

Enjoy delicious summer eating

By Sue Knorr



It's that time of year again for summer picnics, barbecues and celebrations. When I started the Zone diet about 16 years ago, summer parties posed quite a dilemma for me, especially when I was hosting the event. I came up with a few different game plans that year, even considering forgetting about the Zone on the day of the barbecue. In the end I decided to try to have the best of both worlds. I served the typical fare, desserts and all, and I made a couple salads loaded with vegetables for the Zone members of the family. You can imagine how that went. If you guessed that I couldn't manage to stay anywhere near the Zone with all the desserts and the various concoctions of Jell-O and non-dairy whipped topping, you guessed right.

Then came along the annual extended family July 4th picnic at the lake. That has always been the typical American summer picnic complete with hot dogs, potato salad, watermelon, chocolate cake, and s'mores. I was so proud of myself that day because I loaded my plate with a Zone-balanced meal and ate only that. But the dish I'd brought to share with everyone was not a healthy one. I was still harboring a bit of the "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" attitude. Not wanting to seem like I was imposing my newly-found lifestyle on others, I'd made a huge bowl of dip from several packages of cream cheese. As one of my relatives quickly devoured almost that entire bowl of dip, she commented to everyone that she was only going to eat my dip. She went on to explain that since I'd made it, it would be very healthy. Little did she know that she was basically eating a lot of flavored cream cheese. (I confess, I did tell her afterwards.) More importantly, her comment sparked a turning point for me.

From then on I didn't hesitate to bring healthy dishes to share. My friends and family now look forward to trying my latest recipes. In fact, last week, along with our invitation to the annual neighborhood barbecue, I received

a request, or I should say a plea, to bring "large dishes" of my eight-layer vegetable dip.

There's no need to cringe at the thought of your next barbecue. It's pretty easy to plan a Zone-friendly summer picnic. Approach it as you would any other Zone meal, and you can't go wrong. Begin by deciding on the protein you'll serve. I like to offer at least two choices. Marinated chicken and veggie skewers can be assembled ahead of time, and salmon is always a favorite. If you're trying to be budget conscious or you've inviting a large group, grilled turkey burgers and boneless, skinless chicken breasts are good crowd pleasers.

Appetizers, condiments, and salads are the perfect places to spotlight the good carbohydrates and fats. You can keep it simple by serving crudité, reduced-fat cheeses and Zone bagel chips, or you can make some of your favorite Zone salad recipes. For something other than the usual green salad try a simple side dish of blanched vegetables with a vinaigrette dressing. Asparagus goes well with olive oil, vinegar and minced garlic. Baby broccoli is sweet and delectable when blanched, chilled and served as is without any seasonings. To blanch, bring water to a boil, then add the veggies. Leave in the hot water for a minute or two, remove and immerse briefly in cold water to stop the cooking process, drain and chill.

Most picnics also include a pasta salad. Start with Zone pasta or orzo and add your favorite veggies, protein and seasonings. The sky's the limit when it comes to variety. Be sure to use a good Zone fat like extra-virgin olive oil. Olives, grated Parmesan, and white or golden balsamic vinegar or lemon juice will all add extra flavor and zing to your pasta salad.

Remember to leave room for dessert when you plan your barbecue or load up your plate at that picnic next weekend. Recently my daughter's CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) share included a generous bunch of mint. She tossed the leaves into a delicious fruit salad made mostly of slices of fresh pear, with some smaller chunks of ruby red grapefruit and oranges added. It would make a refreshing addition to any summer meal. You can even add a dollop of real whipped cream on top and keep it "in the Zone". Enjoy your next barbecue!

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and sets the foundation for a longer and healthier life. Here are a few suggestions that you'll find helpful on your path to improving your health.

1. Utensils -- To get started, your first knife should be a quality chef's knife, aka French knife. Cook's Illustrated magazine recommends the inexpensive Victorinox Fibrox 8-inch Chef's Knife (about \$25). Keep your knife sharp! There are expensive electric sharpeners, but you can get excellent results from AccuSharp's manual sharpener for about \$12.

