**Health Yourself Byte**

MARCH – NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

March is National Nutrition Month, a month to focus on the importance of making informed food choices and developing or improving sound eating habits. Why? Because when you consider the 3 basic requirements for survival: food, shelter and clothing, FOOD tops the list!

Your food choices impact your overall health status and give you the energy you need to perform your day-to-day activities. Your food is your fuel and what recharges YOUR battery! Eating is not just something we do to fill the time or for thin thighs!

The sad thing is that most of us feel like we can't keep up with the latest nutrition news because it's seems to be forever changing and seems complicated . . . but the bottom line is that there are just a few basic nutrition concepts that you need to know:
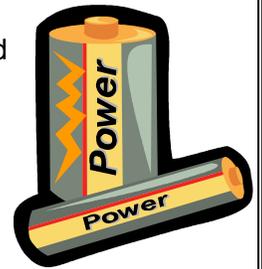
1. The main source of energy for your body comes from carbohydrates which are broken down into glucose. The body has the easiest time digesting them . . . but, if you eat too many carbohydrates, you body is very good at storing them as fat.
2. Protein in the foods you eat are broken down into individual amino acids which you body uses to build and repair parts of your body. Your body also needs protein for components of your immune system, hormones, nervous system and organs.
3. Your body needs calcium to keep your bones and teeth strong.
4. Your body needs fat to metabolize certain vitamins and membranes that contain fats surround all the cells of the body.
5. Vitamins and minerals that you get from your diet are just as important as carbohydrates, fats and protein but, you only need them in small amounts. They help the chemical reactions in your body to happen faster.

If you want to get back to basics, go to www.choosemyplate.gov .   This government sponsored website offers personalized eating plans and interactive tools to help you plan and/or assess your present eating habits and identifies the best food choices for a healthier YOU!

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