

You can make a difference between life and death

The 'Chain of Survival' is made up of many critical links, which help save lives.

Calling 911 is one of the most critical links in the chain. Recognizing a medical problem early and calling for help (911), followed by early CPR, early defibrillation and early advanced life support are all links of this critical chain. The quicker you identify a medical emergency situation or problem and call 911, the greater the chance of survival for that person.

What you should know before you call 911

If you need to call 911, use a regular cord style phone if it's close at hand and is as convenient to use as a cellular phone (a cordless phone is okay). Using a regular phone will instantly provide the 911 operator and the ambulance communications centre with the caller's address information and phone number as soon as they answer your call — most cell phones don't offer this.

Remain calm

The 911 operator will answer your call by asking if you need police, fire or ambulance. You must indicate which agency you require. For any situation where a person is ill or injured, you should request an ambulance. At this point, you will be transferred to the ambulance communications centre operator.

Giving vital information

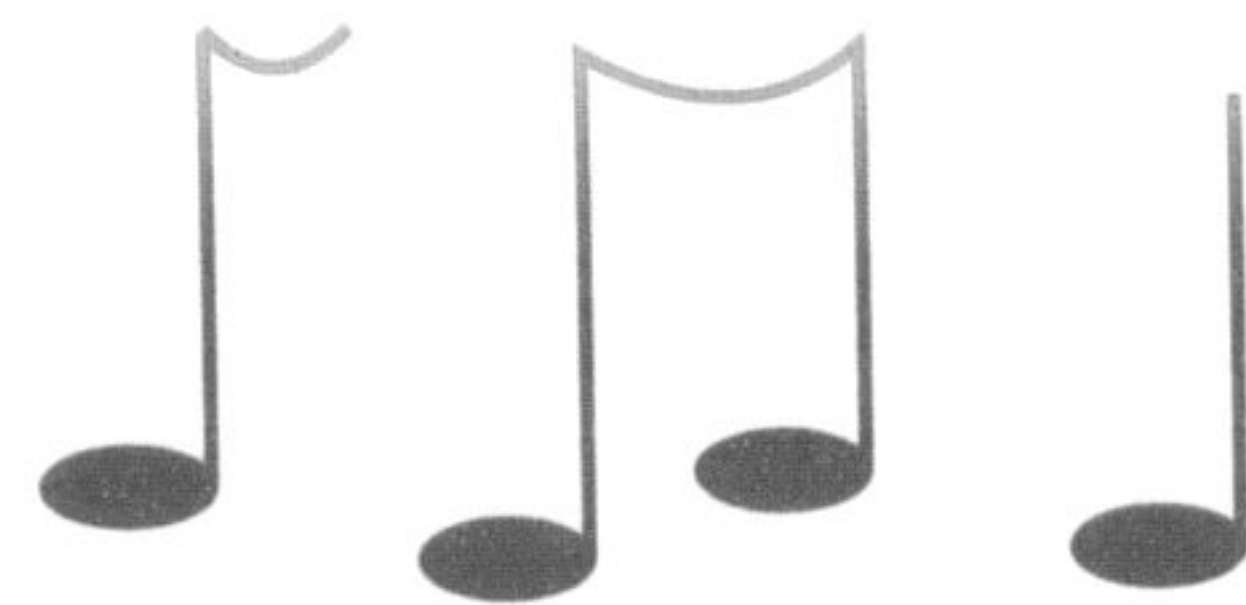
The ambulance communications centre operator will ask you a series of questions to confirm the address and location of the person requiring the ambulance. For rural areas have your emergency locator code number posted by your phone. (This is the number on the green sign at the end of your driveway). It's also a good idea to have your address written down near the phone for visitors who may have to call 911. The operator will also ask for a phone number where you can be reached.

You will immediately be asked some very specific questions about the emergency and the patient's present condition which include:

- Is the patient conscious (awake)?
- Is there any difficulty breathing?
- Is there any bleeding? (If there is bleeding, is it controlled?)

The answers to these important questions will help the operator to quickly determine the severity of the patient's condition. While the operator is asking additional questions about the patient's condition he will immediately send the information electronically to an ambulance communications dispatcher who will notify and dispatch the closest paramedic crew to the call. The operator will continue to speak with the caller while the paramedics are on their

Health Notes



way. Your goal should be to answer all the questions as directly and promptly as possible.

If other emergency agencies are required at the scene, to assist the patient or attend to hazards, the ambulance communications

centre will contact these agencies to respond. For example, if the ambulance communications centre receives a call for someone injured in a motor vehicle collision, they will also contact the fire and police to respond.

Other helpful actions

- Tell the operator which entrance paramedics should use at the site and have someone meet them at the entrance.
- If a security code is needed to enter the building, provide the code to the operator.

Health Notes is prepared by staff of the Halton Region Health Department.



Marion Healy
R.N.C.P.



Protein Vs. Carbohydrates

There is a popular misconception that unless a diet contains substantial amounts of carbohydrates, it will inevitably result in tired and listless people who have no "zip or energy"

The cynical among us tend to believe that such rumors might originate from companies who are incapable of producing high quality protein diet products (which are very difficult to formulate and expensive to produce), but are quite capable of making decent carbohydrate (sugar) snacks (easy to formulate and very cheap to make).

Everyone knows at least one small fact about nutrition and physiology, namely that the body uses glucose (i.e. sugar) for energy, and thus the major assumption is that carbohydrates must be consumed if one is to feel energetic!

Understanding the way the body handles food, and the nutrients they contain, are important factors in weight reduction.

