

**Commit to a Healthy Lifestyle -
Written by Denise Kiamy, Director of Nutrition Services & Diabetes Education,
Hocking Valley Community Hospital**

A healthy lifestyle is not purely choosing to bring carrot sticks and hummus instead of cookies for an afternoon snack and setting aside to work out four times a week. It is a commitment, a way of life that promotes optimum physical health. Working up to 40 hours a week or more can make it difficult. No one says it's easy but there are things you can do to help make it happen.

Make movement part of your daily life. Thinking about how often you are stationary throughout your day may encourage you to realize that a brisk walk before or after work for 30 minutes is actually essential, rather than optional, to keep your body functioning properly. There are exercise and physical activity options for the person with mobility limitations. Consider a referral to physical therapy if you have back or shoulder pain. Sitting exercise videos are available online with many to suit various fitness levels.

If you are interested in following a general healthful eating plan, focus on eating more whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds. Eat at least five (5) servings of fruit and vegetables daily. Don't be color blind; the more colorful the food, the more it is packed with valuable nutrients. Eat blue and purple (blueberries, eggplant, etc.), yellow and orange (peppers, squash, bananas, etc.), and green (apples, spinach, etc.) fruits and vegetables to leverage the tens of thousands of beneficial compounds these foods offer. Color means health: the deeper and richer the color, the more phytochemical vitamins and minerals are present in the food.

Eat more beans, lentils and whole grains. Beans are chalk full of fiber providing more than any other food. Moreover, beans have more protein than any other plant food, and protein is nature's diet pill – giving use to longer lasting appetite suppression than any other macronutrient. Enjoy all beans anyway you want: bean dips, bean soup, beans in salads, beans in your whole grain burrito, beans in brown rice, beans in chili, and beans in your stir fry – just eat more beans!

Whole grains are among the most powerful disease fighting foods nature has given us. When whole grains are refined and processed into white flour products and white rice, their outer bran coat and inner germ portions are removed. Unfortunately, these are the two areas that have virtually all of a grain's nutritional power. So a refined/ processed enriched grain is nothing more than a whole grain with all if its nutritional goodness removed.

In place of beef and processed meats, you can get your protein from eating eggs, fish, poultry, beans, soy-based foods, and nuts/ nut butters. When you eat meat, remove the fatty parts before eating.

Limit your daily added sugar intake, especially from sugar-sweetened beverages like soda, fruit juice, and sports drinks. Sugar is also found in honey, syrups, jelly, and fruit juice concentrate.

Read labels carefully so you know how much added sugar is in each portion. Fresh fruits and fresh vegetables contain natural sugars, fiber, and water. The American Heart Association recommends that added sugars make up no more than 100 calories (25 grams) a day for women and 150 (38 grams) a day for men.

Life is unpredictable so we need to nurture our mind as the tool to cope better with a busy schedule rather than a back up plan. Striving to adapt your attitude when the unexpected occurs will allow you to become resourceful and creative in working physical activity into your day. The ability to do this will also mean that you can say yes to an impromptu dinner date with friends because this is part of a healthy lifestyle, too. Making your mind flexible will help avoid the “on the wagon, off the wagon” mentality. Commit to a healthy lifestyle with your mind and body.

Brown Rice Risotto with Shrimp Recipe

from the Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics

By Stacey Antine, MS, RD, and HealthBarn USA

Ingredients

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 medium yellow onion
1 garlic clove, minced
1 cup short grain brown rice, dry
2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth, divided
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary
3 tablespoons fresh parsley, minced
¼ teaspoon saffron
1 pound shrimp, raw
½ cup grated Parmesan, divided

Directions

1. In a large saucepan, heat oil and sauté onion and garlic. Add rice and cook quickly for 2 minutes more, stirring constantly.
2. Add ½ cup vegetable broth, rosemary, parsley and saffron. Stir well, cover and gently simmer.

3. Add another ½ cup of broth as liquid is absorbed. Continue with remaining broth until it's all used. Rice should be tender after cooking for about 30 minutes).
4. While waiting for the rice to cook, bring one quart of water to a boil. Cook shrimp until pink. Drain and reserve.
5. Just before the rice is done, add ¼ cup cheese. When cheese is melted through, remove from heat. Add cooked shrimp to rice. Toss until combined.
6. Top with remaining cheese and serve.

Nutrition Information

Serving size: 1 cup

Serves 6

Calories: 300; Total Fat: 9g; Saturated Fat 2g; Trans Fat 0g; Cholesterol: 120mg; Sodium: 330mg; Total Carbohydrate: 29g; Dietary Fiber: 2g; Sugars: 1g; Protein: 22g;

Stacey Antine, MS, RD, is founder of HealthBarn USA.