

Vital Signs: Teresa Heinz Housel, 39, focuses on exercise and eating right

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Mark Copier | The Grand Rapids Press Exercise routine: Teresa Heinz Housel runs near her home in Holland.

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

Teresa Heinz Housel

Age: 39

Hometown: Holland

Occupation: Associate professor of communication, Hope College

Biggest health challenge: Avoiding weight gain

Exercise routine: I try to exercise at least five times a week. I usually run five miles on three days, then take a step aerobics class the other two days.

Exercise tip: Make exercise a priority. With my busy job, I can think of a million excuses not to exercise, but the payoffs are enormous.

Eating plan: I belong to the Community Supported Eaters' Guild Farm, located in Bangor, and I eat mostly organic vegetarian foods that are in season. I supplement that with low-fat dairy, nuts, chicken and fruit.

Guilty pleasure foods: Cheesecake, cake with buttercream frosting, cheese and crackers, and cheese ravioli are my guilty pleasures.

Favorite healthy foods: Fruits and vegetables

Breakfast today: Coffee with fat-free creamer and a Granny Smith apple with peanut butter.

Daily doses: None

Healthy advice: Live an active life by taking the stairs, walking and riding your bike. Do what you are able to do and keep moving. Also, barring medical conditions, there is no big secret to maintaining a healthy weight and feeling good: regular exercise and a healthy, low-fat diet must go hand in hand. When I exercise, I look, feel and eat better.

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