

# Curves Mail



September / October 2008

## Member in Focus

### Cilla Riley

Despite losing 1.5 stones with a weight loss class in 4 months up to Christmas last year the weight loss stopped. I was quite despondent and knew that I needed to do regular exercise. The local gym had rows of bicycles and running machines with super fit, skinny youngsters – that wasn't for me. Then at work I noticed that my colleague Fran had lost a lot of weight and she looked really good. When asked how she had managed to achieve this she replied, "I go to Curves in Eastleigh." This didn't help me as I have to care for my aged father and needed somewhere close to home. It wasn't long after that I noticed an advert in the Romsey Gazette stating that Curves was coming to Romsey at the end of July and there would be a discount for the first 100 members. Was I excited?! Sad I know, but I was on the phone immediately booking my appointment because I felt this might be the answer.

Every bit of me was measured and weighed and I have to say that it came as a shock to find that my body fat % was in the very poor column. Goals were set and I was told not to worry. I was shown what to do on each piece of equipment and then it was over to me. One, two, push, pull, keep the legs straight, elbows out, relax the shoulders, push with your bottom, wow. It's only 30 seconds and "Change stations now" thank goodness, oh no, it's the squat – can only manage 6. Also you should be able to tell who goes to Curves because we have the cleanest windows! The staff are so friendly, greeting you by your name and they are so positive monitoring every step. It only takes 30 minutes, 3 times a week to get in shape. We are all ages, shapes and sizes, we are not competing; just women trying to keep fit, toning, getting rid of flabby bits, possibly losing weight too and feeling good about ourselves. It's 'me' time.

My first month has flown by and I was thrilled to find that I had lost 4lbs in weight, 2.5 inches in total and my body fat % had dropped by the equivalent of 5.9 lbs of fat so that I moved out of the very poor range. I was equally pleased to receive a Curves Pound for making good progress. 140 beats per minute – that's the music – Oh pretty woman coming down the street...can't help it just to have a glance in the mirror or the shop window because at last I am starting to feel positive about myself, well, I have dropped a dress size. No longer do I wear black so that I look slimmer. Life is now in colour. Thank you to all the ladies at Curves!

## NEW! to Curves

### Romsey

### Curves Cash

From September 2008 you can earn Curves Cash to spend in our club! Attend on a regular basis, answer questions correctly at quiz time and many other fun ways to earn money and you can start shopping! Choose from a whole array of products from key rings and T-shirts to workout towels and water bottles as displayed next to the bag cubbies!

## Food in Focus

### Broccoli

Broccoli is one of a group of 'superfoods' high in phytonutrients which possess significant anti-cancer effects. One of these is Indole-3-carbinol a compound which deactivates a potent by-product of estrogen known to promote tumour growth. Indole-3-carbinol has been shown not only to suppress breast tumour cell growth but also the spread of cancer cells to other parts of the body (metastasis). Broccoli is a member of the cruciferous vegetable family which contain sulphur compounds recognised as boosting the body's detoxification processes thus speeding up the removal of harmful toxins.

Dairy products are touted as being an excellent source of calcium but broccoli is equal to dairy in the amount of calcium that is absorbed due to its high vitamin C and magnesium content and presence of other minerals vital for calcium absorption. Dairy products on the other hand contain saturated fats which may block calcium uptake and none of the other minerals recognised as aiding calcium absorption.

Include broccoli as one of your 5 or more portions of vegetables a day. Enjoy with salads raw, dipped in hummus or with main meals lightly steamed.

## Balancing Blood Sugar: A Key to Weight Loss

So much has been written about fat making us fat but we need to move past this outdated theory. Large amounts of saturated fat in the diet are unhealthy, but it is important to know that some fats are absolutely essential, hence their name essential fatty acids. The result is that women embark on low-fat and no-fat diets that are dangerous. Commercial low-fat and no-fat foods tend to be high in sugar and salt in order to make them more palatable. Sugar and other foods that are 'fast releasing' actually encourage weight gain. It is the speed with which a food raises blood sugar (in other words whether it is 'fast releasing') that determines whether or not it will cause you to gain weight. When blood sugar levels rise very quickly the body cleverly secretes insulin to bring the level back within 'normal' limits.

Every time you eat your body has a choice: it can either burn that food as energy or store it as fat. Research has found that high insulin levels cause you to change your food into fat and also prevent your body from breaking down previously stored fat. Excess insulin is the primary reason for obesity and early ageing. If you can learn to understand which foods are contributing to your weight gain you will hold the key to losing it. The amount of insulin released in your body is determined by *what you eat*. In order to avoid fluctuating blood sugar levels and high insulin levels it is necessary to eat more low GI (Glyceamic Index) foods and avoid high GI foods. The GI is a measure of how much a specific carbohydrate will raise your blood sugar levels. High GI foods include refined (white) bread, potatoes, cakes, biscuits, some confectionery and sugars. You can slow the release of sugar from high GI foods by making sure that you eat them with proteins, essential fats and plenty of fibre. ie a banana releases sugar quickly but adding a few nuts or plain yoghurt mitigates the effect on your insulin and blood sugar levels. Anything with a score under 50 is considered to be a low GI food.

Several of our members have mentioned to me that they skip breakfast. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. If you skip it you will be placing huge demands on your adrenal glands which assist in blood sugar control and you will be playing catch up for the rest of the day. In addition you may find that you are relying heavily on stimulants (caffeine, cigarettes or sugar laden foods) to get you through the morning. The end result is low energy particularly around 4 pm or immediately after lunch, and subsequent weight gain.

An ideal breakfast is a bowl of porridge oats and milk, half a grated apple and a small tub of plain yoghurt, or 2 scrambled / boiled eggs and 2 slices of wholemeal toast. This breakfast compared to special K, milk and a banana will cut your blood glucose level and your propensity to store fat by a third. As a bonus you will feel fuller and more energetic for longer.

Debbie Hingley Dip ION

## Recipe of the Month: Low-Carb Muesli

A chewy, satisfying muesli, this is lower in carbohydrates than the classic type, as it features more nuts and seeds than grains and no dried fruit (which is very high in sugar). It is also wheat and sugar-free, unlike most of the bought varieties, but you can use a little xylitol to sweeten it if you like.

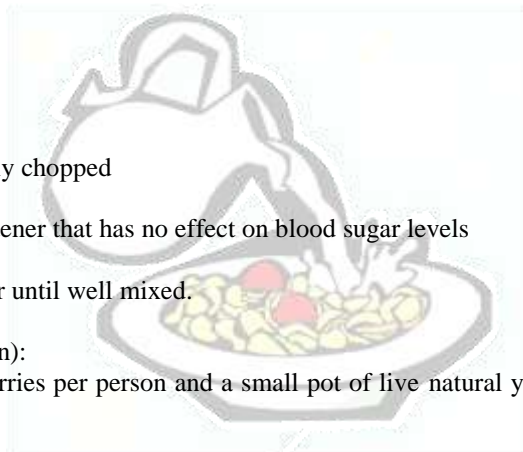
Serves 2:

- 100g (4oz) whole oat flakes
- 50g (2oz) ground almonds
- 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- 2 tbsp macadamia nuts, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp sunflower seeds
- 2 tsp xylitol (optional) a sweetener that has no effect on blood sugar levels

Stir all the ingredients together until well mixed.

Serving Suggestion (per person):

Serve with a tablespoon of berries per person and a small pot of live natural yoghurt, or skimmed milk, soya milk or nut milk



Variations:

Vary the nuts and seeds (pecans or hazelnuts would work well instead of the macadamia nuts)