

Health & Fitness

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JOCELYN KNIGHT

Tiburon's multi-use path is a favorite spot for nutritionist and athlete Julie Upton to get fresh air and exercise. See story on page 7.

Staying Healthy and Keeping Fit

BY MICHELLE ASCHWALD

Two months into 2010, registered dietitian and competitive athlete Julie Upton, RD, MS, of Tiburon, checked our health-oriented New Year's resolutions and told *The Ark* that many individuals resolve to exercise more and lose weight at the beginning of the year, and although they begin in earnest, they experience difficulty sticking to their plans.

"People set unrealistic goals such as 'I'm giving up all sweets,' or 'I'm going to work out every day,'" said Upton. "It is no wonder that most good intentions become distant memories in a few weeks."

Upton, 41, a competitive swimmer, cyclist, marathon runner and triathlete, has been a nutrition communicator for more than 20 years, and she translates recommendations into actionable items to transform lifestyles.

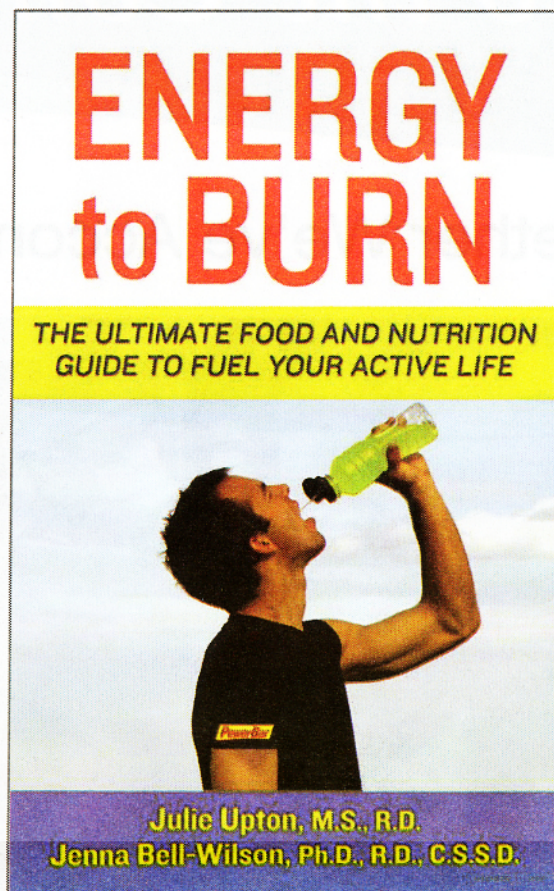
Nutrition Targets

Here are some simple-to-follow objectives that Upton, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, provided:

- Small changes equal big results. Consider two simple healthful diet substitutions rather than a complete overhaul.
- Commit. You are more likely to succeed if you write your goal and read it daily. Sharing your resolution with family and friends adds additional incentive to improve chances of success.
- Limit liquid calories. Consume only 150 beverage calories a day of healthy drinks like tea and 100-percent fruit juice.
- Break the fast. Enjoy a daily breakfast of whole grain cereal to improve your diet and help reduce caloric intake.
- Snack smarter. Fruits and veggies make excellent snack foods. Snacks currently account for one-quarter of total calories in many diets.
- Stick to the list. Always make a grocery list and limit unhealthy impulse purchases.
- Eat out less. More home-cooked meals will lower the calories and fat.
- Write off pounds. Those who track meals and how much they exercise lose more weight. Take advantage of online food and exercise logs. Sign up for a program to document what you eat and how much you move. Two of Upton's favorites are www.loseit.com and www.fitday.com, which work on iPhones.

Fad diets rarely work, claimed Upton, and she is not in favor of eliminating complete food groups, such as dairy. Before embarking on a new, radical

diet or restricting calories, she advised consulting a licensed dietitian who can identify the right dietary program for an individual.



The American Dietetic Association's website, www.eatright.org has a "Find a Registered Dietitian" feature.

"A plant-based diet and the Mediterranean-style diet with small portions are the healthiest ways to eat," said Upton. "Supplement Vitamin B-12, Vitamin D, iron, zinc and calcium, if these vitamins and minerals are not in your meals."

Upton enjoys living in Tiburon, the first town in the United States to pass an ordinance banning trans fat. She advocates limiting the sodium and sugar content in local restaurant cuisine, as there is always room for improvement.

"I'd like to see a farmer's market on the peninsula," Upton said. "Why must we drive to other communities to buy farm-fresh produce?"

Beneficial Exercise

Upton's weekly tri-athlete fitness program includes a regimen of 20 to 30 running miles, 50 cycling miles and three swimming miles — with one day of rest.

She encourages individuals to set realistic exercise goals and enter a charity race or competition at least once a year so that exercise has a purpose. Local events such as the RCP Tiburon Mile Open Water Swim, the Tiburon Triathlon or the Dipsea Race are options.

"It feels like a vacation living here with so much outdoor recreation," enthused Upton, who often trains on Tiburon's multi-use path.

Exercise is also a big part of her husband Craig Upton's life — he coaches professional cyclists and triathletes. The couple moved to Tiburon from Manhattan three years ago.

Julie Upton's Fitness Tips

- Move! Vary sports or workout by day — do not perform the same routine.
- Find fitness that fits. Fitness resolutions often fail because they are too rigid and essentially impossible to achieve. Doing a daily activity that you love increases the odds of success.
- Progress, not perfection. Have a strategy for when, or if, you break your resolution so you can get back on track without derailing all of your efforts.

The physiological benefits of exercise include weight maintenance, lowered blood pressure and cholesterol, improved cognition and enhanced self-esteem, Upton believes.

Upton holds an undergraduate nutrition degree from Michigan State University and a nutrition communications masters degree from Boston University.

She co-authored "Energy to Burn: The Ultimate Food and Nutrition Guide to Fuel Your Active Life" with Jenna Bell-Wilson, Ph.D., RD.

She is a media resource for the American Dietetic Association, California Avocado Society, California Pistachio Commission, Tea Association of the United States, USA Rice Federation and Citracal Calcium Plus Heart Health, a calcium supplement. ☛



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