



NUCIFIC

FIT LIFE MONTHLY

3 Tips | 3 Recipes | 3 Exercises

March 2017

Dr. Amy Lee, MD



SPRING STARTS THIS MONTH!

And I've got some special things in store for you...

Welcome to the March edition of *Fit Life Monthly*! We're finally approaching the wakeful warm months, and it's time to kick your health activities into high gear.

As with every issue of *Fit Life Monthly*, you have 3 items in each of 3 different categories: tips, recipes, and exercises.

PLUS, I've added a new **seasonal produce section** with tasty recommendations for your next trip to the market. :)

- ✓ **Section 1: Inspiration Cheats**
3 tips for staying inspired and sticking to your health goals.
Think of this as your monthly **"Inspiration Cheat Sheet."**
- ✓ **Section 2: Healthy Eats**
3 recipes for easy, healthy dishes you can try at home.
Who says being healthy can't be delicious?
(New seasonal produce section added!)
- ✓ **Section 3: Get on Your Feet!**
3 simple exercises you can do to stay active and energized and keep your metabolism burning all day long!



*Nothing's for sale in *Fit Life Monthly* — ever. I created this guide purely to help you stay motivated... and to make healthy lifestyle choices as easy, simple, and fun as possible for you! This is my gift to you. Thank you for being a loyal Nucific subscriber. :)*

- Amy Lee, MD



SECTION 1: INSPIRATION CHEATS

3 simple tips designed to inspire you and keep you focused on making healthy choices that get results.

Tip #1:

Avoid “vanity numbers” at all costs.



Let’s say you do bodyweight squats during a workout. You make sure your hips are in line and your back is straight. You lower yourself slowly until your thighs are perfectly parallel to the floor... making sure your knees don’t go past your toes. Then, you come back up — just as slowly — to your starting position. THE PERFECT SQUAT.

Trouble is, you can only do three repetitions. Then, you ask someone else how many squats they do, and they say, “Usually, I do three sets of twenty reps.” *What? Sixty squats?!* This makes you feel terrible... *but it shouldn’t.*

You see, that person is most likely not executing the exercise properly. They’re just pumping away partial squat after partial squat, way too fast, without ever going down all the way. As a result, the exercise is far less challenging... but they can do more reps.

I call this, “going for vanity numbers” — doing something improperly to make it more impressive on paper... in other words, *cheating*. Sure, the higher numbers you get may make you feel better, but they won’t make you look better.



I’d rather have you do the super-hard, super-slow version of an exercise for three repetitions... than do the “cheater” version of that exercise for 100 repetitions.

This applies to things other than exercise reps, too: calorie counting (omitting condiments), distance running (not counting breaks), snacking (underestimating how much you ate)... the opportunities to cheat with vanity numbers are endless. But if you really want to make progress, you can’t measure yourself with vanity numbers.

So, be brutally honest with yourself. Count every calorie. Do the exercise right and deal with the low rep count. If you “ran” for 2 miles but walked half of it, record it that way.

This is how you make real progress. Forget what other people are doing. Record what you do honestly. And then try to beat your own real numbers next time. And if you don’t, that’s okay! But whatever you do, don’t go for “vanity numbers”... because they’re not real. And neither is the progress they indicate.

Tip #2:

Your reward is the new body you want... not that cheat meal you “earned.”



You reach the end of a stressful Thursday. You pass by the deli on the way home... and that giant, greasy slice of stuffed-crust sausage pizza is sitting in the window, winking at you. You can already taste the extra cheese in every bite.

You think, *“I’ve worked out today. Plus, it’s been a hard day. I think I deserve to be able to splurge...”*

STOP. You’re thinking about it the wrong way.

Stop looking at unhealthy food as a reward or something desirable, because here’s the truth:

When you work out and eat healthy, you don’t “earn” junk food. You EARN a better body and improved health!

In other words, that greasy slice of pizza — not to mention, that jumbo cola that comes with it — isn’t your reward. **It’s the thing standing between you and your reward.**

So, push the junk aside and go after the real prize: the results you want! When you look at it this way... I promise, it’ll make it much easier to make healthy eating choices!



