



Northern California Indian Development Council, Inc. (NCIDC)

www.ncidc.org

California Native Food and Nutrition Program

241 "F" Street, Eureka • CA • 95501
707.445.8451 (voice) • 707.445.8479 (fax)
dwoodman@ncidc.org

Obesity Reduction & Prevention Issue

November 2005

Weight Loss & Me

By: André Cramblit (Karuk Tribe)

Obesity has been a problem for me most of my life. Growing up I shopped in the husky section. When I was 13 and in the 7th grade, I weighed 225 pounds.



November 2002

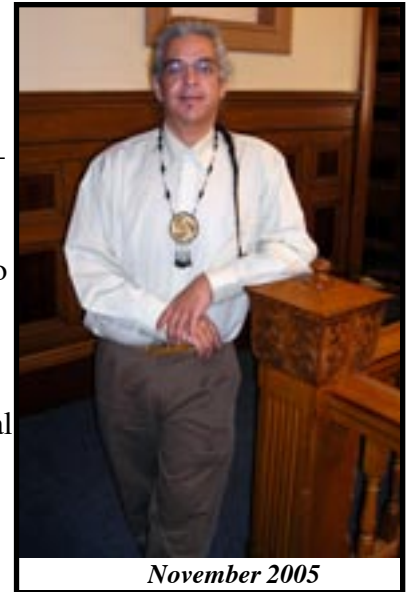
My football coaches loved it, but it was not easy being the roundest kid in school. I was an athlete all through high school playing baseball and keeping busy so my weight didn't change all that much, but I did slowly get bigger. During

my college years I stopped playing sports and doing much exercise at all.

Over the next 20 years or so my girth grew and I entered my 40's at nearly 380 pounds. I had a variety of health related issues due to my super morbid obesity (the doctor's term). I was suffering from high cholesterol (269), high blood pressure, and sleep apnea (I had to use a machine at night to keep breathing). I had asthma, bad joints and back pain. I couldn't keep up with my six-year-old son and I was facing early death from heart attack, stroke, possible diabetes and weight related cancers.

Something dramatic had to happen, and after much thought and deliberation I made the decision that I was not going to live and die this way. Three years later I have lost 180 pounds and have resolved my health issues. How did I do it you ask? That is an OIT (Old Indian Trick).

Actually I decided to have a gastric bypass surgery called a "duodenal switch". The procedure was done laproscopically but I developed an intestinal leak on the 5th day after the surgery and had to be rushed back to the emergency room to be operated on. For my surgeons to repair the problem the doctors had to cut open my belly from my navel to my sternum. I was in the hospital for the next 2 months unable to eat or drink anything. I got all my liquids and nutrition from a food tube directly into my intestines. All in all, I was off work for nearly 6 months. I had an open wound, hospital bills in excess of one million dollars (thank goodness for my insurance), was in a hospital



November 2005

bed tied to machines for 4 months, and I was facing hernia surgery to repair that huge incision on my belly before the year was out. It was not pleasant and even though I was at home and had my family there, I was not a happy camper, but I slowly got better.

Today I eat miniscule portions of food, I have had over three quarters of my stomach removed and over a meter of intestines bypassed so I do not even absorb all that I eat. I have to remain on a strict regimen of vitamins and supplements for the rest of my life and

The contents of this newsletter are for information purposes only and should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease. It is not a substitute for professional care. If you have or suspect you may have a health problem, you should consult your health care provider. Additional information, research, resources and links can be found at www.ncidc.org/food/pdfs.html



make regular visits to my specialists. I am also able to play games with my son, enjoy life more, fit in airline seats and wear normal clothes. My cholesterol is 123, my blood pressure is on the low end of normal and I no longer need asthma meds or the breathing machine. I weigh less than I did in 7th grade. This is what I did it all for!

People always ask me, “Was it worth all the suffering and misery you went through?” It took me a year and a half to say that I would do it again. I would never tell anyone else to get the surgery, but if they have serious health issues I say it is something they should investigate. It is not something to be taken lightly, I have known two Native people that have died from the complications that are part of this surgery. I tell them to know the risks and find a good surgeon who has done at least several hundred successful operations.

I must thank all my family, friends and co-workers for the prayers and thoughts that helped me emerge from this a stronger healthier person. I also owe NCIDC thanks for keeping my job on hold during the recovery process and paying those insurance premiums.

There are three major types of the operation, the Lap Band, the Rouen Y, and the Switch that I had (the most extreme). I have included information below for more research. If you have any questions please feel free to email me at andrekar@ncidc.org.

