

STEPS

DIABETES



Understanding the link

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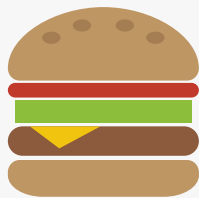
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Editor's letter



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

If there's one thing I've learned from this edition of Step Up, it's how determined Meggitt people are when it comes to fitness. Just look at this month's health heroes. Diana Carrier [page 16] has refused to let her age stand in her way, taking up running and competing in half marathons, to the admiration of her 12 grandchildren. And John Borton [page 8] refused to let even a broken back and major surgery stop him from becoming a world class triathlete.

It's not just our health heroes who are showing determination in their quest to become fitter. Across the whole of Meggitt, people are getting more active. More than 50% of you have achieved silver status or higher, and more of you are getting involved in Vitality activities and competing in sports leagues. There's been an 80% increase in the number of people completing verified activities and a 61% increase in the number completing verified workouts. In short, Meggitt is moving more.

There is one area where Meggitt doesn't score so well, though, and that's in the average BMI. To put it bluntly, lots of employees are overweight. As you may be aware, carrying extra weight puts you at increased risk of diabetes—a serious condition that can lead to all sorts of complications.

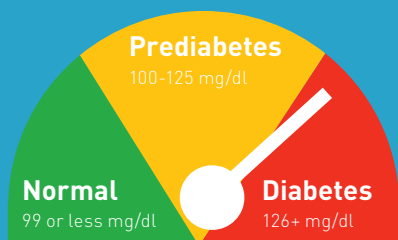
That's why this edition is mostly dedicated to diabetes—what it is, why you might develop it and how to make life a little easier if you have it. We've included some life hacks to help you cope with your condition [page 12] and plenty of great, healthy recipes that are suitable for everyone, whether or not they have diabetes.

One of the best ways of decreasing your chances of getting diabetes, and of improving your health if you have it, is to exercise, so we've included a feature about swimming. Combining cardio with resistance, it's just about the perfect exercise, whether you're making a splash in triathlon or taking your first, tentative strokes.

By the time you read this, there will be exciting new changes to the Vitality website, and maybe more of you will have won big on Vitality Squares like our biggest winner, Chris Harvey [page 26]. Whatever it is that is getting you moving, let us know. We'd love to hear from you.

'Til next time,

Patricia Carswell, health and fitness journalist



Fasting Plasma Glucose Test



Diabetes

101

The full name of the condition is diabetes mellitus, which literally means “passing honey”. Why honey? Well, if you have untreated diabetes you will have glucose—or sugar—in your urine.

In a healthy person, your body breaks down carbohydrates—the sugars and starches found in everything from candy to fruit—into glucose. This passes into your bloodstream and from there is transferred into your body’s cells to give you energy.

The hormone insulin which is made in the pancreas (found just below the stomach) unlocks your body’s cells to let the glucose in. If either your body doesn’t make enough insulin, or it isn’t able to use it effectively, the glucose is locked out of the cells and builds up in the blood, leading to diabetes.

What types of diabetes are there?

Type 1 diabetes

This is an autoimmune disease in which the body’s immune system attacks and destroys cells called beta cells in the pancreas.

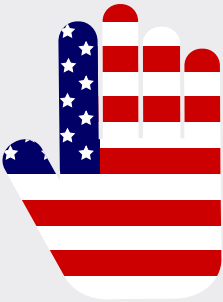
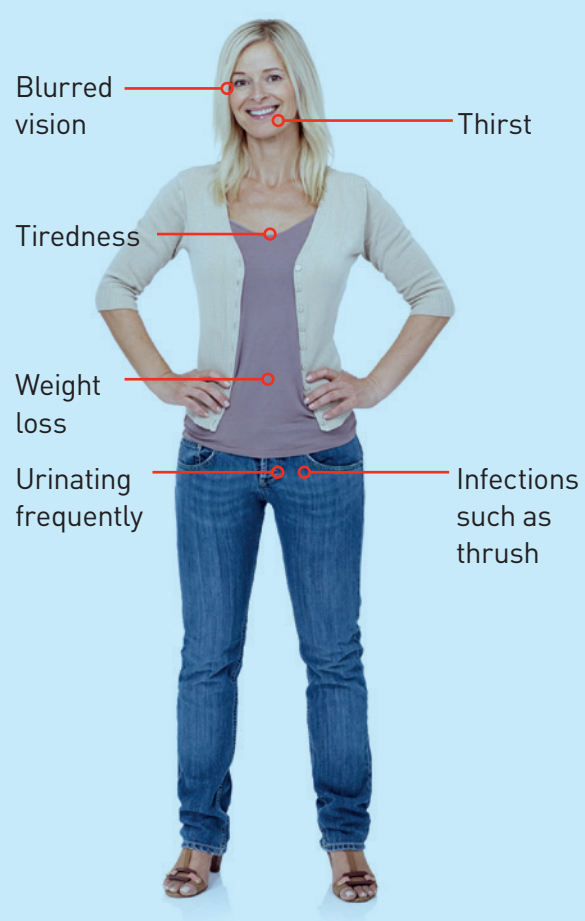
These are the cells that produce insulin, so your body fails to produce enough insulin to transfer glucose from the bloodstream into the cells.

Nobody knows for sure why it happens, but it is believed to be largely hereditary. It usually first appears in childhood and young adulthood and is not connected with the patient’s lifestyle. It can only be treated by insulin.

The distinction between Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes is not always obvious and sometimes diagnosis may be unclear at first.

Diabetes: What are the symptoms and causes of the symptoms?

Symptoms	Cause
Tiredness	Glucose isn't getting into your body's cells to give them energy, which is why you feel tired.
Weight loss	Glucose isn't getting into the cells, the body starts to burn muscle and fat into order to produce energy. This can lead to weight loss.
Thirst and frequent urination	Your kidneys try to get rid of the excess sugar through your urine. To do this they need more water, which is why you feel thirsty and urinate more frequently.
Blurred vision	The high glucose levels in your eyes cause your vision to blur.
Infections	The raised levels of sugar in your urine are an ideal breeding ground for bacteria and fungi to grow.



Type 2 diabetes

This is the most common form of diabetes—27 million people in the United States have it. It usually begins in later life (although cases are starting to appear in younger people).

People with Type 2 diabetes make insulin but their cells fail to use it efficiently. This is called insulin resistance.

Type 2 diabetes is usually caused by a combination of things.

- It may be hereditary.
- It is connected with extra weight—being overweight or obese can cause insulin resistance and people with diabetes are often overweight and carry their excess weight around their middle.
- Some people with diabetes have metabolic syndrome—a group of conditions that includes high blood glucose, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and triglycerides.
- Liver condition: normally your liver slows down glucose production when your blood sugar level rises after you've eaten, storing it for later. Some people's livers don't do this—they keep producing glucose.
- Cell communication: sometimes cells send out the wrong signals or fail to interpret them correctly. If this miscommunication involves glucose and insulin, it can lead to diabetes.
- Beta cells—sometimes these send out the wrong amount of insulin at the wrong time.



Gestational diabetes

This form of diabetes comes on during pregnancy and is controlled with diet and sometimes insulin. It usually reverses once the baby is born, but the mother will be at increased risk of Type 2 diabetes later in life.

Other types of diabetes

There are other, less common, types of diabetes, including a rare form of Type 2 diabetes that occurs in younger people (generally with a strong family history of diabetes), diabetes caused by other diseases affecting hormones, and if the pancreas is removed or affected.



Is it serious?

The problem with diabetes isn't just the inconvenience of the initial symptoms. It can lead to complications such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, dental disease and even death. It can also make you more susceptible to other diseases. In other words, you should take it very seriously.

This doesn't mean you should panic if you have diabetes. Most people manage their diabetes successfully with insulin (in the case of Type 1) and with lifestyle changes and/or medication (in the case of Type 2) and for some it is the spur they needed to start leading a healthier life.

How is it treated?

You will need to discuss a treatment plan with your doctor and take medical advice. If you've been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, the likelihood is that your doctor will review your lifestyle. He or she may encourage you to lose weight and make changes to your diet to make it as healthy and balanced as you can. You may be encouraged to start (or continue) taking exercise. Take a look at our article on Living with Type 2 for some helpful tips and suggestions.

David Krigman

Reaching a landmark age was the incentive David Krigman needed to change his unhealthy ways.

Nine months later, he'd lost 100lbs and transformed his life and his health. Here's how he did it.

Turning 30, David Krigman knew something had to change. He'd been overweight since he was a teenager, but as he moved into his fourth decade he realised that if he didn't change his ways now, he would be heading for some serious health problems.

I do the healthy habits, Vitality Squares, the whole thing. I record all my workouts and do all the courses—I do every single thing Vitality has!

"I'd had lower back problems for as long as I could remember," he says. "My blood pressure was starting to go up to unhealthy levels and one doctor told me I could be prediabetic."





Until that point David had assumed that his weight was part of his genetic make-up. “I thought it was just something I was born with. I thought you should just enjoy yourself and let things happen as they may.”

Looking back, David is not surprised by his gradual weight gain over the years. “I didn’t move much and my diet included a lot of fast food—hamburgers, pizza, ice cream—and in bigger portions than I needed. When I was growing up my parents were exceptional cooks. They served me a lot of delicious food and I was expected to clean my plate.”