Tip #3:

Reverse-engineer your current choices from your ultimate success.

Alright, your goal is to be healthy and lean... but what does that mean? At what point will you consider yourself “healthy and lean”? You have to decide on a specific result that indicates you’ve achieved that goal.

So, let’s say you decide that, for you, “healthy and lean” means you feel incredibly energetic, and you can fit into your old jeans from 10 years ago. You figure out that this means you have to lose 15 pounds of body fat, improve your strength, and get into better cardiovascular shape. And you decide you want to achieve this before your class reunion in September.

From there, you figure out that, to lose the fat, you have to eat cleaner (cut out the junk) and stay at a caloric deficit (eat less than you burn) each week. So, you use an online calorie calculator to figure out how many calories you need. And you plan your weekly meals accordingly in a way that works for you.

Then, you decide on a mixture of exercise classes and swimming to improve your strength and cardiovascular health. You write out a weekly schedule that, again, works for you.

And now, diet plan and workout schedule in hand, you know exactly what steps you need to take today to reach your goal of “healthy and lean” by September.



You see what we did there? We started with your goal 6 months from now and worked backwards to what you have to do today. This kind of “reverse engineering” is the best way to make sure you take the exact steps necessary to reach your health goals.

This way, you don’t have to *think* about it. You just *do* it! That makes developing the right healthy habits much easier! :)

I use all three of these tips daily. They’ll help you make a beeline straight toward the body and life you want!

Now... it’s meal time! (Next Page)

SECTION 2: HEALTHY EATS

*The dishes this month will surprise you!
You're about to see why...*

Special Note: This month, I've provided you with delicious vegetarian dishes... and no, this isn't to get you to become vegetarian (I'm not). It's to get you to enjoy more nutritious vegetables. After all, most people don't realize just how scrumptious and satisfying — even decadent — they can be!

And on that note... *I've also included a seasonal produce section to help you shop for the tastiest produce at the market this time of year!*



Bright and Savory Breakfast: Early Bird Veggie Frittata

The savory satisfaction of the eggs, the slight sweetness of the parsnips, the filling fiber of the asparagus, and some lemon zest to brighten and lift the whole dish...

This high-protein gem is a beauty to have first thing in the morning!



Ingredients (serves 6):

- ✓ 8 large eggs, preferably pastured or omega-3
- ✓ 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ✓ ½ yellow onion, finely diced
- ✓ 3 parsnips, peeled and thinly sliced
- ✓ 1 pound asparagus, finely chopped
- ✓ Zest of 2 lemons
- ✓ ¼ cup parmesan cheese, finely grated (optional)
- ✓ ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ✓ ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ✓ ½ teaspoon sea salt

Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, then set aside. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Coat an 8-inch cake pan in cooking spray, and set aside.
3. Heat the oil in a large saute pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and parsnip and saute until tender.
4. Add asparagus and saute an additional minute, until bright green, then add the lemon zest, cheese, spices, and sea salt.
5. Transfer into the cake pan, then pour the eggs over the vegetable mixture, stirring to combine.
6. Bake until set – about 20 minutes – then slice and serve.
7. *Enjoy your “eye-opener” breakfast! :)*



Melt-in-Your-Mouth Lunch: Tender-Roasted Veggie Wrap

I really do mean “melt-in-your-mouth.” I was amazed at how well this wrap turned out. The texture is unbelievable... and the tangy, creamy sauce just takes it to the next level!

And with all those multi-colored veggies... you can bet this tasty lunch is about as vitamin-packed as it gets. This is truly one of my all-time favorite recipes. Hopefully, it'll be one of yours, too!

