

## & FITNESS



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Dear Risk Reducer:

“It’s not easy being green” laments Kermit the Frog. Every day we face environmental choices like the paper or plastic choice at the grocery checkout. Or the choice of saying “no thanks” to both paper and plastic and bringing a reusable tote bag on every shopping trip to the supermarket and to the mall.

At home your fridge habits can be another way of “going green”. Switching from plastic to glass containers is a win-win for the environment and for your food budget. Glass keeps foods and beverages colder than plastic, which means the fridge works less and uses less electricity. Since the items are colder they stay fresh longer. If you use clear glass, they usually get eaten sooner (since your family can see what is in them).

Since your refrigerator uses more electricity than any other appliance and more energy than anything in your home except heating or air conditioning a few changes in your everyday food habits can result in a significant savings for your budget and planet. Use a thermometer in your fridge and monitor the temperature of the fridge regularly. The optimal refrigerator temperature is 36° to 40° - aim for a range between 38° and 40° (for every degree below 38° F, the unit will consume 5 percent more energy). If you decide to purchase a new refrigerator skip the automatic ice maker and water dispensers. They can raise your units’ energy costs by as much as 20 percent.

Healthily Yours,

Barbara Anderson  
Family Nutrition and Health Specialist

Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating  
Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, and disability.

### Fat - Where It’s At!!!

Studies in recent years have shown the location of extra fat is far more important than the amount of extra fat. Excess fat in the abdominal area is a greater threat to your health than is too much fat in your hips and thighs.

The fat cells in your hips and thighs go into the blood circulating to muscles throughout your body, but fatty acids in your abdomen go straight to your liver. This makes it harder for your liver to remove insulin from the bloodstream. As the amount of insulin in the bloodstream increases, muscles and other cells become insulin resistant so blood glucose levels rise. The pancreas responds by sending out more insulin which promotes the production of the adrenalin-like chemical that raises blood pressure.

The longer this patterns plays, the greater your chances are to develop diabetes, hypertension, and heart problems.

### Cholesterol Is Not the Same as Fat

Cholesterol and fat are often mentioned together, but they are not the same. A food may be high in fat but contain no cholesterol. Peanut butter is a good example. Although it is high in fat, it contains no cholesterol because it comes from the peanut plant.

Cholesterol is found only in foods of animal origin, such as milk, cheese, meat, fish, poultry and eggs. Fish, turkey, chicken, beef and pork have fairly equal amounts of cholesterol – about 10 milligrams per ounce of meat, however, they may vary in fat content. Plant food such as fruit, oatmeal, nuts, vegetables, and vegetable shortenings do not contain cholesterol. In dairy foods, however, the amount of cholesterol depends on the amount of fat. Because cholesterol is fat-soluble, it rides with the fats in milk and milk-based foods. The more fat a dairy product contains, the more cholesterol it will also contain.

## **We Get Questions**

*Are alcohol based sanitizers effective against the H1N1 virus?*

Sam Beattie, Food Science/Human Nutrition specialist, Iowa State University Extension says, “Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are effective against this type of virus. If your hands are clean without visible soil, use an alcohol-based sanitizer. That will kill in influenza virus.”

*What about wearing a paper mask? Does it protect against the virus?*

Dr. Beattie indicated the paper masks keep the wearer’s body fluids from, leaving his or her facial area, so a mask can limit virus spread if the wearer has a virus. Other than that, simple masks may not be very effective. They are not going to help if someone right next to you is breathing out lots of viruses. You may still get the flu because the simple masks are not made to filter out those virus particles. It would be better to avoid crowded situations where distances from one face to another are less than six feet or so.

Good personal hygiene such as proper diligent hand washing several times a day particularly after touching shared items such as ATM keyboards, handrails and door handles helps reduce the spread of the virus.

## **A Safe and Savory Burger**

As backyard cooks head outdoors and fire up their grills, it’s important to keep ground beef safety top of mind.

Always cook ground beef to 160° F. This ensures ground beef isn’t under – or over-cooked, and any harmful bacteria is destroyed.

Stop eyeballing the doneness of your burgers.

Rather than relying on colors or juices, get an instant-read meat thermometer. Always insert the meat thermometer sideways into the thickest portion of the patty to ensure it has reached 160° F.

## **How to Cut Saturated Fat and Cholesterol**

Two tablespoons of butter on a baked potato can add an extra 16 grams of saturated fat and 22 grams of fat. However, 1/3 cup salsa has 0 grams of saturated fat and no cholesterol.

Two tablespoons or regular creamy Italian salad dressing will add an extra 3 grams of saturated fat and 18 grams of fat. Reduced fat Italian dressing adds no saturated fat and only and 1 grams of fat.

## **Homemade Sour Cream**

Try this instead of sour cream on beans, vegetables, fruit and tortillas.

2 tablespoons skim milk  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 cup low fat cottage cheese

Place all ingredients in a blender and combine on medium-high speed until smooth and creamy.  
Yield: 8 servings – Serving size: 2-1/2 tablespoons

Calories per serving: 27, total fat less than 1 gram, Saturated fat – less than 1 gram, cholesterol – 2 mg, sodium – 117 mg, calcium – 24 mg, Iron: less than 1 mg.

## **Mango Shake**

Children of all ages love this drink.

2 cups 1% milk  
4 tablespoons frozen mango juice (or 1 fresh pitted mango)  
1 small banana  
2 ice cubes

Put all ingredients into a blender. Blend until foamy. Serve immediately.

Calories per serving: 106, total fat 2 g, saturated fat 1 g., cholesterol 5 mg, sodium 63 mg., calcium 157 mg, iron less than 1 mg.