<http://www.asbs.org/>
<http://www.obesity.org/education/advisor.shtml>
<http://www.obesityhelp.com/morbidobesity/>
<http://www.lapsf.com/morbid-obesity-is-surgery-for-me.php>
<http://www.obesitysurgery.com/>

Traditional Foods Focus: Acorns

For centuries, the acorn was a staple of food for many Native people. Acorns are rich in carbohydrates, minerals, and vitamins. Acorns are, lower in fat than most nuts, a good source of fiber, contain large percentages of protein, healthy fats, as well as the calcium, phosphorus, potassium and niacin.

An additional benefit from eating acorns is in the gathering. Acorns must be picked-up and processed before eating, which requires walking and bending. This is a good, simple form of exercise. One of the best types of acorns to harvest are those from the White Oak tree

as they contain less tannin, the bitter chemical in the meat of the nut. Depending on the variety of oak tree, acorns usually start dropping between late September and beginning of October. This also depends on the climate zone.

After gathered, the acorns need to be leached to wash out the bitterness. Traditionally this was done by mashing the nuts. After the nut meat was smashed, it was placed in a tightly woven basket or placed in a bag and leached either in the river or stream. The tannin is washed out of the ground meal, dried and used in a variety of foods throughout the year. Now you can leave it under a dripping faucet overnight in a flour cloth sack.

Acorns are still used today. Acorn flour can be a great ingredient in baking. Acorn meal can be substituted for corn meal in most recipes. Acorns can also be used in place of chickpeas, nuts, peanuts, and olives in a variety of dishes. Acorn meal and acorn pieces are excellent in soups and stews and were often used that way by native Californians. Acorns can also be treated with pickle brines or the lye treatment used for olives.

Miwok Acorn Muffins

Mix:

2 tbs. oil
3 tbs. molasses
1 egg

Stir in:

1/2 cup milk
1 cup acorn flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 tsp. double-acting baking powder
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. ginger



Stir rapidly until all the ingredients are wet and the batter is slightly lumpy. Then pour the batter into a greased muffin tin and bake at 425°F for 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the tin from the oven, allow it to cool five minutes, turn the muffins out, and serve.



Key Findings:

“The Effects of Altered Diet on the Health of the Karuk People”

Dr. Kari M. Norgaard

- The diet of the Karuk people has shifted dramatically since European contact due to denied access to traditional foods. The dramatic decline in eel and salmon populations that once supplied over half the Karuk diet has occurred within the lifetime of most adults alive today.
- The loss of the most important food source, the Spring Chinook Salmon run, is directly linked to the appearance of epidemic rates of diabetes in Karuk families.
- The American Diabetes Association has recently calculated the annual cost of diabetes in the U.S. at \$13,243 per person (ADA, 2003). Given this figure the annual cost of diabetes for Karuk Tribal members is 5.2 million dollars.
- The elimination of traditional foods including runs of salmon, Pacific Lamprey, Sturgeon and other aquatic species has had extreme adverse health, social, economic, and spiritual effects on Karuk people.
- Prior to contact with Europeans and destruction of the fisheries the Karuk people were amongst the wealthiest in California. Today they are amongst the poorest: poverty and hunger rates are amongst the highest in the State and Nation. Median income for Karuk families is \$13,000 and 88.4-91.9% of tribal members in Siskiyou County live below the poverty line. This dramatic reversal is directly linked to the destruction of the fisheries resource base.
- Environmental Justice laws require that federal agencies identify and address adverse affects to human health or the environment of their actions on minorities and low-income populations.
- Historic fish consumption for the Karuk Tribe is



estimated at 450 pounds of salmon per person per year or 1.2 pounds per day. Estimates for 2004 are less than 5 pounds of salmon per person per year.

Effects of Denied Access to Traditional Foods

- Traditional diet, especially salmon, is an important factor in both the prevention and treatment of diabetes. Traditional foods are higher in protein, iron, zinc, Omega 3 fatty acids and other minerals and lower in saturated fats and sugar.
- The estimated diabetes rate for the Karuk Tribe is 21%, nearly four times the U.S. average.
- The estimated rate of heart disease for the Karuk Tribe is 39.6%, three times the U.S. average.
- Diabetes is associated with severe and costly complications such as blindness, kidney failure, lower-extremity amputations and cardiovascular disease, disability, decreased quality of life and premature death that continue to affect American Indians disproportionately.
- The United Nations recognizes the right to food security and food sovereignty. Access to traditional food sources of salmon are a basic human right.
- Cultural benefits of the use of traditional food include beliefs about food healthfulness and spiritual provisioning, economic benefits, and place in the social fabric of community life.

To see full report please visit:

www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/programs/tmdl/scott/092005/sr/14References.pdf

FREE

WOMEN’S HEALTH INFORMATION KIT

Offered by the Food and Drug Administration’s Office of Women’s Health and the Federal Citizen Information Center.

Women’s Health Information Kit contains some of the FDA’s best advice on more than a dozen health topics that concern today’s women.

