



PMCare Capsule

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THE QUARTERLY CAPSULE

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Healthy Family Happy Family

Features

Top 10 New Year Health Resolutions

Weight Loss – Smart Goals for Success

Choose a smoke-free lifestyle

How to Reduce Stress in Your Life

5 Reasons Why You Should Exercise Regularly

Health Benefits of a Good Sleep

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PMCare

Wishing you a healthy,
happy & prosperous
New Year!





Message from the CEO

WAN SHUKRI ARIFFIN
PM CARE SDN BHD

Just before we began our new year 2011, the world was shocked and saddened with the flood disaster in Australia with the size of the region affected by the flood disaster was as large as “France and Germany combined”. As the year ended, there was also heavy snow in Europe and blizzards in the American East Coast, disrupting plane flights. In fact, last year in 2010, we also saw many natural and extreme weather events, while the global economy was shaken by the debt-crisis turbulence in Europe. However, the most notable man-made environmental disaster last year was the spilling of 172 million gallons of oil by a BP offshore rig into the Gulf of Mexico.

Last year started with earthquake in Haiti with more than 220,000 deaths, followed by many other areas, including Chile, China, Indonesia, and Iran. Then, there was also extensive flooding. The most devastating was in Pakistan, affected 20 million people and a fifth of the land area. Floods and mudslides also affected China with over 4,000 deaths, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, Colombia, Venezuela and other countries. There were other weather

extremes, with a big heat wave in Russia with 15,000 deaths and forest fires. All these are reminders to us that we have to take care our environment so that this world will become a better place for us and our children to live in.

As for our country, besides the floods, last year we were worried about the second wave of H1N1. However, the actual killer was dengue fever with 134 deaths out of 46,171 registered cases across the country. As for this new year, we will likely see growing concern over the rise of “super-bugs” or bacteria that have become resistant to multiple antibiotics and that make many ailments including dengue, malaria, and TB much more difficult to treat. Scientists are now warning that unless new antibiotics are found or the existing ones are used more prudently, we will be entering a post-antibiotic era, in which more and more diseases will be untreatable. As a result, the World Health Organisation is planning to highlight this problem in its World Health Day in April this year.

We in PMCare hope this year will be a better year to all of us. Last year PMCare were actively organising

wellness and preventive programmes to many of our clients. We also conducted social welfare and community works, including sending our employee for humanitarian works in Gaza, Palestine. Hence, this New Year Capsule’s issue continues to focus on wellness and healthy life style with articles on health resolutions, weight loss, smoke-free lifestyle, reducing stress in life, the importance of regular exercise, healthy eating habits, and health benefits of a good sleep. We hope this health information will lead to change in lifestyle habits and improve the health status of our members. We need to be healthy to be able to take care of ourselves and our family; otherwise, it will be difficult for us to care for our love ones. Healthy employees are invaluable assets to any company. They will also help the company in terms of containing the direct medical cost (such as inpatient and outpatient care), and indirect medical cost (such as absenteeism, disability and loss of productivity).

Best wishes to all of you in the year 2011 and stay healthy always.

Happy New Year

May this new year be a prosperous one for you and your family.

Top 10 New Year Health Resolutions

New Year's Eve is always a fiesta time all across the globe. It has always been a time for looking back to the past and more importantly, forward to the coming year. It is that time of year when many people make their New Year Resolutions that they will abide by in the following year.

Most people have a basic idea of what resolution they want to make. Others are a little less sure of where to begin. While some go overboard trying to change everything all at once (which rarely works!), the remaining lot just does not bother making one because they feel it will not materialize. Here is a list of suggestions for this year:

The Babylonians invented the New Year's resolution. One of their resolutions was to return something borrowed from a friend over the year just passed. The Romans too used to make a resolution to seek forgiveness from enemies of previous years. The Chinese let off fireworks over their New Year to cleanse the self of past sins and bad habits and start again with a clean slate.

1. Lose Weight



Losing weight is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions. But majority of the people give up by the first month's end. Setting reasonable goals and staying focused are the two most important factors in sticking with a weight loss program. Weight loss is not about what you do on one day; it is about what you do today, the next day and the day after that. The first step to losing weight in the new year is to decide a realistic goal for yourself. A 3-4 kg (around 6-9 pounds) weight loss per month is the recommended rate at which you should lose weight.

