

Healthy Living

Can't Find Time For A Healthier Lifestyle? Simple, Says Meredith Vieira

(NAPSA)—There's no question Americans want to live healthier lives. The problem is—with all the family and job priorities fighting for our attention—the task of starting and maintaining healthier habits often gets overlooked. If anyone knows the challenges of balancing health, career and family commitments, it's Meredith Vieira—mother, wife and host of ABC's "The View" and "Who Wants to be a Millionaire."

For Vieira, the key to long term success has been balance. In fact, the concept of energy balance is gaining popularity among health professionals as a solution to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Energy balance means equaling the calories eaten during the day with the right amount of activity to burn those calories. Maintaining a balance can help to achieve your weight goal, whether you are looking to maintain your current weight or shed a few pounds.

For Vieira, finding balance is a two-step process: making sensible food choices and finding easy ways to incorporate physical activity into her routine.

Health and fitness experts agree you can achieve energy balance with small, everyday choices versus a drastic overhaul. Big changes are almost impossible to incorporate into your lifestyle and rarely last—that's why so many diets fail.

"Living a healthier lifestyle is easier, if you break it down into simple steps. You don't have to cut



out the foods you like or suddenly become an elite athlete. You can make simple choices each day that help balance things out," said Vieira.

Fortunately, all foods can fit into a sensible eating plan and help meet your weight goals when you're balancing your food intake and your activity output—but with so many food choices out there, it can be confusing.

Vieira relies on shortcuts to help her make smarter food choices. PepsiCo's Smart Spot symbol is a guide that Vieira uses when shopping for her family. The Smart Spot symbol can be found on the packaging of more than 100 food and beverage choices from PepsiCo that contribute to healthier lifestyles.

"I love the idea of Smart Spot products because the homework has been done for me. The green symbol makes it very easy for me to identify healthier choices, particularly when I'm in a hurry," said Vieira.

Smart Spot products meet nutrition standards based on the FDA and National Academy of Sciences guidelines. Shoppers can find the symbol on products including Tropicana Pure Premium, Gatorade Thirst Quencher, Baked! Lays Potato Crisps, Quaker Oatmeal and Diet Pepsi.

"Smarter food choices are only half of the energy balance equation," said Vieira, "Activity is the other part."

Research from America on the Move, a national initiative to help people improve their health, shows that the average American gains one to three pounds annually—but that gain can be managed through energy balance. The organization suggests this equation to avoid weight gain:

- Move a little more—Take an extra 2,000 steps each day.
- Eat a little less—Consume 100 fewer calories a day.

Some of Vieira's tips for achieving energy balance include:

- When dining out, eat sensible portions and get a to-go container to take extra food home.
- Find little moments to get a few steps in, such as walking around the house while you're talking on the phone.
- Don't sit on the sidelines. If you want your kids to be more active, being involved is the key.

For more information, visit www.smartspot.com or your grocery store and look for Vieira on a free brochure entitled "Guide Your Family to a Healthier Lifestyle."