

6 Tips to Get Fit by Halloween

By David Hardy

Fall is without a doubt, my favorite time of year. Cool weather, colorful leaves, bonfires, and of course all the guilty pleasures like s'mores, craft beer and pumpkin spice coffee. It's a difficult time of year for anyone trying to be fit, and right in the middle of it is my favorite holiday, Halloween. As a child, I always loved the idea of dressing up into my favorite comic book character for a few hours and still do to this day. I always try to look a little better than usual on Halloween and so can you! Here are 6 tips to help you slim down before Halloween.

1. Cut out the liquid calories, such as sodas, juice and yes...even Starbucks! Many times these drinks can add 150 to 500 calories to your daily intake. Not to mention how much sugar can be hidden!
2. Drink more water! When you're fully hydrated, your body runs more efficiently in every sense, and that includes fat burning. You should strive for a bare minimum of half your bodyweight in ounces of water every day, and the closer you can get to your total bodyweight, the better!
3. Lower your sodium intake. Many people check nutrition labels for calories and some even check for sugar, which is great, but few people pay attention to sodium. Aside from the many health risks associated with a high sodium diet, an abundance of sodium causes water retention and that can make you look and feel bigger than you actually are. Nobody needs that!
4. Be more active! Being more active can help raise your metabolism, and a higher metabolism burns more calories. If you're not currently exercising, commit an hour a day, 5 days a week to working out. Shoot for 60 minutes of aerobic activity 3 out of those 5 days, and go for 30 minutes of aerobic activity following 30 minutes of resistance training 2 of those days (inconsecutively).
5. Eat all of your meals at home. Cooking and eating your own food not only saves you money, it saves you from making the wrong food choices. You don't have to worry about what's going into your meal because you're in total control.
6. Load up on vegetables. Vegetables are lower in calories, but not in substance allowing you to gather many nutrients. Filling up on veggies is also a great way to keep you from eating too much of the wrong thing.



Follow these tips all the way up to Halloween day and you'll be very pleased with the results.

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What is This Pain?

By Beth Braviere

So, you have shoulder pain? What could it be?

One of the most common shoulder injuries in an overhead athlete (ie: volleyball, tennis, baseball, softball) is injury to the rotator cuff muscles. What is the rotator cuff you ask?

The rotator cuff is made up of 4 muscles, all which insert into the shoulder capsule. The 4 muscles are supraspinatus, infraspinatus, subscapularis, and teres major. These 4 muscles combined, when activated; result in the rotation of the arm.



Due to the high repetition in overhead sports, it is not uncommon for those muscles to become compromised, resulting in muscle strains, tears, or tendinitis. Aching and pain during movement is the most common symptom of these injuries, although the athlete could also complain about pain during rest or sleep. Pain is usually located close to the shoulder joint, and difficulty lifting the arm or doing simple tasks like brushing your hair or taking off your shirt.

If you, or your athlete, is experiencing any of these symptoms, it is highly recommended that you talk to your Athletic Trainer or Doctor. In most cases, the proper amount of rest and the treatment of ice and anti-inflammatory medication will subside the symptoms. Physical therapy may also be needed to strengthen the surrounding area as well as increase the flexibility of the shoulder.

The more strengthening that is done for these muscles in the off-season or away from practices and games, the better the less chance injury will occur. It is important to strengthen not only the rotator cuff muscles, but also the surrounding muscles such as the deltoid, trapezius, biceps and triceps.

Sweet Potato Season

By Beth Braviere

This time of year, sweet potatoes are in season and at their lowest price. Sweet potatoes are a versatile ingredient that you can roast, puree, steam, bake, or grill. There are a great complex carbohydrates and loaded with vitamins and minerals; which make them a great treat for your athlete! Here is one way to take advantage of such a cheap, yummy sweet potato.

Sweet Potato Chili

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. grass fed beef or turkey
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves of minced garlic
- ½ green pepper, chopped
- 2 cans (8 oz) tomato sauce
- 2 cups petite diced tomatoes, with juice
- 2 cups beef/vegetable stock
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons black pepper
- ½ cup chili powder
- dash of red pepper flakes

Instructions

1. In a large saucepan, brown meat, onions and garlic. Drain off the fat.
2. Add the remaining ingredients to the saucepan. Mix well, bring to a boil and simmer for about 30-40 minutes or until the sweet potatoes are cooked through.



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