



Northern California Indian Development Council
www.ncidc.org
California Native Food & Nutrition Program

241 F Street Eureka, CA 95501
707.445.8451 (voice) 707.445.8479 (fax)
email: andrekar@ncidc.org

Reducing The Health Risks of Obesity

May, 2006

SHAPE UP WITH REZ ROBICS

<http://www.dreamcatchers.org/rezrobics/>

DreamCatchers has joined forces with Navajo Health Promotions, a division of the Indian Health Service on the Navajo Nation, to produce a health and fitness video set REZ ROBICS and REZ ROBICS FOR COUCH POTATO SKINS. The project is inspired by the fact that diabetes has become one of the most serious threats to the health of Indian people both on reservations and in urban settings.

A major contributing factor to the scourge of diabetes in Indian communities is the legacy of U.S. Government commodities. At the turn of the last century, when Indian people were forced onto reservations and forbidden to hunt or fish, the government promised to provide whatever food would be needed. They did so with commodities, primarily white flour, white sugar and lard. A high sugar, high carbohydrate, high fat diet for the last 100 years has caused rampant type two diabetes.

Since the best prevention of diabetes is a healthy diet and regular exercise, The REZROBICS videos were created using a combination of wit and information intended mainly for Natives which includes aerobics as well

as some nutrition facts. Knowing the best way to communicate such issues to Indian people is with humor, REZ ROBICS and REZ ROBICS FOR COUCH POTATO SKINS features two prominent Native actor/comedians: Elaine Miles (Northern Exposure, Smoke Signals) and Drew LaCapa, the up and coming comedian who calls himself "300 pounds of love".

While the REZ ROBICS video is an aerobics workout mixing pow wow dancing and martial arts with normal aerobic moves, the REZ ROBICS FOR COUCH POTATO SKINS companion video is a comedy, in which Drew and Elaine will make every excuse why an Indian wouldn't want to exercise or eat healthy. It is designed for those Indians who would normally never watch an exercise program, while allowing more health conscious Indian people to capture their couch potato relatives and hopefully convince them to begin an exercise regimen.



Copies of the videos are being distributed free of charge throughout the Indian communities of North America. While Navajo Health Promotions distributes on and around the Navajo Nation via clinics, schools and video stores, (cont. next page)

This newsletter is for information and is not to serve as medical advice. Please consult your doctor for any health related questions. For more resources and downloadable articles please go to: www.ncidc.org/food/index.html



DreamCatchers oversees distribution to the rest of "Indian Country". There is no FBI warning on the programs. Instead, the opening message states, "Please make copies and give them to your friends and relatives".

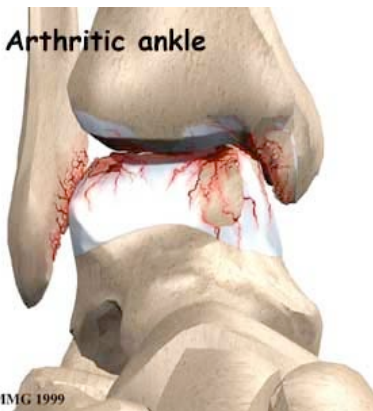
To get REZ ROBICS on VHS, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope or box, sized to fit two videotapes or for DVD, a proper sized padded envelope to the address below. The envelope must have \$5 in U.S. postage.

The REZ-ROBICS team is also available to come to your community for REZ-ROBICS diabetes prevention workshops for adults and children. For more information contact *DREAMCATCHERS c/o Pam Belgarde PO Box 393 Pauma Valley, CA 92061 phone (951) 704-6990 EMAIL wellnative@hotmail.com*

Senior Section: Obesity & Arthritis

One of the most important things you can do to reduce the stiffness and pain of arthritis is to lose weight. In obese people, a 10% weight loss increased knee joint use and flexibility by 28%. Being overweight puts stress on your

Arthritic ankle



weight supporting joints such as the back, hips, knees, ankles and feet. As we get older, these joints are already damaged or strained from years of use. Because of the way joints work, the effect of the weight can be four or five times greater in important parts of the joint. **This means that even a small weight loss can make a big difference to your joints.** If you are overweight and have arthritis in any of your weight-bearing joints, losing weight will help you more than any food supplements.

