



# Vibrant

A Weekly Bulletin for "Choose a PATH to Wellness"

Intro

TEXAS ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES  
HEALTH AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS POOL



Together. Better. Stronger.

## An Olympic Challenge

### GETTING STARTED

#### In This Newsletter:

- A Brief History of the Olympics
- The PATH Website
- How PATH Works
- Nike's Family Tree
- Using Your Pedometer

*"Each Olympics brings the human drama into focus"*

— Kodak

The first Olympic games were held in 776 B.C. as a festival to honor Zeus, god of the sky and ruler of all gods. Legend states that the games were the idea of Hercules, Zeus' son who was known for his enormous strength. Olympia was the original site of the games which included only one event - sprinting. Eventually racing in armor, discus, boxing, wrestling, horse racing, and chariot racing were all added. Champions were given a crown of olive leaves grown from a tree Hercules had planted at Zeus' temple.

Women were forbidden to participate though many owned horses and chariots that competed. The owners were considered winners not the riders, so the ancient games did include some female champions. Some even snuck in and rode anyway!

A key factor of the games was the Olympic Truce - a month devoted to worship and made safe for travelers to attend and participate in the games. Greece was not a unified country then, in fact warlords were constantly at odds, fighting over land and resources. But when the games came every four years, warring communities would lay down their weapons and compete in the spirit of sportsmanship and in the joy of effort. The theory was, if they stopped to honor Zeus and the gods, they would receive mercy and end the strife of war and plague.

As Greece's power in the world began to fade, the Roman empire took over. Slowly, Christianity made its way into the hearts of Roman rulers. Since the Olympics was a festival to honor a "pagan" god, devout emperor Theodosius I banned the games for good in 394 B.C. .



Centuries later, a French nobleman who had traveled the world noticed that there was a general lack of athletic prowess among people, especially French soldiers. His name was Baron Pierre

de Coubertin and he traveled the world for the French Ministry of Public Instruction. He was a strong advocate of physical education. When he saw the original site of the ancient games in Greece, he was smitten. He went home and began to plan a revival of the games and their spirit (sans Zeus). In 1896 he succeeded, as the King of Greece announced in front of 50,000 spectators, "I hereby proclaim the opening of the first International Olympic Games!"

Modern games are now big business and are experienced by millions either in person or through television. The ideals of the games persist throughout the decades thanks to Coubertin's demands: every four years the games open with the following Olympic Creed:

"The most important thing in the Olympic games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well."

- Baron Pierre de Coubertin

Learn more about each decade of the Olympics in the your weekly newsletters and gain insight about Gods, Goddesses, and Olympic Athletes as you move along the map. Most of, all have fun and enjoy the journey!

### The PATH Website:

When you registered, you were automatically given (or you chose) a **username and password**. Log on <http://mybenefits.county.org> and here's what you'll find:

**Your Progress** - Here is where you choose your route and track your success. *You'll need Flash Player for the map to work, but you can download that for free - most computers can do this easily and Flash is safe for any system.*

**Medal Ceremonies** - Each route allows you to stop, click, and learn about various gods and athletes.

**Missions** - On the web the missions are Flash animated with Nike guiding your way. It's a fun twist on the paper booklet you received.

**Newsletters** - all our newsletters are available electronically on the web.

**Your Profile** - You can change your email address and password here.

**Help** - If you have trouble logging in, look for answers here or fill out a technical help form.

*If you forget your username and/or password for the Healthy County PATH website, you can create a new password from <http://mybenefits.county.org>. Your username is your UID on your CBSTX insurance card.*

### Training Table Recipes:



Each week look here in your newsletters for a healthy recipe that's quick to cook and yummy (to most). If you have ideas of recipes you'd like to share, send PATH an email using the "Contact Us" button on your PATH dashboard.



