

ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle



The Quest for Optimum Health

Some people are fixated on a number on the scale, others on a dress or pant size. Yet others are fixated on lab test results or blood pressure figures. These numbers can all be indicators of our current health status, but usually don't tell the entire story. And the reality is that once you achieve your desired weight, perfect clothing size, within-normal-range lab value, or other health goal, there is still room for improvement. In other words, you haven't reached your destination. Upon achieving that number, you are not suddenly in a position to stop your efforts and live in health utopia for your remaining years. You are just at another stage in this life-long quest for optimal health.

It actually all starts before birth. In addition to genetics, we now know that the food choices and weight of a pregnant woman have a very significant impact on the food likes and dislikes and the weight propensity of her child.

Overfeeding; bottles with juice, formula or milk at bedtime; an unbalanced diet; and a diet high in fat and sugar can all set

the stage for health issues later in life. Hopefully, your mother had the knowledge and the resources to get your life started on a good foot.

Next is childhood, with busy working families looking for quick meal and snack solutions, and school lunch programs serving what kids ask for. An environment rich with slick advertising insures that kids are looking for some less-than-ideal foods and drinks. Add in video games, TV programs, computer time, safety concerns about unsupervised outdoor play, and cuts in school physical education programs and you can see the ingredients for less-than-optimal habits to develop.

Teens often enjoy sharing pizza, pop and chips with their friends. Emotions can run rampant during the teen years and the learned behavior of numbing these emotions with food (or other substances) can be learned or solidified if healthy coping mechanisms aren't

adapted. If teens are involved in sports activities they may get regular exercise. If not, sedentary activities may capture most of their attention. Inherent in the teen psyche is also the sense of invincibility (they are never going to get diabetes, heart disease or joint pain), impacting their motivation for a healthy lifestyle.

**The first wealth
is health.**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The young adult years can start off with the "freshman 15," even when starting jobs, careers or families. Food choices may improve from the teen years, but often activity decreases as sedentary demands occupy most available time. Typically there aren't a lot of health concerns yet and no real motivation to make lifestyle changes.

For most people, it is at some point in their adulthood that they begin the quest for optimal health. Perhaps they have just been diagnosed with a chronic disease or are just sick and tired of feeling sick and tired all of the time. If

you are reading this newsletter, you have most likely had (or are considering) weight loss surgery to obtain a healthy weight. Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight is one of the most important steps you can take in the quest for optimal health. A healthy weight not only decreases the risks for obesity-related diseases, it also allows for an expanded ability to participate in physical activity. Here you are, having overcome a major obstacle to good health and feeling better than you have in years.

You now have the opportunity to begin the next leg on your quest for good health. Now you can move your focus to the lifestyle habits that will help you to maintain a healthy weight, boost your level of health and help set the stage to live your remaining years in the best health possible.

What does this next leg look like? It is different for everyone, but it should most likely include these health-boosting components.

A strong toolbox of coping mechanisms. Dealing with day-to-day stressors in a healthy way is one thing, but dealing with life's tsunamis can overwhelm even the most determined person. Build up your arsenal of healthy coping skills before you need them. These may include meditation, relaxation breathing,

exercise, talking with friends, chilling with a good book, prayer, focusing on the positive, or conferring with a counselor.

Regular exercise. The benefits of regular exercise are just too good to not take advantage of them. Schedule time and get moving. Build up to 10,000–15,000 steps a day (5–7.5 miles) or the equivalent. Very few of us have jobs or lifestyles that provide us with adequate movement throughout our day—you know what they say, “Move it or lose it.”

Eat at home more. Meals eaten at home are lower in fat and calories than meals eaten out. Pack your lunch and snacks too, so you have better control over your food intake throughout the day.

Take care of your
body. It's the only
place you have
to live!
Jim Rohn

Choose foods in their closest-to-nature form. Processing removes nutrients and fiber and adds unwanted ingredients. Eat most of your foods in their most natural state—lean meat, fish, poultry, legumes, low-fat dairy products, fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains, and healthy oils. Avoid highly processed foods. Eat foods to nourish your body—not just to delight your taste buds.

Choose healthy hydration. Water is best for quenching thirst and not adding a lot of artificial “stuff” to your body. Avoid beverages with added sugars or significant calories. Even fruit juice is suboptimal—it is better to eat the fruit than drink the juice.



Avoid the things you know are not good for you. Cigarettes, excessive alcohol, candy bars and regular pop are clearly not healthy choices.

If you have had weight loss surgery, you need to take supplements as recommended and monitor lab values. Check with your nutritionist if you are not sure which supplements to take.

Get adequate sleep. Our bodies crave carbohydrates and experience greater hunger when we have not slept adequately. It is hard to get motivated for exercise when your body is exhausted from a lack of sleep. Science has proven Ben Franklin's advice, “Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,” to be true—at least the healthy part.

Be a creature of habit. Find a good fit for exercise and healthy food choices and then stick with it. Consistency is key—especially when life throws you a curveball. You can count on your routine to keep you going until things settle down again.

If you get off track—go back to the basics. Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight and achieving optimal health is an ongoing quest. It will take effort and, yes, sacrifice for the remainder of your life. So, turn off the TV and get moving or better yet—hop on the treadmill and finish your program.



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RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

To receive a **FREE RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY** guide, call 800-282-0066 or send us an email at rc@barixclinics.com with your name and contact information. Our reconstructive surgery program is currently performed at our centers in Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. **Call us today for more information!**

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

Tell us about how your life has changed as a result of your weight loss surgery. Your story may be printed in this publication or on one of our websites and can serve as an inspiration to others.