Ingredients (serves 2):

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| ✓ 1 bunch Tuscan kale, chard, or collard greens (not sliced), OR 2 large whole-wheat tortillas | ✓ 1 red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced |
| ✓ 1 carrot, thinly sliced | ✓ 1 yellow onion, thinly sliced |
| ✓ 1 small zucchini, thinly sliced | ✓ ½ pound asparagus, tough ends removed |
| ✓ ½ eggplant, thinly sliced | ✓ 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil |

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| ✓ ½ teaspoon sea salt | ✓ ¼ cup fresh dill, finely minced |
| ✓ ½ teaspoon black pepper | ✓ Zest of 1 lemon, finely minced |
| ✓ ¼ cup plain hummus | ✓ ¼ cup toasted almonds, finely chopped |
| ✓ ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt | |
| ✓ 1 clove garlic, crushed | |



Instructions*:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Toss the carrots, zucchini, eggplant, bell pepper, onion, and asparagus with the olive oil, sea salt, and pepper.
3. Spread vegetable mixture onto a baking sheet and bake 20 minutes, until tender.
4. Meanwhile, whisk together the hummus, Greek yogurt, garlic, dill, lemon zest, and toasted almonds in a bowl to form a thick, flavorful sauce. Taste, and add a touch of salt and pepper if needed.
5. When vegetables are roasted, assemble your wrap (or wraps). Spread a thin layer of sauce on your greens or tortilla, then layer on the roasted veggies.
6. Drizzle with a little more sauce, then roll like a burrito – fold the bottom and top in, then roll to create a neat package.
7. *Sink your teeth in, and savor every bite!*

****Steps 1-3 can be done up to a week ahead. I ALWAYS keep roasted veggies in my refrigerator. They're great in wraps like this... as well as in salads, stir fries, omelets, or soups.***



Mexican-Inspired Veggie Dinner: Chorizo-Seasoned Sweet Potato Burrito Bowl

Chorizo seasoning isn't just good for chorizo! Sweet potatoes were made for this seasoning blend. Round the dish out with peppers, onions, beans, creamy lime-herb sauce, and guacamole... and you have a dinner so rich and satisfying, you'll forget it's vegetarian!

Ingredients (serves 4):

Main Ingredient List:

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| ✓ 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil | ✓ 1 bunch swiss chard, thinly sliced |
| ✓ 2 7-oz sweet potatoes, skin on, diced | ✓ Juice of 2 limes |
| ✓ Olive oil spray | ✓ ¼ cup Greek yogurt |
| ✓ 2 red bell peppers, thinly sliced | ✓ 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar |
| ✓ 1 green bell pepper, thinly sliced | ✓ ¼ cup diced cilantro |
| ✓ ½ red onion, thinly sliced | ✓ 1 cup thin-sliced radishes |
| ✓ 1 cup black beans | ✓ ½ cup guacamole (homemade or store-bought) |

Spices:

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ ½ teaspoon ground cumin | ✓ ⅛ teaspoon thyme |
| ✓ ¼ teaspoon ground coriander | ✓ ½ teaspoon paprika |
| ✓ ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon | ✓ ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper |
| ✓ ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves | ✓ ¼ teaspoon garlic powder |
| ✓ ⅛ teaspoon oregano | ✓ ½ teaspoon sea salt |



Instructions*:

1. In a small bowl, combine the spices, and set aside.*
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sweet potatoes and saute until tender. Add 1 tablespoon of chorizo seasoning and cook until fragrant. Transfer to bowl and set aside.
3. Return skillet to the heat and spray with a thin coat of oil. Add the peppers and onions, and saute until tender. Add the black beans and chard, and cook an additional 2 minutes, until the chard just begins to wilt.
4. Whisk together the lime juice, yogurt, vinegar, and cilantro in a small bowl. Set aside.
5. Transfer the peppers/beans/chard mixture into 2 bowls, then top with the sweet potatoes. Drizzle with the yogurt dressing, and add radishes and guacamole.
6. *Enjoy your satisfying dinner!*

****Store extra chorizo spice mix in a jar at room temperature. It's great on chicken, pork, beef, tofu, and veggies!***

NEW FEATURE: Tasty Seasonal Produce List (Month of March)

Nothing is better for your health, digestion, and waistline than fresh, nutritious produce. It's packed with fiber, vitamins, and minerals, fills you up fast, and helps control your appetite and calorie intake. And as westerners, we don't eat enough of it!