Your diet can greatly affect how your body feels arthritis. You can reduce or even eliminate the pain, swelling and discomfort associated with arthritis or rheumatoid arthritis (RA) with foods and supplements that help ease swelling.

Omega-3 oil from fatty fish is a very strong anti-inflammatory and can help relieve the pain of RA. Recent research showed that it is possible to cut the risk of developing RA by up to 49% by eating just one ounce of omega-3 rich fish every day. This includes sardines, trout sturgeon and salmon, no wonder our ancestors did not worry about being crippled with arthritis. Other studies have shown that eating red meat *increases* joint inflammation and RA. The same study indicated that eating vegetables helped prevent RA, and a vegetarian diet reduced symptoms very well. Other foods to avoid eating regularly include liver, heart, kidney, anchovies, crab, fish roe, herring, mackerel, and shrimp.



Increasing both fish oil and olive oil in your diet may cut joint pain, stiffness upon waking up, lack of energy, and may even improve handgrip strength. Daily doses of 3,000 mg of fish oil supplements (EPA and DHA types) and about 2 teaspoons of olive oil are the recommended levels to ease the problems associated with arthritis. The supplements glucosamine-chondroitin and MSM (Methylsulfonylmethane) are also thought to help arthritis sufferers. **See a doctor before taking large doses of fish oil or trying new vitamins and supplements.**



Native Diabetes Poem

*FOUR GHOSTS
First we were invaded
Five Centuries of War
But our Enemies now
We bring right in the Door*

*Four White Ghosts-
Salt, Sugar, White Flour
And Saturated Fats
All bring the Dark Hour*

*We're told that the Answer
Is to eat our damn Wheaties
But our Ancestors knew
How to fight Diabetes*

*Each month we ate 23
Seeds Nuts and Grains
Now we eat One
No wonder we're Drained*

*You are what you eat
I'm told and it's true
This country was Red
Now the White makes us Blue*

*They put us on the Rez
And took away our Land
Gave us Commodities
And Foods in a Can*

*Flour and Lard
Made a food to Survive
But Frybread wasn't there
Back when our people Thrived*

*Legs of the Antelope
And Deer were once Ours
Now we're so busy
Riding 'round in our cars*

*If we are what we eat
Do we want to be Bovine?
Or look at Indian Kids
And see Shapes of the Porcine?*

*I'd rather my Son
Have the Strength of Tatanka*



*Than Attention Deficit
Courtesy of Willy Wonka*

*Buffalo are Strong
And will Stand to Face a Storm
They gave Us Sacred Meat
And Fur to keep us warm*

*While our Fathers were Hunting
Our Mothers Gathered Fruits
Vegetables, Nuts and Seeds
And also Herbs and Roots*

*Our Bodies are Starved
For Gifts from our Mother
We down lots of Trash Food
But we Hunger for Another*

*This time no one's holding
A Gun to your Head
It's Our Faults if at 50
We're winding up Dead*

*Robbing our Children
Of our Stories and Love
Who'll be there to Hold Them
From Heaven Above*

*Our People fought Wars
And Infectious Diseases
Brought over on Ships
Like Smallpox and Measles*

*When you Disrespect your Body
It's a Slap to All
So Get Up, Take a Walk,
or Play some B-Ball*

*Listen to the Voice
That We All have Inside
Treat Yourself and Your Family
With some Native Pride*

*I Say this out of Love
Please try to Understand
By Saying No to Sugar
You Stick It To The Man!*

**2006- Jennifer Wolf
Ponca/Ojibwe/Santee**



DR. COYOTE'S CLINIC**

Dear Dr. Coyote: Having grown up drinking sodas, I have noticed that weight



gain is increasing by greater proportions. I watch what I eat, stopped drinking sodas, not eating after 8pm, and skipping sweet

snacks (cake, ice cream, crispy creams, and chocolate) and I've been trying to exercise more. But I'm still curious to know if the carbonation from soda can expand your waistline? Does the corn syrup used in the soda break down in our bodies, and increase our weight? And are dark colored sodas worse for you than the lighter colored ones? Respectfully, colafree (Karuk/Hoopa/Yurok)