To order your FREE kit please visit: www.pueblo.gsa.gov.



Senior Source: Lessons Across The Generations

By: Art Coulson-Reprinted with permission

Today would have been my late grandmother's 82nd or 87th birthday, depending on which piece of government paper you believe. Grandma was born at home on the Cherokee Nation and given the birth certificate of an older sister who had died in childhood, hence the age confusion.

I lived with Grandma during much of my childhood and she taught me many things, often using her extensive gardens as a classroom. She taught me to respect the natural cycles of the seasons, to be patient as tender, green sprouts grew into strong plants, to get my hands dirty if I wanted to produce anything of value. She taught me plants were not just beautiful, but also powerful medicine.

But mostly, Grandma taught me one sure way to bridge the differences between the generations was to join them in productive work, to get them sweating for a common good. And what better place to teach that lesson than the garden, the plot of land that feeds and sustains us all. A place, Grandma said, where we are closest to the Creator.

I've been trying to carry on my Grandma's teachings with my own family. That led my daughters and me to help out in a community garden planted by the American Indian education program in our school district. The sprawling garden sits off in a wooded corner of the grounds of the School of Environmental Studies in Apple Valley.

I thought of Grandma early this spring as I walked the plot that would be the garden, blessing it with sage and singing one of our medicine songs that is thousands of years old (or so I have been told). Clarine Packineau, one of the leaders of the Indian education program, and I left a gift of tobacco that day. We looked up into the clear sky and watched as an eagle soared above the garden and the school. It circled above us the entire time as we said the words to prepare the garden for planting and, I'm sure, the bird we call Wohali helped to carry our prayers to the Creator.

Throughout the growing season I could feel my

grandmother's firm hand on my shoulder as I weeded. I could see her smile on the faces of my daughters, Jesse and Katie, as they pitched in. I could feel her warm breath on my cheeks as I paused and looked up to the sun, scanning the blue skies for the eagle.

We harvested the last of the garden on Thursday, a big celebration of our first season's bounty. Members of the local Indian community, family and friends picked massive pumpkins, squash, green beans and tomatoes. We harvested sunflower seed heads for the birds and began to prepare the garden for its coming nap.

As we harvested and chatted, swapped stories and shared the loud laughter of friendship, we taught our children about community, about the bonds of kinship and about the rewards that come from hard work.

But most of all, we planted a piece of our grandparents in their hearts. I'm anxious to watch it grow.

Coulson is editorial page editor of the Pioneer Press. Contact him at **651-228-5544**; 345 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101; or by e-mail at acoulson@pioneerpress.com.

Whole Wheat Pumpkin Muffins

1 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 cup whole wheat flour
3 tbl. sugar
2 tsp. baking powder
1/8 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pumpkin spice
1/4 tsp. baking soda
1 egg, beaten
3/4 cup fat-free milk
2 tbl. Margarine or butter, melted
1/2 cup canned pumpkin



Lightly coat twelve 2 1/2 inch muffin cups with cooking spray; set aside. In a large bowl stir together all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, sugar, baking powder, pumpkin pie spice, baking soda, salt. Make a well in the center of flour mixture.

In a small bowl, combine egg, milk, margarine; stir in pumpkin. Add all at once to flour mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy). Spoon batter into prepared muffin cups, filling about 2/3 full. Bake in a 375 degree oven for 15 to 18 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted into the centers of the muffins comes out clean. Cool in pan. Remove from muffin cups. Serve warm.

Dr. Coyotes Clinic*

Answers on food and exercise

Hello Dr. C:

Q: I am just starting to exercise and now that it is getting colder I was wondering if you had any suggestions for how to keep working out without freezing? Getting Cold Outside.

Coyote's Reply: If I have said it once, I have said it before, "**No Pain, No Pain!**" Fall and winter are the time for rest and relaxation. Many Tribes only told stories during the colder seasons and I am a firm believer in sitting around the fire and eating all I can get. My advice for you, get lots of wood, plenty of snacks and extra batteries for your remote control. What could be better than sucking the fat off of a few deer ribs and playing the changing channels derby?

Reasonable Reply: Dear Cold. Keep up the good work! Since diabetes and weight related issues have such an impact on the health of many Native peoples I am proud of you and encourage you to keep up your exercise commitment. As the weather outdoors gets colder and rainier you can do two things, bundle up or move indoors.

You can try joining a gym or other exercise program. Another option is to work out at home. There are tons of videos or workout equipment that will help you meet your goals and you do not have to spend a fortune either. Many Indian Health Services Clinics either offer equipment that you can use, exercise classes, discounts or reimbursement for local gyms, clubs, or programs, check with your local clinic. You can also get a relatively inexpensive piece of equipment for your house.