2. Zone your kitchen or pantry with Zone staples. The following foods don't require refrigeration and are always available to prepare a quick, balanced Zone meal.

PROTEINS: Chicken of the Sea "salad toppers, tuna or salmon in a pouch. Sardines in Louisiana Hot Sauce, Peppered Beef Jerky, Kippered herring fillets, Ocean Prince Fish Steaks with Green Chilies. There are various jerky's: Salmon, ostrich, venison, turkey, canned tuna, salmon and white chicken.

CARBOHYDRATES: Wasa crackers, low-carb flat bread, fresh fruit, canned garbanzo, black beans, lentils, canned tomatoes, steel cut oats and V-8 juice.

FATS: Macadamia nuts, almonds, peanuts, packets of olive oil, mayonnaise and Italian dressing. These items are convenient, however, we always suggest fresh, whole foods.

3. Be organized. Have your recipe, ingredients arranged and ready to go.

You can do this! Imagine preparing healthy, balanced meals, looking and feeling better and having others congratulate you on your cooking skills and healthy appearance. Need some help? Consider our recipes featuring the new Zone foods at www.zonehealth.com.

Zone Appetit!

Dr. Sears ZONE® Living

JUNE/JULY 2011



Alaskan cruise the best ever

This was our 13th Zone Cruise and probably the best to date. Of course, the highly unusual sunny spring weather helped, as did the always-spectacular Alaskan scenery, but the key was the total Zone experience based on having a greatly expanded Zone menu featuring our new Zone foods. This time we took a more leisurely approach to Zone science by expanding the always-popular Zone Drop-In Sessions that let the Zone cruisers ask any kind of questions that pop into their minds.

Most importantly, this cruise gave many of the returning Zone cruisers the opportunity to renew old friendships established from past Zone cruises as well as establish new ones to build upon for future cruises. As always it was the last segment of the cruise when individuals gave their own stories of how the Zone has helped them retake control of their lives that illustrated the real value of the Zone technology.

However, there was one low point to an otherwise outstanding cruise. This was the truly pathetic performance of Dr. Sears doing his rendition of Wilson Pickett's classic song "Mustang Sally" during Karaoke night. In his defense, he only made a rare (due to lack of any talent) singing appearance at the urging of his daughter (who happens to be an excellent singer). Nonetheless, his totally off-key singing made even the host of the show comment that he should keep his day job. Fortunately, no pirated videotapes of this once-in-a-lifetime performance were made.

For our next cruise, tentatively set for to Curacao in 2012, Dr. Sears has promised to spend all of his time reading obscure technical papers during Karaoke night, much to relief of the entire ship.





Program keeps Navy in SHAPE

By Lisa Zeigel

The U.S. military enjoys a reputation of being comprised of the fittest men and women in the world. To join the Armed Forces, a person has to train at an extremely high level of intensity for a relatively short period of time (an average of 8.9 weeks among five branches: the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard). Once a recruit has completed these grueling weeks of physical and mental training, he or she will often be in the shape of their life and ready for almost anything once they move on to the next phase in their military careers. The types of jobs that are available within these institutions are practically endless, ranging from clerical and administrative work, flying planes, working on a ship, to active combat.

Despite the requirement of being in top physical shape to become a part of any branch of the military, the physical demands of some of these jobs do not always lend themselves to maintaining this level of conditioning at all times. Although it is required that everyone on staff in the Department of Defense pass a Physical Readiness Test (PRT) at least twice per year, this does not mean that each individual is physically "ready." In fact, as in civilian life, life in the Armed Forces is becoming more sedentary with advanced technology making tasks easier. According to a military health-behavior study published in 2008^[1], trends in obesity and overweight among the American

population were unfortunately being mirrored by the Armed Forces population, with 62 percent falling in the overweight/obesity ranges (based on a BMI of 25-29.9) from between 2005 to 2008 for personnel aged 20 and older. Along with this increase in bodyweight comes a host of problems, including a higher risk of injuries, heart disease and diabetes, all leading to added costs for health care, (and even an increase in depression and suicide), increasing expenditures in the already financially strained military budget. Clearly this is not sustainable, but fortunately, positive changes are taking place through enhanced fitness and nutrition programs. By taking a look at how the U.S. Navy implemented an assertive program specifically aimed at a population from within that is particularly affected by inactivity - the over-40 "senior" group, we can learn how to apply their success to our own inactive civilian population.