2. Quit Drinking/Smoking

This is perhaps the most popular New Year resolution made by men. Making this resolution (just like any other) is easy; following it is quite difficult because it is a drastic change in the lifestyle. Even if you have tried to quit before and failed, do not let it get you down. The key to achieve this goal is not to eliminate all at once but to gradually reduce the consumption. Experts believe that you are more likely to achieve it if you are in a team with a concrete plan. The relationship between smoking/drinking and a whole range of diseases is well known thus there will always be benefits from stopping.

3. Exercise Regularly

This should be your most important resolution because it is a key to resolve all health related problems. One study reports that walking 30 minutes a day adds 1.3 years to a person's life. Another study found that walking can decrease hypertension, lower bad cholesterol levels and help you lose weight. Regular exercise has been associated with more health benefits than anything else known to man. It keeps the muscles in good working order, stimulates the flow of blood and makes you feel better both physically and mentally. If you think 'regularly' is a tall order try at least 3 times a week for about 30 minutes. Get exercise during your regular daily activities by walking at lunch, taking the stairs instead of the elevator and walking short distances instead of using your car.



4. Eat Healthy

To stay fit one must follow a good exercise regimen coupled with good diet. What you eat has a great influence on the way your body works. A balanced diet is vital to good health. In the day to day diet, some things are good, while others are bad. On the "good" list is fiber from fruits and vegetables, raw nuts and whole grains. On the "bad" list is excess salt, refined grains, refined sugar and

fatty foods. Reduce the amount of saturated fats (found in animal products such as meat and butter and processed foods) and trans fat (found in partially hydrogenated oils, vegetable shortening, some types of margarine, french fries, and processed foods) in your diet.

It is easy to overestimate the amount of fruits and vegetables you eat and overlook the fatty foods or extra portions you had. Get a notepad and write down what you eat for a week. Just knowing what you are eating on a day to day basis can inspire you to eat healthier.



5. Reduce Stress

In this modern day life, everyone leads a stressful life. Chronic stress can lead to hypertension, poor digestion, a weakened immune system and many other conditions. Thus everyone needs to de-stress. Spend some more time with your family and friends or on your hobbies. Take a break if the stress is too hard to handle. Other methods of coping include proper breathing and meditation techniques. Stress contributes to many severe health problems, so it is important to deal with stress earlier, rather than later.

6. Get Good Sleep

Sleep and rest are essential to wellness. Sleep deprivation has been linked to stress, depression, immune-system suppression and obesity. According to a published study, people who sleep an average of six hours a night have a 42% higher chance of developing hypertension than those who get seven. The prescribed amount of sleep required is seven hours. However, each person needs slightly different amounts. Studies suggest that it can boost your energy, immune system and helps your blood circulation to allow your body to mend after the day's activities. If you are tired, get some rest. Exhaustion can lead to many illnesses.

7. Drink ample water

This one is pretty easy to follow. Water is essential for everybody and it is also the key to losing weight. Drink approximately eight glasses of water per day (not carbonated drinks). It regulates your body temperature, lubricates your joints, boosts your energy, eliminates waste and provides fluoride for your teeth. Other fluids, such as milk, juice and decaffeinated herbal teas, can also tally up.



8. Increase Your Health Awareness

To achieve a happy and healthy life, knowing about many aspects of health can go a long way. Knowing about common health problems, their symptoms and prevention techniques, along with things like important vitamins and minerals, proper skin care and correct posture, will allow in preventing many diseases for the rest of your life.

9. Regular Medical Check-up

This is one of the most ignored aspects of a healthy lifestyle. Health should not be avoided and a visit to the doctor should not be procrastination. A good idea would be to take regular health check ups and screen yourself for potential health ailments. After all, prevention is better than cure.

10. Socialize

Turn off the television (or the computer) and try to open yourself up to new people. Research suggests that loners are twice as much susceptible to any diseases. Do not just sit at home alone. Get out and meet people, make friends. You can even start with social networking. And while you are at it, tell those closest to you how much they mean to you. Do not wait until it is too late.