Although he had occasionally managed to lose a few pounds here or there, he had always gained it back. This time, though, he decided to take drastic action.

“I didn’t want to live like this anymore,” he says. “I wanted to change my life. I was still single and found it hard to find women I was attracted to who were interested in me. More than that, I wanted to be healthy, have a family and be healthy for my future children. Everything came together at once.”

On 2 January 2014 David decided to join his mother and sister in following a meal replacement plan, Medifast, which involved eating prescribed meal and snack replacements five times a day and preparing his own food once a day.

Because of what I accomplished with my weight loss, I feel there’s nothing I can’t do.

“I also took a multivitamin and fiber supplement for added nutrition” says David, “But for my own meal I’d pretty much have a chicken salad almost every day for six months straight.”

The diet was repetitive, but seeing the weight coming off encouraged him to persist. “Food and its taste became less important. I was eating for fuel, not for fun. I had tunnel vision and a goal in mind. I didn’t

go out to parties and any social gatherings because I didn’t want to be tempted by unhealthy foods.”

On such a strict diet—he was eating fewer than 1,300 calories a day and monitoring it on a calorie tracker app on his phone—David saw the weight fall away. “I lost six pounds in the first six days and 30 lbs in the first month. Of course it got harder after that, but by then I had less weight to lose. I would see the results in the mirror and that would motivate me to keep going.”


It wasn’t just the visual results that kept David going. “I felt a lot better. I had more energy, slept better and could move around easier. My heartburn went away too.” Alongside the diet, David started going to the gym two to three times a week and used a Fitbit to track his steps. He varied his workouts with strength training and cardio.

Having started his diet in January at 283 lbs, by the end of September 2014 David had reached his target weight of 180 lbs. In many ways this was the most testing time, as he transitioned to normal, healthy living. “Losing weight was relatively easy compared to maintaining,” he says. “Medifast holds your hand the whole time you’re losing weight, but it doesn’t prepare you for life after the diet plan. You don’t have the safety blanket of the Medifast foods which all have the same nutritional content.” David gradually reduced the number of Medifast meals but needed support in finding a healthy diet to replace them. It was here that the Vitality program came into its own. “I researched nutritious, whole foods, and Vitality helped a lot with that,” he says. “I used the Vitality courses to learn all about how fat, carbs, protein, fiber and sodium affect your body, and about healthy substitutes for meals and snacks. I’d advise people to look that up.”

David has been a platinum Vitality member since about a month after he joined the program in March 2014 and has thrown himself into everything it has to offer. “I do the healthy habits, Vitality Squares, the whole thing. I record all my workouts and do all the courses—I do every single thing Vitality has! The only thing I haven’t done is the CPR training.”

Since reaching his target weight in 2014, David has managed to maintain it and now has an active, healthy life. He works out five to six days a week and has taken up Pilates, circuit training, mountain biking and even running. Because of the amount of exercise he does, he can afford to eat more, too.

“My diet is not as strict now. I eat around 2,200 to 2,500 calories a day, sometimes up to 3,000 depending on my workout. Now that I exercise more, I don’t worry about calorie intake as much but I still focus on eating healthy and making sure I’m getting

**CUT OUT AND KEEP**

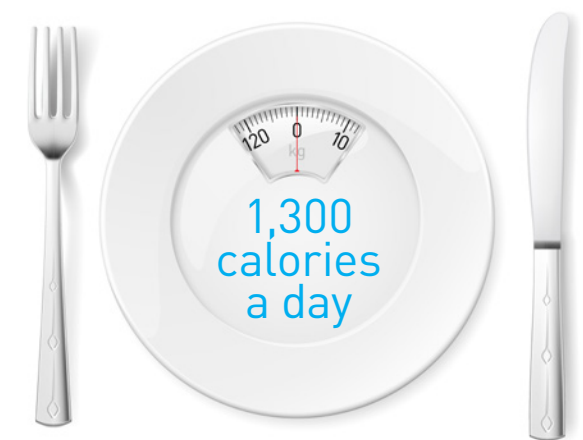
David’s weight loss tips

Find your motivating factor—the most important reason in your life for losing weight, and never lose focus. Find ways to remind yourself of that reason and let it drive you.

Even when you’ve lost a few pounds, don’t lose sight of your goal. Remind yourself regularly of what you’re doing and why.

Take advantage of the information that Vitality has to offer. Do the on-line nutrition courses and educate yourself about how food affects your body.

Find an activity you like to do and move as much as you can. A stable, healthy diet is a must for weight loss, but exercise will get you healthy, in shape and will help keep the weight off.



I lost six pounds in the first six days and 30 lbs in the first month

a good balance of protein, fiber, fat and carbohydrates. I enjoy the fun foods again, in moderation of course. My body is in the best shape it’s ever been in and life is pretty good.”

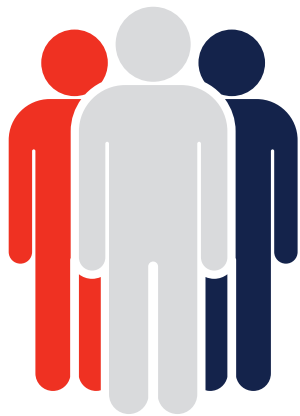
Best of all, losing so much weight has given David a confidence he never had before. “I’m motivated to do different things,” he says. “Because of what I accomplished with my weight loss, I feel there’s nothing I can’t do.”

Note: If you are considering a meal replacement plan, consult your physician first.

Prediabetes Don't leave it to chance

One of the things that prompted our health hero David Krigman to start taking better care of his health was the fact that his doctor told him he might be prediabetic.





86 million
people in the
US have it

Fasting plasma glucose test



Diabetes
126+ mg/dl

Prediabetes
110-125 mg/dl

Normal
99 or less mg/dl



David Krigman at the gym, part of his weekly workout routine. Read his full story on page 4.

Prediabetes is more common than you might imagine—86 million people in the United States have it. Here's the lowdown on what it means and what you can do about it.

What is prediabetes?

A person with prediabetes has a blood sugar level that is higher than normal, but not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. Doctors sometimes call it impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) or impaired fasting glucose (IFG), depending on what test they used to diagnose it. It puts you at a higher risk of getting Type 2 diabetes.

How big is the risk of getting diabetes if you have prediabetes?

Significant. If you have prediabetes and you don't take action to improve your lifestyle, there's a 15% to 30% chance that you'll go on to develop Type 2 diabetes within five years. Your risk is elevated if:

- You are over 45
- You are overweight or obese
- You have a family history of diabetes
- You have an African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American or Pacific Island racial or ethnic background
- You have a history of diabetes when pregnant (gestational diabetes) or have given birth to a baby weighing nine pounds or more
- You are physically active fewer than three times a week

Apart from the risk of getting diabetes, is prediabetes serious in itself?

In a word, yes. If you have prediabetes you're also at a higher risk of developing heart disease.

How will I know if I have prediabetes?

There are often no symptoms at all—that's why it's a good idea to have your Vitality Check, which includes a test for blood glucose levels and will tell you if you are prediabetic.

I have prediabetes. What can I do to reduce my risk of getting type 2 diabetes?

If you do have prediabetes, research shows that two things can help you prevent or delay Type 2 diabetes:

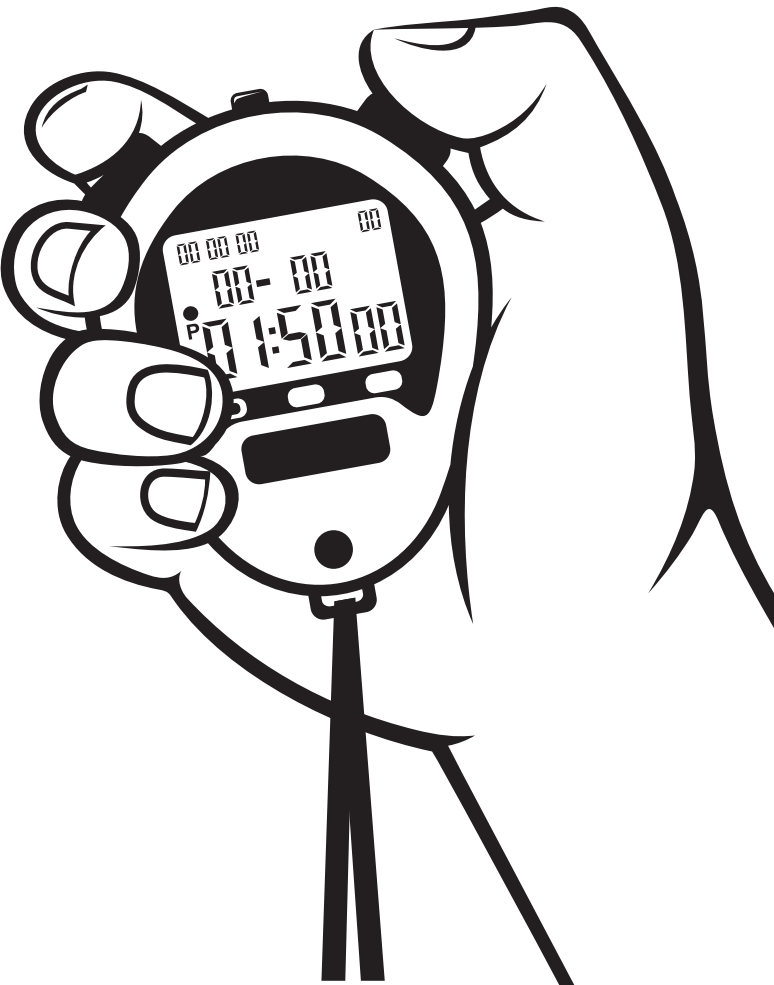


If you are overweight, lose 5% to 7% of your body weight, so if you weigh 200 lbs, you should aim to lose between 10 and 14 lbs.



