

Teams needed for Extension's 'A Healthier Weigh' challenge

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

For those who made New Year's resolutions to lose weight or improve health, there is help to follow through. The 2011 "A Healthier Weigh" program, sponsored by Colorado State University Extension, begins Monday, Jan. 24.

This 12-week challenge encourages increased physical activity, making wise food choices and living a healthier lifestyle in 2011.

Teams consisting of four adults participate in the weigh-in at the beginning of the challenge. At weigh-in, each participant receives a pedometer to keep track of daily activity, with the goal of increasing their activity levels through exercise and lifestyle changes.

Participants will also be given a "Walk Your Way to Fitness Guide" and a tape measure to record waist measurement changes during the challenge.

High waist circumference is associated with increased risk of type 2 diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease.

Team members will receive details on how to access weekly information on health, nutrition and fitness from an Extension website.

Again, the goal is to educate and learn to make lifestyle changes that may gradually improve one's nutrition and health.

Through increased activity and making wise food choices, individuals in previous years have lost an average of 4 percent of their beginning weight. In a trial last year recording inches lost around the waist, teams lost from zero up to 27.5 inches for an average waist reduction of 2.76 percent.

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Since the program promotes overall health and fitness and not just weight loss, there are not weekly weigh-ins. A team weigh-out will be held at the end of the 12 weeks in mid-April.

During the 12-week challenge, teams earn points for activity recorded and questions completed from website information. Points are also earned for weight loss and reductions in waist measurements based on a percentage of the team's original weight and waist totals.

In lieu of each participant receiving a t-shirt or book, this year more money from the registration fees will be returned as cash prizes at the conclusion of the challenge.

To learn more about the 2011 "A Healthier Weigh" challenge, contact Yuma County Extension at 970-332-4151 or e-mail Joy.Akey@colostate.edu for guidelines and entry form.