So, below is a list of the top in-season produce at the market right now — plus suggestions on how to prepare it. *Enjoy! :)*



Asparagus: Not a fan of steamed? Toss with olive oil and roast until the tips are crispy for an addictive treat.



Bitter Greens: Chard, kale, and collards are all delicious sauteed with garlic. They're great in soup, too!



Broccoli: If you're not a broccoli fan, look for broccoli slaw – it's delicious sauteed with sea salt and curry powder.



Brussels Sprouts: Great roasted, but delicious raw, too – shred them into an addictive, peppery slaw.



Cabbage: Have you tried it roasted? It's a little unusual, but sliced roast cabbage is deliciously nutty.



Grapefruit: Don't judge a grapefruit until you taste it in a salad (especially with arugula)!



Tangerines: Not only are they the perfect snack when you're craving sweets, they're delicious roasted with fish or chicken.



Pears: A great addition to salad and slaw, and a fantastic source of prebiotic fiber, too! Pear season is almost over – get them while you still can.



Parsnips: Carrot's earthier cousins – great roasted or sauteed, delicious with fish.



Radishes: Try them raw, lightly pickled, or even roasted with olive oil and herbs.



Lemons: Lemon juice and zest add freshness to everything from heavy meat dishes to quick vegetable sautes. And lemon juice also helps to shut down hunger!

Culinary Tip: Try roasting lemons before juicing for a more complex, deep flavor.



Sweet Potatoes: Use wherever you would use a regular potato – baked, sauteed, mashed... even sliced for oven "fries" when you have a junk food craving.

You have three incredible, healthy recipes... AND an amazing shopping list!

Now, let's get on your feets... on the STAIRS? (Next Page)



SECTION 3: GET ON YOUR FEET!

You're going to want to find a flight of stairs for these (or any sort of sturdy, elevated foothold).

If there's any underlying theme of these eBooks, it's that your direction is always onward and upward... toward greater health and happiness. And to symbolize the climb you're on, I decided to make all three of this month's exercises involve stairs.

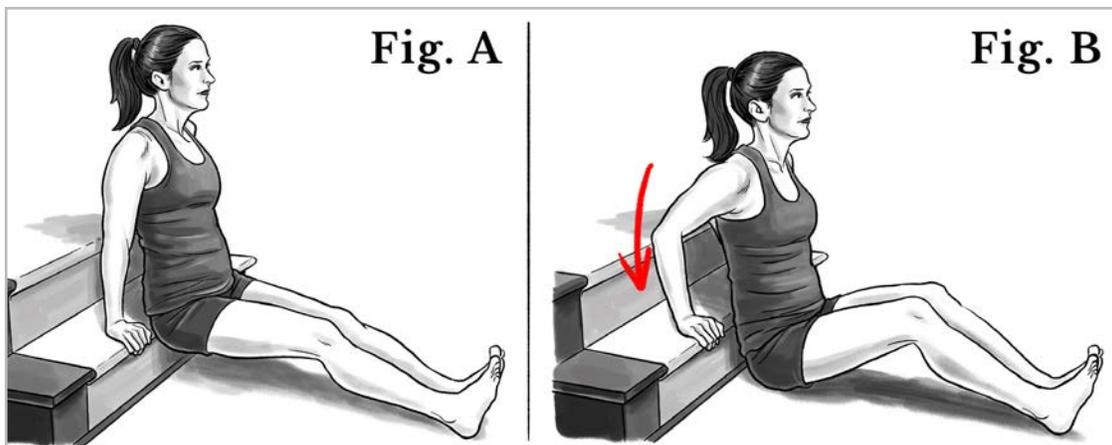
Look, I know it's cheesy, but these exercises work! ;) And don't worry, they're all confined to the bottom two stairs. *So, you can substitute any low, sturdy, safe foothold.***

*****As always, check with your doctor to make sure these or any other exercises are safe for you to do.***

Alright, let's do it!

