

Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

Keep an Eye on These Nutrients



August is National Eye Exam Month—a good reminder for us to get an eye exam! A simple checkup can reduce your risk of glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, and cataracts. Researchers have linked these nutrients to improved vision and overall eye health: lutein, zeaxanthin, beta-carotene, vitamin C, and omega-3 oils.

Dark, leafy green vegetables, such as kale, spinach, and broccoli, are good sources of lutein and zeaxanthin. These nutrients protect eyes from sun damage. Eating them with olive oil helps our body absorb these nutrients.

Beta-carotene is found in deep orange and dark green vegetables, such as carrots, butternut squash, spinach, and collard greens. It helps prevent dry eyes and night blindness.

Vitamin C may help lower your risk of cataracts. Vitamin C is found in citrus foods, but also in sweet bell peppers, broccoli, strawberries, and cantaloupe.

Healthy fats such as omega-3s may be beneficial for eye health. Salmon and trout are good sources of omega-3s. Include fish in your meal plan two to three times each week.

Sources:

[Eat Right](http://eatright.org), eatright.org.

[American Optometric Association](http://www.aoa.org), www.aoa.org.

Chocolate Chip Zucchini Muffins

Serving Size: 1 muffin | Serves: 12

Ingredients:

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/4 cup oil (canola, olive, or vegetable)
- 1/4 cup nonfat milk
- 1 banana, mashed
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup zucchini (washed and shredded; about 1/2 large unpeeled zucchini)
- 1/4 cup chocolate chips

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a muffin tin.
2. Whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon in a large mixing bowl.
3. Whisk together applesauce, oil, milk, banana, and brown sugar in a separate bowl.
4. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients. Stir until just moistened.
5. Stir in the zucchini and chocolate chips.
6. Divide the mixture between 12 muffin cups. Bake until a tester (knife or toothpick) comes out clean (about 18 minutes).

Nutrition information per serving:

160 calories, 6g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 140mg sodium, 26g total carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 9g sugar, 3g 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



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Pack a Safe Lunch

August is “back to school” time. Does your child bring a lunch from home? When packing school lunches, it’s important to consider food safety. First, wash your insulated lunch box or bag with warm water and soap. Always wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds prior to preparing foods. Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and countertops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next item. Preparing and freezing sandwiches the night before is a time saver. Don’t freeze sandwiches that contain tomato, cucumber, or lettuce. Pack your lunch bags right before leaving home.

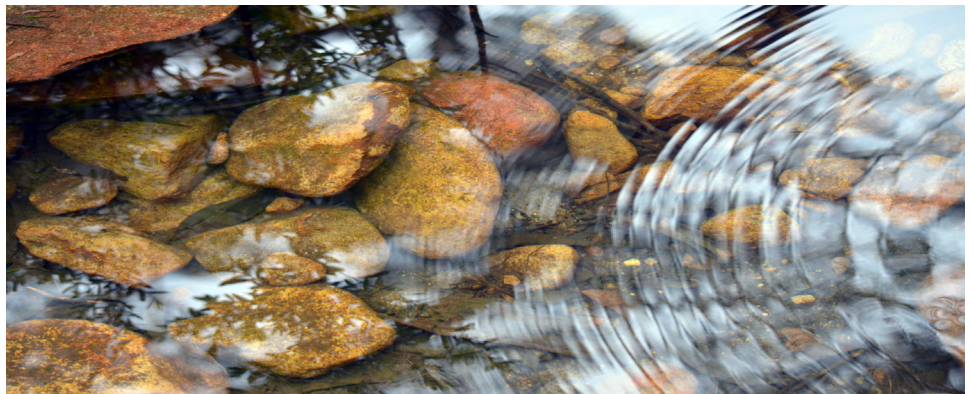
Insulated, soft-sided lunch boxes or bags help keep food cold, but pack at least two ice sources with perishable food in any lunch bag you use. You can use a frozen juice box or bottle of water rather than a frozen gel pack. When packing your bag lunch, place the frozen ice source above and below the perishable food items to keep them cold.

Want more information? Check out [Freezing Sandwiches](https://food.unl.edu/fnh/freezing-sandwiches), <https://food.unl.edu/fnh/freezing-sandwiches>.

Source:

[What’s For Lunch? It’s in the Bag!](https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/13900), store.extension.iastate.edu/product/13900.

Creek Walking



Looking for a way to keep cool this summer? Try creek walking! It’s a great way to enjoy nature with family and friends, get a little exercise, and experience the outdoors. You don’t need much equipment to creek walk, just a pair of dirty tennis shoes or water socks to protect your feet.

Walking in the creek allows you to explore wildlife and native plants; find a fossil, bone, or antler; and leave the video games at home. Any stream can be unpredictable at times, so walk in the water when you can see the stream floor. Pack drinking water and snacks if you plan to walk a longer stretch. Towels and a change of clothes will provide a dry ride home. If walking alone, let someone know where and when you are going.

Find walking trails at [Iowa Walking Trails and Maps](http://www.trailink.com), www.trailink.com.

Source:

[Iowa Department of Natural Resources](http://www.iowadnr.gov), www.iowadnr.gov.