Get at least 150 minutes each week of physical activity, such as brisk walking.

Prediabetes doesn't have to be a disaster. The best approach is to treat a diagnosis of prediabetes in a positive way, welcoming it as an opportunity to make changes to your lifestyle that will make you look and feel better.





John Borton

Zero to hero – the making of a champion

Meggitt graduate program engineer John Borton has faced more obstacles than you'll find in an episode of American Ninja Warrior—yet when it comes to sport he lets nothing stop him. We find out how he went from a hospital bed to competing in the triathlon world championships and what makes him pick himself up every time he's knocked back.



Lying in hospital at the age of 17, John Borton was faced with the possibility that he might never do sport again. A keen student athlete, he'd been involved in sport since he was six. He was captain of the cross country team and co-captain of the athletics team, as well as playing rugby and cricket, so it was not the news he wanted to hear. But after a crash in which a friend drove a car into a tree, John's back was broken in two places. It didn't look good.

After a period of bedrest, 10 weeks in a back brace and surgery on his stomach, he was able to get back on his feet again, but his career as a student athlete was over. "I did no sport in my final year at school," he says. "I look back on it and wonder how I coped. I probably suppressed a lot of emotion at the time."



Once at university, John was able to start doing a little exercise, playing some soccer as well as gentle running, but his progress was still blighted by the accident. “I lacked strength in my midline and I kept getting injured because of my back,” he says. “I also broke my leg playing soccer.”

Most people faced with this run of bad luck would give up sport, but by the time he reached his third year at university, John was on a placement in Switzerland and had taken up running. Although he hadn’t done much training and was not fully race-fit, he competed in a half marathon and finished in an impressive one hour and 40 minutes. Before long, though, he went through another low patch when he suffered more injuries as a result of playing rugby. A friend who was a competitive cyclist suggested he get a bike and start cycling. Within three months of getting a bike, John competed in his first triathlon in Zurich.

It wasn’t without mishap. It was a wet day, he crashed his bike and ended up with “road rash”. Yet he was hooked. “I loved every minute of it,” he says. “I loved the feeling of accomplishment at the end, of pushing myself as hard as I could.”

Before long John had signed up for a further triathlon, this time in the UK, and enjoyed a better race. Never one to stand still, next on his list was a half ironman. Little did he know that the event he had chosen for his first half ironman was one of the toughest in the world—“it was one of the hardest races I’ve ever done”—but he was delighted with his time of five hours and 58 minutes. John’s success spurred

him on to greater ambition. Having entered and performed well in other triathlons that year, in 2012 (his final year at university) he set his sights on the world championships in Auckland, New Zealand, undeterred by the prospect of combining training with his final year studies.

“I knew I had to come in the top four in my age category in one of three pre-defined races to qualify for the GB team. I thought

I love the sport and the feeling that it gives me, and I love the sense of achievement in what I’ve managed to accomplish even with so many setbacks.

that not many people would want to go to New Zealand and it would be a good opportunity to try to qualify,” he says. As it turned out, he couldn’t have been more wrong—there was a bumper number of entrants to the qualifying events – but John hired a coach and joined a triathlon club. “I was living and breathing engineering and triathlon.”

It paid off: he qualified and was all set for the world championships. Time was tight, though. John graduated in August, started work in September and the world championships were in October. “Trying to balance the transition to work and training was tough,” he says.

Despite the obstacles, John performed well in New Zealand and came 30th out of 100 world wide. “I was chuffed to be there wearing the GB suit with my name on it.” Perhaps unsurprisingly, next on John’s list



was a full ironman, which he completed in July 2013, having started Crossfit training the previous winter. Although the Crossfit helped with his back by strengthening his core, John continued to be beset with injuries. He finished the ironman in an excellent ten hours and 20 minutes—faster than he expected—but by then had injuries to his hamstring and hip, coupled with ongoing back problems.

If that weren’t enough, he had unexpected and major surgery to remove a blockage in his small intestine, which brought on heart complications. “It was a pretty traumatic time,” he says. Post-surgery it was time to reevaluate things. Some were saying he would never exercise again. His doctors told him that he could start training again around the second week of May the following year (2014), but John knew that May 10 was the date of an Ironman 70.3 in Mallorca that he was determined to race, having already signed up. Against his doctors’ advice, John started training in January, determined to make the race in May. “I was very careful about it,” he says. “I never overstretched myself. I learned how much I could listen to my body and how much I could stretch it without being detrimental to it. I had to play it by ear.”

By March he had managed a half marathon in a spectacular time of one hour and 20



minutes, and on May 10 he raced the 70.3, came ninth and qualified for the world championships held in Mont Tremblant, Canada.

2015 has seen almost as much drama. John hoped to represent GB in the world championships in Austria in August and Chicago in September in both middle distance and Olympic distance, but once again disaster struck. He was knocked off his bike in July, leaving him with calf and wrist injuries. His training was severely compromised.

Within three months of getting a bike, John competed in his first triathlon in Zurich.

Somehow, though, he made it to the start line—"it was a major battle"—and was delighted to finish both races in a respectable time. "With everything that had happened I was pretty chuffed to get to the start line and then finish but also to wear GB on my chest."

So what drives him to keep going, race after race, in the face of so many setbacks, injuries and accidents, and through constant pain? It's not, he says, that he's naturally overly competitive.

"What I like about triathlon," he says, "is that it's you against yourself. You're racing others but you can only try and beat your best time. As long as I feel I'm improving, that's what drives me. I love the sport and the feeling that it gives me, and I love the sense of achievement in what I've managed to accomplish even with so many setbacks."

The surgery in 2013 was, he admits, a turning point. "I had to refocus my mind. I decided to focus on being the best in this sport. Before I didn't put in as much hard work as I do now." John now aims one day to be world champion in his age category. "It might not happen until my 40s or 50s, but the great thing about triathlon is that you can keep going."

Training so hard means a lot of discipline when it comes to his diet. "I don't follow a particular diet," says John, "but I do eat healthily and well. I do cheat every now and then—if my body craves something I'll indulge—but no more than once a week and not during peak season."

John avoids bread and sugar—"I don't like the idea of spiking my insulin levels and then crashing later"—and he tries not to snack." Breakfast might be nutty granola with Greek yogurt and blueberries and raspberries (which are low GI – see page 15) rather than a sugary cereal. Lunch is usually salad with meat. He'll often have a banana at about 4 p.m. and an energy bar before training. Dinner will be a balanced meal accompanied by plenty of vegetables.

Even in off season John keeps alcohol to a minimum and sticks to red wine or premium vodka with soda and lime. Beer and cider are off limits, as is getting drunk too often. This doesn't mean he can't enjoy life. "In off season I let my mind relax. I go out with my friends and chill out. You can't be too structured all the time."

As for coping with the demands of the Meggitt graduate scheme, John admits it's been tough at times. He accepts that there is no training during the notorious graduate program transition weeks, and has to be disciplined.

Not everyone can relate to his lifestyle. "I've been called a lunatic, a masochist. Some people don't quite get it. But then I don't really get it, either. All I know is that I enjoy doing it."



CUT OUT AND KEEP

Why tri?

