

Mission Nutrition: Teach Sailors how to get the fitness results they want from eating

By MC1 (AW) Tim Comerford: The Flagship Staff Writer

NORFOLK-- Naval Station Norfolk's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) fitness team started offering a class, Oct. 12 - 13, which helps bring new light on one of America's largest problems – nutrition.

Started by Commander, Navy Installations Command in 2010, the course gives easy to understand information on fitness habits with medical and scientific explanation on why and how our bodies react the way they do to diet, exercise and nutritional supplements.

"Mission Nutrition is a two-day nutrition course that covers a little bit of everything from hydration to meal planning to fad diets," said Rebecca Litchfield, MWR Fitness assistant.

"The biggest part of the course is the meal building, which teaches you how to judge serving sizes and build meals that are appropriate to goals of weight loss, gain or maintenance."

When meal planning and building comes to mind, many people might think of booklets with every food item in it and how many calories divided into ounces or grams or some kind of ancient hieroglyphic mathematical formula. This isn't so with Mission Nutrition.

"It's very easy because there is a sheet with everything on the sheet being one serving. Then depending upon your weight and your goal, it will tell you how many servings you have for each meal and snack. You plug and go!"

That double sided sheet shows the amount of servings you have to eat and the amount of food each serving is.

"So it could say you have two servings of grain, one serving of fruit, one fat serving, one of protein," she said. "You can just flip the sheet over and on the other side is a bunch of different items with serving sizes. So you can say 'okay I'm going to eat half a cup of grapes, a tablespoon of peanut butter.' You use all that information to build your meal."

And part of the good news is that the meal building works hand-in-hand with the Navy Operation Fueling and Fitness Series (NOFFS).

"It's actually part of the NOFFS," said Litchfield. "The end of the NOFFS book is the meal building portion. Even though the zones are based on weight loss, gain or maintenance you have to be working out for the program to work."

And that could be the bottom line. The MWR fitness instructors know the NOFFS system, they know how to use weights, machines, resistance bands, or how to exercise without anything at all. But they understand that is only one half the equation, with the offering of mission nutrition they are able address the other half.

The next Mission Nutrition class will be held, Dec. 15 - 16.

Call 444-7218 or 445-5644 for information on future Mission Nutrition classes.

For more information about Mission Nutrition, visit www.navyfitness.org/nutrition/mission_nutrition/.