

FOOD FOR FITNESS AND FUN

March - 2008

Happy March! This month spinach will help us 'Go for the Green.' Enjoy! Jan Temple



NUTRITION: GET THE FACTS

The best nutrition is based on science and fact. Following is some nutrition myth-information.

Coconut Oil

Many folks are switching from their unsaturated or monounsaturated fats to the saturated coconut oil touted as promoting heart health, improving blood lipid levels and stimulating metabolism and helping with weight loss.

The Facts: Studies show that these claims are unsubstantiated. A vast majority of scientific evidence shows that a diet high in saturated fats raises the LDL levels in blood, promotes arteriosclerosis and coronary artery disease.

Glycemic Index

One of the hottest new diets uses the concept of glycemic index and glycemic load as a way to control or lose weight. Glycemic index assigns a numeric value to food based on how rapidly it raises blood sugar levels based on a reference food. These diets proclaim that those eating diets with lower GI and GL will lose weight faster.

The Facts: Two recent studies have shown that GI and GL have little effect on weight loss. If you want to lose weight focus on food high in fiber and low in calories: like fruit, vegetables and whole grains while reducing low nutrient density foods.

Sea Salt

Folks frequently question the difference between sea salt, flavored salts and other higher priced salts and their nutritional values. Some claims state that these "special" salts do not have the same affect on blood pressure as "regular" table salts. Other suggestions include that added minerals in some of these salts are beneficial to health.

The Facts: There is no credible research that demonstrates any unique health benefits attributed to sea salt, rock salt, Himalayan salt, Kosher salt or any other salt consisting of primarily sodium chloride. The main difference between the different types of salt is the taste and texture. Kosher salt has coarse irregular crystals that may allow you to use less for the flavor and give a different taste to

foods. Sea salt may have small amounts of additional minerals and thus a slightly different taste. Research has shown that the risk of cardiovascular disease is reduced when individuals consume less salt of any type. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends, "Consume less than 2,300 mg (approximately 1 tsp. of salt) of sodium per day. Individuals with hypertension, black, and middle-aged and older adults should aim to consume no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day, and meet the potassium recommendation (4,700 mg/day) with food."

Source: *Communicating Food for Health*, February 2008

NOTE: Campbell's™ efforts to reduce sodium in their soup products have been achieved by incorporating a unique sea salt, which is lower in sodium than regular sea salt. Consumers are reminded to read labels to find foods that are low in sodium. Generally this means a food with a daily value of 5% or less for sodium. The new soups contain 20-25% of the daily value or 480 mg of sodium. Further, sea salt is not a low sodium salt. Regular sea salt usually has about the same amount of sodium as table salt.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health*, March 2006



SPINACH AND MEAT CAKES – 6 SERVINGS

1 pound ground beef or turkey, 7% fat or 93% lean	½ teaspoon salt
1-pound bag of frozen chopped spinach, thawed and well drained	Black pepper to taste
½ finely chopped onion	3 cups cooked brown rice
2 minced garlic cloves	

Preheat frying pan (no oil). Combine all ingredients except brown rice in a large mixing bowl. Mix well. Form mixture into 12 small balls. Place in frying pan and flatten into patties using a spatula. Cook over medium heat until cooked on both sides. Serve over cooked brown rice.

For 2 cakes with **BEEF**: 248 calories, 7.2 g fat, 2.4 g saturated fat, 0.3 g trans fat, 48 mg cholesterol, 354 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 20 g protein.

For 2 cakes with **TURKEY**: 246 calories, 7.1 g fat, 1.9 g saturated fat, 0.2 g trans fat, 60 mg cholesterol, 375 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 18 g protein

Source: *The Healthy Family Guidebook*, USDA FNS

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SALSA-BROILED TILAPIA — 4 SERVINGS

16 ounces tilapia fillets	1/2 cup chopped green pepper
2 cups chopped tomato	1/2 teaspoon minced jalapeno pepper
1 lime, juice only	1 Tablespoon chopped cilantro
1/2 cup chopped red onion	

Preheat oven broiler. Place fish in baking dish and top with tomato, lime juice, green pepper, onion and jalapeno. Broil until fish is done, about 10 minutes. Serve fish hot topped with baked salsa.

Garnish with chopped cilantro (or parsley).

Each serving: 130 calories, 3.2 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 57 mg cholesterol, 59 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 19 g protein.

Communicating Food for Health, February 2008

SHOPPING SMART FOR HEALTH



The lousy winter in Iowa may have been a barrier to your healthy eating plans. Now that Spring is surely around the corner, resolve to get on track. Here are some shopping tips to get you started.

Produce – fill your cart

Make this the most important section of the store. Nonstarchy vegetables are very low in calories. A low-calorie diet is based on fruits and vegetables. They are high in fiber and can be used as a tool to help you feel fuller on fewer calories.

Meat, seafood and deli – think lean

- Beef: loin, round, extra-lean ground beef
- Pork: loin
- Lamb: leg
- Poultry: use white meat without skin
- Seafood: choose items that are not breaded
- Remember portion size should be 3 ounces cooked which is the size of a deck of cards.
- Trim all visible fat prior to cooking.
- Use low-fat cooking methods: bake, broil, grill, microwave, steam, poach.



- **Dairy – keep it skim or low in fat**
- Choose skim or fat-free dairy products.
- Choose light, nonfat yogurt – be aware of yogurt that has added sugar.
- Beware of cheeses that are high in fat. It is best to use strongly flavored cheese, such as Parmesan or feta, and use sparingly.
- **Margarine – go light**
- Your best bet for margarine is light margarine in a tub. Goal: 50 calories or less per serving.

Grain foods – keep them whole

- Grains that you cook, e.g., pasta, rice, barley and oats, are lower in calorie density than those with less water content such as breads, crackers and ready-to-eat cereals.
- Grain products should have a whole grain listed as the first ingredient on the label.

Condiments – read the label

- Choose low-fat or fat-free varieties
- Flavored vinegar is virtually calorie-free.

Frozen foods – choose carefully

- The best bets in the freezer are:
 - ✓ Frozen fruits
 - ✓ Frozen vegetables and vegetable medleys
 - ✓ Skillet-type dinners where the sauce is in a separate packet (only add 1/3 of the sauce and use more vegetables)

Canned foods – avoid added sugar

- Canned fruits, vegetable and beans are often good, time-saving choices.
- For canned fruits, choose products that are packed in water or juice. OR drain heavy syrup and rinse in cold water for serving.

Snacks – think out of the bag

- Choose healthful snacks that use fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Think “out with the bag” and limit high-calorie foods that are sold as snacks.

Read the label

- Be aware of serving size and servings per container.
- Be aware of calories per serving.
- An item is considered to be low in fat if it has 5% or less of the daily value for this nutrient.
- Many items labeled “sugar-free” or “fat-free” are not usually low in calories.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, February 2006

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Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.

and justice for all

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