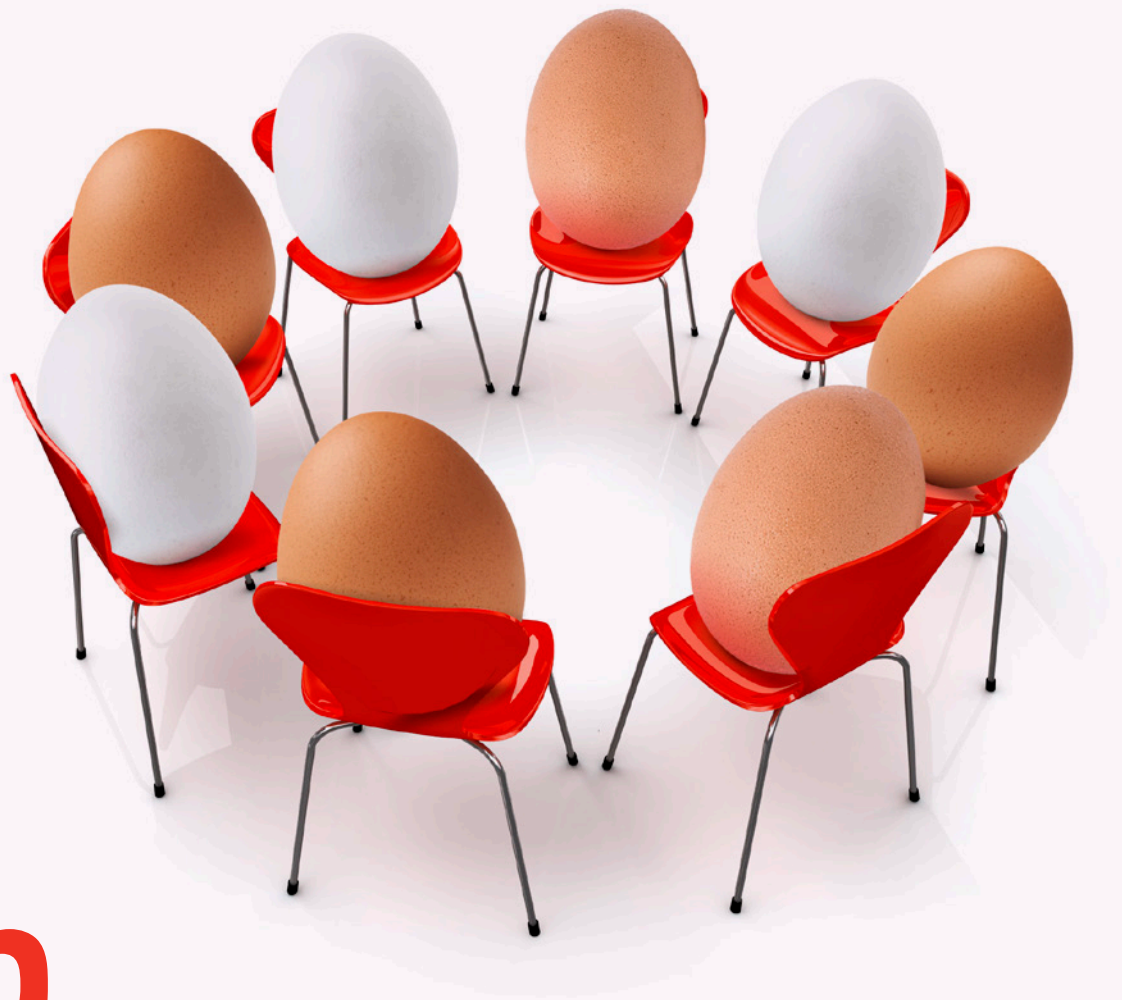
Triathlon is perfect for people of all levels of fitness. You can start from nothing and build up very quickly, and as it involves a variety of sports it doesn't matter if you're not brilliant at all of them.

Don't be put off by people at tri clubs running or swimming at daunting speeds. Just get in, try it and stick with it.

Join a club. It's easier if you have people around you to motivate you and there's a great community around triathlon.

You can keep doing triathlon as you get older—it's suitable for all ages.

Eggs in rehab



There was a time when eggs were considered almost as bad for you as smoking. The yolks, we were told, were full of dangerous cholesterol, and we were solemnly advised not to eat more than one a week.

But the good news for egg-lovers is that eggs are back in. It turns out that eggs are actually pretty good for you, and that far from avoiding the yolk (and really, who actually enjoys an egg white omelette?) we should enjoy the whole egg.

When it comes to high quality protein, it seems that Rocky was right, after all. One egg contains 6g of protein and, as it contains the full range of amino acids, an egg is considered a complete protein.

One large egg gives you a bunch of vitamins:

- **Vitamin B12** (Cobalamin): 9% of your RDA.
- **Vitamin B2** (Riboflavin): 15% of your RDA.
- **Vitamin A**: 6% of your RDA.
- **Vitamin B5** (Pantothenic Acid): 7% of your RDA.
- **Selenium**: 22% of your RDA.

It contains smaller quantities of nearly every vitamin and mineral required by the human body including calcium, iron, potassium, zinc, manganese, Vitamin E, folate and plenty more.

If that weren't enough, eggs provide lutein and zeaxanthin that protect your eyes and choline which you need for good liver, heart and brain health.

But what about the cholesterol?

Well, the answer here depends on whether you have diabetes or not. Studies suggest that eggs improve your cholesterol profile as they raise HDL (good cholesterol) and change LDL (bad cholesterol) to a subtype not associated with heart disease.

If you're diabetic, though, the picture may be different. Although most studies reveal no association between egg consumption and cardiovascular disease, some do show an increased risk in diabetic patients. If you have diabetes or prediabetes, it's a good idea to talk to your physician or dietitian about your egg consumption. Of course, how healthy an egg is depends on what you do with it. Eggs over easy with a big stack of home fries is not going to do you any good. But poached, boiled, hard-boiled, even scrambled with a small amount of fat or made into an omelette (ditto) should all be fine.

Here's a great, healthy recipe for eggs which is a north African favorite. All you need by way of equipment is a heavy-bottomed skillet with a lid.



Shakshuka

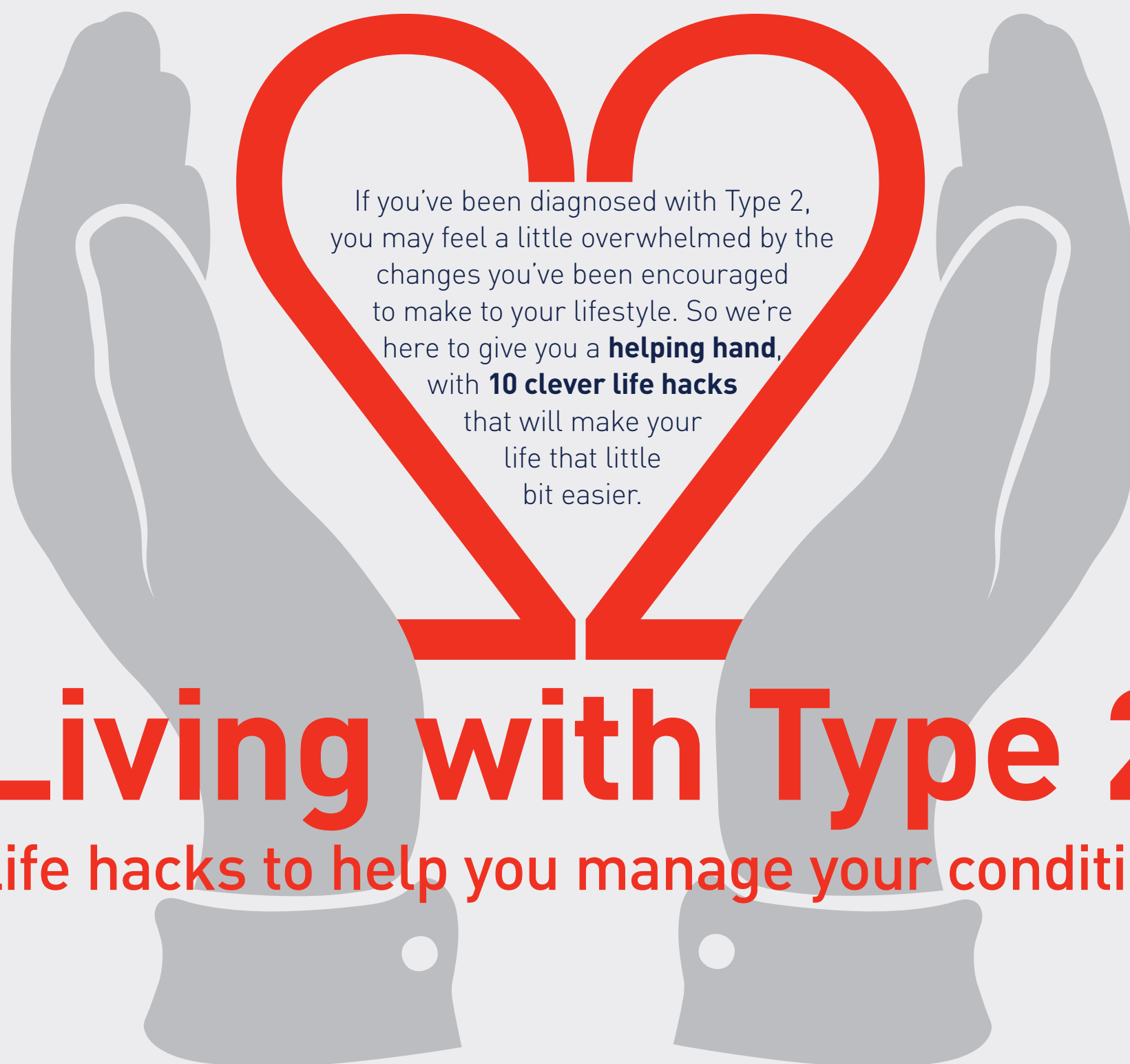
45
mins

Serves 4

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 large bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, diced
- 1 tsp cumin seeds or ground cumin
- 1 tsp harissa (north African chilli paste)
- 1 can plum or diced tomatoes
- 6 eggs
- Parsley for garnish

- 1 Heat oil and gently sauté onion and pepper until soft (about 20 minutes).
- 2 Add garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes.
- 3 Stir in cumin and harissa and cook for a further minute.
- 4 Add tomatoes and simmer until thickened (about 10 minutes).
- 5 Make 6 wells and crack in the eggs. Put a lid on the skillet and cook gently for about 10 minutes until the eggs are set.
- 6 Sprinkle on parsley

Serve with wholemeal bread and green salad.



If you've been diagnosed with Type 2, you may feel a little overwhelmed by the changes you've been encouraged to make to your lifestyle. So we're here to give you a **helping hand**, with **10 clever life hacks** that will make your life that little bit easier.

Living with Type 2

Life hacks to help you manage your condition

Keep cool

Eating your pasta or potatoes cold could help control your blood sugar levels. When you cool a starchy food down again after cooking, it becomes resistant to the normal enzymes in your gut that break it down and release glucose. Your body will treat it much more like fiber, creating a smaller glucose peak. You will also absorb fewer calories, which helps if you're trying to lose weight.

