

FOOD FOR FALL FITNESS AND FUN

SEPTEMBER 2001

PICK A BETTER SNACK & ACT BINGO

We have a new feature to the Pick a Better Snack program! In addition to a featured produce item each week, there will also be realistic ways to get exercise in Iowa each month. Receive information about the produce and the "ACT" ideas by contacting an Iowa State University Extension Office or from the web:

www.extension.iastate.edu/food/

SEPTEMBER featured produce items for the Pick A Better Snack Campaign include:

- Zucchini
- Radishes
- Tomatoes
- Plums



NATIONAL 5 A DAY WEEK: SEPT. 9-15

"5 A Day: Yes You Can!" Consumption of fruits and vegetables could help to decrease the numbers of Americans suffering from cancer, heart disease, stroke, heart attack, obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related health risks.



Note: "5 A Day" means eating a minimum of 3 vegetables and 2 fruits EACH day. For those with an active lifestyle, you may need as many as 5 vegetables and 4 fruits for "9 A Day."

5 INGREDIENT MEALS FOR 5 A DAY

Try these EASY ways to get vegetables into your diet.

GARDEN TUNA PITA 1 SERVING

- 1 cup tossed salad (bagged salad is fast)
- 1 Tablespoon reduced fat salad dressing
- 1 tomato, diced
- ½ can (6 oz.) tuna, drained
- 1 whole-wheat pita pocket



Mix the first four ingredients together. Cut a pita pocket in half and fill each half with the salad mixture and serve immediately with veggie sticks and baked chips.

Adapted from: *Communicating Food for Health September 2001*

FIESTA RICE

- 1 cup brown rice
- 1 ½ cups cooked or canned kidney beans, drained
- 2 cups mixed frozen vegetables
- 2 cups low-sodium V8 or broth
- 1 teaspoon chili powder



Place all ingredients in a large covered microwave container. Cover and microwave on 80% power for 35 minutes or until rice is done. Allow to stand a few minutes then fluff with a fork. Serve hot with a tossed salad. Serves 4.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health September 2001*

GO FOR THE GRAINS!

According to an article in Tufts University Health and Nutrition Letter, August 2001, most Americans aren't having a problem eating 6-11 servings from the grain group of the USDA's Food Guide Pyramid. BUT, we are having a problem with the recommendation that at least 3 to 4 of our daily grain-based foods be whole grains. The article points out that the average American doesn't even eat one whole-grain item each day. This is problematic because the fiber in whole grains helps reduce blood levels of "bad" LDL cholesterol and can help prevent serious conditions like diverticulitis. Whole grains also contribute vitamin E, selenium, and zinc (nutrients not added back when refined grains are enriched).

The Tufts article reminds us of whole grain breads and cereals and using grains in soups, stews and salads. But to really experience the grains, it may be easiest to try them as a pilaf – a recipe in which a grain is coated with a drop of oil, cooked in broth and embellished with herbs or dried fruit. For the next few months, I plan to share with you a grain that I have tried using the Tufts recommendations. I will share with you modifications that I suggest to make it more adaptable to Midwest lifestyles. This first month we will begin with **BARLEY**.

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BARLEY PILAF

1 cup chopped onion (I used frozen.)
2 teaspoons oil
1 cup quick cooking barley
1 ¾ cups low sodium broth (I used one 15 oz. can)
8 oz. sautéed mushrooms (I used 1 small can stems/pieces)
¼ cup chopped fresh dill (I used dried – seasoned to taste)
1 Tablespoon lemon juice (I used bottled)
Pepper to taste.

In large saucepan, cook the onion in the oil for 2 minutes or until the onion is softened. Add the barley and stir for 1 minute to coat the grain with the oil/onion mixture. Add the broth and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 15-18 minutes (mine took 18). Fluff with a fork and add mushrooms, dill, and lemon juice. (I thought it made a nice nutty side dish for chicken, turkey or lean pork. My daughter, who doesn't care for brown rice, gave it a thumbs up).

Source: Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter: August 2001

CHOOSING THE BEST CALCIUM SUPPLEMENT

The calcium supplements on the market use a variety of chemical forms of calcium. Some are more efficiently absorbed than others, and some contain more elemental, or raw calcium than do others. The table below shows how much actual calcium some common supplements contain.

Calcium source	% Elemental calcium
Calcium carbonate Ex. Caltrate, Tums, Calcium Plus: One-A-Day	40%
Calcium phosphate (tribasic)	39%
Calcium phosphate (dibasic)	30%
Calcium citrate Ex. Citrical Caplets +D	21%
Calcium lactate	13%
Calcium gluconate	9%

Absorption is greatly improved in the presence of vitamin D. Lactose also seems to improve calcium absorption. Choose a supplement that gives you the most calcium for the lowest price. Consider choosing a supplement that also contains vitamin D.

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BE COOL - CHILL OUT!

REFRIGERATE PROMPTLY

Did You Know . . . at room temperature, harmful bacteria in food can double every 20 minutes? And the more bacteria there are, the greater the chance you could become sick. So, it's important to refrigerate food quickly because cold temperatures keep most harmful bacteria from multiplying. Here are some helpful tips for keeping cold food cold:

- Make sure the temperature in the refrigerator is 40 °F or below and 0 °F or below in the freezer. Use a refrigerator/freezer thermometer to check yours.
- Don't overfill the refrigerator. Air must circulate.
- Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food, and leftovers within 2 hours of purchase or preparation, or within 1 hour if the temperature is above 90 °F.
- Thaw food in the refrigerator. For quick thawing, submerge in cold water in airtight packaging or thaw in the microwave, and cook the food immediately.
- Divide large quantities of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.
- Marinate food in the refrigerator.
- When transporting food, place cold food in a cooler with a cold source such as ice or commercial freezing gels. Keep the cooler in the coolest part of your car, rather than in a hot trunk.

JUST THE FACTS, MA'AM

Myth: Refrigeration stops bacterial growth.

Fact: Not so. Refrigeration slows, but does not prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. So always remember to refrigerate food quickly!

Myth: I can safely thaw food on my kitchen counter at room temperature.

Fact: Remember, bacteria grow rapidly at room temperature. You should avoid keeping food in the Danger Zone—the unsafe temperatures between 40 and 140 °F. To keep your food safe, always follow the **Thaw Law: Never defrost food at room temperature.** Thaw food in the refrigerator. For quick defrosting, thaw food in airtight packaging submerged in cold water or thaw in the microwave, and cook the food immediately.

Source: SM International Food Safety Council

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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