Weight Loss - Smart Goals for Success

By far the number one New Year's resolution most people make is to drop a few pounds and get into shape. Ask any health club manager and they will tell you stories about the mad rush of people eager to join their club. People full of enthusiasm that pushes their bodies to the limit hoping for instant results and magical physique transformations. More often than not, this enthusiastic crowd will return to their old habits soon. Why? Because they did not have a plan. When life throws you a curveball, it is easy to get knocked off course. However, with a well laid plan and realistic goals, it is much easier to knock life's curveballs out of the park and successfully follow through on your New Year's resolution.

Before you begin your exercise and weight loss program, you need to determine what your goals are. The most effective method that I have used for this is called the SMART goal setting method. SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timetable.

SPECIFIC - When you think about setting a goal, be as specific as possible. The more specific you can be the better. If you want to lose weight, how many pounds are you going to lose? If you are going to go to the gym, how many days per week will you go? How long will you exercise while there? At what intensity will you exercise? (Use a heart rate monitor for cardio; use a stop watch to measure rest periods, work intervals, etc.)

MEASURABLE - Have you ever heard the saying "you can not manage what you do not measure"? You must measure your progress if you want to reach your goals. When you exercise keep a log book to record each training session. Write down the distance and speed with which you completed your cardio session. If you use a heart rate monitor, record those readings as well. When weight training, record weight, reps, sets and type of exercises performed during your training. Once a week weigh yourself and record that as well. As you build a log over time, you will begin to



see patterns develop and progress being made. It feels good to look back over months of hard work and see in black and white how far you have come. Remember, the numbers do not lie.

ATTAINABLE - Are your goals attainable? Be honest with yourself. If you need to lose 25lbs, but in your mind you just do not feel like you can do it, then start with a lower goal like 10lbs. Remember, a goal should take you out of your comfort

zone; However, you should still feel confident that it's attainable.

REALISTIC - Let's say that you have decided to lose 10lbs, however, you want to do it in two weeks. Or maybe your goal is to spend an hour and a half in the gym six days a week even though you have two young children, a husband and a full time job. These goals are not realistic. A better option would be to lose 10 pounds in 5 weeks or go to the gym for an hour four times a week. Again, be honest with yourself and set realistic expectations.

TIMETABLE - A goal is not a goal unless there is a timetable attached to it. Setting a timetable provides you with accountability and a sense of urgency. It also allows you to continue setting new goals. Your journey never ends when you reach the date you have set for achieving your goal. You should continue setting new goals to build upon the foundation you have laid.

If you follow the SMART method for goal setting, you can go into the New Year with confidence that you will finally succeed at accomplishing your New Year's resolution!



Choose A Smoke-free Lifestyle

Smoking kills. If you smoke, you need to stop. It is that simple. With over 4,000 dangerous chemicals found in tobacco smoke, you are not only hurting yourself but those around you too.

Second-hand smoke is the number two cause of lung cancer coming right behind the number one cause: smoking.

Here is a look at some helpful tips to get you into a quitting mood.

1. Set a date to quit

Setting a date to quit makes quitting a tangible reality and allows you time to mentally prepare for the task ahead. You should choose a date away from known stressful events. Take the date seriously and circle it on all your calendars. Even write it on each pack of cigarettes you already have.

2. Throw away your tobacco triggers

Avoid triggering cravings by throwing away all your reminders of tobacco, including cigarettes, lighters, ashtrays, and anything else that is related to smoking.

3. Change the daily routine

Tobacco use is a part of your daily routine so you need to change it up. Simple changes engage your brain differently and may help you avoid cravings. Try taking a different route to work or taking your coffee breaks with non-smokers.

4. Start a money jar

Tally up the money you will save by quitting. Start a money jar and fill it with the money you are no longer spending on tobacco. A pack-a-day smoker invests about RM300 per month in their addiction or RM3,600 a year.

5. Change your eating habits

Keep your kitchen well stocked with fruits and vegetables so that you have something to reach for when you get a craving. Try eating baby carrots instead of lighting up. Keep a bowl of grapes in the fridge, washed and ready to eat. Put apples in the living room. When you read or watch TV, you will have an apple to reach for in place of a cigarette.