Try making a potato salad using cold, cooked potatoes (replace the mayo with low fat natural yogurt with parsley for added flavor and fiber) or make a pasta salad using cold, cooked pasta with lots of roasted vegetables and maybe some olives. Sushi is another super-healthy way to eat resistant starch.

If you've time, consider heating it back up again. In one study, pasta that was cooled and reheated was the most resistant.



Snack attack

Think about the times when you find yourself eating the wrong foods, and the chances are it's when you're out and about, without access to healthy food.

Get into the habit of planning ahead. Each weekend, think about where you're likely to be during the week and what you will eat. Make sure you always have a few healthy, portable snacks in your car or bag, such as small packets of almonds or pistachios (not the honey-roasted kind!) or turkey jerky (lower in fat and sodium than beef). Be wary of snack bars—even so-called healthy ones—as they can be packed with sugar and high in carbohydrates, and avoid smoothies which can send your blood sugar sky high.





Cinnamon sprinkles

OK, so let's be clear here. We're not talking about Cinnabons—nobody's going to claim cinnamon rolls as a health food. But cinnamon is a great way to bring out the sweetness in your food without adding sugar. Sprinkle it on oatmeal, yogurt or fruit, or add it to a tomato sauce for a surprising flavor explosion. Evidence that it actually lowers your blood glucose has now been largely discounted, but it's still a great way to avoid the foods that raise it.



Water

We're all told we should drink more water, but it's especially important if you have diabetes. In a study of more than 3,000 French people, those who drank at least 16 oz of water per day were 28 per cent less likely to develop high blood sugar than people who drank less.

The reasons for the findings are not entirely clear, but it is thought that it may be to do with the hormone vasopressin, which helps regulate water retention. If you get dehydrated, your levels of vasopressin rise, which makes your kidneys retain water and makes your blood sugar rise.



Snooze function

If you don't get enough sleep, you may find your hormones disrupted, leading to increased appetite, higher blood sugar, and a thicker waistline. Researchers in the Netherlands found that a single night of sleep deprivation could decrease insulin sensitivity by almost 25%.

Practise good sleep hygiene. Stop looking at your phone or tablet at least a couple of hours before you go to bed, avoid drinking too much alcohol, go easy on the caffeine, get into a regular sleep routine and make sure your bedroom is cool, dark and free from stimulation.

If you really can't solve your sleep problems, consult your doctor, who may be able to recommend a sleep program.



Time to chill

Stress can make blood sugar levels harder to control. When your body is under stress, your adrenal glands trigger the release of glucose from various organs, which can lead to your blood sugar levels rising. If you have diabetes you may find it hard to get your blood sugar levels back to normal after a period of stress.

Of course you can't avoid all stress in your life, but what you can do is find ways to manage your stress. Relaxation techniques and mindfulness meditation exercises are a well-documented way of controlling your response to stressful situations. If you want something slightly more active, consider signing up for a yoga or T'ai Chi class.

Make a list of five things you enjoy doing and make sure you do at least three of them every week. Making time for yourself is not self-indulgent—it could be a life saver.



Resistance is not futile

If you have Type 2 diabetes, you'll no doubt have been told that you need to take plenty of exercise. You may have started walking or even jogging, but have you considered strength (or resistance) training? Research suggests that doing weight training can improve your blood sugar control—the glucose passes more effectively into the muscles you have worked in your training.

If you're going to start resistance training, it's important to do it safely and with your doctor's approval. Hiring a personal trainer is ideal, but most gyms will have staff who can help you work out a safe and suitable program.

And remember, strength training isn't just for guys. Women benefit just as much from it and far from bulking up, they'll just get nicely toned.



Shrink your plate

It sounds silly but it really works. If you're trying to lose weight, eating your food on smaller plates helps you not only to serve smaller portions, but also makes you feel more satisfied. It's a trick of the mind—you're conditioned to fill your plate, and a full, small plate is more satisfying than a half-filled large one.



Vinegar splashes

According to research conducted at Arizona State University, consuming 1-2 tablespoons of vinegar before a meal may help slow the post-meal spike in blood glucose by as much as 34%. It is thought that vinegar may inhibit starch digestion and hold food in the stomach a little longer, which helps slow down the rise in blood sugar.

If you can manage a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar (the most palatable form of vinegar) in a glass of water before a meal, that's great, but it's not to everybody's taste. If you don't like it on its own, splash it on a salad or add it to cooked vegetables.



This isn't, by the way, carte blanche to go crazy with your carbs—it's just a neat way to keep your blood sugar a little more level.



Home made food – cook from scratch

Ready meals and fast food tend to be much higher in sugars, fat and sodium than home-cooked food, so make a point of making food from scratch, using natural, wholesome ingredients.

You can easily replicate fast food favorites with a healthier, home-made versions. Instead of pasta sauce laden with butter and heavy whipped cream, make one with half-fat sour cream. Or ditch the fried chicken and bake it in the oven instead—you'll be surprised how good it tastes. Take a look at our healthy recipes for diabetics and everyone else on page 22.





Carbs

THE GOOD

THE BAD

AND THE UGLY

Whether you're in perfect health or are dealing with the challenges of diabetes or prediabetes, getting to grips with the different types of carbohydrates is an important step towards leading a healthy lifestyle.

All carbs are not created equal—some send your blood sugar levels rocketing faster than a launch from Cape Canaveral, whereas others keep it firmly on terra firma, so it's important to know the difference between them.

But first, back to basics—what are carbs?

This is not a dumb question, by the way. Lots of people who bandy the word around don't really know what they are.

Carbohydrates are chains of sugar molecules that are hooked together. They are broken down into glucose during digestion and then absorbed into your body's cells to give you energy.

Simple carbohydrates are smaller chains of molecules that naturally occur in fruits, vegetables and milk products, as well as in processed sugars such as candy, honey, sugar and syrups.

Complex carbohydrates are longer chains and are found in breads, cereals, rice and pasta.

So are complex carbohydrates better than simple ones?

It's not quite as straightforward as that. What you really need to check out is the **glycaemic index**, or GI, of carbohydrates. This is a measure of how quickly sugars in foods are released into the blood stream. The GI of a food is measured on a scale of 1 to 100. Foods with a high GI break down quickly into sugar, whereas those with a low GI are slow-release.

It's important to favor low GI carbs over high GI ones because they keep your blood sugar levels more stable. This is especially important if you have diabetes or are prediabetic, but it's also good practice for all of us, as low GI carbs also stop you feeling hungry again so quickly and prevent you having energy slumps during the day.

But the lists don't make any sense!

Yes, it can be pretty confusing. Sweet potatoes, despite their name, have a lower GI than regular white potatoes, and potato chips score better than boiled potatoes (because adding fat to a carbohydrate slows down its absorption speed). You might be surprised to see rice cakes in the high GI list alongside bagels, and you may have expected all fruits to be on the "good" list.

On top of that, there are other things that affect the GI of food. How long you cook it for can make a difference (pasta cooked al dente has a lower GI than soft-cooked pasta), as can its ripeness—the riper the fruit the higher the GI.

So are there any rules of thumb?



Yes. Apart from the odd exception, most of it is actually common sense. You know already that donuts are not a health food (you do, don't you?!) and that you should pick oats before Lucky Charms for breakfast.

- If you choose natural, whole foods over processed foods, you'll already be most of the way there.
- Cook from scratch when you can and include lots of non-starchy veggies in your diet, along with beans, pulses and lean protein.
- When it comes to bread, rice and pasta, choose brown over white.
- Instead of soda, juice and even smoothies which can be surprisingly sugary, choose water.
- As for fruit, the less exotic the fruit, the lower GI it tends to be, so choose pears over pineapple, apples over mango, blueberries over bananas.

And if you slip up, don't panic. Healthy eating is a lifetime's work and the occasional sugary snack needn't be a disaster.



You can find lists of the GI of different carbohydrates on-line and there are books which give the same information.

Here are some examples of low, medium and high GI foods [source: American Diabetes Association]:

- Low GI foods (55 or below):**
- 100% stone-ground whole wheat or pumpernickel bread
 - Oatmeal (rolled or steel-cut), oat bran, muesli
 - Pasta, converted rice, barley, bulgur
 - Sweet potato, corn, yam, lima/butter beans, peas, legumes and lentils
 - Most fruits, non-starchy vegetables and carrots

- Medium GI foods (56-69):**
- Whole wheat, rye and pita bread
 - Quick oats
 - Brown, wild or basmati rice, couscous

- High GI (70 or more):**
- White bread or bagels
 - Corn flakes, puffed rice, bran flakes, instant oatmeal
 - Short grain white rice, rice pasta, macaroni and cheese from mix
 - Russet potato, pumpkin
 - Pretzels, rice cakes, popcorn, saltine crackers
 - Melons and pineapple



Diana Carrier

Born to run

She may have five children and 12 grandchildren, but Diana Carrier, a trade compliance specialist at Meggitt Training Systems, doesn't let age stand in her way when it comes to fitness. Every morning before work she goes for a run and is often found working out in the gym. She competes in races—anything from 5Ks to half marathons—between one and three times a month.

