

Cycling For Health And Fitness

(NAPSA)—In nearly half of developed countries, 50 percent of people are obese or overweight. With obesity, diabetes and heart disease on the rise, now is the time to take control of your health, fitness and well-being.

Cycling can be fun, low impact, inexpensive and helps improve health while controlling weight. It burns around 600 calories an hour—and lowers the risk of heart disease and stroke. In addition, cycling promotes psychological well-being. Several studies suggest that cycling leads to reduced stress, improved mental abilities and a more positive attitude.

To help you get into cycling, members from one of the United States' premier professional cycling teams, Optum Pro Cycling presented by Kelly Benefit Strategies, provide these fitness and nutrition tips:

• **Make sure your bike fits:**

"Finding the right bike fit is important for a comfortable ride," explains Rachel Heal, Women's Performance Director and a former Olympian. An expert can help you find a bike that suits your body and riding style.

• **Ride at your own pace:**

Know your limits. If you can't keep a smooth pedal stroke or you aren't able to talk or take a full breath, slow down.

• **Cross-train for strength:**

Men's Performance Manager and three-time Olympic athlete Eric Wohlberg suggests adding lower body exercises such as single leg squats, lunges, jumping rope and running to build strength and power for cycling.

• **Eat for optimal energy:**

Professional cyclist Jade Wilcoxson knows firsthand the health benefits of cycling. Just five years ago, she was diagnosed as prediabetic. Jade took up cycling and quickly learned she had a talent for racing. She recently signed



Cycling is a great way to get fit and stay active.

with Optum Pro Cycling's newly formed professional women's team. To feel her best, Jade recommends a diet high in protein, fruits and vegetables. She also recommends staying away from processed foods, using the rule of "seven ingredients or fewer."

• **Prepare nutritionally for a long ride:** On long, rigorous rides lasting more than two hours, your body will need about 250 to 300 calories every 45 minutes to an hour. Sports gels or small snacks that incorporate lean protein and carbohydrates can be smart choices.

• **Recover effectively after a ride:** Take in some calories immediately after a long ride to help your body recover. Wohlberg recommends chocolate milk to incorporate calories, sugar and protein quickly. After cooling down, eat a good meal of lean protein and carbohydrates and plenty of water to rehydrate.

• **Enjoy it:** The best thing about cycling is that just about anyone can do it, at any level, and still have fun. "You control how hard or easy your workout is," said Wilcoxson.

• **Learn more:** For more information on cycling and to follow the team, visit www.humanpoweredhealth.com.