

Iron out personal health plans

Trainer offers vital tips to improve lifestyle

photo by Nick Hadley

by Katie Archer

The Clackamas Print and fellow Clackamas Community College students got their fitness questions answered by Nautilus Plus trainer Michelle Craig.

Kristi Date: How hard would a transition be from a normal American diet to a healthy diet?

Michelle Craig: So typically I tell people to take baby steps. I usually recommend people change one thing at a time. So maybe the first step is cutting fast food and then it's working on portion sizes and then increasing your fruits and vegetables and really trying to transition into more of a nutrient dense whole foods diet. So I think for people trying to go from 0 to 60, it's going to be a lot more changeling where as you take those baby steps you can create more of a healthy lifestyle.

Stephen Henderson: What is a good diet composed of?

MC: Lots of fruits and vegetables, lean protein and when it comes to dairy and gluten, those are kind of the big ones where people look at them, and it really depends on the person. So some people will go with a higher fat diet. Some people go higher protein. But really make sure you're getting a lot of fruits and vegetables, getting enough protein and trying to eat more whole foods versus processed foods. And cooking at home makes a huge difference, so trying to make your meals so you know what goes in it as opposed to going to a restaurant and getting whatever they serve you.

Ezra Molina: What are the best steps to start dieting and exercising in a safe way?

MC: So initially I would say, for most people, if you're going from completely inactive it's going to be to just start moving. So maybe that means, for certain people, it's going to be a 15-minute walk just around the block. For other people, it's going to be setting a goal to come to the gym maybe twice a week, start some really basic strength training, work on flexibility, and then increase cardio over time. With the dieting, it's kind of the same thing. Just starting with those baby steps. Most of the time, when people go from kind of eating what they want to eating really big portions to a diet, then they're not going to succeed or they're not going to succeed for as long because it's too drastic of a change.

The Clackamas Print: For people who don't have a lot of time, what are some good short workouts?

MC: So I would say, incorporating a high intensity in-



Working out in the CCC fitness center, Rory Williams bench presses as Nick Hernandez spots.

terval training. Let's say you're going on a run. Instead of doing 30 minutes at four miles per hour average pace, running sprints within that will actually shoot you heart rate up and get your body burning things a lot faster. So you can do a shorter run but you're going to feel more exhausted by the end of it because you're running faster and then bringing your body down and then back up.

TCP: What are the different effects of weightlifting and cardio?

MC: Weightlifting builds muscle. It uses a different energy system within the body, so you do still burn calories when you're weightlifting, but you're burning fewer than when you do cardio, which is cardiovascular endurance, where you're going to train your heart to perform a little better. You're going to be able to do more endurance related things and it has to do more with your oxygen system as opposed to the muscles specifically. Any good fitness program needs both. So if you're wanting to increase muscle mass or lose weight or train for a race, you really should be combining both of those.

Angelina Korovnik: Why is doing HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) everyday, bad for you?

MC: It overloads your system. So if you're doing something really low impact and you're doing that over

time, that's okay. But if you're doing something that's really hard on the body, especially if you're doing plyometric training, which is rough on the joints, so if you're doing jumping, lunges or mountain climbers or things like that, you definitely want to take a day in-between workouts and it helps your body recover more properly.

TCP: Any final words of advice?

MC: People shouldn't be afraid to start working out, even if you've worked out before and feel out of shape. If you start today you'll be ahead of tomorrow. Get moving, whether it's a short walk, any activity you do is beneficial to your overall well-being.

Anthony Castro: Do we have trainers that will help us out here (CCC)?

TCP: CCC doesn't provide any trainers at the Fitness Center. There are classes students can take to learn more about physical health. If students have questions, some good people to talk to would be Clif Wegner, Paul Fiskum, Keoni McHone or Robin Robinson.

Nautilus Plus offers a three-month student plan for \$99.

For the full story go to theclackamasprint.com.

This story has been edited for clarity and space.