



Try a grilled veggie burger instead of beef.

THE Y AXIS



Play Video Games to Curb Sugar Cravings

Got a sweet tooth? Curb cravings by playing video games.

Sound crazy? Maybe not.

In a recent study, researchers created a video game called Diet Dash.¹ The goal: Fill a grocery cart with healthy foods, and skip junk foods, while a timer ticks down.

About 100 overweight adults with a sweet tooth signed up to play. First, they took a class to learn more about healthy eating. Then they played the game every day for about eight weeks.



The result: Shopping for healthy foods in virtual reality actually retrained their brains to eat better.

Want to improve your diet? Start by training your brain.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:
well@wellsources.com

Red Meat Rules: Eat Less to Live Longer

New study links eating red meat to higher risk of death, even in small amounts

It's that time of year when backyard barbecues, picnics, and grilling dominate the calendar. There's even a long list of contests to see who can grill the tastiest beef.

And there's no shortage of Americans ready to sink their teeth into steak, burgers, hot dogs, and ham. In fact, the average American eats about 222 pounds of meat a year, most of it red meat. And that's a problem.

A recent study found that even small amounts of red meat raises the risk for early death, heart disease, and some kinds of cancer.²

How small? Just two ounces a day may be too much. Researchers looked at the eating habits

of about 8,000 people over 11 years. Those who ate just two ounces a day, were more likely to die early.

Here's what two ounces of red meat looks like:

- 2 slices of bacon
- 2 slices of deli ham
- ½ of a small steak filet
- ½ of a hamburger
- 1 hot dog

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What's the beef with red meat?
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If you want to be healthier, live longer, and avoid heart disease and cancer, limit red meat. Better yet, give fish, poultry, or a veggie burger a try when you fire up the grill this summer. @

Want to Be Happy? Take a Break from Social Media

Social media use linked to depression and mental health problems

Everyone is always smiling and happy. Your friends all take dream vacations and dine on gourmet food. Fame, fortune, money, success, good times...Your life might not have all these things, but it looks like everyone else does. You're missing out. And now you're not happy?

Ever felt that way? If you're a regular social media user, you might think all your friends are living the dream lifestyle. But it isn't true. You're only seeing the "highlight reel," according to a recent study.³

Too much social media time is a recipe for feeling unhappy and depressed, says University of Houston researcher Dr. Mai-Ly Steers. "Depressed feelings and lots of time on Facebook and comparing oneself to others tend to go hand in hand."



Social Media Use by the Numbers

- **3.5 billion** People actively use social media
- **7.6** Average number of social media accounts per person
- **142** Number of minutes the average adult spends on social media per day
- **10** Number of times per day social media users check accounts

If you're feeling down, depressed, or unhappy, take a break from social media.

- Try a social media fast for a few days.

- Cut back on how much time you spend on sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others.
- Or simply call it quits to your click-tap-and-swipe habits for awhile.



Stuffed Mushrooms

Hungry for a healthy no-meat dish? Try this stuffed portobello mushroom recipe with couscous, veggies, and cheese.⁵

- 8 portobello mushrooms
- ¾ C scallions, chopped
- 2 T black olives, chopped
- 1-½ C tomatoes, chopped
- ¾ C dried couscous
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- 1-½ T oil
- 1 T balsamic vinegar
- 1-¼ C boiling water
- 3 oz fat-free mozzarella, shredded

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Clean mushrooms; remove and discard stems and black gills from under the mushrooms.
3. Place mushroom caps onto a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake 20 minutes.
4. Chop scallions, olives, and tomatoes; add couscous, pepper, oil, and vinegar. Add boiling water, stirring to combine. Cover tightly with plastic wrap. Let steam 15 minutes, then fluff.
5. Divide couscous mixture among the mushroom caps. Top with cheese. Bake additional 10 minutes.

Track It: The Smartphone Way to Get Moving

Get more active with fitness tracking apps

You step on the scale or look in the mirror and promise yourself you're going to be more active. Maybe you got out of the habit of going to the gym, taking a daily walk, or regular exercise. Or maybe you've never had the habit.

You want to be active. But you can't seem to flip the switch to get started. Sound familiar?

Only 53 percent of adults get the minimum amount of exercise each day. That's a 30-minute walk, jog, bike ride, swim, or any other activity that raises your heart rate. Most adults only take 3,000 to 4,000 steps per day, but you need at least 10,000.

So how do you make it happen?

Track your activity. Use a fitness watch, tracker app on your smartphone, or some other digital tracker. Even an old-school pedometer will work. You can track things like:

- Steps per day
- Heart rate
- Calories burned
- Minutes of exercise
- Mile pace
- Distance traveled

"Studies show that people are 30 to 40 percent more active when they use activity trackers," says University of Wisconsin researcher Dr. John P. Porcari.⁴

Ready to be more active, improve your health, and



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feel better? Use a fitness tracker. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity a day. Or set a goal to take 10,000 steps per day. Now is always the best time to get started. @

Want to Be Happy? Take a Break from Social Media (continued from page 1)

In place of social media time, book a lunch date with friends. Go for a walk. Read a book. Cook a healthy meal. Spend more time with your family. Do something other than

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How to use social media wisely
tinyurl.com/y66ukwnk

staring at a screen comparing yourself to others, and you'll feel happier.

And if you still feel sad or depressed after a break from social media, see your doctor. @

References

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Take the June Health Challenge!

Protect Your Head: Make it a habit to wear a helmet

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Brittany Carter answers the question:
What kind of shoes should I wear for exercise?