Nearly 7 out of 10 adults and 3 out of 10 youth in Michigan are overweight or obese. Obesity is a risk factor for chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. Healthy eating is important to prevent these diseases, but it is not the only thing we can do to stay healthy. The 4 x 4 Plan urges Michigan residents to follow 4 health behaviors and attend to 4 health measures.

Four Health Behaviors

1. Maintain a healthy diet
   A healthy diet should include lots of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Limit saturated fat, added sugar and sodium. Balance calories that you consume on an average day with calories that you use.

2. Engage in Exercise
   Physical activity helps us maintain healthy weight, keeps our bones, joints and muscles strong, boosts energy and lifts our mood. Adults should get in at least 2.5 hours of “moderate intensity” activity a week. Bike, dance, swim or walk at a pace lets you talk but not sing. Children should be active for at least one hour a day and limit media time.

3. Get an Annual Physical Examination
   Annual physicals help diagnose current health problems and prevent future ones. Speak with your doctor about health screenings specific to your age, family history and lifestyle.

4. Avoid All Tobacco Use or Exposure
   Smoking and tobacco use is the leading cause of premature and preventable death in the US, and contributes to 15,000 deaths in Michigan each year.

Four Health Measures

1. Body Mass Index (BMI)
   BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight. A healthy BMI is between 18.5-24.9; 25-29.9 is considered overweight; and a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. Among other benefits, a healthy BMI indicates lower risk for many chronic diseases.

2. Blood Pressure
   High blood pressure increases the risk of heart diseases and stroke. Healthy eating and regular exercise help keep blood pressure at healthy levels (lower than 120/80).

3. Cholesterol Level
   (Continued on page 2)
Serving Fall Harvests

Sweet Potato

- Select a tuber that is tapered at both ends.
- Store in a cool, dry place for up to 2 weeks. Place cooked sweet potatoes in a closed container in the refrigerator.
- Before cooking, scrub sweet potatoes to remove dirt; remove eyes and dark spots. Cook and eat with the skin on, for greater nutrition.
- One medium sweet potato, or about one cup chopped, provides more than the recommended daily amount of vitamin A, essential for healthy skin and eyes.

How to cook sweet potato:
- Bake: Scrub the tuber and poke holes with a fork. Cover with foil and place in the oven at 375 degrees for about 1 hour or until soft.
- Sautee: Sautee slices in a pan with a tablespoon of olive oil, and cover, stirring periodically. Cook until slices are soft.
- Microwave: Prick the skin of the sweet potato with a fork or knife a few times. Cook on high, flipping the potato over halfway through cook time. Cook 1 potato for 3 to 4 minutes, or until it is soft.

Put Harvests Up, Cont’d from p 1

Sweet Potato & Apple Stir-Fry

Ingredients:
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 cups chopped sweet potatoes
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger (optional)
- 2 apples, chopped
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions:
1. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add sweet potatoes, cover and cook for 5 minutes.
2. Add ½ cup water and ginger. Cover and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often.
3. Add apples and cinnamon. Cook for 10 more minutes until sweet potatoes are soft.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Makes 5 servings.

Adapted from sparkrecipes.com

4x4 plan, Cont’d from p 1

High cholesterol increases risk of heart disease and stroke. A diet low in saturated and trans fats helps keep ‘bad’ cholesterol (LDL) levels low. Regular exercise helps lower bad cholesterol and increase the ‘good’ kind (HDL). Keep your total cholesterol level below 200; consult your doctor if your level is 240 or higher or if you have other concerns.

4. Blood Glucose Level
High blood sugar levels can increase the risk of heart and kidney disease, stroke, and eye problems. Choosing diets with fruits and vegetables and whole grains, minimizing the consumption of foods and beverages with added sugars, regular exercise, and good eating habits help maintain desired levels. Aim for a fasting sugar level below 100 mg/dl.


Sources: JSYFruitsVeggies.org; USDA Household Food Fact Sheets