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THE FILIPINO PYRAMID ACTIVITY GUIDE

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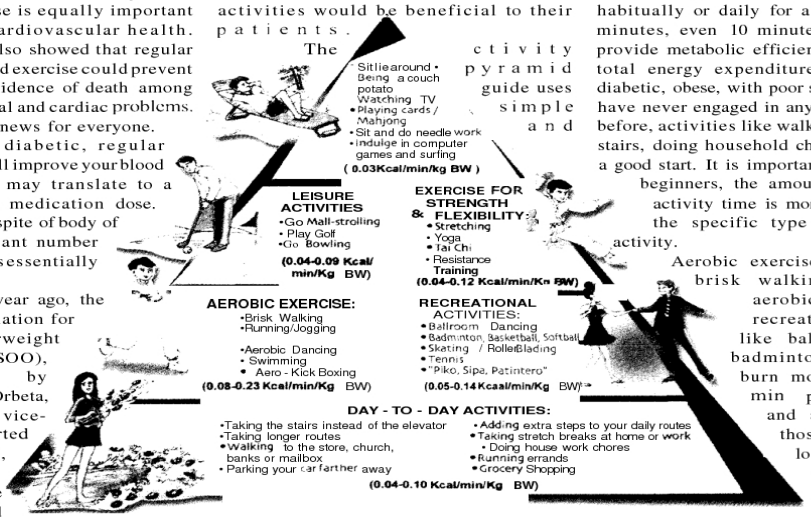
The development of the different food pyramids worldwide have proven to be an important educational tools for health care professionals while counseling patients on healthy eating habits. The illustrations of the pyramid guides help patients to vividly visualize the right proportion and amount of food needed to maintain health. Scientific findings show that regular exercise is equally important in maintaining cardiovascular health. Recently, a study also showed that regular physical activity and exercise could prevent or decrease the incidence of death among patients with medical and cardiac problems. These findings are news for everyone.

If you are a diabetic, regular physical activity will improve your blood sugar level. This may translate to a reduction in your medication dose. Unfortunately, in spite of body of evidence, a significant number of Filipino diabetics essentially remain sedentary.

Just under a year ago, the Philippines Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO), spearheaded by Mrs. Sanirose S. Orbeta, MS, RD, FADA, vice-president --supported by the president, Dr. Augusto D. Litonjua and the other officers and members of the board of directors--conceptualized the **FILIPINO PYRAMID ACTIVITY GUIDE.** Similar to the food pyramid guide, it is intended to help diabetes educators illustrate more clearly which activities would be beneficial to their patients.



The activity pyramid guide uses simple and easy action words or instructions like *Habitually*, *Often*, *Regularly* and *Minimal* to indicate activities that would provide the most benefit in terms of cardiovascular and metabolic health. Included in the guide is the number of calories burned per minute per kilogram of body weight of the person performing the activity.

The base of the pyramid includes activities that are easy, convenient and accessible to everyone. These activities, part of our daily routines, when performed habitually or daily for a minimum of 30 minutes, even 10 minutes at a time will provide metabolic efficiency by increasing total energy expenditure. So if you are diabetic, obese, with poor sugar control and have never engaged in any form of exercise before, activities like walking, climbing the stairs, doing household chores etc., may be a good start. It is important to note that for beginners, the amount of cumulative activity time is more important than the specific type and manner of activity.

Aerobic exercises like jogging, brisk walking, swimming, aerobic dancing and recreational activities like ballroom dancing, badminton, tennis etc., burn more calories per min per body weight; and are advised for those who want to lose more weight. To get the most benefit from the activity, it has to be done 3-5 times a week for at least 30-45 minutes. These activities will also

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