

# sdhealth

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## AT YOUR PEAK

Conquering  
your weight-loss  
obstacles

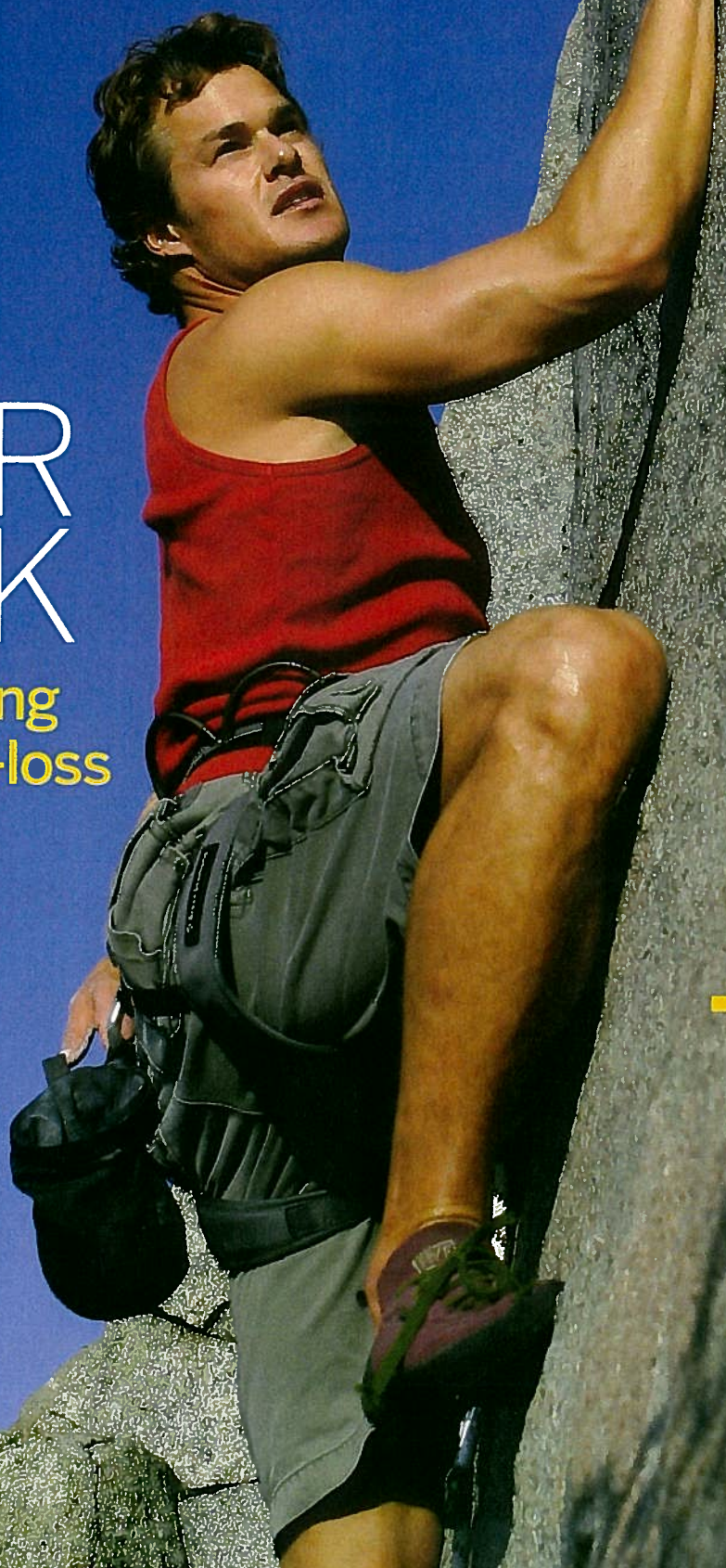


Are you ready  
for summer?