## About the Olympics:

Look here, each week, for interesting details about the various Olympic games: tidbits, firsts, famous moments, and little known facts. To help you keep track over the 10 weeks, here is a list of Olympic games:

### 776 B.C. - 393 B.C. - Ancient Games

- 1896 - Athens (S)
- 1900 - Paris (S)
- 1904 - St. Louis (S)
- 1908 - London (S)
- 1912 - Stockholm (S)
- 1920 - Antwerp (S)
- 1924 - Paris (S)
- 1928 - Amsterdam (S)
- 1932 - Los Angeles (S)
- 1936 - Berlin (S),
- 1948 - London (S)
- 1952 - Helsinki (S)
- 1956 - Melbourne (S),

- Charmonix (W)
- St. Moritz (W)
- Lake Placid (W)
- Garmisch-Partenkirchen (W)
- St. Moritz (W)
- Oslo (W)
- Cortina
- d'Ampezzo (W)
- Squaw Valley (W)
- Innsbruck (W)
- Grenoble (W)
- Sapporo (W)
- Innsbruck (W)
- Lake Placid (W)
- Sarajevo (W)
- Calgary (W)
- Albertville (W)

- 1960 - Rome (S),
- 1964 - Tokyo (S)
- 1968 - Mexico City (S)
- 1972 - Munich (S)
- 1976 - Montreal (S)
- 1980 - Moscow (S)
- 1984 - Los Angeles(S)
- 1988 - Seoul (S)
- 1992 - Barcelona (S)
- 1994 - Lillehammer (W)
- 1996 - Atlanta (S)
- 1998 - Nagano (W)
- 2000 - Sydney (S)
- 2002 - Salt Lake City (W)
- 2004 - Athens (S)
- 2006 - Torino (W)
- 2008 - Beijing (S)
- 2010 - Vancouver (W)
- 2012 - London (S)

## How PATH Works:

You'll have two jobs, each week:

1. Be physically active and record your progress;
2. Accomplish your weekly health missions.

Record your progress in your paper booklet or on the web on the "Progress" page where we have a fun, interactive map. Then we'll help you keep pace with the following tools:

- Newsletters to help you accomplish your missions and give you fun tidbits about health, safety and history.
- Website animation to keep things fun and exciting.
- History, History, History:

- ◆ Greek Philosophers - Read weekly quotes from Hypatia



(the first female mathematician on written record, and the first to be respected as much as a man) and Aristotle (one of the greatest male philosophers of all time and one of the first to believe in the power of sound choices



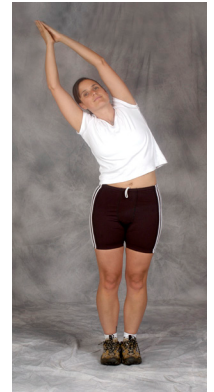
regarding leisure and sport).

- ◆ Gods & Goddesses - read about the prominent characters who played a large role in Greek history and Mythology.
- ◆ Athletes - read inspirational stories of great champions, either for their spirit or their great skill, or both.
- ◆ Olympic factoids

The key is to have fun and look forward to each week's challenge. By the end of 10 weeks, you can't help but have a new habit or two ingrained in your "psyche".

## Training Tips:

Everyone is a champion in his or her own right. "Training" to be an Olympic athlete takes work and sacrifice. But champions don't think of their training as sacrifice because their passion and dreams inspire them far beyond any sense of deprivation or fear of failure. "Training" to be human and to go through life injury free, healthy, and happy takes desire and belief.



Each week, take a few minutes a day to try the Stretch and Strengthen activities we've given you. Keep track of your daily progress in your booklet by marking a check next to each day you do the exercise.

Your newsletters provide larger picture images and detailed instructions on how to do the exercises. If you really want to be a champion, try adding each exercise to the previous week's challenge. By the end of the program, you'll have 15 minutes worth of exercises you can do 3 times a week to stay strong and fit.

