



ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

55 Pittsfield Road-Building 10, Lenox, MA 01240

(413) 637-0656 * train@zenquestmac.com * www.zenquestmac.com

An Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Mata Jiu-jitsu Network and Siyodtong Boston Affiliate

NEWSLETTER June 2024

The Hard Part

Many people train in martial arts to improve and maintain their physical fitness. In addition to the skills they learn in the classes they attend, they also burn a fair number of calories while building strength, flexibility, coordination, and stamina. This can also improve the quality of the student's life with improved body and brain chemistry, lower stress levels, and better sleep patterns.

Many students do supplemental exercises to enhance their overall fitness. Done right, this can improve their performance in the martial arts, and even tend to prevent the occasional injury. Aside from practicing their art at home, we encourage students to cross-train in different arts, or even other sports and activities to enhance their fitness. This can be roadwork or treadmill time, bicycling, weight training, stretching or Yoga, hiking, etc.

Senior students and instructors also carry the responsibility of setting the example for others in the dojo on fitness and health, and representing their martial art and academy well. It important for them to perform their art on the highest levels and a high level of physical fitness is required to do this. Strength, speed, mobility, and even mental awareness are all better with a high level of physical fitness.

There is another side to physical fitness though that can actually be the hardest part. That is the food that we eat each day. Following a smart diet will keep our bodies healthy and in top condition for the demands of our chosen art(s). Conversely, bad eating habits or being reckless with diet can leave us struggling to perform well and mediocre results in our development. This gets more difficult as we get older. However, just like the training part, an intelligent approach to eating will optimize our fitness and health journey. Here are some tips that can help with this side of reaching our martial arts and fitness goals.

Nutrition Every living cell in our bodies needs fuel to function. Our bones, muscles, joints, skin, organs, and brain all depend on the food we put in our bodies. Nutritious food will have all of this working well and optimize their function. Good food will also help our bodies fight disease and injuries. Poor nutrition can also affect our mental health and attitude. Studies have shown that good nutrition tends to elevate our mood and minimize anxiety and depression. In addition to the classic 'Food Pyramid' shown on page 4, there are volumes of more specific information available online or at the library.

Portions One of the most important aspects of our diets is intelligent portioning. A diet of the most nutritious and healthy food will be sabotaged by excessive portions. The Okinawans



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Summer Adjustments

During the summer months we will be making a few small adjustments to the class schedule. These will be as follows:

- No Monday 7:30 PM Strength & Conditioning
- No Wednesday 4:30 PM Pythons (children's Jiu-jitsu)
- No Friday 9:15 AM LEJJ

All other classes will be held as normal and we believe that, with slight adjustment, students shouldn't be affected too much. These are based on expected attendance patterns during the summer season.

These adjustments to the schedule will be effective between Memorial Day and Labor Day (from Tuesday, May 28 to Tuesday, September 3.) We apologize for any inconvenience and appreciate your understanding. A summer schedule with these adjustments is available on the ZenQuest website, and hard copies are available in our reception area.

Gear Is Here

Many students have been patiently waiting for custom ZenQuest gear like Karate and Jiu-jitsu uniforms, patches, and training shorts. Well, we're happy to announce that the latest shipment of gear has arrived and is now available again. If interested in any of these items please stop at the front desk or message us and we'll be happy to help.

We also have more of the black ZenQuest T-shirts and sweatshirts coming, so look for those to be available again soon!



Team Z @ NAGA

On Saturday, June 1 a group of students represented Team ZenQuest at NAGA's latest grappling tournament in Albany, New York. Although this was a group of relatively inexperienced competitors, they all fought well and several were able to place in their respective divisions. In all, a total of 11 medals were earned by the team. These are as follows:

Shawn Chambers - 3rd Men's/ White Belt/ <170#

Mahad Ali - 2nd in Men's No-Gi/ Beg./ Absolute

Jerad Deluca - 1st in Men's No-Gi/ Beg./ <160#,
2nd Men's/ White Belt/ <160#

Christhyan Garcia - 2nd in Men's No-Gi/ Novice/
<170#, 2nd in Men's No-Gi/ Beg./ <180#, 2nd Men's/
White Belt/ <170#, 2nd Men's/ White Belt/ <180#

Elias Casey - 1st in Men's No-Gi/ Intermediate/
<180#, 2nd in Men's/ Blue Belt/ <180#, 2nd Men's/
Blue & Purple Belt/ <180#/ 30+



Congratulations to all and thanks to everyone who came out to support the Team!



IMPORTANT DATES

June 19th - NO CLASSES
 July 4th, 5th, 6th - NO CLASSES
 July 14, 1:30 pm - Kyu Test
 July 21 thru July 28 - 2024 Kikai Camp
 (stay tuned for class adjustments this week)

NEW STUDENTS!