Exercise 1: Stair Tricep Dips

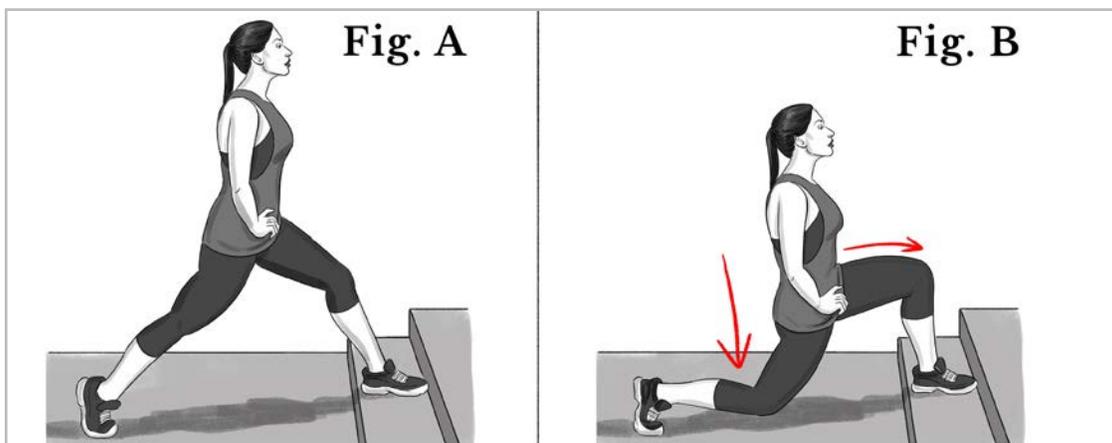
This exercise strengthens and tones the “pushing” muscles in your arms. This helps you get up from a seated or lying down position, move heavy objects, lift things overhead, and perform countless other important activities.



- Step 1:** Sit on the bottom stair, facing away from the stairs, with your legs in front of you (parallel to one another), knees slightly bent, and feet flat on the floor, toes pointed forward. Place your hands, palms down, next to your hips on the stair you're sitting on. Your fingers should be hanging over the edge of the stair. Your shoulders should be pinched back and down, and elbows should be facing backward — not flaring out to the sides.
- Step 2:** Shift your weight onto your hands and feet as you move your butt forward off the edge of the stair. Make sure you're just far enough forward that your back won't scrape the stair as you lower yourself in the next step. **This is your starting position.**
- Step 3:** Controlling the motion with the muscles in your arms, lower yourself slowly until your butt is almost touching the floor. This is your **bottom position**. Make sure your elbows remain pointed straight backward and don't flare out to the sides as you do this. Also, make sure your elbows move as little as possible and your forearms remain perpendicular to the floor. You want to bear the weight with your triceps and shoulder muscles, not the tendons in your elbows.
- Step 4:** From your bottom position, use your arms to slowly push yourself back up to the starting position in a controlled motion. Make sure you're keeping your arms and elbows in line, and your shoulders pinched down and back as you do this.
- Step 5:** Repeat Steps 3 and 4 for a total of 10 repetitions (or fewer or more, depending on your needs) before placing your butt back on the stair to exit the exercise.

Exercise 2: Stair Static Lunges

WARNING: Go easy on this exercise. It will make you sore! These lunges will work your whole thighs and buttocks, strengthening and stabilizing your legs. This will help your mobility — and lower body appearance — in just about every way.



Step 1: Stand straight up, feet flat on the floor, facing the stairs — a few feet away from the bottom step. You want enough distance that, when you lower into the “lunge” position with the thigh of your front leg parallel to the floor, your front knee isn’t going past your toe. If, when you stand comfortably straight up on your back leg, your front foot barely reaches the bottom stair, this will usually put you at the correct distance.

