niggles and pains, but remember, guys, your health matters. Make sure you have regular check-ups and don't ignore any problems that come up.

## Mud runners

Photo of the month goes to this tough bunch of guys and girls from Meggitt Defense Systems in Irvine, CA. Here's what the very muddy Ben Lin had to say about how they got into this state:

"In a span of a little over four months, employees of MDSI vanquished not one but two different muddy runs—Irvine Great Park Mud Run (pictured) and Rose Bowl Mud Run II, proving once again that Gladiators, who love mud, hate terrorists, and don't mind exchanging a Saturday morning for fun and charity, walk amongst you. As with mud runs of yore, the Irvine Great Park one packed a punch. It was chock full of obstacles set over 6km (3.73 mi). It included the standard fare of 8 ft walls, barbed wire,

tunnel crawls, dumpster mud diving, ice cold polar bear plunge, rope climbs, monkey bars, and some running.

"This time they included some new obstacles to wet your proverbial whistle. Imagine holding a tire overhead and performing walking lunges for 25 yards. Piece of cake you say? How about testing your balance and agility by crossing a muddy wooden log over a treacherous pit filled with lost sunglasses and shattered dreams from previous Gladiators who fell into its dark icy depths (actually about waist deep and lukewarm)? Still not impressed? Up the ante by laying out a sea of 6 inch diameter wooden poles set 3 feet off the ground at various step distances. Now imagine having to traverse over them by bouncing and stepping like Super Luigi without falling, getting a charley horse, or bruising your spleen.

"Crazy, non? BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE! The big finale featured the world's longest mud pit spanning the length of a football field. That's 100+ yards of Mississippi Mud between you and the finish line (where the free beer awaited). This sucker was thick, heavy, and fortified with vitamin dirt. It took the combined effort of each team member working hand in hand to defeat the final 15 vertical feet of wet, slippery mud. When all was said and done we weren't just co-workers that day, we became Brothers-and-Rianne-in-Arms."

Gladiators, Step Up salutes you.

# Your Champions

If you have any questions about Vitality and how you can reap the rewards of healthy living, talk to your Wellness Champ. Here’s who they are:

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