Diana hasn't always been this active. Until Vitality came along she was fairly active and enjoyed hiking, but never did anything as strenuous as running. "It's all because of Vitality," she says.

When she investigated the Vitality points structure, Diana realised that running would be a great way to earn points, so she immediately signed up for some runs in her local park. "At first I couldn't jog for very long at a time but I kept pressing on," she says. "I was running once a week, but when I upped it to two days a week I noticed I was getting stronger."

I have increased my bone density and I feel better for it

After three months Diana decided to run a 5K race. "I was hooked," she says. "I run in anything up to half marathons now, usually



CUT OUT AND KEEP

Diana's top tips

Do what you can do. If you can't run, start with walking. If you feel strong, do more.

Use the prospect of Vitality points to motivate you—think of the benefits!

Losing weight really is as simple as moving more and eating correctly.

Never let age stand in your way! If I can do it, so can you.

between one and three a month. I just love the fun and adventure. I hate to jog but if I'm going to earn points and win medals, I'm all for it, and usually there's a little party afterwards!"

At first I couldn't jog for very long at a time but I kept pressing on

She has joined the walking club at work and uses the MapMyFitness to track her walks and runs. "I have an old-style Fitbug too," she says. "I like it and it works for me."

Diana is full of enthusiasm for Vitality and participates in everything it has to offer. "It's an awesome program," she says. Thanks to Vitality, Diana has entered the Biggest Loser contest three times and has lost an impressive 22 lbs. "I had some weight to lose so I stepped up my training routine. Now I run every day before work and do

weight training three times a week. I eat correctly, with oatmeal for breakfast, and salads, and I don't drink soft drinks."

Diana is a big fan of the Vitality on-line nutrition courses. "They are chock full of good information. I know a lot of it but not all of it."

With all of this activity, it's no surprise to learn that Diana's health has benefited. "I have increased my bone density and I feel better for it. I can do yard work without pooping out in the middle of the day. And my yard looks good!"

Needless to say, Diana's family is proud of her. "They're surprised by the change. I was never one to sit around all day, but I have really stepped it up. Now I have two of the kids running with me and one accompanied me on a half marathon. I'm getting them a bit fitter!"



Now, just hold on a minute. If you're trying to lead a healthy lifestyle, why would you even think of going to a burger joint?

Well, it's not something we'd recommend as a daily or even weekly event, but sometimes life conspires to take you there.

Maybe you're out with friends and everyone votes to go for a Wendy's. Or you've run out of time, the only place open is a Five Guys and you figure it's better than eating nothing and bingeing later. Or maybe, just maybe, you want an occasional treat within an otherwise wholesome diet. All of those are perfectly valid excuses for lovin' it every now and then. Whatever your McReason, the fact is that fast food needn't be a dietary disaster.

It needs to be done with care, though. Junk on the tray means junk in the trunk. So let's start with a few ground rules:



Do not, in any circumstances, supersize. We all know what happened in the documentary.



Shun the sodas. We know there's a meal deal, but put your waistline before your wallet.



Forget the fries. No, we're not kidding. They're just too good to have one or two, and they're packed with fats that won't even fill you up.

Can I have a burger, at least?

This is where it gets interesting, because the burger isn't always the worst thing on the menu. OK, maybe not the triple-mountain-bacon-cheese-big-bad-mega-burger. You don't need us to tell you that's not a smart choice. But the basic, regular-sized, plain burger—it's not actually that bad. The basic McDonalds hamburger is one of the lowest calorie items on the main menu—lower, surprisingly, than many of the chicken options. Lower, even, than the wholesome-sounding Artisan Grilled Chicken Sandwich.

What about chicken, while we're on the subject?

Most burger bars have a chicken sandwich or burger and it sounds great, but do apply some common sense. If it contains the word "fried", that should give you a tiny clue that it might contain some added fat. Anything southern-style should also get alarm bells ringing. If it's grilled, though, and not covered in mayo, it's likely to be a sound decision.

Buns away?

Purists will tell you to have the burger without the bun, and it's true that burger buns aren't exactly at the superfood end of the spectrum (some of them contain high fructose corn syrup and those nasty, partially-hydrogenated vegetable oils). And yet it strikes us that a burger without a bun ... well, it's Fred without Ginger (or Ginger without Fred, depending on how you look at it). It's not going to bring much to the party, but the party wouldn't be much without it, either, so knock yourself out.

Salad days

Hmm, approach with caution. So a grilled chicken salad is always going to be a better option than the five-patty stack-burger with Cajun fries. But, as always, watch out for the lure of the hidden extra. Fried croutons, bacon bits, ranch dressing and nachos are not your friends. Keep it simple, choose just a dash of plain oil and vinegar for your dressing and you won't go far wrong.

Refuse the challenge

Yes, we know your friends would love it. And you'd win a t-shirt. And get your photograph on the Hall of Fame. And feel great about yourself for the 30 seconds it took your stomach to realise what you'd done to it. But do not, under ANY circumstances, accept the burger-eating challenge that increasing numbers of restaurants are offering. This is Meggitt, not Man v. Food. And when Man v. Food's Adam Richman lost 60 lbs, the first thing he did was quit the extreme eating.

Let us know what you'd like us to cover next. Texas Roadhouse? Chuck E. Cheese's? Southern food? We'd love to help.



Did you know?

Vital facts |
Breakthroughs |
Health news |

The spice of life

If you like your food hot, you may be doing your health a favor. A study of nearly half a million people in China revealed that participants who ate spicy foods almost every day had a 14% lower risk of death from cancer, heart disease and respiratory system diseases compared with those who consumed them less than once a week. It's good to be liberal with the chilli but just don't go crazy with the less healthy stuff that often goes hand in hand with spicy food, like ghee, cheese, fried rice and sour cream!



Stress and the cookie jar

We all know that high levels of stress are bad for your health, but now scientists have discovered it may affect your ability to say no to unhealthy snacks. In a study conducted by the University of Zurich's Laboratory for Social and Neural Systems Research, researchers presented volunteers with a choice of a healthy food or a less healthy but tastier alternative. Those who had undergone a stressful situation before the choice made less healthy choices. So next time you have a difficult meeting or a tense situation at work, be careful when you pass the cookie jar.



No need for a pregnant pause

Pregnant women are sometimes nervous about exercising, but a Spanish study concluded that moderate exercise during pregnancy had many benefits for mother and child. Not only did those who kept moving gain less weight, they had a reduced risk of gestational diabetes, which carries an increased risk of serious disorders such as pre-eclampsia, hypertension, preterm birth, and with induced or caesarean birth. So long as your doctor is happy and you keep it sensible, there's every reason to stay active.



Sleep tight

A bad night's sleep doesn't just make you yawn, according to a paper published in the Journal of Psychology. If you don't sleep well, the hormone controlling your appetite is affected, your emotional stress is greater, you crave more food to compensate for your lack of energy and you are more impulsive— a perfect storm that's likely to make you eat more than you should. Make a good night's sleep a priority over finishing that box set, and talk to your doctor if you find it hard to nod off.





Terry Weed

Terry Weed—a platinum Vitality member who goes to the gym every day of the week—is the poster boy for Vitality. We find out why he’s so keen to tell everyone about the benefits of the Vitality program

If you see Terry Weed—Vice President (Measurement) Sales and Marketing Meggitt Sensing Systems in Irvine, CA—poring over a computer with his teenage daughter, the chances are they’re not looking at cats on YouTube or posting pictures on Instagram. They’re much more likely to be on the Vitality website, reading up on useful facts on health and fitness.

“We go through the website and gather information,” says Weed. “It has helped my daughter with homework for her health class.”

My clothes fit so much better and I feel a lot better about myself. I have more energy and when I go out with my children I’m able to participate more.

It’s not just in educational terms that Vitality has been a family affair for Weed: he has bought Fitbits for himself and his family from the Vitality website and works out every day in a partner gym with his fiancée, Amy Hathaway.

“I have a very busy schedule,” says Weed. “I usually work from 7.30 to 6 every day. We meet each other at the gym every day. She’s trying to lose weight and become healthier, and it’s a chance for us to talk and catch up while we exercise.”



Weed—a Vitality platinum member—takes Vitality seriously. He has done all the nutrition courses, participates in Vitality Squares, and attends the weekly fitness session at the factory on a Friday. He is an enthusiastic advocate for Vitality in the workplace. “I try to convey the message of its advantages for the company as a whole,” he says. “We have had a significant rebate from Vitality because of our level of participation, but more than that I see it as a way of improving the health of the population at the facility. We have 433 employees who work really hard. The Vitality message increases awareness of the three major risk factors—blood pressure, cholesterol and weight—the things we are screened for in the biometric screening.”

Weed himself found the biometric screening tests especially illuminating. “I’m still extremely healthy for my age, but at the last biometric screening I found that I didn’t have enough good cholesterol. As a result I’m eating more fish oil and less meat. Before Vitality I never knew that the source of cholesterol made a difference. I eat a lot more fish and less beef, though I still eat chicken.”

Exercising every day has made a big difference to how Weed feels.

“When I didn’t go every day I was always 10 lbs heavier,” he says. “Now I’m able to control my weight. My lower back pain has gone, too. I don’t have any pain so long as I go every day and do my stretches and exercises.

On his new, healthier regimen, Weed has lost weight, too.


“I used to weigh 185 lbs. Now I maintain 175 lbs and am aiming for a target of 172 lbs. My clothes fit so much better and I feel a lot better about myself. I have more energy and when I go out with my children I’m able to participate more.

