

Eat Your Way To Lower Health Costs

CREAMERY (Montgomery Co.) — President Clinton and his wife Hillary, along with a group of medical experts and lay people, are aggressively addressing the escalating cost of medical care in our country. As usual they are taking the "band-aid" approach and trying to fix you after the fact. A much better approach would be a preventive one. Research has shown that 44% of our health care bill is directly related to our diets and exercise programs. Think of the dollar savings if we could get people to change their nutrition habits and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

According to Annette Goodling, Extension Agent, Montgomery County Cooperative Extension, "Adopting a healthy lifestyle is relatively easy but requires most of us to make some changes in our diets and exercise choices." How can we do this? We start to establish our nutrition patterns at birth and they become habits that we follow. Like any habit they are a part of us and

require a conscious effort on our part to effect changes. Most of us set ourselves up for failure when trying to change our food and exercise habits. We think we have to make a complete overhaul at once, but unlike other habits such as smoking, "cold turkey" is not the best way to change nutrition patterns. It is best to choose just one thing you'd like to change and concentrate on it for several weeks, maybe months until it becomes your new habit. For example, if you currently have breakfast at the local drive-through on your way to work,

select the muffins over the biscuit sandwich at least one day a week. Another example, substitute a low-fat dressing for your regular dressing on your salads. In the exercise department, instead of driving around the parking lot looking for the closest spot, park farther way and enjoy the walk. You might choose to walk the steps instead of the elevator at least once or twice a week. These are easy changes to make without totally overhauling your current habits. These small changes can be significant in helping to reach our goal of better health habits.

Suggest to your congressmen that we spend money on wellness education at the worksites. Money spend on wellness training and support groups at the worksites would encourage people to become more health conscience. Resolve this month to poll your co-workers to see what programs

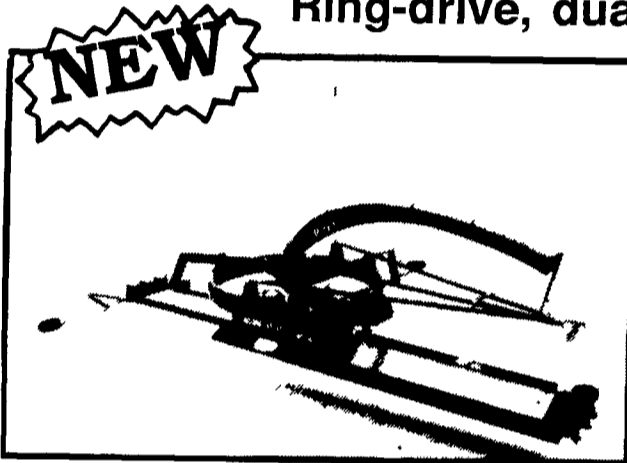
you can request for yourselves. Ask your employer to be the trend setter for the new "Healthy America 2000." Let's update that old motto "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." to say "A dime spent for nutrition education is worth a dollar spent for health care."



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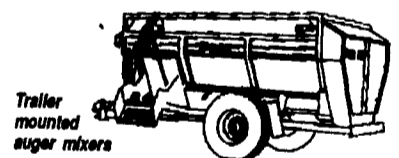
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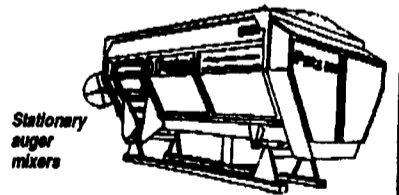
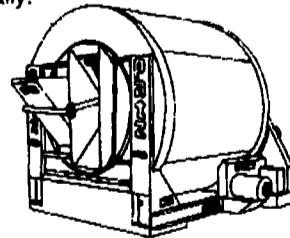
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