

Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

Why You Might Need More Potassium

If you read Nutrition Facts labels, you may have noticed they now list the potassium content of foods. So why is potassium a mineral we need to pay attention to?

For starters, potassium controls your heartbeat, builds muscle, and helps your body make proteins. Potassium can protect you from heart disease, stroke, muscle wasting, osteoporosis,



and kidney stones. If you get enough of it, you can lower your blood pressure and cut your risk of dying from all causes by 20%!

Potassium is in many common foods, such as bananas, citrus fruits, potatoes, broccoli, milk, yogurt, beans, and leafy greens. However, fewer than 2% of adults

meet their daily recommended potassium requirement. Adults should aim for 4,700 mg of potassium a day.

For example, this is one potassium-rich meal that would fulfill 40% of that requirement:

½ cup Swiss chard	480 mg
1 baked potato	610 mg
3 ounces turkey breast	249 mg
1 cup low-fat milk	366 mg
1 cup fruit cocktail	225 mg
Total	1,930 mg

Please do not rush out to buy potassium pills. High-dose potassium supplements can disrupt heart rhythm. They are also dangerous for those who have undetected kidney disease. Enjoy your potassium by eating a variety of fruits and vegetables!

To find out more about potassium-rich foods, visit MedlinePlus (medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002413.htm)

Source:

Today's Dietitian (www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/121112p50.shtml)

Autumn Soup

Serving Size: 1 1/2 cups | Serves: 6

Ingredients:

- 1 butternut squash
- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- 1 cup diced onion
- 2 cups sliced apples
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 4 ounces Neufchatel cheese, cubed

Instructions:

1. Prick squash skin 6–8 times. Microwave for 5 minutes.
2. When the skin is cool enough to touch, cut off the top and bottom of the squash. Peel and cut in half lengthwise. Scoop out seeds. Cut squash into cubes.
3. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium high heat. Add onion. Cook for 5 minutes.
4. Add squash, apples, and chicken broth. Heat to boiling and then reduce heat to medium low. Cover and cook for 25 minutes until squash and apples are tender.
5. Blend soup until smooth using a blender.
6. Return soup to saucepan and add cheese. Cook and whisk until cheese is smooth.

Nutrient information per serving:

210 calories, 7 g total fat, 2.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 440 mg sodium, 35 g total carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 12 g sugar, 6 g protein



This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu.



www.extension.iastate.edu

Ugly Fruits and Vegetables – Are They Safe?

Grocery shoppers tend to avoid fruits and vegetables that have odd shapes or unappealing spots. As a result, many tons of edible food go uneaten and wasted.

Although it's true that bacteria can cause blemishes on produce, that doesn't necessarily mean that blemished produce is unsafe to eat. "Ugly" fruits and vegetables are usually tasty and healthful. They provide the same—in some cases, more—nutrients as their more attractive cousins.

Several studies have shown some imperfect fruit and vegetables have higher amounts of phytochemicals. Phytochemicals are naturally occurring plant chemicals that give produce its color and flavor. Phytochemicals may also protect us from cancer and heart disease.

So go ahead and eat ugly produce! It usually costs less because of its appearance. The nutrients it gives you, though, are priceless to your health.

Source: *Today's Dietitian* (www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/1216p10.shtml)



Workouts with a Buddy

It can be hard to stick to an exercise routine. The demands of work and family can ruin your good intentions. Research shows that exercising with another person may help you succeed.

One study found that married couples who exercised together did it more consistently than married people who exercised alone. A family member or friend who shares an activity with you provides support and motivation.

Activities that go better with a buddy include partner yoga, dance classes, martial art classes, hiking, tennis, and many others.

Sometimes two people may not find the same activity enjoyable. For couples or buddies with different preferences, just committing to the same exercise time together may be beneficial. They might try the following:

- Go to the same gym together.
- Try activities that are new to both of them.
- Sign up for a competition or fun fitness event.
- Plan a group session with a personal trainer.



Having the support of a partner for both diet and exercise helps us stick to lifestyle changes.

Source: *Today's Dietitian* (www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/060415p56.shtml)