How to Reduce Stress in Your Life

While some stress is actually necessary for you to function at your best, too much takes a mental and physical toll. Learn to manage stress levels to prevent anxiety, depression and other conditions.

Write down everything you have to do when you are feeling overwhelmed. Set a time frame, then block out when you will accomplish what. By dividing up your workload into manageable chunks, each with an allotted time, you will feel more relaxed about the work before you.

Concentrate on one task at a time. Stressing about work you have not done yet only detracts from accomplishing the task at hand.

Manage your energies wisely, prioritize your workload and put in less effort for low-priority jobs and avoid expending energy on unimportant tasks.

Delegate responsibility and get outside help if you feel overwhelmed. Hire a gardener for your lawn or a baby sitter for your child when you feel pressed for time.

Reward yourself for accomplishing things. Acknowledge the work you put in and give yourself a pat on the back, instead of immediately rushing into the next task and creating more stress.

Take small breaks during work. Visit a nearby café or take a quick walk or allow yourself 10 minutes to relax in your office: Close your eyes, strip your mind of work-related thoughts, visualize a pleasant landscape or vacation scene and relax your muscles.



Exercise regularly to maintain your health and release stress or take up a hobby. Set aside some quiet time to meditate and relax.

Give yourself vacations. If indulging in a long vacation (and staying away from work) seems even more stressful, try taking several short vacations per year.

Maintain your perspective by asking yourself, "Is the situation at hand really that serious that I should become stressed-out about it?"

5 Reasons Why You Should Exercise Regularly

You already know that you need to hit the gym, the pool, the basketball court, or the soccer field to get and stay fit. If you need some extra motivation to get up and just do it, these five reasons may provide you with the push you need to get started.

1 Exercise helps to elevate your mood.

Whether you need to relieve stress after a long day or you are feeling a bit down, spending 20 or 30 minutes performing some kind of physical activity will make you feel better. When someone gets their heart rate elevated, their brain releases some feel-good chemicals that help them to feel more relaxed. Exercising regularly can help with anxiety and depression too.

2 Exercise can help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Many people struggle with their weight and if you have ever tried to manage it by dieting alone, you know how difficult it is. A better strategy is to combine a healthy diet with regular exercise. Physical activity gives your metabolism a boost and makes it easier for you to burn calories.

3 Regular exercise will help you sleep better at night.

When you are more physically active, you may find that you are able to fall asleep easier and stay asleep longer. The quality of your sleep improves and you are much better able to deal with the demands of your day, no matter what it throws at you.

4 Exercise strengthens your heart and lungs.

Your heart is a muscle, and when you get regular exercise, you are actually helping to strengthen it. If your heart is able to do its job more efficiently, your whole body functions better. As a result, you will have a lot more energy and when you are not struggling to get through the day, you will be better able to enjoy life.

5 Being physically active can improve your sex life.

That is a good reason to make plans to include exercise in your routine. If you find that you are too tired to be interested in sex, then start exercising. It will give your energy levels a boost, which means that your interest in being intimate will come back. When we feel better about ourselves, we are more confident, in the bedroom and outside of it.

Since exercise improves circulation, men who make a point of exercising regularly are less likely to experience erectile dysfunction as they get older. This is another good reason to stop being a couch potato.

Now get off the couch
and get started!



The good news about getting motivated to exercise is that once you establish the habit of being physically active, it will be less of a chore for you. It will probably take about 30 days before this change in your routine is a habit and that does not seem like a long time to wait to get used to doing something that is going to improve your life in so many wonderful ways. Even if you start with a daily walk around the block or a game of one-on-one in your own driveway, you will start to see improved strength, endurance and energy.

Eating Healthy

Eating healthy foods is one of the greatest ways you can live healthy and combat developing a disease. Some diseases are genetic and there is not much you can do about that. But others like Diabetes , Lung Cancer and Heart Disease and might be prevented with the proper diet. Below is a list of healthy foods and some of the body parts they affect.



Boron for Bones

Boron is a mineral that is important for calcium absorption. For women, this mineral seems to play an important role in enhancing the activity of estrogen cells, which is important for the formation of strong bones.

Boron can be found in grapes, pears, apples, peas, broccoli, peanuts and raisins.

