

NUTRITION TIPS RESOURCE PACKET

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TAKE THE FOOD QUIZ

Vitamins, minerals, fats, fiber: Good nutrition can seem pretty complicated. Think you know a lot about nutrition? Try this quiz from the American Dietetic Association and see where you stand.

- 1. Snacking may keep you from becoming overly hungry and overeating.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

- 2. Eating a variety of foods is important because:**
 - a. You're bound to eat something that's good for you eventually
 - b. That's the best way to obtain the vitamins and minerals you need for good health
 - c. Your mother or father said you should

- 3. Vitamins are a good source of energy.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

- 4. What is the key to healthy eating?**
 - a. Variety
 - b. Balance
 - c. Moderation
 - d. All of the above

- 5. If you're often too busy working to eat lunch, how can you enjoy a healthful meal?**
 - a. Order "fast food"
 - b. Pack a brown bag lunch
 - c. Go to the vending machine
 - d. All of the above

- 6. By adding regular physical activities that are fun, refreshing and within your abilities, you:**
 - a. Can help keep your body in good working order
 - b. Feel energized so you can do things you like to do
 - c. Can help keep your weight within a healthy range
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above

- 7. Both fat and cholesterol are found in:**
 - a. Food of animal origin, such as pork, chicken, fish, beef, milk, butter, and eggs
 - b. Foods of both plant and animal sources, such as those listed above, and oils such as olive or canola, and avocado
 - c. Largest quantities in seafood
 - d. None of the above

- 8. The calcium content of fat-free milk is the same as whole milk.**
- a. True
 - b. False
- 9. Which ethnic food offers healthful, low-fat choices?**
- a. Chinese
 - b. Italian
 - c. Mexican
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above
- 10. According to the Food Guide Pyramid, a serving of meat is approximately the size of:**
- a. A deck of cards
 - b. A paperback book
 - c. A matchbox
 - d. A softball

Answers to the Food Quiz can be found on page 5.

THE SEVEN BEST FOODS MOST OF US NEVER EAT

Stuck in a food rut? You don't have to go far to find some overlooked food choices that are easy to prepare, pack a nutritional wallop and avoid unhealthy fats.

We asked two veteran nutritionists to help us identify seven great foods most of us skip. Our consultants: American Dietetic Association spokeswoman Cindy Moore, R.D., at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation; and Institute of Food Technologists spokeswoman Christina Stark, R.D., at Cornell University.

Avocado

The avocado is high in fat, but most is the heart-healthy monounsaturated kind. The avocado is high in Omega-3 fatty acid that is the key to healthy hearts, brilliant brains and eagle eyes. We know the avocado tastes great, but outside of an occasional guacamole dip, few of us reach for this high-fiber food for salads or as a great side dish.

You'll also get protein, a good dose of vitamins A and E, some B vitamins, lots of potassium and a dollop of copper. The rich and creamy avocado has been called the "chocolate" of fruits.

Sweet Potato

At Thanksgiving, we dash for sweet potatoes as if they're available just once a year. But you can bake or microwave these powerhouses anytime for a super dose of vitamin A -- five times the daily value (DV) the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses for labeling.

Sweet potatoes also offer some vitamin C and a significant helping of important minerals, including calcium, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium and iron. And this fat-free, tasty package brightens the plate.

Soybeans

The FDA recently added soy to the list of foods that can make health claims because of its value in reducing the risk of heart disease. Soy is extremely high in protein -- one cup of beans can fill 40 percent of the DV for protein -- and the bean also serves up generous helpings of fiber, calcium, potassium, iron, phosphorus and magnesium. How you eat this versatile food is up to you -- cooked and mixed in salads or casseroles, roasted for snacks, or as tofu, tempeh or soy milk. Soy has some fat, but very little saturated fat.

Dried Figs

Tasty as Fig Newton cookies are, figs stand on their own. They provide a high-fiber punch, topped with some B vitamins and iron, finished off with abundant potassium and calcium. Five figs give you as much calcium as half a glass of milk.

What to do with a fig? Pop a few in your mouth, sneak them into casseroles or replace raisins in a salad.

Lentils

We rarely think of this legume unless it's in our soup. But put lentils in rice or casseroles and you've added one of the highest-protein, highest-fiber foods around.

A cup of lentils supplies about 40 percent of the DV for protein and about 65 percent of the DV for fiber. The lentil is high in potassium, calcium and iron, and a good source of B vitamins, phosphorus and copper. The fat content? Zero.

Kale

Dark, leafy green vegetables are an acquired taste. Maybe now's the time to see if your taste buds have matured to accommodate this no-fat, low-calorie, super-high-vitamin-A food.

One cup of kale (boiled, but not overcooked) gives you double the DV for vitamin A. You'll also get some vitamin C, a small amount of B vitamins and a generous amount of calcium. Look for kale's healthy but ignored cousins: Swiss chard, mustard greens and collards.

Barley

Here's another soup secret we tend to forget despite its claim to protein, fiber, potassium, phosphorus and iron. One cup supplies 25 percent of the DV for fiber.