In 2007 the Navy decided to partner with Indiana University to create a program called "SHAPE" (Senior Health Assessment Program Enterprise). The Navy relied on the University's Kinesiology Department's expertise to provide top staff for three fitness centers at Norfolk, VA, Pearl Harbor, HI, and San Diego, CA, who were not only knowledgeable about exercise physiology and training, but also possessed specialized skills in working with a "de-conditioned" population and would

be able to motivate and engage these people to overcome whatever barriers may arise and thus obtain measurable positive outcomes.

Although passing a PRT twice per year is mandatory for all Navy personnel, participating in the SHAPE program is not, so the program had to be marketed to potential participants. All supporting facets within the Navy, including the Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC) and the Navy Bureau of Medicine (BUMED), assisted in this. In fact, the Navy has become so focused on fitness and physical readiness, it has adopted the slogan "Stay Healthy, Stay Fit, Stay Navy," making it a priority to encourage its members to join such a program.

Once a participant enrolls in the SHAPE program, a complete assessment is conducted to not only measure standard markers, such as weight, body composition, strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular endurance, but since many jobs in the Navy require specific physical actions, "functional movement screens" (FMS) are important to uncover muscle imbalances that may need to be addressed. In addition, a questionnaire is given both pre- and post-program asking members to rank the goals that are most important to them, list any injuries that are of concern to them, and to quantify the time they spend sitting during a workday. Based on fitness testing results and questionnaire answers, participants are assigned to a trainer. They are also encouraged to attend group exercise classes as well as lectures on health and fitness topics. Incentives are offered as part of the program, which are usually health and fitness related (water bottles, T-shirts, towels) or can

be cash, group recognition, etc. This is not a "one-size-fits-all" type of program but personalized to each person's specific needs, goals, and abilities, which is one reason why it works so well.

When outcomes were examined at the end of a two-year period (2009-2011), the findings were very encouraging. Ratings of program satisfaction were high: 92 percent ranked it as excellent or good, 84 percent reported a positive impact on work productivity; and fitness markers such as VO2 Max improved by 5 percent, strength by 7 percent, flexibility by 24 percent, body fat decreased by 6 percent, and systolic blood pressure decreased by 3.5 milliliters.^[2]

The DoD (Department of Defense) has taken huge steps in addressing the problem of overweight and obesity and to increase the level of "Total Force Readiness" among all branches of the service. Programs similar to the Navy's SHAPE program are available in some worksites, community centers, recreation departments, community colleges, hospitals, YMCAs and more. The structure and supervision provided by these are very helpful in engaging those who may otherwise struggle on their own and can provide tangible outcomes, which are not only self-motivating, but also proof that this works! Civilians can benefit from this approach by thinking of health and fitness as being part of "readiness" for life!

References:

[1] <http://www.health.mil/Content/docs/Health%20Behaviors%20Survey%20QAs.pdf>

[2] <http://www.navyfitness.org/shape/outcomes/>



Sherlock Zone has dinner at BJ's

Sherlock Zone, our food detective, recently went to BJ's, a restaurant chain that has loads of menu landmines that will take you out of the Zone. But a close look at the menu convinced Sherlock that several offerings met his criteria.

Only one appetizer got his seal of approval: Chicken Lettuce Wraps, marinated chicken breast diced and sautéed with mushrooms, water chestnuts, celery, green onions, garlic and topped with crispy wontons, served with chilled iceberg lettuce cups, sesame soy sauce and hot Chinese mustard. Ask for the wontons to be omitted.

