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# HEALTHY HERALD

## Healthy Living and Your Mindset

### PT Corner

**Carol Hollenbeck,  
PT, DPT, CEEAA**



Over 4,000 miles away, a tiny village may surprise you since its villagers are seen as the healthiest in the world. Located deep in the rain forest of Bolivia the 16,000 Tsimane villagers have been found in a recent study to have the healthiest hearts ever studied. Their diet, lifestyle and mental well-being all contribute to this remarkable outcome.

The researchers studied the level of coronary artery calcium (CAC) which is a major risk factor for heart attack and a marker for clogged arteries. The Tsimane have virtually no CAC at age 45 which 25% of Americans do and at age 75 only one-third has the CAC marker compared to 80% of Americans. Clearly we are not doing something right.

Living like our ancestors thousands of years ago, these villagers live off the land with a very simple diet. Freshwater fish and wild game make up ~25% of their diet which includes wild pig, tapir,

capybara (a rodent), catfish and piranha. The rest of their diet is made up of locally grown vegetables, fruits, nuts and grains—foods such as rice, corn, sweet potatoes (manioc root) and plantains. In all, carbohydrates comprise 72% of their diet, fats 14% and proteins 14%, compared to the average American diet which is 52%, 34%, and 14% respectively. This is a diet high in clean burning carbs, but low in fats with no processed foods.

Activity is another component of their healthy lifestyle. On average the men take 17,000 steps per day while the women average 16,000. Even those over 60 average 15,000 steps per day. This equates to 7.5 to 8.5 miles per day. Most weight loss programs stress that one should walk 10,000 steps per day or 5 miles. This is 40% less than these villagers. The message is clear—most Americans are not walking nearly enough during their day. Even those that are trying to do the suggested 10,000 steps per day may really need more to

combat their diet and years of being too sedentary.

The final component to the Tsimane lifestyle is stress-free living. Numerous studies have proven stress is as detrimental to one's health as a poor diet and lack of exercise. Reducing daily stress should be a goal for everyone. Try to simplify your life, reduce commitments, reach out to others for help, be present and slow down, and meditate even just 5 minutes per day. When you meditate take deep breaths, shut your eyes, and focus on the moment. Let all those distractions and thoughts in your head go away with each breath.

Clean eating with a balanced diet, lots of activity and stress-free living seem to be the cornerstones to the Bolivian lifestyle which Americans would benefit modeling.

### TIP FROM A TRAINER *by Jim Gibson*

#### Gym Etiquette

It should go without saying that common sense, consideration and mutual respect is the rule at a gym (or really anywhere). However, I have witnessed inconsiderate behavior that is as bad as anything on the streets and it is worth taking a few minutes to talk about.

Remember, we are all in this together and resources are limited, so here are a few pointers. First, be aware that gyms typi-

cally have times when it's busy, especially just before and after group fitness classes. So be prepared to wait for a station or move out of a busy 'waiting' area until the next class begins. Next, have a flexible workout plan. If someone is using a station or a piece of equipment on your program, just move on to your next station or exercise until the person is finished. Finally, be aware of others. Do not "take up space" on a station by standing by and chatting, or

just sitting on the station when someone else is waiting.

Working out properly requires a great deal of concentration and if done right, it is not easy. With a little compassion and understanding you can make everyone's gym experience better.

