

Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

The Flexitarian Diet: A Flexible Way to Eat Well

A new term in the world of diets is the Flexitarian Diet. The mission of the Flexitarian Diet is to add more plant-based foods to your diet. Flexitarians eat less meat than they used to, but don't give it up completely. The Flexitarian Diet has benefits like those seen with vegetarian diets—a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer. The American Heart Association encourages the Flexitarian Diet as a good compromise to promote heart health. This way of eating can be fun—and may save you money!

Try these simple tips:

- Find ways to replace meat at your meals with legumes or soy products. For example, have a black bean burger instead of a hamburger.
- Start out small, by making just one meal each week meatless. You may find you enjoy the variety.
- Visit the Extension Store to download a free copy of *Dried Beans, Peas, and Lentils Can Help You Save \$\$* at store.extension.iastate.edu/product/14036.
- Find vegetarian recipes on the American Heart Association website, recipes.heart.org/en/collections/lifestyles/vegetarian.
- When you do eat meat, select a lean cut. Lean cuts of meat include the words "loin" or "round." After cooking, rinse ground meat with water and drain to reduce fat content. Limit your daily intake to 6 ounces.



Black Bean Burgers

Serving Size: 1 burger | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 can low sodium black beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup onion, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon oil
- Optional: cheese slices, lettuce leaves, mushrooms, onion, tomato, whole wheat bread or hamburger buns

Instructions

1. Mash beans with a fork.
2. Stir mashed beans, egg, bread crumbs, onion, pepper, and oil together until combined. Shape into 4-inch patties. Wash hands.
3. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Spray with nonstick cooking spray.
4. Place patties in the skillet and cover with a lid. Cook patties for 5 minutes on the first side. Flip patties and cook for 4 more minutes on the other side.
5. Serve with optional ingredients.

Nutrition information per serving:

200 calories, 6g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 45mg cholesterol, 260mg sodium, 28g total carbohydrate, 8g fiber, 2g sugar, 10g protein

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



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How Dangerous Is Double Dipping?

There's always one person at holiday gatherings who double dips at the table. They take a bite out of their chip or carrot and then inconspicuously stick it back in the dip again. This habit is gross, but is it actually dangerous? A study conducted recently by Harvard Medical School found that double dipping can add bacteria to dips.

No studies have examined how much disease double dipping causes. However, saliva from a sick person often contains infectious germs. Researchers say your chances of getting sick from a healthy person who double dips are less than from sick people who cough or sneeze without washing their hands. Still, to protect the health of your guests, serve them dip on individual plates or put a spoon in the dip, so they won't be tempted to double dip into the common dip bowl.

Source: Shmerling RH. "Double dipping" your chip: Dangerous or just...icky? Harvard Health Publishing. August 4, 2016. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/double-dipping-chip-dangerous-justicky-2016080410059>



The Scoop on Hot Yoga

Not a big fan of warm or hot yoga? Don't sweat it! A new study published in the Journal of Experimental Physiology showed that participants who worked up a sweat in hot yoga got the same heart health benefits as those who did yoga at room temperature.

Bikram (hot) yoga has been increasing in popularity. It consists of 26 yoga poses done in a room heated to 105°F. Researchers compared adults who took three 90-minute yoga classes a week (either hot or at room temperature) over 12 weeks. These adults were also compared with a control group of people who did no yoga at all. The hot-yoga group did decrease their body fat more than the room-temperature yoga or control groups. However, people in both yoga groups showed improved heart health. So, if health and vitality are your goals, you can choose either form of yoga.

Source: Hunter SD, Laosiripisan J, Elmenshawy A, Tanaka H. Effects of yoga interventions practiced in heated and thermoneutral conditions on endothelium-dependent vasodilation: The Bikram yoga heart study. *Experimental Physiology*. 2018;103:391–396.