“I really bought into Vitality and feel a lot better. Now I want to convey that to other people.”



Weed—a Vitality platinum member—takes Vitality seriously. He has done all the nutrition courses, participates in Vitality Squares, and attends the weekly fitness session at the factory on a Friday.

Spreading the word



CUT OUT AND KEEP

Terry’s top tips

Take advantage of the information on the Vitality website: it’s a great source of information for the whole family.

Don’t skip the biometric screening: it could reveal important health issues and risk factors.

If you struggle to find time to exercise, consider working out with a friend or family member so you get time with them as well as taking exercise.

Don’t forget the financial benefits of Vitality: you’ll get a rebate on your health insurance.



Healthy recipes for diabetics (and everyone else!)

Diabetes-friendly cooking doesn't need to be weird or complicated or expensive. You don't even need special, diabetic products. All you need is lots of nutritious ingredients and a bit of imagination.

We've taken some popular dishes and given them a healthy twist to make them suitable for everyone in the family, whether they're diabetic, prediabetic, looking for healthy recipes or just interested in delicious, wholesome food.

Pork tenderloin with peach salsa

30 mins

Usually pork is paired with high GI pineapple. We've substituted peach instead for a lower GI but equally tasty alternative. Herbs add flavor and eliminate the need for salt.

Serves 4

- 1 x pork tenderloin (approx. 1 lb)
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper

Salsa

- 2 peaches, peeled and diced
- 1 green bell pepper, finely diced
- 4 scallions, chopped

- 1 Rub the pork with the pepper, garlic and herbs.
- 2 Broil the pork under a medium-high heat for 12-15 minutes or until done. Allow to rest for 10 minutes as you assemble the salsa.
- 3 Mix together the salsa ingredients in a bowl.
- 4 Slice the pork and serve with the salsa.
- 5 If you're not trying to lose weight you could add a plain oil-and-vinegar dressing to the salsa to make it extra-delicious.

12g Approx. carbohydrates (for 3oz pork and ¼ cup salsa)



Healthy turkey chilli

60 mins

This dish has all the benefits of a chilli—a thick, flavorsome, spicy sauce—with none of the bad bits. We’ve taken out the fatty, red meat and substituted super-lean turkey, and have added extra veggies and gone easy on the salt. Serve with brown or basmati rice to keep the GI on the low.

Serves 4

- 1 tbsp olive or ground nut oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 medium carrot, diced
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 16 oz lean, ground turkey (breast, not thigh)
- 1 x 14.5 oz can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tbsp tomato puree (salt-free if possible)
- 1 x 14.5 oz can kidney beans (salt-free if possible)
- ¼ tsp chilli powder (or more or less, to taste)
- ½ tsp ground cumin

- 1 Heat oil in a large pot over a medium heat and cook onions until translucent.
- 2 Add carrots, zucchini and garlic and cook for three minutes.
- 3 Turn up heat and add turkey. Cook until brown, stirring constantly so it doesn’t stick.
- 4 Add diced tomatoes, tomato puree, chicken broth, beans and spices.
- 5 Bring to boil, reduce to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for 15-20 minutes until sauce has thickened.

21.5g Approx. carbohydrates per serving (excluding rice / accompaniments)



Apple slaw

5 mins

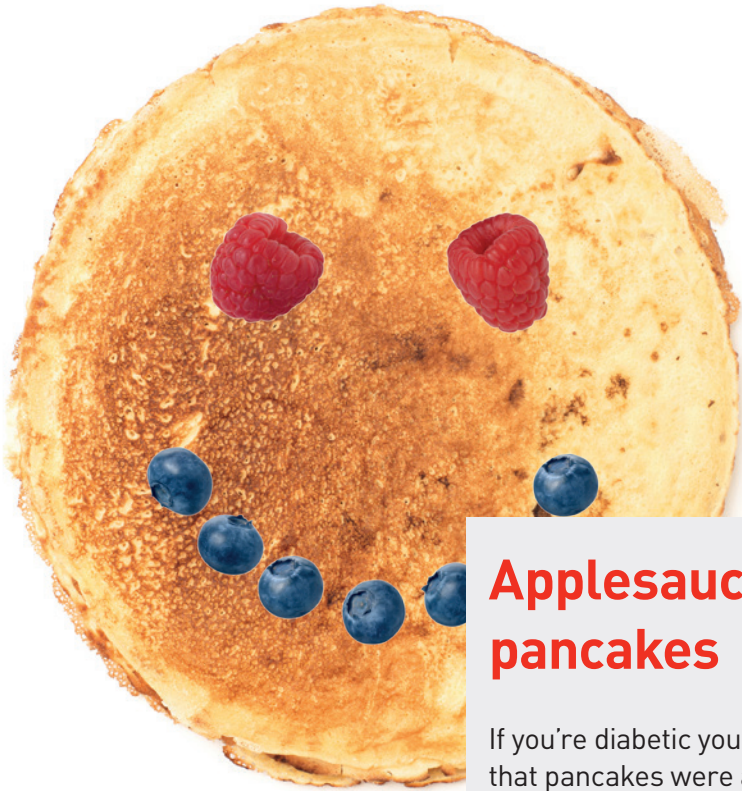
With its lashings of mayo and high-fat reputation, slaw is one of those sides we’d usually tell you to pass on. With this recipe, though, we’ve swapped the mayo for nonfat yogurt and added extra veggies, so you can eat it happily, confident in the knowledge that it’s fat-free and super-good for you.

Serves 6

- ½ white cabbage, quartered, cored and shredded
- 1 apple, cored, grated and sprinkled with a little lemon juice
- 2 carrots, cut into matchsticks
- ½ red onion, finely sliced
- ⅓ cup fat-free Greek yogurt
- juice ½ lemon (plus extra for sprinkling on apple)
- 2 tsp cider vinegar
- 2 tsp mustard

- 1 Mix the cabbage, apple and carrot in a large bowl.
- 2 In a separate bowl, mix remaining ingredients to make the dressing.
- 3 Add the dressing to the mix and stir to coat.

8g Approx. carbohydrates per serving



Applesauce pancakes

5 mins

If you’re diabetic you may have thought that pancakes were a Sunday treat you’d never be able to have again. Not with these ones! They’re low in fat and sugar and, although they wouldn’t be a perfect breakfast choice for every day, they are great for an occasional, even weekly, breakfast treat. If you can’t live without a drizzle of syrup on top—and who could blame you?—go for sugar-free maple syrup, which you can find in most grocery stores. Again, not something you’d want to have every day, but if it lets you enjoy pancakes once in a while, we’re all for it.

If you want to add fruit, choose low GI fruits such as berries.

Serves 10. Serving size: 2 pancakes

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 2 tsp toasted wheat germ (available from grocery stores including Walmart)
- 1 cup nonfat buttermilk
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- Cooking spray
- Sugar-free maple syrup (optional)

- 1 Combine dry ingredients in a medium bowl; make a well in center of mixture.
- 2 Whisk buttermilk with applesauce, vegetable oil and egg.
- 3 Add buttermilk mixture to dry ingredients, stirring until just mixed.
- 4 Heat a nonstick griddle or nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray over medium heat. For each pancake, pour 1/4 cup batter onto hot griddle, spreading to a 5-inch circle. Cook pancakes until tops are covered with bubbles and edges look cooked; turn pancakes, and cook other side.

23g Approx. carbohydrates per serving of two pancakes (excluding maple syrup and fruit)

Note: 1 tbsp sugar-free maple syrup has 3g carbohydrate.



Maybe you don't like the idea of getting your hair wet, or are embarrassed by the thought of appearing in a swimsuit. But swimming is a fantastic sport for people of all ages, shapes, sizes and levels of fitness (and if you stick at it, you'll look a whole lot better in a bathing suit!)

**ake to the
water!**

POOL RULES OK

Here are 10 great reasons to love swimming



- 1 It's perfect if you're only starting to get fit.** If you're starting exercise from scratch it can be a bit daunting. Happily, swimming can be as gentle as you like, and you don't need to be super-fit to start.
- 2 It's non-impact.** Because the water supports 90% of your weight, swimming is a great form of exercise for anyone with joint problems or carrying excess weight.
- 3 It combines aerobic exercise with resistance.** Swimming is pretty much the perfect form of exercise as it gives you both a thorough cardio workout, which is good for your heart, and improves your muscle strength. Because water is 12 times denser than air, every stroke becomes a resistance exercise which strengthens your muscles and builds muscle tone. This is especially good news for diabetics, as resistance training can improve your glucose levels.
- 4 It's good for your bones.** Great news for anyone worried about bone strength, especially post-menopausal women who tend to lose bone density. Because of the resistance offered by the water, swimming improves bone strength.
- 5 It makes you smart.** Research shows that children who swim regularly enjoy better language development, math skills, confidence and fine motor skills than non-swimmers. There's no reason to think that adults won't enjoy similar benefits.
- 6 It helps you stay cool.** If you're prone to overheat when you exercise, then swimming is for you. The water disperses your body heat more efficiently and continuously cools you down. If you swim before you get to work, you won't have to show up with a red face!
- 7 It could make you live longer.** Researchers at the University of South Carolina studied 40,000 men aged 20 to 90 for more than 30 years. The results showed that those who swam had a 50 percent lower death rate than runners, walkers, or men who didn't exercise.
- 8 It reduces your stress levels.** All exercise is good for de-stressing, but there's something about swimming that seems to make it more effective than other forms of exercise. Nobody's absolutely sure why—it might be the rhythmic nature of the stroke, the feeling of being supported by the water, or the experience of near-soundlessness if you immerse your head in the water.
- 9 It burns more calories than you might think!** A 155 lb person will burn nearly 500 calories in an hour of lap swimming (equivalent to a wholewheat bagel with two tablespoons of peanut butter or a cup of Greek yogurt with 1 oz almonds).
- 10 It's super flexible.** If you find the idea of doing laps of a pool boring, consider water walking, an aquafit class or even water yoga. Some spin classes now even take place in pools!