Try looking at yard sales, used sporting good stores or online. Pick something that you will use. A recumbent bike or elliptical training works out many muscle groups and is easy on the knees. You can also add some weights to your routine, as muscle mass is good



and burns tons of calories and can help defend against osteoporosis.

For more cold weather workout ideas see:

www.exercise.about.com/cs/exerciseworkouts/a/cold-workouts.htm

www.workoutsforyou.com/home_gym_article.htm

health.yahoo.com/ency/healthwise/aa93056

Always consult with your doctor or medical provider before starting or changing any exercise program. Whether or not you are ready to exercise depends on individual factors and should be done in consultation with a professional.

** Remember that Coyote is the trickster in many cultures, and the breaker of rules. He teaches us by doing the opposite of what is correct. He will try and deceive you so be skeptical of his words. If you have any questions please contact your Elders, doctor, or someone with more credibility than a joker like Dr. Coyote.*

De-toxing Your Diet

How have you been feeling lately? A little tired or stressed. How long have you been feeling this way? If you are like I am, there just never seems to be enough time in the day to get everything done. Between work life and home life we forget the most important people, ourselves!

By trying to make the most of our days, often we tend to forget our own eating habits. Fast food, pre-sweetened foods and packaged ready-to-eat meals may seem to be a good choice for us on the go, when in reality it is adding harmful toxins and chemicals to our bodies. These toxins and chemicals are what help add to stress, tiredness and fatigue.

Choosing the right foods is a good start to help in the detoxification of your body. Foods with fiber, brown rice, and organically grown, fresh fruits and vegetables are great for cleaning the body's system. Drinking plenty of water is also important for hydration purposes and overall body function. Eliminate things like alcohol, cigarettes, coffee, refined sugars and saturated fats from your diet. All of these things act like toxins in your body. Exercise also plays a key role in the success of your detoxification. By sweating your body releases toxins through perspiration.

For more information on this topic please visit:

www.finetuning.com

www.gaiam.com

Kids Korner: Staying Healthy The Traditional Way



Regrettably obesity or being overweight is a rising epidemic among our native youth. This is leading to higher rates of diabetes, asthma and other serious problems. As our kids exercise less and eat worse they are losing not only their health but their connection to their customs as well. How can we help our children live better lives both physically and culturally?

You can lose pounds simply by eating less and exercising more. The key is to finding a way to motivate children into making this a life long choice. Tying it to our Tribal traditions is one way to do that. Take your kids to talk with their Elders and find out what they did as children, the games they played, the foods they ate, etc.

Many tribes spent hours in the river swimming, fishing cleaning, all burning calories. Go out into nature and collect traditional plants and foods. In many tribes play had a purpose other than enjoyment. All activities helped teach the child something practical, something they needed to learn.

Don't count calories or worry about the latest craze of high protein, low carbs or whatever. Focus on eating whole foods, preferable traditional things from your tribe. The more natural you can eat the better nutrition you will provide. Offer healthy meals and snacks and encourage regular physical activity, join them in moving around daily, it will do you both good. Being a good role model is also important, starting when your kids are young. This can help the whole family to be healthy.

Here are some game ideas from the Chumash Tribe:
<http://www.sierracanyon.pvt.k12.ca.us/school/chumash/games.html>

Target shooting is when a bundle of tule or other brush about 4" by 1.5" were the target for the bow and arrow. It was thrown on the ground about 40 feet away. If the arrow would go into half the length of the target, the arrow was selected as good to use for big game. They stood the bundle upon end,



securing it by stakes. They would aim about the height off a deer's throat. They also shot into creeks and streams aiming for fish.

Hoop and Stick is a game in which a wooden, stone, or twig hoop was rolled along the ground and a stick or spear was 6-in long thrown through it. It was played to improve hand-eye coordination and hunting skills. This game was often played by children learning how to hunt. Their fathers often helped them and assisted in their learning.



Shiny was a popular Chumash game. It was often played in larger villages or at a special gathering on a large flat field, as many as 2 or 3 hundred players played

divided into two teams. Each team has facing goal posts, and the players used shiny sticks. The object of the game was to put the small wooden ball through the other team's goal post using a shiny stick. At the end, the team with the most goals won.

Walnut shell die was one of a set of gaming pieces which were made from walnut shell halves. These die were used in a game of chance. Dice games were played differently throughout the region and by all California Indians, not just Chumash.

Gaming counter was one of a uniform set of short or long sticks, often made from sections of split reed stems in coastal areas and of willow or elderberry inland. They were smoothed and pointed at one end. Gaming counter was used in keeping score during various games of a chance. Scoring varied from place to place. One way was based on odd and even throws. The counter sticks were used to record the number of odd or even shells showing after a throw.



For more information please visit:

<http://www.ewebtribe.com/NACulture/games.htm>

<http://www.nativetech.org/games/index.php>

<http://www.inquiry.net/outdoor/native/games/>