## Safety Corner:

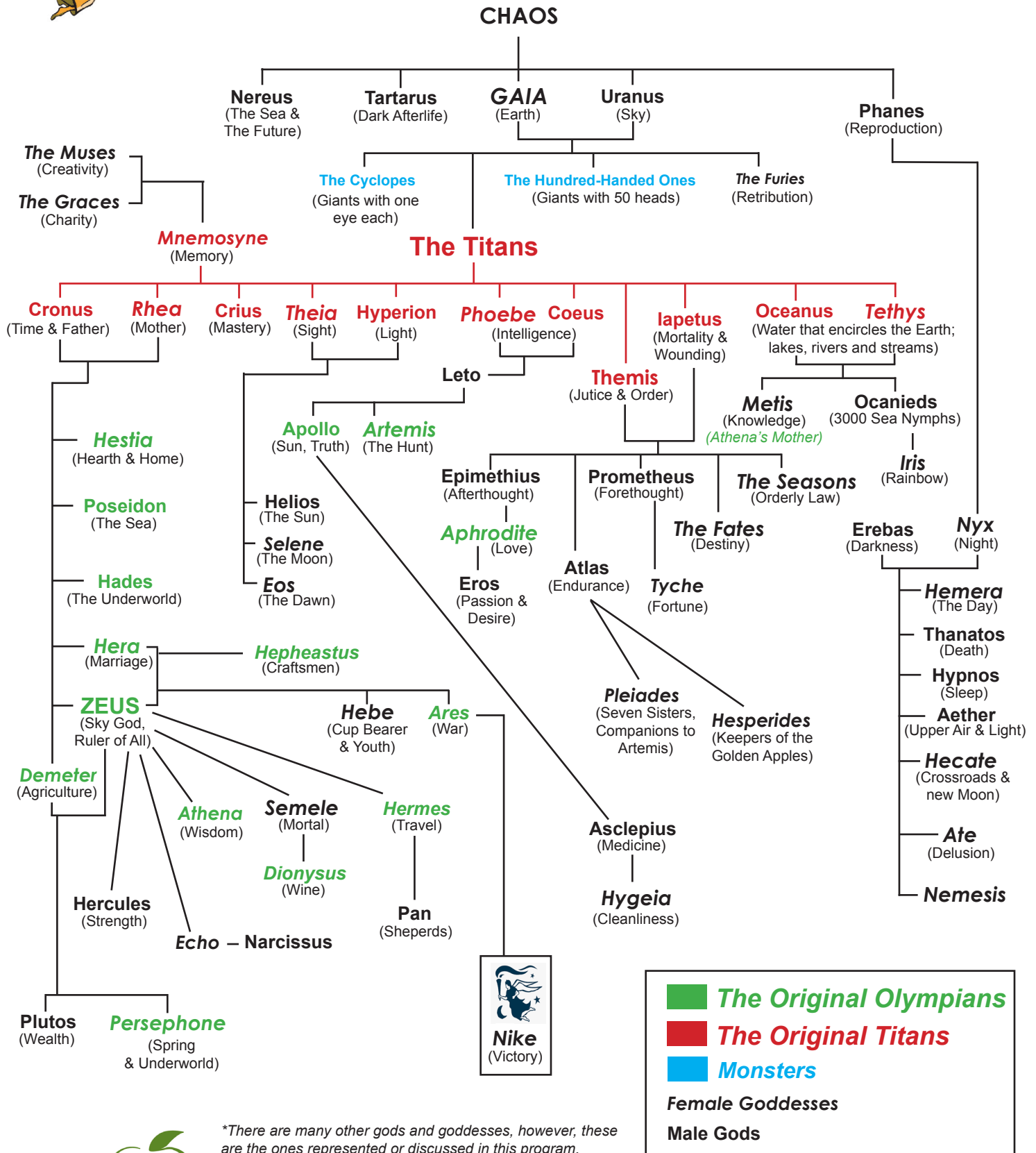
Safety is key to successful training and easy living! Check here each week for tips on how to be safe and smart so your healthy-life training has as few interruptions as possible.





# Nike's Family: The Greek Goddesses & Gods of PATH

Throughout your PATH you will encounter many different Goddesses and Gods who shed light on a bit of Greek mythology and history. To put them in context, within their stories, their skills and their ancestry, the following is a family tree.\*







## Using Your Pedometer



**Finding Your Sweet Spot:** *Every body and every piece of clothing is different. You'll need to spend some time finding your own personal sweet spot both on your body and on the different clothes you wear.*

**Putting it on:** Use your leash to keep from losing your pedometer if it falls off your waist. Wrap the leash around the clip and then clip your pedometer to your waistband. Clip the leash to your clothing.

**Setting Your Stride & Weight:** *In either the distance mode or the calories mode, press and hold the MODE button. For miles, a stride length will show up and blink. Press the SET button until you reach your stride length in feet or your body weight in pounds. The SET button only moves numbers forward (not backward). If you pass your number, keep going until your number cycles back around. Press the MODE button once to end the session. Do the same to set your weight in the calories mode.*

**How It Records Steps:** Inside your pedometer is a magnetic pendulum. As you step with a bit of force and your hips sway, the pendulum swings. On each down-swing, the pendulum passes a digital sensor that records a step.

