

Natural diet aids are diet drug alternatives

BY JENNI BURROWS

The American obsession with the slender body has resulted in the development of an abundance of diet aids. A large number of appetite suppressant drugs can be purchased without a prescription at nearly every drug store and supermarket.

But for those who would be thinner but don't like the idea of using drugs to get that way, herbal alternatives exist.

A variety of diet aids containing only natural ingredients are available in Lincoln, and those on the selling end say that business is terrific.

Euphoria Herbs, 2639 Randolph St., carries herbal health aids for nearly every ailment, but the diet aids are one of the biggest sellers, owner Deb Haselhorst said.

Store has two diet aids

The store has two diet aids, which are contained in natural gelatin capsules. One of the aids listed its ingredients as Irish moss, sea wrack, fenugreek, valerian, shavegrass, Hawthorne berries, horseradish, cleavers, chickweed, celery, alfalfa and garlic. The other aid, which was temporarily sold out, contained chickweed, fennel seed, burdock root, kelp, bladder wrack and chia seeds.

"These herbs are all natural," said Mrs. Haselhorst. "They can't hurt you, and they're better and cheaper than medicine."

Mrs. Haselhorst said that users report good results using the herbs, and that she has had no complaints. Each herb has a different effect on the body. For example, fennel seed aids in digestion and burdock root reduces cellular congestion she said. When used in combination in a capsule, she said that the herbs help dieters to lose weight.

General Nutrition Center in the Centrum, 1111 O St., sells many natural diet aids. The best one is Glucomannan, said Andy Hird, manager. Glucomannan is a high-fiber powder contained in capsules.

Dieters take the capsules before each meal with eight ounces of water. The capsules absorb the water and expand into a high-fiber gel, which gives the stomach a full feeling, making the dieter eat less.

Hird said he recommends that dieters take only one capsule per meal when beginning the diet, because sometimes it takes a few days for the digestive system to become used to large amounts of fiber.

The ingredient in glucomannan is 100 percent natural, he said, and contains no flavorings, color or stimulants.

"You have to stick with it to do it right," said Hird. "You have to remember to take the capsule with every meal."

Protein blocks sugar conversion

Another big seller is Starch Block, a legume protein concentrate that supposedly blocks the change of starch into sugar, Hird said that one tablet blocks 150 grams of starch, which roughly equals four slices of bread.

Starch Block does not contain anything artificial, and there are no dangers involved in taking the tablets, Hird said.

Hird said that he recommends the tablets more as a way to prevent weight gain than as a way to lose weight. "These aren't for fast weight loss, but you won't gain anything either," he said. He said that as a pasta and pizza lover himself, he finds the tablets effective.

"I recommend taking them before a meal heavy in starchy food. I try just about all the diet aids myself," he said. "We don't advise crash dieting or really fast weight loss."

Hird said that every diet aid as well as all the other products made by General Nutrition Centers are tested by people in GNC labs in Pittsburg and in South Dakota.

But, of course, thinness has its price. Starch Block tablets sell in bottles of 30 for \$9.95. Glucomannan capsules sell for \$14.99 for a bottle of 90.



Photo by Kathy Graff

Glucomannan is a dietary aide that claims to help users take off five pounds in ten days. The capsules are 100 percent natural food fiber.

Movie at Sheldon called screwball comedy

The movie Twentieth Century, starring Carole Lombard and John Barrymore, will be shown Thursday through Sunday at the Sheldon Film Theater.

The film is part of the theater's "Heroines of Hollywood" series and will be shown at 7 and 9 p.m. each day. Matinees will be at 3 p.m.

on Saturday and Sunday Andrew Sarris, film critic for the Village Voice, describes the 1934 production as a "screwball comedy," which means that the attractive, sophisticated stars perform their own slapstick comedy instead of delegating it to others.

One outside eating area ready, two more soon ready for use

BY PAT MASTERS

When people dine out they usually end up eating inside.

That isn't necessarily true at Pontillo's Pizzeria, 1246 Q St.

An outdoor dining area has been available there for almost 14 months.

Manager Shawn Lohry said the restaurant has almost doubled its seating since expanding outdoors and people have loved it.

"If people have a hoagie and no place to eat it then they become distressed," Lohry said. "An outside eating area can add some time to their lives and also our business."

She said business has increased at least 30 to 40 percent during the peak hours of 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

People order and pay for their food inside, Lohry said, and then an intercom system calls them to pick it up.

Outside eating areas for two other Lincoln restaurants have been approved by the Lincoln City Council.

Soon Lincolmites may enjoy swordfish or a luncheon steak outside The Rotisserie, 1100 O St.

Owner Bahman Sepahpur said he hopes to have outside dining available in two weeks.

Valentino's Pizza, 232 N. 13th, may have an outside eating area available this summer, said Ron Messineo the vice-president of operations for Valentino's Pizza in Nebraska.

Messineo said if logistics such as the number of tables needed and whether to have waitresses and waiters can be figured out, downtown Valentino's Pizza may have outside dining by mid-July.

Lincoln Health Inspector Roger Peters said customers must carry their own food outside unless covered dishes are used.

Several specifications must be met before a license is granted, said Robert Otte, an attorney commissioned by Valentino's Pizza to apply for a license.

The sidewalk must be checked by an inspector to make sure ample room is available for pedestrian flow, Otte said.

The planning commission was especially concerned about impeding traffic flow on football Saturdays, Otte said.

Awnings must be constructed above the seating area, Otte said, and waste baskets must be made available outside.

The cost for a sidewalk cafe permit is \$200, Otte said, and an additional users fee is assessed, depending on how big the eating area is.

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