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# Wellness

## *Miami-Dade County*

PROVIDING EMPLOYEES WITH THE LATEST FITNESS AND WELLNESS NEWS, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

### The Ultimate Crave Crushing Veggie!

“HEDONIC HUNGER- A FANCY TERM THAT DESCRIBES THOSE CRAZY-INTENSE CRAVINGS FOR JUNK FOOD- IS THE DOWNFALL OF MANY A DIETER.”

Most of us know what we should be eating and what foods make us feel happiest and healthiest. And yet, even the woman who has so much willpower that it might be a superpower has succumbed on occasion to the siren call of ice cream (or cake or candy or chips — pick your poison). Getting our bodies in line with our minds has been a question for the ages, and not just about food.

A recent study has found a new supplement that reduced cravings by 95 percent, helping women to stick to their diet plans. OK, so it's not technically "new," but rather a new use for something you likely have sitting in your refrigerator right now: spinach. Now the almighty green can add another accolade to its long list of health benefits: cravings crusher.

For three months, researchers followed 38 overweight women. The women were given a green drink every morning with half containing a spinach extract and the other half being a placebo. The only other instructions they had was to "eat a balanced diet, including three meals a day and not to go on any other diet."

Charlotte Erlanson-Albertsson, lead author of the study, reported that the control group lost an average of 3.5 kilograms, while the group that was given thylakoids lost 5 kilograms. "The thylakoid group also found that it was easier to stick to three meals a day — and they did not experience any cravings," she added.

The scientists chalk up the impressive results to the thylakoids found naturally in spinach and concentrated in the extract used in the smoothies. Thylakoids, a natural part of green plants, were thought to extend digestion, producing a feeling of satiety. "This means that we are able to stick to the diet we are meant for without snacks and unnecessary foods like sweets, crisps and such," Charlotte explained. She added that it may have also worked by helping the women feel the difference between hedonic cravings and true hunger. Whether it really works like this or not (this is only one small, not replicated study, after all), if it gets you to throw a handful of spinach into your morning smoothie, it's probably a good thing anyhow. Spinach definitely falls into the category of "can't hurt and will probably help."



## Wellness Works thanks you for your support in the 2014 Fall into Wellness Fair

On Friday November 14, 2014 we held Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez's Fall into Wellness Fair sponsored by the Employee Discount Program. The Creative Entertainment Group provided us with live entertainment including music, performances and a live DJ. Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Department also provided games and activities throughout the day. In addition to the food trucks, vendors, exercise demonstrations, and giveaways, AvMed provided County employees with free chair massages, health education literature, and health screenings that included: blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, bone density and more. Thank you to all of those who attended, volunteered and contributed to the 2014 Fall into Wellness Fair.



## 6 Reasons You Aren't Losing Weight (or Keeping It Off)

### ***You Aren't Running***

Running for one hour (assuming a 160lb person) burns 606 calories at a 5mph pace and 861 calories at a 8mph pace; the intensity at which running takes place can create an after-burn process called *excess post-exercise oxygen consumption* (EPOC). EPOC turns your body into a calorie-burning machine with an additional 24 to 36 hours of elevated calorie consumption. Studies corroborate running's effectiveness.; one study compared running with walking. Runners with a BMI over 28 had 90% greater weight loss than those who walked. If your body has an aversion to impact from injury, then try the stair climber machine (657 calories in an hour). Otherwise, learn to like running and your waistline will thank you.

### ***You Aren't Going Anaerobic***

On the subject of exercise that people don't tend to like, anaerobic (lasting 10 seconds to 3 minutes) exercise is also near the top of the list. Anaerobic exercise can be summed up in one word - uncomfortable. Doing sprints, jumps, and burpees in an anaerobic fashion (think high-intensity interval training) isn't fun, but it most certainly is effective.. Anaerobic exercise burns lots of calories, and also it creates lots of, you guessed it, EPOC.

### ***You Don't Look for Added Sugar in Your Foods***

Even things you think are "healthy" - energy bars, yogurts, jerky - can have lots of added sweeteners. Do your due diligence, scrutinize labels and ingredient lists, and avoid added sugars. Watch out for: High fructose corn syrup, Stevia, and Splenda.

### ***You Eat Out a Lot***

When eating out, planned meals turn in to unplanned meals. If you eat out frequently (more than three times per week), it's much tougher to lose weight and keep it off. A recent study published in *Public Health Nutrition* found that people who eat out at restaurants eat on average 200 calories more per day than those who eat at home. 200 calories might not sound like much, but extrapolate that from a daily to an annual basis and you're talking about 73,000 calories or 21 pounds of fat. Eating out equals the wrong types of food and too much food in general. Eat out infrequently and you'll be healthier, leaner, and richer.