**Reading it:** Simply unhook your pedometer and read the display. To switch the display from steps to miles, activity time or calories burned, press the MODE button.

**Resetting:** Press and hold the MODE button and the SET button together (3 seconds).

**How it Records Distance:** You can just put it on and go! It will not, however, calculate distance accurately, unless you set it. The pedometer uses your stride length to determine miles walked. There are 5280 feet in a mile so the formula goes as follows: # of steps x stride length ÷ by 5280 = miles walked.

**Water:** The digital sensor is very sturdy but will blank out if it gets wet. If your pedometer does have an episode with a body of water (say, for example, a bathtub, a pond, or maybe even a toilet bowl), let it sit out to dry for a day or two and it may recover.



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**Secret Agent Man:** Many pedometers have an anti-falsing agent (also known as an "auto filter sensor") that must sense 6 steps before it begins counting. If you stop for 2 seconds, the counter resets and must sense 6 steps again before counting. Once it senses you're walking, it adds those 6 steps in and counts from that point forward. If you take 4 steps, stop for 5 seconds, then start up again only to take 3 and so on, you'll end up with zero steps! We know you moved but the pedometer says you're a liar. Prove **it** false by always going that extra step (groan).

### Troubleshooting:

*Several situations can throw your pedometer off its accurate count. Here are some troubleshooting tips:*

**Ridin' High Part 1** (How'm I ridin'? I'm ridin' high!): Some pants have thicker waistbands than others. A thin or floppy waistband may cause the pedometer to slide up to where it is barely hanging on. A pedometer that is not firmly seated on the waistband will flop around and won't be able to keep an accurate count.

**Ridin' High Part 2:** Some people's pants fit high up on the waist. The pedometer's pendulum loves swingin' hip movement. If it is sitting too high up on the waist, the hip movement is not as pronounced. If you are walking softly and wearing high waisted pants the problem gets worse. Check out your waistband placement and test which one works best with your pedometer and your hip action. On some pants, that fifth pocket sometimes can be an alternative placement.

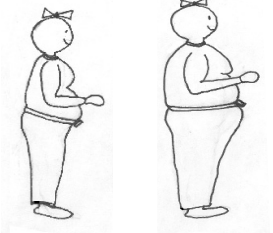
**Bulky Sweaters:** Sweaters and bulky banded sweatshirts or tops that fold under at the waist can push your pedometer off your pant line. If you often fix and tuck your sweaters throughout the day (my favorite nervous twitch), you may dislodge your pedometer or make it crooked.

**Dresses, Tights, Tunics, Boxers, Hose, Underwear:** When wearing a loose waistband, such as spandex, boxers or hose, turn the clip inside out - wear the pedometer so that the front cover is against your skin and the clip faces out.

**Those Pesky Pants:** Can't someone design pants for people who want to wear pedometers? Our friends Olga and Inga have had

trouble getting their pedometers to read properly. Olga's is tilted too far forward. Inga's sits on her lower belly and tilts too far up. Tilting sideways is also a problem. Wear your pedometer so it sits flat on all angles. If you are like

Olga or Inga, try wearing it to your far side or even on the back of your waistline. Check it periodically against your own count to see that it is working properly.



Olga's tilts forward

Inga's tilts upward

**The Pedometer Who Lived in a Shoe:** When all else fails, try wearing the pedometer on your shoe. Some have also tried it on the collar of scoop neck shirts or dresses - Jack Lalane might have tried that since his one-piece, gold lamé suit would have left him few other options.

**Shuffle Off to Buffalo:** Pedometers are a relatively new phenomena in the United States. We are only now beginning to see good research on their value and validity. Most recent research says that all pedometers are 95% accurate at 3 mph and faster. For those who regularly walk slower or shuffle, very few pedometers (only two, in fact) will record such movements accurately. Our pedometers are reported to be 99% accurate in all circumstances but every movement on every person is different. So to be sure, pick up your feet and walk with purpose (at 3 mph)!

**Finding Your Stride Length:** *The average stride length is about 2.5 feet. If you want to be truly accurate for your body, here are some options for finding your personal stride length:*

- Walk on a track - 400 meters (one lap) is 1312 feet. Divide the number of steps you take into 1312 and you have your average stride.
- Tape a measuring tape to the floor and count how many steps you take - divide the steps you take by the number of feet on the tape.