

Well NEWS

A Monthly Insight into Health and Wellness



Get the Most Nutrition from your Calories

While taste drives most food choices, eating nutrient-rich foods that provide the most nutrition per calorie is one of the best ways to “Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right,” according to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. As part of the 2014 National Nutrition Month theme, the Academy encourages everyone to choose the most nutritionally-packed foods you can from each of the five MyPlate food groups each day.

Nutrient-rich foods and beverages provide vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrates and other essential nutrients that offer health benefits with relatively few calories.

“When your daily eating plans include foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, fat-free or low-fat dairy, beans, nuts and seeds in the appropriate amounts, you are able to get many of the nutrients your body needs, all with relatively low amounts of calories,” says registered dietitian nutritionist and Academy spokesperson Debbi Beauvais. Beauvais offers practical ways to add nutrient-rich foods and beverages to your daily diet:

- Make oatmeal creamier by using fat-free milk instead of water. Mix in some raisins, dried cranberries, cherries or blueberries, too.
- Make sandwiches on whole grains bread, such as whole wheat or whole rye. Add slices of avocado, tomato or cucumber to lean roast beef, ham, turkey or chicken.
- When eating out, look for nutrient rich choices, such as entrée salads with grilled seafood and low-calorie dressing, baked potatoes topped with salsa, grilled vegetables and reduced-fat cheese and yogurt parfaits made with strawberries and blueberries.
- Drink nutrient-rich, low-sugar beverages such as low-fat or fat-free milk or 100-percent fruit juice.
- Top foods with chopped nuts or reduced-fat sharp cheddar to get crunch, flavor and nutrients from the first bite.
- Spend a few minutes to cut and bag vegetables so they are in easy reach of every family member. Some ready-to-eat favorites include red, green or yellow peppers, broccoli or cauliflower flowerets, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, snap peas or radishes.
- Serve meals that pack multiple nutrient-rich foods into one dish such as hearty broth-based soups that are full of colorful vegetables, beans and lean meat. Make chili with a dollop of low-fat yogurt. Serve these with whole grain breads or rolls.
- For dessert, enjoy a tropical treat by blending mango, plain low-fat milk, ice and a splash of pineapple juice. Or you can stir chocolate syrup into a cup of coffee flavored yogurt, freeze and enjoy.

“You should enjoy the foods you eat. In choosing nutrient-rich foods, you’ll find they are familiar, easy to find and represent the five MyPlate food groups,” Beauvais says. “Achieving balance and building a healthier diet can be simple and stress-free. Selecting nutrient-rich foods and beverages first is a way to make better choices within your daily eating plan.” Beauvais also recommends limiting added sugars and reducing the major sources of solid fats. “Drink few regular sodas, fruit drinks and sports drinks, and cut back on cakes, cookies, ice cream, cheese and fatty meats like sausages, hot dogs and bacon,” she says.

“You don’t have to give up these foods entirely, but find ways to enjoy small amounts occasionally,” Beauvais says.

Visit www.eatright.org to view a library of recipes designed to help you “Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right.”

Be Happy and Help your Heart

In life, we all face our share of stress. Sometimes it's something big hanging over our heads, like an illness or money worries. But most of the time, it's the dozens of little things that happen each day. All that ongoing stress, no matter how small, can take a toll on our health - even affecting our heart health.

In fact, being under constant stress - the kind that raises your heart rate and blood pressure - could damage the walls of your arteries. But the good news is that there are things you can do to help prevent it. Here are some helpful hints from the American Heart Association (AHA) to help you beat stress and strengthen your heart:

- **BREATH.** It's easy, free and really works. Research shows that meditation can have a calming effect, and restful breathing definitely plays a role in that. Whether you choose to try breathing exercises or a form of meditation, make time for a 15-20 minute break where you can take a few deep breaths and relax.
- **EXERCISE.** Besides keeping your body and heart in good shape, daily exercise can also help with stress. According to the AHA, active adults are less likely to suffer from depression, too. So choose an activity that you love like hiking, swimming, biking or simply walking around your neighborhood - and then make time for it every day.
- **SLEEP.** Not getting enough sleep has been linked to a host of health problems, from weight gain to higher stress levels. Aim for six to eight hours of shut-eye each night. And don't forget about exercise, as mentioned above. It can actually improve the quality of the rest you're getting.
- **PLAN.** If your work or family to-do lists have you feeling overwhelmed, the best way to take control is to take a breath and do some planning. Make lists of what needs to be done and tackle the most important tasks first. And if something takes less than five minutes, don't put it on your list - just do it now. Then, commit to getting organized one place at a time - from your office drawers to your closets at home, as well as your personal and financial life. A little planning and organization can go a long way toward preventing stress.

Exercise

OF THE MONTH

Rear Lunge

Stand upright with arms at your sides. Step back with one leg while bending the supporting leg. Plant forefoot far back on the floor. Lower body by flexing knee and hip of supporting leg until knee of rear leg is almost in contact with the floor. Return to original standing position. Be sure to keep your torso upright through the entire exercise. Repeat alternating sides. **A rear lunge is much easier on your knees than a traditional front lunge.

A rear lunge is great at targeting all of the muscles of major muscles in your lower body.



Newsletter Quiz

1. What is the theme of this year's National Nutrition Month and how will you try to implement it?
2. What is the difference between a rear lunge and a front lunge?

To earn your Wellness Incentive Points, e-mail your response to Katie@wellworksinc.com by March 31, 2014.

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