Foods, (whether conventional or special dietary products) are not available to the body as such and must be broken down. The digestive processes occur mainly in the stomach and small intestine, and are brought about by enzymes which break down protein (into amino acids), carbohydrates (into simple sugars such as glucose,

fructose and galactose) and fats (into fatty acids, glycerol, mono and diglycerides). The salivary enzymes can break down starch, but food is not usually chewed long enough for this to make a major contribution. Essentially all the bi-products of digestion are now in a form which can be absorbed from the intestine and be further processed.

The absorption of these simple nutrients also requires work and therefore costs energy. Thus by the time your nutrients have been absorbed, you have already invested quite a lot of energy in them.

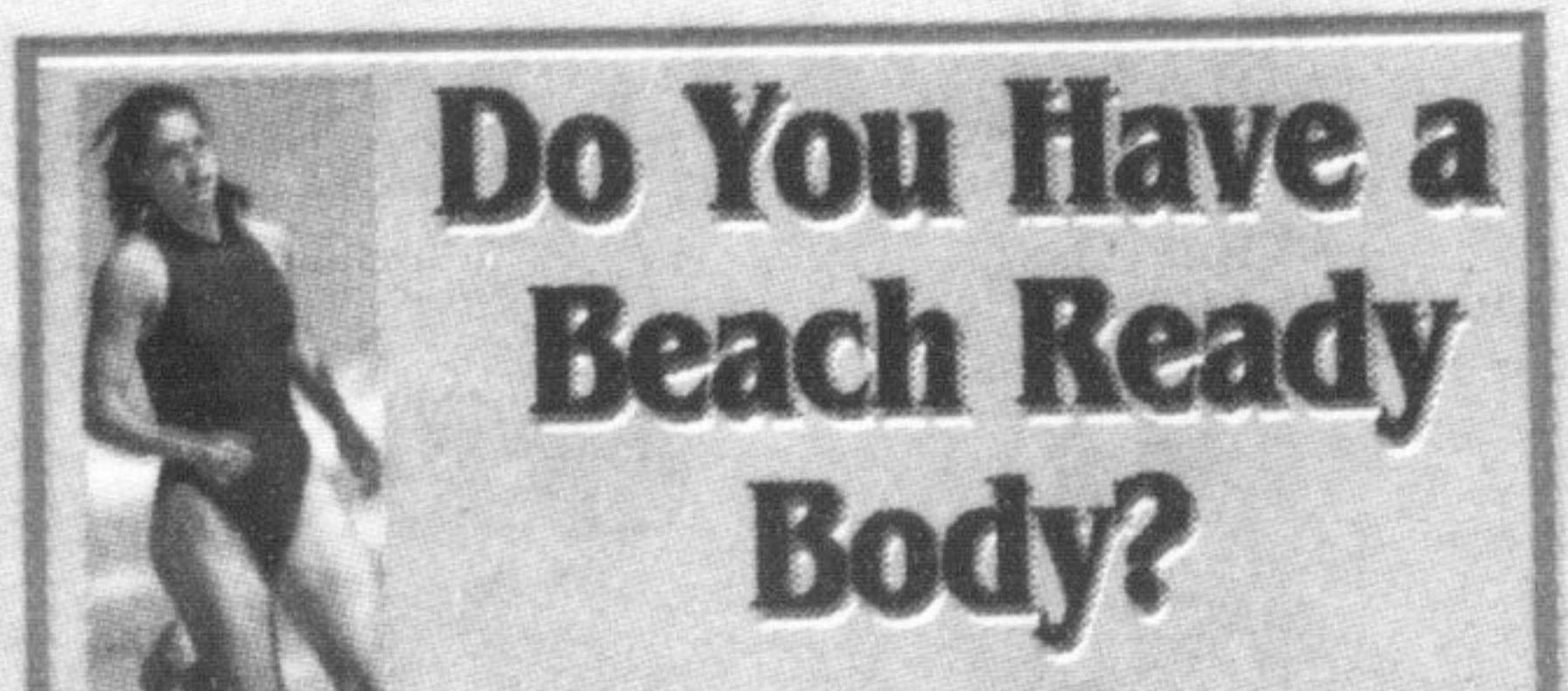
A major study found that the minimal protein intake required to prevent loss of lean body mass (i.e. muscle) on a low calorie diet was 1.26 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day. They also reported that the high protein intake also improved weight loss in all their subjects, when compared to rates of loss on a low protein, high carbohydrate calorie diet. The protein content makes the greatest contribution to maintaining the ability to perform physical exertion (keeps the "zip" in the individual) and enhance weight reduction. Individuals on the high protein diet had significantly less hunger, and were also much less pre-occupied with food. A further consequence of diets in which car-

bohydrate has been used to replace protein is the potential of exposing users to the risk of loss of lean body mass (muscle). One of the main findings into the composition of weight loss diets is that the diet must preserve the lean body mass (i.e. muscle) by making sure that the nitrogen balance is positive. In other words, in order to protect muscle tissue, an individual must maintain an adequate intake of protein. Furthermore, high carbohydrate diets may cause loss of muscle tissue, increase appetite, and may even result in deposition of extra fat. To date, research has indicated that a diet moderately high in protein may:

- improve weight reduction
- preserve/protect muscle tissue
- reduce sensation of hunger
- increase level of energy
- increase metabolic rate.

Marion Healy is a registered Nutritional Consulting Practitioner with over 15 years experience in weight loss and nutrition. She is Clinic Director of Beverly Hills Weight Management and Nutrition Centre in Milton & Clarkson Village, Mississauga. For more information contact Marion at 905-875-2889

MARION HEALY
Registered Nutritional Consulting Practitioner
550 Ontario St. S., Unit #18
(905) 875-2889



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bob@robertleeinsurance.com

