IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

POLK COUNTY
Leading the Way

News You Can Use

Nutrition Education with Seniors

October 2020

Do you heart chocolate?

Soon grocery aisles will be overflowing with Halloween candy. This means lots of chocolate everywhere. But chocolate isn't a forbidden food.

Chocolate, in moderation, can be part of a heart healthy diet. One of the main ingredients in chocolate is cocoa, which contains a group of nutrients called flavonols.

Chocolate benefits: Flavonols act like antioxidants in that they help to reduce the inflammation inside your body. Too much inflammation can increase your risk of heart disease and certain cancers. There's evidence to suggest flavonols in chocolate promote healthy blood circulation by reducing the risk of blood clots and relaxing the blood vessels to maintain lower blood pressure.

The Darker the Better

- Choose a chocolate candy that is at least 70% cocoa. Higher amounts of cocoa often have more benefits and less added sugar.
- Select chocolate candies with a shorter ingredients list. Extra ingredients can increase the calories and decrease the benefits you get from the chocolate.
- Another benefit to choosing dark chocolate is its longer shelf life. Dark chocolate can last up to a year in an air tight container, whereas milk chocolate only lasts a few months.

While enjoying your chocolate, remember that along with the flavonols, it still has added sugar. Men should aim for no more than 36 grams of added sugar daily, while women should aim for no more than 25 grams.

Resource: Kansas State University Research and Extension, *https://bit.ly/30QZrPW*

Canned Kidney Beans

Selection:

- Choose cans of **kidney beans** without dents or broken seals, this could mean they are unsafe to eat.
- Check the "Best by" or "Best if used by" date on the can.

Storage:

- Store unopened cans in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening, drain fluid, rinse and put the **kidney beans** in an air tight container in the refrigerator.

Nutrition:

- 3.5 ounces of **kidney beans:**
- Provides 127 calories and 6.4 gram of fiber.
- Each serving contains 8.7 grams of protein.

Uses:

- Add **kidney beans** to chili, chip dips, salads, or casseroles.
- Combine **kidney beans** with onion, tomato, cheese and a lean protein for a complete MyPlate meal.

Budgeting Tip Jar: Tips and Tricks to Help You Save

There are many who struggle to make ends meet and often run out of money for food by the end of the month. This could be from choosing more expensive brands, buying more convenience foods, not having a budget, or simply not having enough money. **If you don't have enough money, call 1-855-944-FOOD (3663) to apply for food assistance**.

These shopping tips will also help stretch your food dollar.

- **Make a master grocery list.** Frequently used grocery items can be a permanent part of your master list to reduce extra visits to the grocery store.
- **Organize your list according to the store.** This will save you time and reduce temptation for buying foods not on your list.
- **Check your kitchen.** Look in your cabinets, refrigerator, and freezer for foods you have on hand. Are you missing any staples? Are there items you can use up?

SpendSmart. EatSmart. has printable master grocery lists and other resources to help you make the most out of your shopping experience. Visit *https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu* for more details.

Adapted from: *https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/plan/shopping-tools/*

SLOW COOKER PORK CHILI

Serves: 6 | Serving Size: 1 1/4 cup

INGREDIENTS

2 pounds boneless pork butt, roast, or shoulder
1 cup bell pepper, diced (1 medium)
1 cup onion, diced (1 medium)
1 1/2 cup salsa
1 can low sodium red kidney beans (or pinto beans)
1 can low sodium diced tomatoes

INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

1. Trim visible fat from the pork. Cut into 2-inch chunks. Place in slow cooker.
2. Add pepper, onion, and salsa.
3. Cook on a high setting for 3 hours.
4. Pull the meat apart into shreds with a fork
5. Put half of the shredded pork in the refrigerator or freezer to use in a different recipe or for pork sandwiches. Freeze if it will not be used within 4 days.
6. Return the rest of the pork to the slow cooker, add diced tomatoes and drained/rinsed kidney beans.
7. Cook for another 30 minutes until hot.

Storage. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator or up to 3 months in the freezer and one year in a deep freezer.

Nutritional analysis (1 1/4 cup): 250 calories, 8g fat, 3g saturated, 520mg sodium, 21g carbohydrates, 6g fiber, 6g sugar, 18g protein.

This recipe is adapted from https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/slow-cooker-pork-chili/

Holiday Plans

With the holidays coming up, there is bound to be some extra spending. Here are a few ideas to bring extra holiday cheer without breaking the bank.

- **Make your own gifts**

Homemade treats, a knitted scarf, or a handmade card bring smiles to faces while saving you money.

- **Reduce, reuse, and recycle decorations**

Reduce the amount of new decorations bought each year. Instead, *reuse* your current decorations, or *recycle* them into a crafty new focal point in your home.

Helpful Resources

Kelsey Salow, RD
Human Sciences Specialist
Nutrition and Wellness
ksalow@iastate.edu
563-927-4201

Vera Stokes
Human Sciences Specialist
Nutrition and Wellness
vstokes@iastate.edu
563-659-5125

PREPARED BY
Chandler Kendall
Diet & Exercise Graduate Student; Iowa State University (ISU), Dept. Food Science & Human Nutrition
ckendal@iastate.edu

ASSISTED BY
Sarah L. Francis, PhD, MHS, RD
ISU Associate Professor & Human Sciences Extension and Outreach State Specialist, Nutrition and Wellness; *slfranci@iastate.edu*

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran, or other protected classes. Direct inquiries to the Diversity Advisor, 515-294-1482, *extdiversity@iastate.edu*.