Dear Cola Free, I just gotta say how disappointed I am that you have chosen to abandon your pals, caffeine, sweets and other snacks. Little Debbie is our friend! Some have even said I must have invented Jolt Cola as it has twice the caffeine and sugar. If cola or any soda was bad for you would the mini-mart have a 64 oz. double gulp for individual portions? The only problem with soda is that it can get in the way of eating a big meal, so be sure and pace yourself, one burger, one soda, order of fries, another soda, etc. Be sure and get your money's worth so fill up your soda bucket on your way out the door. As far as light versus dark sodas the only ones to stay away from are the ones like diet that have no redeeming value such as a ton of calories and sugar for a burst of energy. And as the syrup is made out of corn so how could it be harmful? Now Go Eat Drink & Be Merry! Dr. C.

Reasonable Health Practitioner's Reply:

Over the last 30 years, Americans have increased their daily caloric intake by 450

calories of those, 180 of them are from soda, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. America consumes more soda than any other beverage according to the American Beverage Association, twice as much as water. The sparkling drink satisfies a sweet tooth but does little for our bodies, except add calories and pounds. As reported by the American Society for Clinical Nutrition, consumption of high-fructose corn syrup in beverages may play a role in the epidemic of obesity. A single 12-oz sugar-sweetened beverage per day translates to about 1 pound of weight gain over 3 to 4 weeks. Carbonation has no effect on your weight.



Soda is especially damaging to our young people, as they drink it instead of more healthy options. Sugary drinks can be a major cause of the early onset of diabetes in Native youth. On May 3, 2006 soda makers agreed to pull most of their soft drinks out of elementary, middle and high

schools around the country. The agreement was brokered by the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Assn. For more info see:

<http://tinyurl.com/olapm>
or <http://tinyurl.com/s9mlm>

**** Remember that Coyote is a schemer & a wise fool who is generally on the wrong end of the truth. What works for him doesn't always work for us human types. Check his "facts" with your own doctor.**

Kid's Korner: Exercise In School

Traditionally, Native youth incorporated activity in almost everything they did. Work, play and survival prevented the creeping obesity seen in youth today. Video games, fast food and channel surfing occupy our kids now days. Parents can work with their school boards to help (cont. next page)





reverse obesity related problems in our youth. They can request healthier meals, elimination of junk food vending machines, and increasing the amount of time students are involved in physical activity. You can also pack your kids lunches and snacks to help them make healthier choices.

The US Dept of Education recently released a report called Calories In, Calories Out: Food and Exercise in Public Elementary Schools, 2005. This study, prompted by concern over increased obesity among children, was designed to provide current national information on nutritional information related to schools and opportunities for physical activity in public elementary schools.

The report includes findings on the variety of food sold in schools and in their cafeterias or



lunchrooms; the kinds of food sold at vending machines, school stores or snack bars, and times when foods were available at those locations. The

report also discusses food service operations and contracts with companies selling foods at schools. Other topics include scheduled recess, including the days per week, times per day and minutes per day of recess; scheduled physical education, including the days per week, class length, and average minutes per week of physical education; activities to encourage physical activity among elementary students; and the physical assessment of students.

To browse the report, please visit:

<http://nces.ed.gov/Pubs2006/nutrition/>

To download, view and print the publication as a PDF file, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006057.pdf>

The California Pan-Ethnic Health Network shows that 25% of Native children are overweight and nearly 40% are unfit. The bottom line? Have your kids eat healthier and exercise more to prevent long term health problems.

Recipe: Tasty-Healthy Casserole

Chicken, Rice & Broccoli Casserole

- 1 T. olive oil
- 1 split skinless, boneless chicken breast, washed & cubed
- ½ onion, chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1# fresh broccoli, washed & chopped
- 1 cup of brown rice, cooked
- 1 cup of shredded co-jack cheese (or your favorite)
- 1 cup 1% milk
- 2 T. flour
- ½ t. salt and pepper



In a medium pan, over medium heat, sauté chicken and then add onion, garlic and celery; cook until celery is tender. Add broccoli and cook for two minutes.



In a mixing bowl, whisk together milk, flour, salt and pepper. Stir in cheese, rice and chicken. Bake in a 9" x 13" pan at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Serves four.

