

# The York University Staff Association Health and Wellness News and Views

From relaxing vacations and dips in the pool to outdoor BBQ's and lingering daylight, there are so many reasons to love summer. Yet, year after year one common question arises...Is summer the easiest time to lose weight? Common sense suggests that the abundance of delicious fresh fruits and vegetables, plus the warm weather, shorter sleeves and hemlines, would be motivation enough. However, each summer many of us struggle with our weight. The problem is not only with the foods that we're eating, but also with the lifestyles that we're leading. The summer months are just more social — more dinners with friends, more opportunity to relax, more reasons to celebrate with umbrella clad drinks, often, a vacation and/or a few extra days off from work. All this socializing, while fun and festive, can make it extremely hard to maintain a healthy weight let alone allow for weight loss. If you, like many of us, are determined to stay on your weight-loss track this summer, don't fear. It is possible to enjoy yourself while watching your waistline.

Think beyond burgers and hotdogs. For delicious and — in most cases — healthier options, try throwing seafood on the grill. From shrimp appetizers and scallops to salmon and red snapper. Fish is a nutrient-dense food packed with heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids. It's a good source of protein — most varieties contain around 20 grams of protein per 3-ounce serving, the same as meat. Fish is a good source of vitamin B-12, and most fish are rich sources of iron. While King-sized, Juicy steaks are nice they can also pack the most incredible amounts of calories. If you are barbequing steak be sure to get lean beef, or even better skinless chicken breasts are always a healthy option.

The single easiest way to trim calories from your summer diet is to load up on nature's bounty. Summer brings an endless supply of delicious fruits and vegetables. Besides being low in calories, produce is packed with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber. The key is to keep things simple and let the quality of seasonal ingredients shine through. Eating salads is a super-convenient way to work in a couple of servings of vegetables and/or fruit into your summer meal. Salads are the perfect addition to a potluck picnic and a great

counterpart to all that meat at a BBQ. Best of all, they just taste great.

Enjoying a cool treat on a hot day is a summertime favourite. But an ice cream everyday will certainly add up when it comes to the fat and calories. Froyo shops are popping up everywhere these days. Whether it's a taste preference, or the belief that it's the healthier choice, froyo's popularity is skyrocketing. Ice cream and frozen yogurt are both products made from dairy. The calorie content of ice cream and frozen yogurt may be similar if they are made from whole fat dairy; the calories and fat content of ice cream will be higher if it is made with cream. A one-half cup serving of banana frozen yogurt contains 121 calories and one-half cup of vanilla ice cream contains 130 calories. The same size serving of fat-free, sugar-free frozen yogurt only has 80 calories and low-fat fudge ripple ice cream has 120 calories. If you're used to filling your cup (or bowl) with frozen yogurt, mounds of brownie bites, cookie dough, and even gummy worms then you're probably piling on more calories than you realize. If you choose to eat a cold treat whether it be ice cream or frozen yogurt, remember to moderate your portion size, pay attention to the fat content and choose the healthier toppings. Choose toppings such as fresh fruit, granola and nuts to get the antioxidants, protein and fiber. These toppings will also likely be lower in calories, fat and sugar. Eating variety is essential. And the truth is: Frozen yogurt and ice cream can both be part of a healthy game plan.



It's hot, and you're thirsty! But don't just grab the first cool drink that comes along. What you choose to quench your thirst can make or break a healthy diet. It just doesn't make sense to spend your

precious calories on sweet drinks that add calories without any nutritional value. Most people don't drink enough water. So do your body a favor; when you get thirsty, reach for water first. If you choose a beverage that contains calories, select one that contributes important nutrients as well -- like skim or low-fat milk or 100% fruit juice. Is there anything better than reclining in a beach chair with a summer cocktail? To some its pure heaven - the only downside is that margarita has a staggering 440 calories. If you choose to sip on an alcoholic beverage? Instead of using calorie-filled mixes loaded with sugar, swap in fresh fruit and juices that give you plenty of flavor without all the extra stuff. Try making summer cocktails with sake, shochu, or soju, a distilled Korean liquor that has a smoother taste and half the calories of most vodkas.

Welcome to your new gym. It is open 24 hours per day and the membership is free. Whether or not you're a gym rat, there's nothing like heading to the great outdoors to get some fresh air and fitness in the summer months. Nature is a perfect buff-body training ground. Being close to nature increases our well-being and exercising outside creates greater feelings of revitalization, energy, and positive thinking. Training on uneven terrains like the road, sand, or field requires more body control, balance, and it activates more joints and muscles than working out on even, indoor surfaces. So, Leave the magazines at home and head out for an exploratory run through your "hood". A run becomes much more interesting if you're on a trail avoiding rocks, tree roots, barking dogs, and small children. The equipment found on playgrounds, in parks, along running paths, and at beaches is perfect for training. Try bodyweight exercises like pull-up variations, inverted rows, and dips. It might be a surprise how many outdoor sports are calorie-torchers disguised as fun. Your favorite weekend pickup game actually helps you achieve your fitness goals. Paddleboarding, tennis, volleyball, basketball, swimming, rock climbing, hiking, kayaking, and soccer can burn hundreds of calories per hour. Just get out and be active in any way you can!

Here's to a happy and healthy summer!