NO EXCUSES!

Chris Harvey

The biggest winner

If anyone deserved to win on Vitality Squares, it was support analyst and deployment specialist at MUSA, Chris Harvey. A Vitality enthusiast, he participates to the max and loves to spread the Vitality message. But Chris very nearly didn't win—we find out why.





CUT OUT AND KEEP

How to be a Vitality winner—Chris’s top tips

You’ve got to be in it to win it—just sign up and get involved

Do as many Vitality activities as you can—you’ll soon earn points.

If you have a fitness device, make sure you wear it at work and sync it to Vitality—you’ll earn points just by walking to the coffee machine!

“It was a bad 15 minutes,” says Chris Harvey, recalling the agonizing quarter of an hour he spent waiting for his computer to unfreeze. He’d been playing the Vitality on-line game, Vitality Squares, in which players click on a series of squares to reveal healthy and unhealthy foods. Just as Chris had uncovered four fruits, his computer froze.

"My boss asks me how I get to go to the coast one weekend and then to San Diego another," he says. "I tell him Vitality pays for it"

“I was screaming at the computer,” he recalls. Thankfully when power returned, his progress had been saved and Chris was able to continue.

His next move was to uncover a fifth fruit which won him a \$50 gift card, but it was what happened next that made him rub his eyes. “I clicked a sixth [which meant that he’d won a \$500 Amazon gift card] and I

thought this can’t be right,” he says. There was no mistake, though. Chris validated his win with Amazon and was \$500 richer.

“I was giddy all day”, he says. “I told everyone, ‘Hey, guess what?’”

Chris used the win to buy gift cards for his nephews and nieces, and has used other (smaller) wins to buy cards for his son and his sister. It’s just one of the perks of Vitality that Chris enjoys.

“My boss asks me how I get to go to the coast one weekend and then to San Diego another,” he says. “I tell him Vitality pays for it. I go on four trips a year because of the bonus on my pay check.” The bonus is, of course, the \$900 healthcare credit he gets because of his and his wife’s participation in the Vitality program. In addition he has earned \$1,000 in gift vouchers since the start of this Vitality year.

If anyone deserves to win prizes through their Vitality membership, it’s Chris, who must be one of the program’s most active participants. “I take all the classes and do all the goals, and I walk 15,000 steps at work each day.”

Chris enjoys the competitive nature of amassing points. He and health hero David Krigman (see page 4) compete each year to

I take all the classes and do all the goals, and I walk 15,000 steps at work each day

be the first to hit platinum status. “We’re Fitbit buddies and egg each other on,” says Chris.

Chris’s job involves him in a lot of walking —on a work visit to San Diego to install computers he managed 40,000 steps in one day—and he and his wife enjoy hiking in the hills. “There’s all kinds of mountains around here, so I can say to my wife on a Saturday morning, ‘Let’s go hiking.’”

He has plans to lose weight, but he believes the walking is responsible for his blood pressure and glucose levels being healthy. “I’m the fattest fit guy you’ll ever meet!”

What frustrates Chris most is the people who won’t get involved in Vitality. Many, he says, believe that their personal health information will be known to their bosses and he is keen to remind them that this isn’t so. “Though some are just lazy and don’t want to do it!”

His message to anyone who hasn’t yet signed up for Vitality is clear. “Do it. It’s good for you.” It’s certainly good for him.

Vitality news and events

The Vitality kick-off challenge

The Vitality program has been making a difference in so many aspects of your lives that it's hard to know where to start, but let's kick off with the Kick-Off Challenge that ran in November through December 2015. The challenge was to get as many of you signed up and actively participating in Vitality as possible: the winner was the unit with the highest percentage of employees to complete both the Vitality Health Review and the Vitality Check. The winning unit was rewarded with points: each employee who completed the challenge won 350 Vitality points. Those in the second place unit won 200 points each and those in third place, 100 points each.

The winners were MABS Kentucky, with an impressive 78% employees completing both their Vitality Health Review and Vitality Check. At second was MPC Rockmart Nonunion at 68.3%. Rockmart Union came in a close third with 68.1%. Congratulations to everyone who took part in the challenge and got their co-workers signing up for Vitality.



New, improved platform

There are big changes to the Vitality platform, with improvements designed to make navigating the Power of Vitality website easier and keeping track of your health more straightforward.

Vitality learning center

The learning center at PowerofVitality.com is packed full of educational resources to improve your health plus opportunities to earn more points. It has a Guide to Vitality section with information on everything from the new three-tiered workout levels to what risk factors are used to calculate your Vitality age.

Personalized homepage

It's all about you when you hit the homepage. You can upload your own photos, check your messages and get up-to-date with all things Vitality on the Vitality newsfeed.

Status symbol

Track your Vitality status, plan your points, make sure your devices are linked to Vitality and you're logging all your workouts. Getting to the Vitality status you're aiming for should be easier and quicker. With the improved site, Vitality continues to suggest goals, but you will be more involved in selecting your goals and ensuring they are appropriate for you and your health profile. As an added bonus, once you personalize and set your goals, you will earn a maximum of 30 Vitality points each week for checking in and recording your progress.

Health tracker

It's not just about points. Check your health profile to see your personal data (and remember, nobody sees this but you) and whether you're improving month by month.



And as a new year gift ...

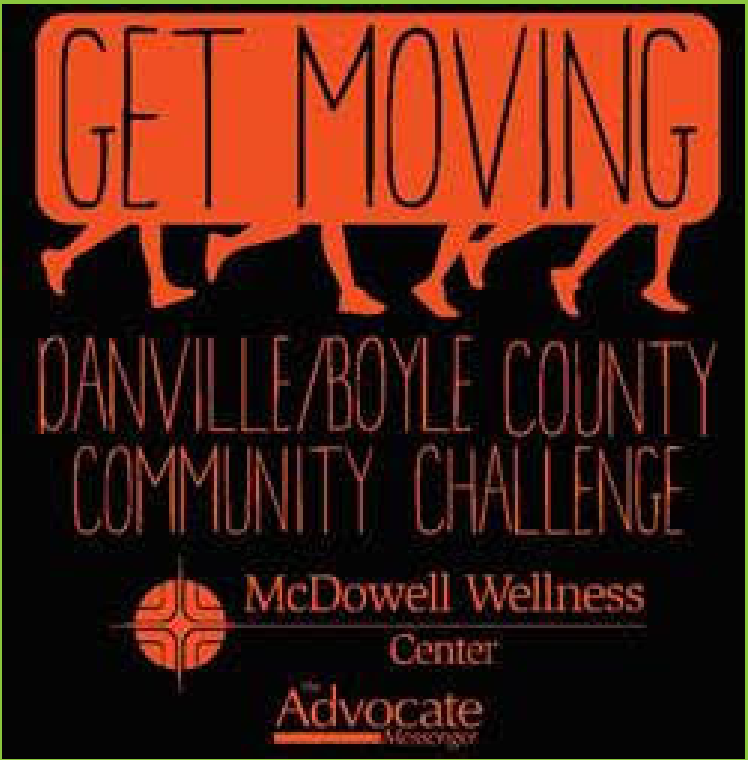
If the healthcare savings of up to \$900 per year, the chance to earn Vitality points, win prizes and get savings on groceries weren't enough, now you can get money off a fitness device. Each employee and their spouse will be given one Vitality Mall coupon code each worth \$25 to spend at the Vitality Mall on a fitness device of their choosing. Maybe you've chosen the popular Fitbit Surge or a Garmin VivoFit2—whatever it is, it'll make tracking your healthy activities that little bit easier. And employees can pay for the balance with Vitality Bucks.

Seriously, if you haven't yet signed up for Vitality, what are you waiting for?



Take a hike!

Nobody sits still for long in Orange County, CA. Director of Hikes, Christine Whitaker, organizes monthly Vitality hiking events at Meggitt Sensing Systems. "It gives employees the opportunity to earn Vitality points while enjoying a variety of local landscapes, fresh air and hearty work-outs," says Christine. Here's the gang enjoying a hike in the stunning surroundings of Peter's Canyon.



MABSKY on the move

The folks at MABSKY don't stay still for long either—at least not if Wellness Champ Connie Brewer has anything to do with it. The two plants participated in a "Get Moving" community challenge sponsored by a local gym. 108 people got involved in the eight week program and there was an impressive 100% participation rate for the whole period!

And in case anyone thought the holiday season was going to be a time of rest, they needed to think again! The D.C. plant had a scavenger hunt on December 4, to get everyone moving after their holiday dinner. They had to gather items from 20 locations in and around the plant, so the turkey and pumpkin pie were soon a distant memory.

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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