

Dietitians find healthy picks for stores

To celebrate National Nutrition Month, six registered dietitians from Westchester Nutrition Consultants visited local food establishments and helped storeowners identify their healthiest offerings. The dietitians presented each store with a list to display.

Participating are: DeCicco's Marketplace, Michael's Gourmet Foods, Lange's Deli, Parkway Coffee Shop, Metro Deli, Metro Diner, Balducci's, Gristedes, Katzenberg Kafe, Italian Village and Supersol Kosher Supermarket.

"Managing weight is all about calorie control," said Elizabeth DeRobertis, who is also the nutritionist for Scarsdale Medical Group. "If you are losing weight, you are taking in fewer calories than your body burns."

DeRobertis said that many people focus on the wrong things on a food label. People who have diabetes should not be looking at sugar content, but at total carbohydrates. Peo-

ple who want to lose weight should focus on calories and serving size. "Just looking at fat, or just looking at sodium, sugar or carbs, is really not enough," she said.

The nutritionists were looking for menu choices that are lower in calories, fat and sodium and higher in fiber with some extra nutritional value. Saturated fat is the primary culprit of high LDL cholesterol, DeRobertis said. One slice of cheese has 4-5 grams of saturated fat and 80-100 calories, as compared to 15-20 calories a slice for turkey, ham, roast beef or chicken. She recommends keeping saturated fat under 12 grams a day.

DeRobertis recommends starting meals with a salad, a broth-based soup or vegetables: "Eating these lower calorie foods first will help you to fill up and eat less of the higher calorie foods that may follow."

Some nutritious foods are high in calories and hard to eat in moderation, she said, like oil, nuts, avocado, dark chocolate and peanut butter. Keeping a food log, like keeping a checkbook, is "a good way to see what you are taking in compared to what you are expending," she said, and choosing snacks wisely and spacing food

through the day is key to staying in control of one's appetite.

Looking for 100-120-calorie snacks with extra nutritional value, the nutritionists found Fiber One Bars and Healthy Delite Frozen Souffles at DeCicco and Supersol, GNU Bars and Crispy Green Fruit Snacks, at Balducci's, and Stoneyfield Farm Oikos yogurt at all the local supermarkets, including Gristedes.

"DeCicco's has these great rice cakes called Cocopops that are only 16 calories each, so this is a good 'volume' snack," DeRobertis said, with a little Laughing Cow light cheese. Berries are low in calories and packed with nutrients.

Michael's makes a "very veggie" sandwich. Parkway has "an amazing chopped/shredded salad that you can add turkey to for some protein, and it doesn't even need any dressing because it is so good. Scarsdale Metro has some great wraps and salads. Katzenberg's has an excellent salad bar and a few lower calorie breakfast options.

DeRobertis said the storeowners were "happy to see that it's not that hard to provide options that are both healthy and tasty."



Elizabeth DeRobertis