### ***You Don't Have Support***

Take an honest look at those you spend time with personally and professionally and see if there are changes you can make in your lifestyle. For example, instead of joining your coworkers who eat out every day, pack a healthy lunch. When it comes to family, changing habits can be tougher, so you will need to ask them for support. If all else fails, join support groups, find mentors, or hire the right professionals.

### ***You Aren't Addressing the Emotions Around Your Eating***

Addictions have a physical component, but they also have roots in our emotions. If you're heavy, it might be time to look beyond exercise and diet and dig deeper into the whys behind your compulsive and emotional eating.

The best exercises for losing and keeping it off are hard and uncomfortable. Period. Deep down, we all know the fat-free brownies and Six-minute Abs programs are lies. They are harmful in that they are diversions from the truth. There's only one way to the mountaintop and it's through the journey of introspection. Find the ability to go running when you don't feel like it. Find the way to pick up the apple instead of the junk food. Yes, keeping weight off is about metabolism, exercise, and the right nutrition. But mostly, it is about awareness of self and the willingness to get uncomfortable.



## 3 Minute Meditation to Increase Heart Rate Awareness and Control

### **How Do Meditation and Heart Rate Relate?**

Advanced meditators have demonstrated their ability to tune into and, in some cases, control their heart rate with simple awareness. "Simple," of course, is a relative term, as this skill is practiced and refined over decades of meditation. There is something you can do every day, though, to start honing your ability

**This meditation has a few benefits:** First, for those of us with attention-span challenges, it presents a focal point that is constantly drawing us back in. The heart beats anywhere from sixty to 100 times per minute in the average healthy person. As you continue to tune in, you may find yourself slowing your heart rate down through breath control and mindful awareness. You may also notice your heart rate spike at certain times of day or on days when your stress level is high. As you keep track, you will notice your personal response pattern to external stimuli.

**In a very keyed-in state, you may feel how your heart rate varies beat by beat - this is your heart rate variability.** You may practice calling to mind various mental images and watching how your heart rate responds. This is where we find true benefit. The more your heart is able to respond appropriately to the information you feed your brain, the better the potential effects in overcoming stress and trauma-related reactions in your mind and body.

*Try this meditation every day for a week or, if you like it, every day for a month.*

### **3-Minute Meditation for Body Awareness and Control**

1. Sit comfortably.
2. Locate your pulse, either on your neck or your wrist, making sure find a pulse strong enough to hold your attention.
3. Set a timer for three minutes.
4. Sit and count your pulse. Count every single beat to the best of your ability for the full three minutes.
5. Write down your results.

## Active Events: December/January

### **Jingle Bell Jog Cross Country Classic 5K**

Saturday, December 6, 2014 @ 8:00am  
Miami Lakes Par 3 Golf Course, Miami Lakes, FL

[Click here for details](#)

### **down2earth Bark at the Park 5k Dog Run**

Saturday, December 6, 2014 @ 7:30am  
Amelia Earhart Park, Hialeah, FL

[Click here for details](#)

### **Miami Dade College 5K Run for Education 2014**

Saturday, December 6, 2014 @ 7:30am  
Miami Dade College Kendall Campus, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)

### **Oleta 5k-10k - half marathon holiday Trail Run**

Sunday, December 14, 2014 @ 7:30am  
Oleta River State Park, North Miami Beach, FL

[Click here for details](#)

### **Serena Williams Ultimate Run**

Sunday, December 14, 2014 @ 8:00am  
Nikki Beach Club, South Beach, FL

[Click here for details](#)

### **Miami Marathon/ Half-Marathon/Tropical 5K**

Sunday, January 25 @ 6:15am  
American Airlines Arena, Miami, FL

[Click here for details](#)



**Are you acquainted with the County's Worksite Wellness Program "WW" events and activities?** The Program is endorsed by Mayor *Carlos A. Gimenez*' Office under delegated authority to Deputy Mayor *Russell Benford*. The WW Program is coordinated through *Dennys E. Gonzalez*, from the Internal Services Department, who channels information to every County department through designated *Wellness Liaisons*. To find out who your department liaison is please visit [this link](#). Under its tagline "**Wellness Works**" and the blue "**W**" identifier the County's WW Program aims to engage employees on the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through educational activities, "health & wellness fairs" and ad-hoc department-level initiatives. Our goal is to join forces with existing employee-benefit resources and in-kind services from several County departments to bring information, resources and opportunities to all Miami-Dade County Employees and to lead a healthy lifestyle that promotes responsible individual choices. For related events and WW information visit <http://www.miamidade.gov/mayor/wellness.asp>. Feel free to contact [wellnessworks@miamidade.gov](mailto:wellnessworks@miamidade.gov) for more information.