



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NOTRE DAME HOSPITAL LAB FOR WINNING Q2 OF OUR HEALTHY LAB CHALLENGE.



TEAM MEMBERS:

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| 1. VALERIE RHEAUME | 4. LYSA POMMINVILLE |
| 2. GILBERT FOISY | 5. JOELLE JACQUES |
| 3. ELISE LEVESQUE | 6. JOSÉE VEILLEUX |

INITIAL WEIGHT: 1055.7 LBS
FINAL WEIGHT: 1002.3 LBS
TOTAL WEIGHT LOSS: 53.4 LBS (5.1%)

Q2 HEALTHY CHALLENGE REPORT

When participating in a healthy challenge, you question what it is to be healthy. Is it only to be physically healthy, or is there more to the story? Also, what is required to be healthy? When searching the Internet or watching television and even just looking at social media, you get bombarded by information that they are claiming is health.

We can all admit that there is an obesity epidemic in the civilized First World. We have an abundance of food available, yet we are not healthy. Our food is mostly processed, calorie dense but nutritiously poor. The perception of convenience is influencing us to pick up these foods instead of unprocessed whole foods.

Although, we are also doing the opposite by taking beneficial foods and extracting the “good parts” out of them. Why eat a pepper or an orange when I can get all my daily requirements of vitamin C in a pill or gummies laden with silica, colour, sweeteners and so on? We are doing ourselves a disservice by not eating the whole food.

When media shows us a “healthy” person, often what is shown is a body that is muscular, tall and slim. According to our genes and the morphotype that we are born with, that type of body may be unattainable. The ectomorph, a person that has a lean body with barely any body fat, may never reach the muscle mass that a mesomorph, who is naturally muscular, can easily obtain. And what about the endomorph, who is more prone to accumulating fat?

Are we supposed to push our body to its breaking limit in order to reach a perfection that is in the end unreachable?

When you are not only looking to be healthy, but also to lose weight, you have many types of diets offered to you promising health, happiness and everything under the sun. For a sum of money, we can tell you what to eat



HEALTHY LAB CHALLENGE

or not to eat, sell you a bunch of books, pre-made dishes and other “good parts” pills in order to lose weight. But is it really healthy to stress your body into submission by omitting certain foods? Let’s look at the Atkins diet as an example: cut out sugar, the energy that your brain needs, to only eat fat and protein. It may be successful to lose weight, but what is the impact in the body? Is it healthy to have to monitor your ketones in order for you to not reach toxicity levels?

Also, with all the different artificial sweeteners or substitutes now, you can eat and drink all that you want, calorie free. Indulge without the guilt. But what are the health consequences of all the “artificial” substitutes? The rise of the use of these sweet substitutes should have helped the obesity crisis, but it has not. Could these have done the opposite and further caused more health issues?

Physical exercise is another aspect of health. Gym memberships are advertized everywhere, enticing you with free memberships, discounts and VIP perks. Run on the hamster wheel while watching TV, your phone or tablet; pump that iron until you muscles are bulging; work out until you are the verge of collapse – all for a healthier you! Sounds more like punishment of your body than being healthy. Even more, drive your gas-guzzling vehicle three blocks in order to work out at the gym.

So now that you are following the pressure to be thin, limiting your diet, but indulging in guilt-free rewards, trying to whip your body into a shape it was not born to be, are you happy? What does happiness have to do with it? We are more than the sum of our parts, as demonstrated in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. To achieve health, you need to first meet your basic physiological needs such as air, water, food, shelter and rest.

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The definition of what is healthy, we believe, is individual because we are all unique. As individuals of this group, we chose to improve on certain aspects of our lives in order to have a healthier lifestyle. Our goal was taking one step at a time in order to improve our lives by making little changes. We believed that making small changes would be more sustainable than drastically changing our lifestyle.

For some of us, it was to change certain eating habits, by adding more vegetables to the everyday diet and drinking more water during the day. For another, who does not eat much meat, it was to add more legumes and nuts to her diet. Some also decided to remove the dipping sauces used to accompany meat in their meals. Also, instead of reaching for a snack after



dinner, some of the participants tried different teas or eating a small piece of dark chocolate in order to satiate their cravings.

Some of us took part in a community walk for MS. Not only was there exercise, but it was also a learning experience while being in nature. The fitness trail had information boards along the way teaching the participants on this disease.

Another individual took advantage of play groups and gym nights with her kids, where she was able to nurture her relationship with her family, but had fun playing with her children without the distractions of everyday life.

Some of us walk to work every day, rain, shine or snow. It is a way to keep fit, clear our heads before moving on to the next step in our day, and is better for the environment.

Some used technology to their advantage, and downloaded an application for their electronic device to help them adhere to a fitness regime and keep track of their activity levels.

By living in rural northern Ontario, we have a large backyard that we can explore. For one of the members of this group, it is literally her backyard, where she can explore, create trails for walking in the summer and snowshoeing in the winter, and even hunt for edible mushrooms and berries.

We believe that the path to health is a journey and not a race. As individuals, we chose paths to improve our health in a sustainable way. These changes have positively impacted our bodies and well-being, without hindering on the enjoyment of our everyday lives.