Welcome: Adnaan Stumo, Lochlan Murphy,
 Shea Murphy & Matt Kinney

Welcome Back: Tim Noble & Gustavo Perez

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Matt Hill 6/3
 Ryan Williams 6/5
 Michael Wynn 6/6
 Maggie Williams 6/6
 Clayton Correia 6/6
 Hunter Hamilton 6/7
 JJ Hastings 6/7
 Andrea Moreau 6/10
 Dessa Boinay 6/11
 William Straub 6/12
 Ryan Thebeau 6/13
 Jared DeLuca 6/16
 Charlie Guyer 6/18
 Travis Brecher 6/21
 Gavin Tedesco 6/21
 Andrey Norin 6/24
 Sean Callahan 6/25
 Penelope Chavez-Norbury 6/27
 Theodore Didio 6/27
 Benjamin Chagnon 6/30

RECENT PROMOTIONS

TIGERS:

DRAGONS:

6kyu - Elijah Schrag, Noah Schrag
 7kyu - Tony Kennedy

COBRAS:

PYTHONS:

JIU-JITSU:

3-stripe white - Mike Siktberg
 2-stripe white - Mahad Ali,
 Shawn Chambers

Terminology

Food

Japanese: Tabemono
 Brazilian: Comida
 Thai: Kahan

**“Best Martial Arts Academy”
ZenQuest Martial Arts**



*Berkshire Eagle's
 Readers Choice Awards
SEVEN years
 running!*



(Continued from page 1) **The Hard Part**

have a practice that they call 'Hara Hachi.' This means stopping eating when their stomachs are eight-tenths full. Too often in the U.S. we eat until we're 'stuffed' or completely full. It would be better instead to try to portion out an amount of food that will make us 80% full, and then avoid getting 'seconds.' We should also avoid feeling compelled to finish our food even though we've eaten enough.

Pace The speed or pace at which we eat meals can significantly influence our health. Eating too quickly is linked to poor digestion, increased calorie intake, and a higher risk of obesity and metabolic disorders. Eating more slowly allows for better digestion and absorption of nutrients, and it also gives our brain time to register feelings of fullness, which can prevent overeating and aid in bodyweight management. Slower eating also promotes mindful eating practices, contributing to overall better dietary habits and overall satisfaction after meals.

Drinks What we choose to drink also profoundly affects our health. Sugary beverages like sodas and energy drinks contribute to obesity, diabetes, and dental problems due to high sugar contents. Drinks high in caffeine, such as coffee and certain teas, can impact sleep quality and increase anxiety in excess. Alcohol beverages have high calories and cloud our judgement about all of the other aspects of our diet. On the other hand, moderate consumption of beverages like green and herbal tea can offer health benefits, including antioxidants and cardiovascular support. Consuming water regularly supports overall hydration, essential for bodily functions such as digestion, temperature regulation, and joint health.

Timing When we eat can also significantly impact our fitness and health. Eating at regular intervals helps regulate our blood sugar levels, which is crucial for preventing diabetes. Consuming meals earlier in the day aligns with our body's natural 'circadian rhythms', improving digestion and metabolic health. Late-night eating is associated with weight gain and poor sleep quality. Consistent meal timing can also enhance energy levels and cognitive function throughout our day.

Snacking One of the worst ways to go sideways from a healthy diet is unhealthy snacking. Processed foods and foods with high sugar, sodium, and other chemicals can sabotage an otherwise healthy diet. Instead consider snacks like: fruits, veggies, peanut butter and jelly, nuts or trail mix, yogurt, cheese, popcorn, jerky, and protein bars. Some of these things can be combined to make delicious treats that won't destroy your other healthy food strategies.

Sweeteners Artificial sweeteners are low in calories, which can help people lose weight and control blood sugar. However, some studies suggest they might cause problems with our gut bacteria and make it harder to handle natural sweeteners like sugar. They can also cause some people to crave more sweet foods and eat more overall. Some people might also get stomach problems like bloating from them. Scientists are still learning about the long-term effects of these sweeteners, but moderate natural sweeteners are generally considered better for health and fitness.

Inflammation When dealing with injuries, short or long term, it's important to know that certain foods can affect inflammation in our bodies. Eating a lot of sugary foods, fried foods, and red meat can increase inflammation, which can make injuries worse and lead to long-term health problems like heart disease and arthritis. On the other hand, foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and fish can help reduce inflammation because they have nutrients and antioxidants that protect our cells.

Health Issues Certain health conditions can affect our fitness levels. For example, asthma can make it more difficult to breathe during exercise, and arthritis can cause joint pain making it difficult to move. Heart conditions might limit how much physical activity someone can do safely. Diabetes can cause blood sugar levels to drop or spike during exercise, requiring careful management. These conditions can make staying fit more challenging, but with the right treatment and adjustments, people can still find ways to stay active and healthy. Eating a healthy diet is even more important with these conditions because it can help manage them properly. For instance, a balanced diet can not only reduce inflammation, but also provide us with more energy, and help us maintain a healthy weight making it easier to stay active and fit.

Cheat day A "cheat day" is when you take a break from your healthy eating plan and enjoy your favorite treats. This can be important because it helps you stick to good eating habits in the long run by giving you something to look forward to. It can also keep you from feeling deprived and make it easier to stay motivated. Just remember to enjoy your cheat day in moderation so you don't undo all of your eating discipline and hard work.

So, with some intelligent eating practices we can address the 'hard part' of our fitness and health journey, optimize our martial arts, and live a long and happy life. Happy eating!

