Ask the Expert
What is Insulin Resistance?
by Alicia Robbins, Health Coach

Chances are, somewhere you’ve heard the phrase “insulin resistance.” It’s a term often used in the medical profession, but is not explained very well. As a result, it can seem vague and even a little confusing.

Insulin resistance can occur even before someone develops Type 2 diabetes. In early stages, the pancreas secretes extra insulin to compensate for insulin resistance, blood glucose levels remain in normal range. Eventually, the pancreas may be unable to keep up with the extra demand, blood glucose levels may rise and Type 2 Diabetes may develop.

Common ways to reverse insulin resistance with lifestyle changes include increase movement, decrease stress, improve sleep, and reduce sugar intake.

For more information to reduce your risk of insulin resistance, visit www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/insulin-resistance.html

What is S.M.A.S.H. Fish?
by Robin Stahl, RDN

In a world full of acronyms, here is one more! S.M.A.S.H. stands for salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, and herring. While health authorities recommend consuming 2 servings of fish per week, there is the concern for toxins in our fish supply. S.M.A.S.H. fish have low levels of mercury and other toxins while they are high in omega-3 fatty acids, protein, Vitamin D, selenium and iodine.

Sometimes, we have to settle for canned fish, especially sardines, anchovies and herring. These can be high in sodium. Does this mean the points for being healthy just got cancelled? Nope! Just be aware of the sodium in your day. Are these the only fish that Registered Dietitians recommend? Nope! Try trout, catfish, pollock, canned light tuna and shellfish as great, low mercury alternatives.
FITNESS

5-10 Minute Ideas for Movement

by Jackie Gieb, BA, Certified Wellness Coach

We all know exercise is vital for your health but sometimes it is hard to find time to get in a full workout. However, you can spend 5-10 minutes moving your body throughout the day to get some of the same benefits of a full workout. Here are some ideas for activity you can do for short periods to move your body throughout the day.

**Tabata workout.** Choose 4 exercises. Set a timer for 20 seconds on and 10 seconds rest. Do one exercise for 20 seconds, rest, then continue with the next exercise and rest. Do this until you have completed all 4 exercises. Depending on how much time you have, you can repeat this series multiple times.

**Take a walk.** You can walk just about anywhere at any time. Even if you are stuck in your house you can walk in circles around your house and up and down the stairs. Set a timer for 5 or 10 minutes if that’s all you have time for and just walk; around the block, in the mall, at work, or in your house! You Tube has some fun options too. For example, try this [5-minute energy walk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ) — Energy Boost 5 Minute Walk on YouTube.

**Stretch!** You can start with dynamic movements like spinal twists, arm circles, etc to loosen the muscles up. You can then work from you head to your toes doing static stretching each body part. Static stretching is when you extend the muscles and hold for a certain period of time. Hold each stretch for at least 15 seconds.

**Yoga.** There are many videos, apps or even books you can follow that have short yoga routines. You can get your blood flowing and feel refreshed and relaxed all at the same time.

**One third.** Do one third of your 30-minute workout (and do the other 2/3 later if you have time.)

It does not matter what activities you choose! Your body is designed to move, not sit at a desk or on the couch all day, so the most important thing is to let it move in different ways throughout the day.
The Power of Herbs and Spices
by Jessica Robertson, MA, RD, CD

You’ve probably heard about the powerful nutritional benefits of certain foods, but what about herbs and spices? They do a lot more than just flavor your food. If you’ve been curious about how or why to add more herbs and spices into your diet, keep reading!

The health benefits of herbs and spices are plentiful due to the variety of vitamins and antioxidants they contain that may play a role in preventing inflammation and chronic disease. For example, ½ teaspoon of cloves has more antioxidant power than ½ cup of blueberries!

Using herbs and spices will provide flavor to your meals without adding extra calories, sugar, salt or fat. They can be used in endless ways in the kitchen. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Sprinkle cinnamon in your coffee
- Stir ground turmeric into scrambled eggs
- Add dill before roasting potatoes
- Top your pizza with fresh chopped basil
- Add fresh mint leaves to your hot tea
- Infuse your water with basil leaves and lemon slices
- Add a cinnamon stick to your rice while cooking
- Add cumin to your favorite chili recipe
- Roast whole garlic heads in the oven
- Add ginger to your morning smoothie

The key is to consume a variety. Just as we advise to “eat the rainbow” of fruits and vegetables, the same applies to herbs and spices so you can get all the different antioxidants they contain.

To experiment with herbs and spices in the kitchen, visit eatingwell.com/recipes/18246/ingredients/herbs-spices/
STRESS AND MINDFULNESS

Comparison: The Thief of Joy

by Carla Ficorilli, MS

I’m sure you’ve heard the statement “comparison is the thief of joy”. The urge to make comparisons is strong. Throughout history, people have struggled with comparing themselves to others. Today however, with social media, the internet, and the constant access into people’s lives, it’s almost impossible to avoid comparison.

When we compare ourselves to others, we’re telling ourselves not to be content. When we compare ourselves with what others have achieved, like having a new car, a new house, and a so-called happy life, we become sad about our own situations.

There are many opportunities to compare ourselves to others: we can compare how we look to other people, we can compare what we have vs. what they have, we can compare what we’ve accomplished in our lives vs. what others have accomplished, or the common scenario of comparing your work performance to your co-workers. But beware—it’s a vicious cycle to get caught up in.

You will always find someone with a better job, a nicer home, a better wardrobe, etc., etc. If you compare yourself to others, you will always lose—that’s a 100% guarantee. Gently remind yourself that there will always be people better than you.

When we get free from the comparison trap, we can create a beautiful life free of other people’s judgments and opinions; because at the end of the day, the only person’s opinion that really matters is your own.

Remember, comparing ourselves to others takes away our own joy for what we accomplished, and everyone has accomplished something great. What matters most is doing your best in the given circumstance.