



Lifestyle Letter

Wellness News

Understanding Dietary Fats **Keeping good fats in your meals while eliminating unhealthy fats** **can be healthy and still taste good!**

To stay healthy and lower your heart disease risk and high cholesterol levels, you don't have to eliminate all fats. It's a matter of knowing which fats are which, and how to replace bad fat with good fat.

Bad Fats

Saturated fat. This type of fat is what leads to high cholesterol. This is the unhealthy fat found in animal products like beef, lamb, pork, butter, cheese, cream and other whole milk products.

Trans fats and hydrogenated fats. Trans fats and hydrogenated fats are dietary fats created when processed, fattening ingredients like margarine and shortening are made. Many processed foods, commercially prepared baked goods, and fried foods contain trans and hydrogenated fats.

Cholesterol. Cholesterol is actually a fat-like material that we get from eating chicken, beef, pork, eggs, and whole dairy products - many of the same foods that contain saturated fats.

Good Fats

Polyunsaturated fat. This unsaturated fat is found in healthy, cholesterol-lowering foods like flaxseed, sunflower seeds, and walnuts. Omega-3 fats are a type of polyunsaturated fat. You can bulk up on this good fat by eating fish two to three times a week. Salmon and mackerel are good examples. Plant oils are also a good source of polyunsaturated fats (sunflower and coconut oils).

Monounsaturated fat. This unsaturated fat is found in certain plant oils, such as olive and canola oils. You can also get this good fat in your diet by eating nuts, (pecans, almonds, hazelnuts), seeds (pumpkin and sesame) and avocados.

The American Heart Association recommends that less than 7 percent of your daily calorie intake be from saturated fat, with less than 1 percent coming from trans fats. Remember to watch what you eat, total fat consumption each day should be between 20 to 30 percent of your total daily caloric intake.

Get on the good oil track by making these small changes:

Get butter out of the pan. Cook with canola, olive, coconut, or sunflower oil instead of butter.

Ditch the beef. Replace beef burgers with grilled turkey burgers, replace steak with lean skinless

chicken breasts.

Choose fish. Salmon is a healthy and delicious alternative to meat, especially for people with high cholesterol.

Snacks. Choose nuts instead of potato chips for a satisfying snack. Just keep your portions to 1/4 cup.

Egg whites. Enjoy a healthy breakfast without the added cholesterol by whipping up an egg-white only omelet. Add fresh herbs, vegetables, or avocado for a fulfilling and healthy breakfast.



Be Fit.

The Many Benefits of Exercise

The next time you feel like trashing your running shoes or canceling your gym membership, here are some reminders why exercise is such an important part of your wellness lifestyle.

1. Exercise "eats" calories. Aerobic exercise (such as running and biking) burns lots of calories, and strength training builds muscles that burn calories 24/7.

2. Exercise is key for weight maintenance. Studies have shown that 94 percent of people who have maintained their weight do so by exercising regularly.

3. Exercise is good for cardiovascular health. It strengthens your heart, improves blood flow, and lowers blood pressure.

4. Exercise reduces the risk of diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, and some types of cancer.

5. Exercise is a natural antidepressant. Studies have shown that exercise reduces stress levels and prompts the body to release chemicals that make you feel good.

6. Exercise improves memory by optimizing the delivery of oxygen and other vital nutrients to the brain!

Think Well.

Optimism can enhance your long-term health

It's a well-known fact that being optimistic and focusing on emotional wellness seems to reduce stress. Research has found that an upbeat attitude, or happiness, can help lessen the burden of chronic pain or even reduce your chances of developing cardiovascular disease.

Experts now think that staying positive can help you live longer. Researchers found that people who were generally classified as "optimistic" were 20 percent less likely to suffer an early death than those classified as "pessimistic".

Happiness also plays an important role in keeping your brain healthy and vital, too. Staying positive helps fight the "blues". This is good news since depression has been shown to increase a person's risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

Training your Brain to Stay Positive

These are some specific activities you can do to boost your brain's vitality:

Practicing yoga - trains your brain to stay focused. Yoga also promotes relaxation and eases stress.

Meditate - clears your mind and lets you concentrate on being peaceful.

Religious and Spiritual activities - connecting with others that share your beliefs, gives a sense of belonging and heightens alertness.

Recipe

Ginger Chicken Kabobs

Ingredients

1 pound of chicken breast, boneless, cut into 1-inch pieces.

2 tablespoons cilantro

1 tablespoon ginger, fresh

2 cloves of garlic

1 pepper serrano chile, seeded and finely chopped

1 teaspoon olive oil

1/2 teaspoon coriander, ground

1/2 teaspoon cumin, ground

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg, ground

1 cup pineapple, fresh cubes

1/2 medium pepper, red, bell cut into 1-inch pieces

1/2 medium pepper, green, cut into 1-inch pieces

Preparation

Place chicken in a large resealable plastic bag set in a shallow dish. Add cilantro, ginger, serrano pepper, oil, coriander, cumin, salt, and nutmeg to bag. Turn and press bag to coat chicken. Chill for at least 2 hours or up to 6 hours.

On eight 10-12-inch skewers, alternately thread the chicken, pineapple, red sweet pepper, and green sweet pepper, leaving a 1/4-inch space between pieces.

Place kabobs on the rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium coals. Grill 8 to 12 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink, turning occasionally to brown evenly.

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 175 cal., 1g fat, 3g total fat, 8g carbs.

Be sure to visit "My CreatingWellnessSpace" for more recipe ideas!