

Nutrition expert coaches Tahoe-ites on eating

By Kathryn Reed

What you put in your body has a direct correlation to how you will function. Fad diets are not necessary. Trans fats are poison.

These were some of the words of wisdom Bridget McGrath shared at a recent nutrition talk sponsored by Tahoe Regional Young Professionals. McGrath is owner of Elevated Fitness in South Lake Tahoe. Nutrition coaching comes with the gym membership.

“Everyone’s diet is specific to them. Just eat healthy for you,” McGrath said.

She employs the philosophy of using one’s hand size to determine a portion size. For women at each meal, this means a palm size of protein, one fist size of vegetables, and a thumb worth of essential fats. If carbs are on the plate, no more than one cupped handful worth. For men, it’s twice the amount at each serving.

McGrath is a proponent of getting as many nutrients as possible from food and not from vitamin supplements.

“Since vitamins don’t get synthesized that well, you can do more harm than good,” she said.



Bridget McGrath talks about what constitutes a healthy diet. Photo/LTN

She also said it's better to get calories from food instead of liquids. Alcohol and fruit juices have little if any health benefits.

McGrath also stressed how essential fats are necessary. This includes things like nuts and avocados.

"If you are on a super low fat diet, you are angry all of the time," McGrath said.

Food affects more than just one's weight – nutrients tie into cognitive ability, strength, how internal organs are working and more.

Processed foods are some of the worst things people consume. She had nothing good to say about anything that comes out of a cardboard box, adding that the box is "more nutritious than what it contains."

Sugar is one of the big issues with processed foods. More than 25 grams of sugar per day is toxic for the body, McGrath said.

It's not that McGrath said people should never splurge on "bad" foods or drink alcohol, but it all needs to be in moderation. The "bad" items should also be consumed after the good and not on their own because it's easier for the body to

break everything down together.