Vitamin C for Skin

Vitamin C helps the body make collagen. Collagen helps keep the skin firm, increases oxygen flow to the skin, heals scar tissue, cuts and bruises.

Vitamin C can be found in broccoli, strawberries, citrus fruits, green peppers, brussels sprouts, honeydew, and cantaloupe.

Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids for Heart

Omega 3 Essential Acids lower the "bad" cholesterol levels, blood pressure and triglyceride levels while raising "good" cholesterol levels. This will help lower the risk for heart disease.

Omega 3 Essential Acids can be found in cold water fish such as salmon, mackerel and sardines.

Copper for Joints

Copper is a mineral that is essential for the functioning of an enzyme responsible for strengthening bones and joints.

Copper can be found in liver, seafood, nuts and seeds.

Acidophilus for Vagina

Acidophilus helps restore a natural balance between good and bad bacteria in the vagina, helping to ward off infection.

Acidophilus can be found in yogurt.

Zinc for Ears

Experts believe hearing loss associated with tinitis ringing in the ears may be linked to a zinc deficiency in the tissue of the inner ear.

Zinc can be found in oysters, chicken, beef and lamb.

Indole-3-Carbinol for Breasts

Indol-3-Carbinol is a naturally occurring phytochemical. Lab studies have found that it halts the growth of tumor cells.

Indol-3-Carbinol can be found in broccoli and cabbage.

Biotin for Nails

Biotin, also called B7 or vitamin H, helps correct dry, brittle nails by increasing their ability to absorb water.

Biotin can be found in eggs, fish, milk, cheese, whole-grain cereals, cabbage, and potatoes.

Amino Acids for Hair

The Amino Acids Cystine, methionine, and cysteine are very important for hair growth and repair.

Amino acids, the building blocks of protein can be found in chicken, turkey, beef, eggs, cheese and nuts.

Beta Carotene for Eyes

Beta Carotene is a vitamin that acts as an antioxidant. It breaks down cancer-causing chemicals that may damage eye tissues, and helps prevent macular degeneration and cataracts.

Beta Carotene can be found in carrots, sweet potatoes, broccoli and yams.

Calcium for Gums, Teeth, Bones

Calcium is a mineral that helps keep your teeth strong and white.

Calcium can be found in almonds, white beans and milk.

Health Benefits of a Good Sleep

Sleep, we all love it, especially when you wake up from a great night's sleep. In the past, sleep was often ignored by doctors and surrounded by myths but now we are beginning to understand the importance of sleep to overall health and well-being. In fact, when people get less than 6 or 7 hours of sleep each night, their risk for developing diseases begins to increase.



1. Sleep Keeps Your Heart Healthy

Heart attacks and strokes are more common during the early morning hours. This fact may be explained by the way sleep interacts with the blood vessels. Lack of sleep has been associated with worsening of blood pressure and cholesterol, all risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Your heart will be healthier if you get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each night.

2. Sleep May Prevent Cancer

People working the late shift have a higher risk for breast and colon cancer. Researchers believe this link is caused by differing levels of melatonin in people who are exposed to light at night. Light exposure reduces the level of melatonin, a hormone that both makes us sleepy and is thought to protect against cancer. Melatonin appears to suppress the growth of tumors. Be sure that your bedroom is dark to help your body produce the melatonin it needs.

3. Sleep Reduces Stress

When your body is sleep deficient, it goes into a state of stress. The body's functions are put on high alert which causes an increase in blood pressure and a production of stress hormones. Higher blood pressure increases your risk for heart attacks and strokes. The stress hormones also, unfortunately, make it harder for you to sleep. Learn relaxation techniques to counter the effects of stress. There are also stress reduction techniques for sleep.

4. Sleep Reduces Inflammation

The increase in stress hormones raises the level of inflammation in your body, also creating more risk for heart-related conditions, as well as cancer and diabetes. Inflammation is thought to be one of the causes of the deterioration of your body as you age.

5. Sleep Makes You More Alert

Of course, a good night's sleep makes you feel energized and alert the next day. Being engaged and active not only feels great, it increases your chances for another good night's sleep. When you wake up feeling refreshed, use that energy to get out into the daylight, do active things, and be engaged in your world. You will sleep better the next night and increase your daily energy level.