Submit your story online (http://www.barixclinicsstore.com/share_your_story.html).

We'd love to hear from you.

QUESTIONS ABOUT FINANCING YOUR SURGERY?

Call a Barix Patient Service Representative at 800-282-0066

It Worked for Me

The Barix Forums are about people supporting each other through tough times and WOW moments. No one can quite understand what you are going through like someone who has walked in your shoes. Here is just one example of a posting (edited) that supports the person posting and also inspires others. If you have not checked out the forums, what are you waiting for? Just create an account and find the support you need (forum.barixclinics.com).

POSTING

My family just booked a spring break vacation cruise in early April - I love to travel, and I am so excited for it! I've lost about 80 pounds since my sleeve surgery August 1st, so I feel much better about participating in something like this.

BUT...then I started worrying about all the FOOD that is going to be EVERYWHERE (not to mention froo-froo alcoholic drinks with umbrellas in them that I have avoided for 8 months). I am hoping for motivation about how not to blow it on the cruise! Any tips or advice?

RESPONSE 1

I'm getting married this weekend and going on a cruise next week!

I have never been on one so I'm unsure of ALL the temptations. I checked out the menus online and they have sugar-free selections so I'm excited! I checked out the gym and I plan to go in the morning to prepare for my first 1/2 marathon in October. I also plan to drink my water during the day. I hear walking the ship itself is lots of walking and the excursions are fairly active. We



can do this!!!! I plan to make healthy food choices. I will choose protein and fruits and veggies, then carbs. And IF I want the sugar-free ice cream I will have some and not think of it as falling off the wagon, which in my pre-WLS life sent me into a whirlwind of the "I'll start Monday" diet!

RESPONSE 2

The trick is to not make food the focus - the trip and the relationships are the focus! Do what you normally do - I've been to so many parties, functions, etc., where I focused on the people, the activities and the conversation - the food then became an afterthought - like, "Oh - there's food here?" The one great thing about a cruise IS the amount and variety of food - you can probably stay on track more than being home, because you don't even have to prepare it! I would be extremely careful about 2 things: don't go overboard on no-added-sugar treats, and don't get into the alcohol habit. Being on a cruise is so amazing! Don't cloud your great memories with bad memories of overeating, over-indulging and feelings of guilt. That said - have a great time!

REQUEST a Free Brochure for you or a friend. Call us at **800-282-0066**, or log on to **www.barixinfo.com**

Ham & Sausage Breakfast Casserole

- 1 teaspoon oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 large green pepper, diced
- 4 ounces ham, diced
- 8 ounces lean turkey sausage
- 1 cup low-fat baking mix (low-fat Bisquick™)
- 2 cups fat-free egg substitute
- 1 cup part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup skim milk
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 teaspoons ground pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt

Sauté onion and pepper in oil until softened. Add sausage and brown. Add ham and continue to cook over medium heat for five minutes. Coat a casserole pan with non-stick spray. Layer 1/2 of the meat mixture in the bottom of the casserole. Top with 1/2 cup baking mix and 1/2 cup cheese. Cover the cheese layer with the remaining meat mixture, and top with the remaining baking mix and cheese.

In a large bowl, mix the egg substitute, milk, and spices. Pour the egg mixture over the layers in the casserole. The casserole can be covered and refrigerated overnight or baked at 350 degrees F for 30–45 minutes until the middle is set. Let cool for 10 minutes, slice and serve. Makes 15 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING:

95 calories, 10 grams protein, 4 grams fat, 3 grams carbohydrate, 588 mg sodium.

Trifle

- 1 pkg (4 serving size) cheesecake instant sugar-free pudding mix
- 1 pkg (4 serving size) chocolate fudge instant sugar-free pudding mix
- 4 cups skim milk
- 1 (8oz) pkg Neufchatel cheese
- 1.5 tbsp frozen white grape juice concentrate
- 1 large banana, sliced
- 1 lb blackberries
- 1 lb strawberries, hulled, quartered
- 1 (14oz) can pineapple chunks in juice, drained
- 1 sugar-free angel food cake
- 1 cup Cool Whip Lite™
- ¼ cup sliced almonds

Slice angel food cake into 1/2" cubes and set aside. Prepare chocolate pudding mix as directed on package and refrigerate. Prepare cheesecake pudding mix as directed on package. Whip Neufchatel cheese with white grape juice concentrate and stir into cheesecake pudding and refrigerate.

In a trifle bowl, layer 1/3 cake, ½ cheesecake mix, bananas, pineapple, ½ chocolate pudding, 1/3 cake, blackberries, remaining cheesecake mix, strawberries, remaining cake, and remaining chocolate pudding. Top with Cool Whip and sprinkle with sliced almonds. Makes 10 servings.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER

SERVING: 249 calories, 8 grams protein, 7 grams fat, 41 grams carbohydrate, 557 mg sodium.

REWARD YOURSELF



This month, you could earn a SPECIAL GIFT for your "It Worked For Me" tips or recipes! Just submit as many recipes and "It Worked For Me" tips as you like. The most original and creative will be awarded a special gift from our online store. Include your name and contact info with your entry—make sure your recipes follow Barix nutritional guidelines.

Tips must be submitted by April 30, 2012. Please send comments, ideas, recipes and "It Worked For Me" tips to Deb Hart, RD, LD at dhart@foresthealth.com.