

PICK A BETTER SNACK – ON THE GO!

March

Week One -

On the Go – With Cauliflower!

Mark Twain referred to cauliflower as a “cabbage with a college education.” Cauliflower packs an entire day’s worth of vitamin C into just one serving (1/2 cup of florets)! It is also a great source of potassium and fiber while being low in calories!



When selecting cauliflower, choose clean, white, firm heads free of spots, bruises or speckles. The flower clusters should be compact, and the surrounding leaves should be bright green and firmly attached. Avoid heads with open flower clusters. A medium sized head is 6 inches in diameter will serve 4-6 people after trimming.

Cauliflower will keep in the crisper up to 5 days. Keep the head stem-side up to prevent moisture from collecting on top. Rinse with cold water before using. If cooking, avoid aluminum or iron pans. Natural compounds in the cauliflower when in contact with aluminum turn the vegetable yellow. Iron pan will turn the vegetable brown or blue-green.

Wash. Break. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Cauliflower With You!

- Enjoy cauliflower on top of your favorite salad.
- Try cauliflower steamed in the microwave for two minutes with a tablespoon of water. Microwave 30 seconds more with reduced fat cheese, and you’ve got a hot, healthy bite to eat!

SILKY RANCH DIP FOR CAULIFLOWER FLORET’S

A simple, tasty way to get soy protein into your diet.

Use a blender or whisk to combine a 12 oz. package silken style tofu with a package of **Fat Free Ranch® Dip Mix** (.59 oz.). Chill before serving with cauliflower.

SPRINGTIME CELEBRATION – LAMB FACES

Spread some **Silky Ranch Dip** in the center of a plate to a thickness of about ¼ inch. (Not ready for tofu? Use another dip). To make it look like a lamb face, place **cauliflower florets** around the edge of the plate to be like fleece. Use clusters of **raisins** for the eyes a **grape tomato** for the nose. Serve with fresh vegetables.

Quick Nibble:

Cauliflower is a “cruciferous” vegetable. Cruciferous vegetables are named for their cross-shaped flowers and are believed to contain natural substances that can reduce the risk of cancer. Health experts recommend eating cruciferous vegetables 2-3 times each week.

Week Two –

On the Go – With Raisins!

What’s small, sweet and can be taken anywhere?



Raisins! This delicious fruit is versatile and easily portable. Enjoy it anytime!

Raisins are popular at breakfast time – 75 percent of raisins are eaten with breakfast. Start your day with some fiber and potassium by tossing raisins into your hot or cold cereal.

A raisin is actually a dried grape. Its name comes from a Latin word that means cluster of grapes or berries. Two popular varieties of raisins in the United States are Natural Seedless Raisins and Golden Seedless Raisins. Both are dried from Thompson Seedless grapes. The Golden variety is oven dried to avoid the darkening effect of the sun. The Natural variety is dried in the sun for two to three weeks.

Raisins typically come in bags or boxes. Check to be sure the container is tightly sealed. Squeeze or shake the package to see if the fruit is soft. If the raisins rattle inside, the fruit is too dried out. Before they are opened, they can be kept at room temperature. After they are opened, store them in the refrigerator – there they can last up to a year! They will keep even longer in the freezer and will thaw quickly at room temperature.

Open Box. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Raisins With You!

- Stir raisins into a bowl of oatmeal cookie mix to add a fruity taste to your treats.
- Spread a slice of toast with peanut butter and top with raisins for a snack loaded with protein and fiber.

GOLDEN G.O.R.P.

Combine golden seedless raisins and honey roasted soy nuts for a sweet but hearty portable snack with crunch.

Quick Nibble:

Raisins have almost as much iron, by weight, as cooked dried beans or ground beef. They have 136 % more iron than raw broccoli and 22 % more than raw kale.

For snack and activity ideas for the other 11 months of the year go to:

www.extension.iastate.edu/food/

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Week Three-

On the Go – With Cabbage!

Cabbage is an inexpensive source of vitamin C that is also a great cancer fighter. It contains nitrogen compounds called indoles, as well as fiber.



Include both red and green cabbage in your diet. Red cabbage is similar in flavor to green cabbage although its

texture may be a little tougher. When choosing a quality cabbage, pick one that feels heavy for its size, with compact leaves and even color. Avoid cabbages with discolored leaves or splits. For maximum nutrient benefit, avoid halved or quartered heads of cabbage – even if they are well wrapped. As soon as the leaves are cut or torn, it begins to lose vitamin C.

An uncut head of red or green cabbage will keep in the refrigerator for at least two weeks. Rinse with cold water and remove any wilted leaves before using. Once a head of cabbage is cut, cover the cut surface with plastic wrap and use the remainder in one or two days. Rub the cut surface with lemon juice to prevent browning.

Wash. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Cabbage With You!

- Mix shredded cabbage leaves with a prepared, low-fat coleslaw dressing for a quick and easy coleslaw salad. Add chopped apples for extra flavor.
- Quarter a head of cabbage and dip the wedges into your favorite low-fat dressing.
- Spread cabbage leaves with low-fat cream cheese. Roll up and enjoy!
- Corned beef and cooked cabbage is a popular St. Patrick's Day dish – give it a try!

GREEN TO GO!

Celebrate with this easy to prepare portable sandwich.

Spread a **spinach tortilla** with **low fat lemon flavored yogurt**. Sprinkle with **cabbage slaw mix**. Top with deli **turkey** and **green pepper strips**. Roll and go!

Quick Nibble:

In China, Scrolls from 1000 B.C. were uncovered that mention white cabbage as a cure for baldness in men! Though cabbage won't put hair on a bald head, it is full of vitamin C.--www.cabbagetown-toronto.com

Week Four-

On the Go – With Celery!

Did you know that March is National Nutrition Month?



Celebrate by incorporating a variety of nutritious food into your diet, including the crunchy vegetable celery! Keep celery stalks handy in the refrigerator for a crisp, healthy snack on the go.

It's not known who discovered celery, but it's been around for almost 3,000 years. The ancient Greeks and Romans used it as medicine—not food! Celery is not used medicinally today, but it is a great addition to a healthy diet and is available year-round. The vitamin C found in celery is important for maintaining good health.

Look for green, glossy celery with thick stalks when you're searching for the best bunch. Leaves should be bright green and look fresh without wilting or discoloring. Check for firm, crisp stalks and avoid any that are yellow. Note that light green ribs tend to taste best. Dark green ribs have more nutrients, but are often stringy. To remove the strings, trim with a vegetable peeler. Rinse with cold water before using.

Wash. Cut. Eat. (how easy is that?)

Take Celery With You!

- Spread a clean celery stalk with peanut butter for a crunchy snack that curbs hunger. Add raisins on top for extra flavor and fun.
- Dip stalks into your favorite healthy veggie dip.
- Add chopped celery to your favorite salad – whether it's lettuce, potato, pasta or chicken – to add substance and texture with very few calories.
- Use an aerosol can of processed cheese spread to add a stripe down the center of each celery stalk.

CELEBRATE SPRING WITH BUTTERFLIES

Cut a **celery rib** into sections 2-4 inches long. Fill with **spreadable cheese or peanut butter**. Add **pretzel twists** to the celery to be the wings of the butterfly. Use broken pieces to be antennae. If desired, decorate with **raisins**.

Quick Nibble:

If you place celery in a glass of water with food coloring, the celery will absorb the water and change color!
--www.hungrymonster.com

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*Printed with funds from the Iowa Nutrition Network and the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program, United States Department of Agriculture.
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