A variety of salads, besides the trusty Chicken Caesar, were on the menu: Seared Ahi Salad, seasoned, seared rare ahi tuna, baby field greens, romaine, Napa cabbage and red bell peppers tossed with rice wine vinaigrette, served with tomatoes, avocado, pickled cucumber and wasabi, topped with crispy wonton strips and green onions (again, no wantons); Fresh Mozzarella and Tomato Salad, a caprese-style salad with fresh mozzarella and tomato wedges, basil, red onion and Parmesan cheese drizzled with balsamic glaze; Italian Market Salad, a new twist to the original Italian chopped salad with fresh mozzarella, chunks of Fontina cheese and salami, artichokes, Kalamata olives, roasted red peppers, pepperoncini, garbanzo beans, red onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, romaine and iceberg lettuce all topped with fresh Parmesan and basil then tossed with Italian herb vinaigrette; BBQ Chicken Chopped Salad, grilled breast of chicken with tomatoes, corn, green onions, black beans, jicama, cilantro, mozzarella cheese, BBQ sauce and iceberg lettuce, tossed with BBQ ranch dressing and topped with crunchy, sweet onion strings (omit); BJ's Cobb Salad, chopped romaine and iceberg lettuce tossed with creamy garlic dressing and oven-baked seasoned croutons (say no), topped with roasted turkey, Applewood smoked bacon, feta cheese, tomatoes and avocado; and Garden Medley Salad, crisp romaine lettuce, artichoke hearts, fire-roasted red peppers, tomatoes, red onions, feta cheese and balsamic vinaigrette dressing, and available with grilled chicken, Cajun shrimp, flame-broiled or blackened salmon.

Three entrees caught his eye: Chicken a La Fresca, marinated chicken breast grilled and served over rice pilaf with zucchini, mushrooms, peppers and tomatoes prepared ratatouille style, then drizzled with a light Dijon tarragon jus, garnished with arugula tossed in balsamic vinaigrette; Creole Talapia, oven-roasted tilapia topped with a tomato olive tapenade and served with rice pilaf, baby greens tossed in balsamic vinaigrette and topped with shredded carrots, red onions, cucumbers and tomatoes; and Fresh Atlantic Salmon, fresh salmon fillet either flame-broiled or blackened, served with lemon Chardonnay butter sauce, rice pilaf and seasoned, steamed vegetables.

All the entrees come with rice. Have your wait staff remove and replace with extra vegetables.



Save your life – Cook a meal

By Dave Schreck

Every day around 3 I would come home from high school and hang out before my mother would arrive from work at 5:30. By that time I was starving so as soon as she'd walk through the door, I'd ask her what's for dinner? She put up with that for a few months and then said, "Young man, if you're so hungry, you should start the meal. The shopping list is right over there, so jot down what you'll be cooking the family for dinner, and we'll buy it down at the A&P." (We're talking '60s.) That's when there were three types of potato chips, Bugles, Jell-O and fresh, unadulterated meats and vegetables.

Forty years later the ingredients have changed and so has the health of the nation. Today companies offer more than 18 different types of chips and prepare their foods with a list of ingredients I've never heard of. Everything is based on convenience: It's pre-cut, pre-packaged, pre-frozen, pre-cooked and pretty bad for your health. Why? Food manufacturers are concerned with profits, and this usually means cheap, tasty, edible food-like ingredients produced in the laboratory, not in nature.

Most convenience foods are loaded with cheap vegetable oils and processed carbohydrates leading to what Dr. Sears has termed the Perfect Nutritional Storm. These two factors, along with the decreased consumption of fish oil, have set the foundation for increased cellular inflammation, causing our nation to lead the world in the twin epidemics of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Are you included in this statistic?

What's the solution? Prepare your own meals at home. You don't have to be a gourmet cook mastering sauces, soufflés and flambé. You need basic recipes that are easy to follow like the hundreds posted at www.zoneliving.com, and many do not require cooking!

If food is the most powerful drug you'll ever consume (proteins and carbohydrates alter hormones), then wouldn't it make sense to adapt your kitchen into a health-food café? Learning the basic skills of preparing a meal is economical

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