Step 2: Keeping your left foot stationary on the floor, place your right foot firmly on the bottom stair. Make sure your spine, torso, and hips are in line, whole body facing forward. Bend both knees very slightly. This is your starting position.

Step 3: From your starting position, use mainly your right thigh muscles (only a little bit your left) to gradually lower yourself until your right thigh is almost parallel to the floor. Make sure your right knee does not go forward past your right toes. Your left knee will naturally lower, but make sure it does NOT touch the floor. This is your bottom position.

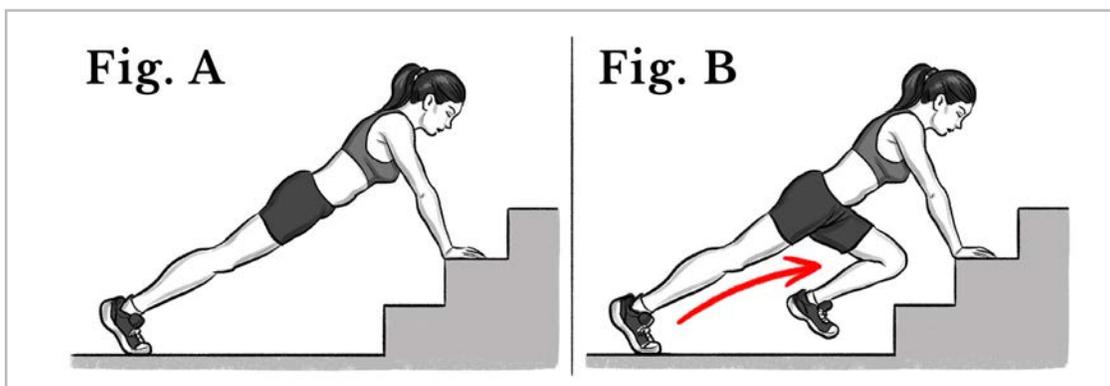
Step 4: From your bottom position, use mainly your right thigh muscles (only a little bit your left) to lift your body slowly back up to your starting position.

Step 5: Repeat Steps 3 and 4 for a total of 8 repetitions (or fewer or more, depending on what you need), making sure to keep your body stable, hips/spine in line, and body facing forward throughout the whole exercise. Your torso should remain erect, and you should never lean your upper body forward.

Step 6: Switch sides and repeat the entire sequence on the other side (left leg forward, right leg back).

Exercise 3: Stair Mountain Climbers

This intense exercise works your body head-to-toe! However, a special emphasis is placed on your abs. This is the perfect way to finish a great workout!



Step 1: Face the stairs and get into elevated “push-up” position — with the balls of your feet on the floor and your hands on the first step, core engaged. Your whole body — head to toe — should be straight like a rod. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart. Your hands should be shoulder-width apart, too. Make sure your shoulders are pinched back and down (“anti-shrug” position). Your arms, when straight, should be perpendicular to your body. Make sure you’re far enough from the stairs that your knees won’t hit the stairs when you pull them in. **This is your starting position.**

Step 2: From your starting position, begin to bend your right leg and drive your right knee up toward your arms until it almost reaches your elbows, with your right heel close to your buttocks. This is your **climber position.**

Step 3: Slowly return your right leg from the climber position to the starting position.

Step 4: Repeat Steps 2 and 3 on the opposite side (with your left leg).

Step 5: Alternating legs (right, left, right, left), perform this exercise for up to 20 repetitions (10 total for each leg).

Well done! Now, drink some water and enjoy that chorizo-spiced sweet potato bowl! :)



THANKS FOR JOINING ME!!

I hope you liked the new additions to this issue of *Fit Life Monthly!* :)

Above all else, my goal is to inspire you to make healthier lifestyle choices... and to give you the knowledge and tools you need to make those choices easier.

And on that note, I'm going to be sending you a few extra goodies this month. So, stay tuned to your inbox for those!

In the meantime, follow the tips, recipes, and exercises in this eBook... and you'll be well on your way to feeling and looking like a completely new person by the end of the spring. :)

To your present and future health,

- Amy Lee, MD