Eat pearled barley as a side dish instead of rice, use it for a hearty casserole, or boil it to create a unique base for a stir-fry meal. And look at the high nutritional content of some other forgotten but powerful grains, like quinoa and amaranth.

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THE HEALTHY FRIDGE MAKEOVER

One of the best ways to improve your health and longevity is to improve your diet. And one of the easiest ways to improve your diet is to give your fridge a healthy makeover. "Taking a look at the foods inside your refrigerator is like taking a look inside your heart and your health," says Debra R. Judelson, M.D., a cardiologist with the Cardiovascular Medical Group of Southern California in Beverly Hills.

Dr. Judelson offers the following suggestions on how to reorganize your fridge to support a healthy diet.

Get organized

Take stock of what's inside. Once a month, pull everything out and separate the better-for-you foods from the rest. Make sure you have more low-fat, high-fiber and low-sugar foods than other types. If not, gradually adjust the number of not-so-good foods and increase the number of healthy foods.

Organize by "more" and "less." Divide your refrigerator into different sections of "choose more often" and "choose less often." This could be by shelf or within the shelf, always keeping more healthy foods up front and less healthy foods toward the back.

"Choose more often" foods include fresh fruits and vegetables; lean meat, poultry and fish; low-fat yogurt and skim or 1 percent milk; low-fat soft or squeeze margarine, salad dressing and mayonnaise; and low-fat frozen foods.

"Choose less often" foods include fatty cuts of meat and bacon; breaded and fried foods; whole milk or 2 percent dairy foods; regular salad dressing; sugar-based soft drinks; creamy dips; and high-fat frozen foods.

Shelf appeal

Make healthy food appealing. Keep a food you would love to indulge in next to a healthy food to make it more appetizing. For example, put the chocolate syrup beside the skim milk, ready to be mixed together.

Make a healthy grocery-shopping list and stick to it. Your "no brainer" list should include lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, plain low-fat yogurt, turkey bacon or Canadian bacon, 100 percent whole wheat bread, skinless chicken and lean ground beef.

"Taking time to plan your family's meals and snacks from the point of view of health and taste will help lower their cholesterol and blood pressure and reduce their risk for heart disease, stroke and diabetes," says Dr. Judelson.

Freeze fruits such as bananas, grapes and orange slices to make them more fun and easy to eat. When your children want a sweet snack, offer them frozen fruit rather than ice cream.

"Making these and other changes in the foods you buy and how you store them can improve your family's health," says Dr. Judelson. "Making small changes is much more effective than trying to implement a total dietary overhaul all at once. One key goal is to reduce your intake of saturated fat and cholesterol to help lower or keep blood cholesterol in check."

ANSWERS TO THE FOOD QUIZ

1. True. Healthful snacking can help you moderate the amount of food you eat so that you will be less inclined to overeat at your next meal.
2. B. Eating a variety of foods from the five food groups is a great -- and enjoyable -- way to get the 40 or so essential vitamins and minerals and the fiber you need.
3. False. Vitamins are not a source of calories, but instead help convert food into energy. Foods are the best source of vitamins.
4. D. An eating style that promotes your overall health is based on variety (enjoying many different foods from all the food groups; balance (including enough, but not too much, of any one kind of food; and moderation (in use of fats, oils, added sweets, and portion sizes).
5. D. Quick-service restaurants offer many options, making it easy to maintain healthful eating. Healthy choices include a grilled chicken sandwich, salad with low-fat dressing; and fat-free milk or frozen yogurt. Brown bag lunches allow a lot of flexibility. Some ideas include pasta leftovers, frozen entrees (if your workplace has a freezer and microwave) and sandwiches made with whole-grain bread, low-fat deli meats like lean roast beef, ham or turkey, and sliced veggies.

Finally, depending on your vending machine selections, look for pretzels, peanuts, fruit juice, and yogurt to create a healthful mini-meal.
6. D. Finding the right mix of physical activities and leisure time makes life fun all year round. Think positively about keeping your body in good working order. Doing fun and novel physical activities you enjoy will keep you energized.
7. A. The key here is the word "cholesterol." Cholesterol is found only in foods of animal origin. Plants do not contain cholesterol; however, some can contain significant amounts of fat, such as avocado and other vegetable oils. Many seafoods are low in fat and cholesterol.
8. True. The better daily choice for including calcium without the fat is 2 to 3 servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy products, rather than whole or full-fat dairy products.
9. D. All three popular ethnic cuisines offer healthful dishes, such as stir-fried vegetables, linguine in marinara sauce, and rice and beans. All are high in complex carbohydrates, including fiber, and are flavorfully seasoned.
10. A. Two to three ounces of cooked lean beef, poultry with skin removed, or fish constitutes one serving.

How Did You Score?

If you got 8-10 items right, you are a nutrition whiz. Congratulations!

If you got 5-7 items right, you are eating healthy some of the time. Keep it up.

If you got 1-4 items right, you would benefit from reviewing the Food Guide Pyramid at www.mypyramid.gov.