Diet plans: the  
ups and downs

Get armed  
for sleeveless  
season

Go for the  
faux glow







# Fiber is the ninja of the food world

STORY BY **CAROLINE DIPPING**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **CRISSE PASCUAL**

**F**iber is our friend. It fills us up without adding a lot of calories. It slows digestion and keeps blood sugar stable after meals (keeping us from reaching for more munchies). It can cut cholesterol and lower the risk of heart disease, and it may even slash the threat of certain cancers.



Yet most Americans get only about half of the fiber they need every day, according to the American Dietetic Association. The fiber RDA is 21 to 38 grams.

Meg Woodard, a trained chef and registered dietitian at the Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine in La Jolla, said there are essentially two types of fiber people need to know about — soluble and insoluble.

“Soluble fiber is like a sponge that helps soak up the bad cholesterol, and insoluble is like a broom that sweeps out the waste in our body,” Woodard said. “Soluble foods include beans, oatmeal, apples and pears. Insoluble fiber comes from such foods as whole wheat, corn bran, celery and green beans — easy veggies to get in.”

Woodard says one of the culprits in a low-fiber diet is fast-food restaurants with their lack of whole-grain, fruit and veggie menu options. But getting adequate amounts of fiber into your diet needn't be dreary or difficult.

“Breaking it out into three sections is a good way to look at it,” Woodard said. “People who get their daily fiber in start at breakfast. It can be as effortless as having a bowl of whole-grain cereal with a cup of berries.”

At lunch, consider jazzing up a green salad with a few tablespoons of black beans and a sprinkling of nuts. For snacks, pair nuts and dried fruit. At dinner, add a cup of broccoli and a medium sweet potato to

whatever lean protein you have planned.

Finish up the day with a dessert of fruit and yogurt or some whole-grain granola atop the yogurt, she suggested.

**Woodard offers these other tips to get your fill of fiber:**

- Set a goal of serving two meatless meals a week, making beans and grains the main components.
- Swap out white bread for whole-wheat bread. Instead of white rice, have brown rice.
- Eat your fruit, don't drink it.

Woodard also advises adding fiber gradually if you are not used to it. Start by adding a serving of fiber-rich food every day to your diet and increase your water intake.

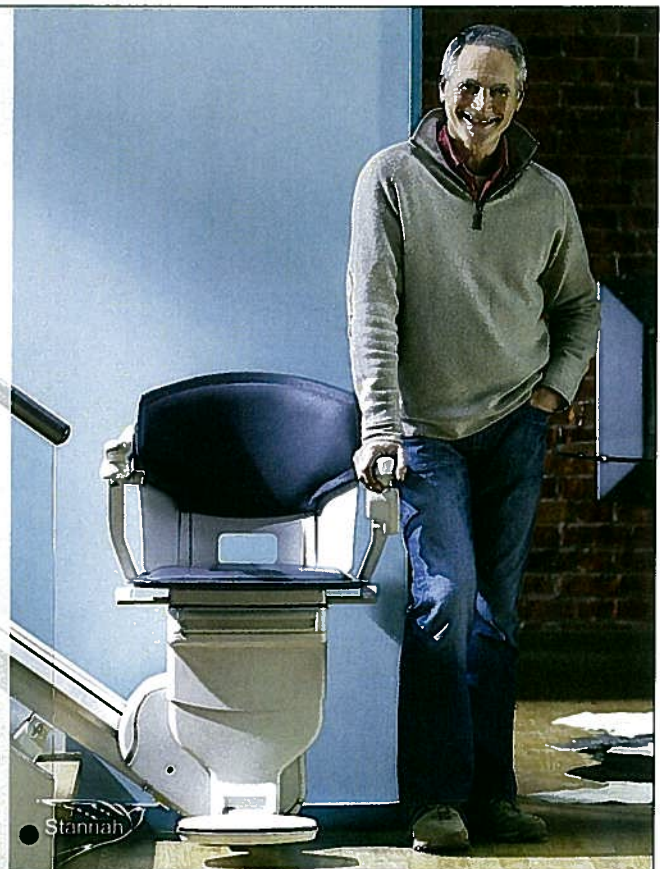
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