6. Sleep Bolsters Your Memory

Researchers do not fully understand why we sleep and dream but a process called memory consolidation occurs during sleep. While your body may be resting, your brain is busy processing your day, making connections between events, sensory input, feelings and memories. Your dreams and deep sleep are important time for your brain to make memories and links. Getting more quality sleep will help you remember and process things better.

7. Sleep May Help You Lose Weight

Researchers have also found that people who sleep less than seven hours per night are more likely to be overweight or obese. It is thought that the lack of sleep impacts the balance of hormones in the body that affect appetite. The hormones ghrelin and leptin, important for the regulation of appetite, have been found to be disrupted by lack of sleep. So if you are interested in controlling or losing weight, don't forget to pay attention to getting a good night's sleep.

8. Naps Make You Smarter

Napping during the day is not only an effective and refreshing alternative to caffeine, it can also protect your health and make you more productive. A study of 24,000 Greek adults showed that people who napped several times a week had a lower risk for dying from heart disease. Napping also improves memory, cognitive function and mood.

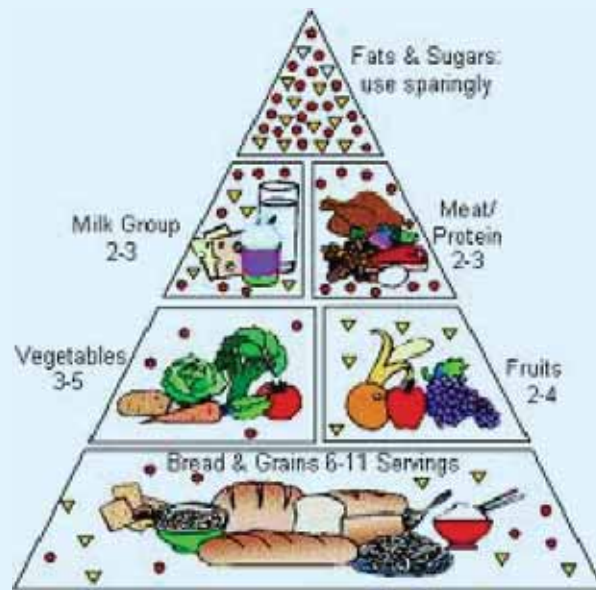
9. Sleep May Reduce Your Risk for Depression

Sleep impacts many of the chemicals in your body, including serotonin. People with a deficiency in serotonin are more likely to suffer from depression. You can help to prevent depression by making sure you are getting the right amount of sleep, between 7 and 9 hours each night.

10. Sleep Helps the Body Make Repairs

Sleep is a time for your body to repair damage caused by stress, ultraviolet rays and other harmful exposures. Your cells produce more protein while you are sleeping.

Eat
Right
 For Life



Make half of your grains whole: Whole grains and foods made from whole grains include corn, oatmeal, whole-wheat cereals and crackers, quinoa, whole-grain breads, and baked whole-grain corn tortillas. Look to see that grains, such as wheat, rice, oats, or corn, are referred to as "whole" in the list of ingredients and that the whole-grain ingredient is one of the first listed.



Vary your vegetables: Eat more dark green vegetables such as spinach, okra, or broccoli, as well as more orange vegetables such squash and pumpkin. Use your favourite salsa recipes or traditional legumes like black beans, chickpeas and pinto beans to your vegetables. Enjoy beets, green beans, mixed vegetables, onions and cabbage.



Focus on fruits: Whether they're fresh, frozen, canned or dried you should eat a variety of fruits – try papaya, cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, dried apricots, grapefruit, banana, pear, orange, apple or peach – instead of fruit juice for most of your fruit choices. Remember to limit added sugars.



Get your calcium-rich foods: Choose low-fat (1%) or fat free milk – or milk products such as low-fat yogurt and low fat cheese every day. If you don't consume milk, choose calcium-fortified foods (such as cereals) and beverages (such as soy beverages with added calcium) or try lactose-free milk products.



Choose lean meats and poultry: Vary your sources of protein with chicken, turkey and beef. Nuts, seeds, fish and eggs can be healthy choices too. Prepare dishes with legumes and beans (without added fats) such as lentils, pinto beans, pigeon peas, garbanzos, peas, lima beans and other dried beans.