

# Nutritional Advice at Your Fingertips

**N**ow you can feel less guilty about your next trip to the drive-thru, thanks to a new nutritional Web site that will help you to make an informed choice about what to order. Produced by Wake Forest University's Bowman Gray School of Medicine, the interactive site provides the caloric, fat, cholesterol and sodium content of the offerings at seven major fast-food chains.

The school's Center for Research on Human Nutrition and Chronic Disease Prevention devised the site to promote preventive health care. As the introductory screen states, it is "designed to address the needs of generally healthy adults."

In addition to the fast-food section, the site offers a "Calorie Calculator," which estimates the caloric, fat, cholesterol and sodium levels in a variety of common foods and beverages based on small, medium and large servings. The calculator is particularly useful for athletes and others concerned with daily caloric consumption—you can select the food and beverages you have ingested in one day to find out your total intake in the four areas.

Those who are unsure if they are eating a balanced diet will find the "How's Your Diet?" quiz useful. After entering the number of servings you consume daily from each of the six food groups, you are told how your eating habits compare to the "1995 Dietary Guidelines for Americans," established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. You will also learn if you are in accordance with the recommended guidelines for daily fat and cholesterol intake.

The "Fit or Not" quiz would be more appropriately named "Fat or Not," as it focuses strictly on weight loss. And based on the site's calculations, you could easily convince yourself that you are seriously underweight: Recommended weight ranges, based on age, height, and hip and waist mea-

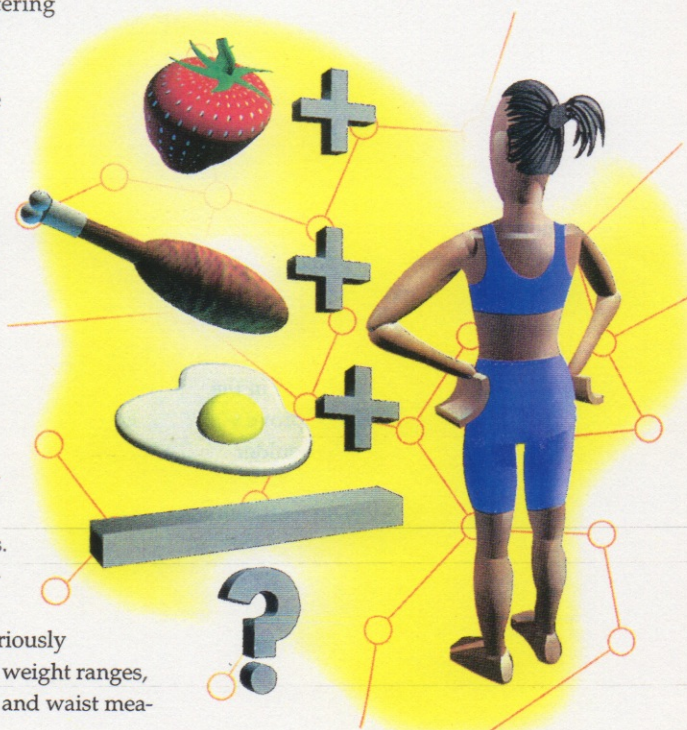
surements, err on the heavy side. For example, a 25-year-old, 5-foot, 6-inch female is given a recommended weight range of 136 to 167 pounds.

This evaluation also tells you how many calories you can consume per day to maintain your current weight, based on the number of times per week that you exercise (you will notice that "3-plus" times weekly is the maximum allowed). It is important to remember here—as well as in other areas of the site—that this is only a guide. If you exercise six times weekly for extended periods of time, this estimate is too low. Another feature of this section determines how much weight you can lose in 10 weeks given your predetermined caloric intake and the duration and frequency of the exercise you plan to do.

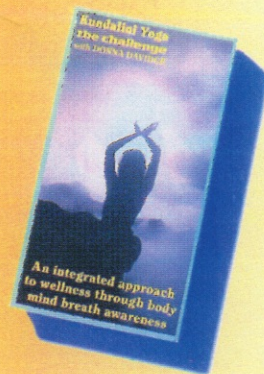
Overall, this Web site offers a quick, simple and inexpensive way to gain insight into your dietary and exercise habits. A wealth of personalized information awaits, whether you are a serious athlete or just one of those "generally healthy" Americans interested in eating well. Check it out at

<http://www.bgsm.edu/nutrition>.

—Stacey Cramp



## TAKE THE MELLOW CHALLENGE



In her video, "Kundalini Yoga, The Challenge," Donna Davidge promises viewers all the traditional benefits of yoga, including a foundation for the unity of body, mind and spirit. A tall order for a video, but, certainly, an appealing one.

Stressing the practice of Kundalini Yoga as a noncompetitive discipline, Davidge focuses on its three tools: postures, breath and sound. In the serene setting of a leafy forest, Davidge then incorporates solid explanations of terminology and the rationale behind each of her postures. The description of the benefits—"This stimulates the pituitary gland, which aids intuition" and "This posture cleanses the stomach"—adds dimension and depth to the instruction.

The beginning yoga student stands to benefit from this video primarily because it stimulates blood flow and energy. Intermediate or advanced students may find information lacking on the hips, shoulders and lower back. With Davidge's pleasant encouragement and clear demonstration of postures, "The Challenge" does, however, provide a good alternative to coffee jitters as a way to get started in the morning. For more information, call (212) 226-2673.

—Sarah Levin