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BALANCE



FUELING WONDERFUL WORKOUTS

What should you eat before working out? As it turns out, the answer varies. “Every body is unique and different,” says Michelle Joy Kramer, a health coach in Naples. It also depends on the intensity and type of exercise, how much you need to eat for your body type, and other factors. She does, though, offer a few tips for everyone to consider: Remember to hydrate. Drink 8 ounces of water when you wake up, then wait about 30 minutes before starting your morning exercise. Adding electrolytes to the water is even better to promote hydration. Kramer recommends Elete Electrolytes from Mineral Resources International Inc.

Focus on proteins with some carbs and a small amount of healthy fats. Good pretraining foods include oatmeal, half a banana, a few dates, or toast with almond butter or avocado. Kramer recommends avoiding refined sugar and energy bars.

And, regardless of what you eat, she suggests waiting one to two hours between eating and starting your workout. Listen to your body. If you ate a late dinner the night before, you may not be hungry before a morning sweat session. For a shorter exercise routine, you may not need to eat anything at all beforehand. “This is figuring out what works for you,” Kramer says. “Know what makes you feel good.” To energize your morning workout, try Kramer’s oatmeal recipe. (michellejoykramer.com)—E.K.

Chocolate Overnight Oats

Serves 2

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup gluten-free rolled oats
- 1 cup oat milk
- 1 1/2 heaping tbsp. chia seeds
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp. cocoa powder
- Dash of sea salt (optional)

Directions:

Place all ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Transfer to two 8-ounce glass containers, seal, and place in refrigerator overnight. In the morning, mix and enjoy. Add your favorite healthy toppings, like nuts or fruits.



COURTESY OF MICHELLE JOY KRAMER

Medical
GASLIGHTING

You may have heard of gaslighting in relationships, for instance when a manipulative partner leads one to question memories and perceptions. Unfortunately, the same dynamic can occur in the doctor’s office—sometimes with severe consequences for your health. “Medical gaslighting is when a health care provider dismisses your complaints or concerns,” explains Margot Escott, a clinical social worker and licensed therapist in Naples for more than 35 years. “They don’t seem to take you seriously or blame your symptoms on a vague cause, such as stress.” While it can happen to anyone, Escott says women, people of color, and the elderly experience it most frequently. We talked with Escott about recognizing and dealing with medical gaslighting to help make sure you’re sent home with a proper diagnosis and treatment plan.



How do you know if you are experiencing medical gaslighting?

“People can recognize medical gaslighting when their symptoms are ignored or dismissed without cause,” Escott explains. For example, it can happen when a doctor attributes a medical issue causing memory loss to old age or skips diagnostic tests in favor of blaming the issue on the patient’s weight. “Being told problems are just ‘nerves’ is another sign,” Escott adds.

What are specific clues?

Be on the lookout for several signs of medical gaslighting, including when you’re made to be the blame for your health problems; your doctor doesn’t share test results; you’re told to wait in the lobby or examination room for hours; or you need to argue with your doctor just to be heard.

What should you do if you experience medical gaslighting?

The first step, Escott says, is to find a new physician. If this isn’t an option, she suggests taking a family member or friend to your appointments so they can observe the doctor’s behavior and support you if necessary. Remember, “If you are ill or in pain, you deserve to receive good medical care,” Escott says. (mar otescott.com)—E.K.

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