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Vital Signs: Kym Matthews

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The Grand Rapids Press staff

Emily Zoladz | The Grand Rapids Press

At the Y: Fitness instructor and personal trainer Kym Matthews spins at Visser Family YMCA in Grandville.

Every Tuesday, The Press looks at someone who puts a priority on living a healthier life.

Kym Matthews

Age: 45

Hometown: Jenison

Occupation: Fitness instructor/personal trainer

Biggest health challenge: Getting enough sleep. Sleep is when your cells regenerate and muscles heal, so it is important to get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Since I teach most of my classes at 5:30 a.m. and have kids who are busy at night, this is a tricky balance for me.

Exercise routine: I believe in cross-training. I like spinning, yoga, P90X DVDs and EcoTrek. Too many people do a lot of cardio or a lot of lifting; both should be incorporated in your routine.

Exercise tip: Find a workout buddy and be brave. There are lots of winter mornings I would not crawl out of my warm bed to run if my workout partner was not waiting for me. You can run, walk or go to the gym together. It is therapeutic on an emotional level, too.

Eating plan: I plan a menu every week so I know what I am eating most days. This eliminates grabbing junk food. I eat five to six small meals a day, making sure I get a protein and a healthy carb at each meal. I have always been about the same weight.

Guilty pleasure foods: Ice cream! Every Saturday night is burger and fries night at our house. Sometimes, I will have a veggie burger and, in the winter, baked fries, but we love burger and fry night.

Favorite healthy foods: Sweet potatoes, spaghetti squash, homemade salsa, homemade veggie pizza, with spinach, artichokes and zucchini.

Breakfast today: Greek yogurt and 1/4 cup of granola

Daily doses: A multivitamin for women

Healthy advice: Journal what you eat for a couple of weeks. It's a big pain, but the payoff is also big if you learn to eat healthy.

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