

FOOD FOR FITNESS AND FUN

April - 2007

This month's newsletter includes some snacks to help celebrate spring, information about some new products in the marketplace and some information about reducing sodium in your diet. Enjoy! Jan Temple

SPRINGTIME CRITTER CREATIONS

BUGS

This is an adaptation of a fruit kabob.

Enjoy making wiggly worms or bugs with pieces of fruit strung on a pretzel stick. It will be easier for young children if an adult pre-pierces each piece of fruit using a metal or wood skewer before giving it to the child. Fruits that will string easily on the pretzel stick include:

- Banana slices
- Pineapple chunks
- Grapes
- Kiwi
- Strawberry



After stringing several pieces of fruit on the pretzel stick, give your bug legs, eyes and antennae using some of the following: Toasted oat cereal, pieces of pretzel, dried fruit and mini chocolate chips.

BUNNIES

This is a fun way to enjoy a peanut butter and banana sandwich.



Make a peanut butter sandwich using a whole grain white bread. Use a large round cookie cutter to cut a circle out of the center of the sandwich to be the bunny face. For the ears, use one half of a banana cut crosswise. Cut the half lengthwise to make two ears. Assemble the bunny on a plate with the sandwich being the face and the bananas being the ears on top. Make a face with cran-raisins. For whiskers, you may wish to use thin carrot sticks. Other choices could include celery strips, jicama sticks or string cheese.

BUTTERFLIES

Have fun flying with these colorful butterflies.

Fill a 2 to 3 inch long piece of celery with peanut butter, cream cheese or spreadable cheese. Make wings for the butterfly using assorted sizes of carrot slices or chips (available in the produce section). Use pretzel sticks to be antennae.



ENERGY DRINKS: GAIN OR LOSE?

Energy drink claims are certainly enticing – from Redbull's power to "give you wings" to Arizona Green Tea Energy Drink's "explosive caffeine energy" – who is to say that Enviga can't "invigorate your metabolism" too? There is no denying that the energy drink market is burgeoning with hundreds of innovative "functional food" products; however, the one caveat is that the health claims in this beverage category are currently not strictly regulated by the U.S. FDA. With a public hungry for quick energy and easy weight loss potions, these beverages promise a magical solution. But weight loss is never that simple.

ENVIGA/\$1.29 TO \$1.49 PER CAN

- A carbonated green tea beverage
- Contains the same amount of caffeine as a cup of coffee (100 mg per 12 oz. can) plus 200 mg of calcium
- Enviga's so-called superior calorie burning properties are primarily rooted in green tea's anti-oxidant epigallocatechin (EGCG) – with 90 mg per can. EGCG is purported to speed up metabolism and promote fat burning. Thus, the claim is that polishing off 3 cans a day would result in burning an additional 60 to 100 calories a day. Each 12 oz. can contains 5 calories.

The research was a brief, three-day intervention of Enviga's calorie burning potential on 32 lean or normal weight people. Although the findings revealed that metabolism was boosted by about 100 calories a day, the nutrition science community is skeptical at best. NAASO scientists, as well as the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a consumer advocacy group, are concerned that this product is sending consumers the wrong message about weight loss. The 100-calorie burn is just too insignificant in the weight loss scheme.

The bottom line: Why not just drink plain brewed green tea – it's virtually calorie-free, costs less and may have other health benefits, too.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, April 2007

Note: USDA reports that an 8 oz. cup of fresh brewed green tea contains 196 mg of EGCG; bottled green tea has 9 mg. A cup of freshly brewed black tea contains 27 mg of EGCG; a cup of bottled black tea has 1 mg.

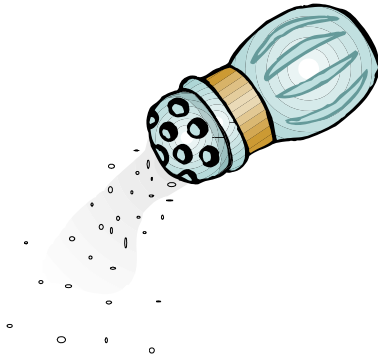
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20 WAYS TO LOWER SODIUM

In February 2004, a panel of experts from the Institute of Medicine's Food and Nutrition Board released a report on the need for sodium (salt).

This report set a toxic upper limit (UL) for sodium as 2,300 mg. For young adults the new guidelines state that 1,500 mg of sodium is an adequate intake (AI). Most Americans get an average of 3,000 to 5,000 mg per day – how are they to cut it in half?



1. Switch from using deli meats to low-sodium tuna and roasted chicken
2. Use low-sodium bread or use less bread. Cooked rice and pasta (without added salt) make good alternatives.
3. Switch to pasta sauce without added salt or no-salt-added tomato sauce in equal parts to bottled pasta sauce.
4. Eat cereal without added salt: oatmeal, cream of wheat (whole is best), shredded wheat and puffed whole-grain cereal.
5. Use no-salt-added condiments like salt-free ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, vinegar and low-sodium mayonnaise. Beware of mustard and soy sauce, both of which are high in sodium.
6. Use vinegar and oil (sparingly) on your salads instead of bottled dressings.
7. Make your own soup instead of using canned soup; use low-sodium broth.
8. Avoid or limit convenience meals. These include boxed mixes, frozen dinners and canned foods.
9. Eat more meals at home. Cook your own food in batches and freeze for use on hectic days.
10. Eat more fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables.
11. Read labels to find foods that have a lower amount of sodium than calories.
12. Substitute fresh vegetables for pickles and other pickled foods.

13. Use cheese very sparingly.
14. Watch out for salty snacks.
15. Limit the amount of cured meats such as sausages and hot dogs that you eat.
16. Limit the amount of imitation crab and fish eggs that you eat. These are often found in sushi.
17. Beware of soy substitutes; these are often high in sodium.
18. Bake your own cookies, muffins and breads; omit the salt.
19. Use nut butter without added salt instead of margarine.
20. If you are going to use canned foods, rinse them first to remove some of the sodium.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2004*

12 BEST LOW-SODIUM FOOD CHOICES

- Brown rice – Cooks easily in a rice cooker
- Colored and whole-grain pastas – Usually have no added salt; add fiber to your meal.
- Flavored vinegars – Come in fun colors; add a lot of flavor with no sodium.
- Fresh fish – Quick cooking; no added sodium.
- Frozen artichokes – All the flavor of artichokes without the added salt of canned versions.
- Frozen beans – Black-eyed peas and lima beans are cooked without added salt.
- Frozen vegetable mixes – Many flavor varieties and all the convenience of canned without the salt.
- Fruits – Naturally delicious and salt-free!
- Nut butters (without salt)
- Oatmeal – Cooks quickly and you don't need to add salt.
- Rotisserie chicken – Already cooked, low in sodium.
- Vegetables – Naturally delicious and salt-free!

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2004*



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