Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

Let's Talk Nuts

October 22nd is National Nut Day, so let's talk nuts. Nuts are an excellent source of protein, minerals, and heart-healthy fats. So healthy that the FDA approved this health claim: "Eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease."

The heart-healthy fats that make up as much as 80% of the nut are unsaturated fats, which include omega-3 fatty acids. These fats work to protect your heart by lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol levels and increasing HDL (good) cholesterol levels.

Each type of nut has its own unique profile of nutrients. For example, one Brazil nut can meet 100% of your daily need for selenium, which can keep your mind and heart healthy. Eat a wide variety of nuts for the most benefit. Specific nutrition information about each variety can be found in the USDA article, Go Nuts! (www.ars.usda.gov/plains-area/gfnd/gfhnrc/docs/news-2013/go-nuts).

One serving of nuts is 1.5 ounces of whole nuts (a small handful) or 2 tablespoons of nut butter. Try these tips to add more nuts to your diet:

- Choose nuts instead of your typical less-healthy crunchy snack.
- Add nuts to yogurt, salads, or hot cereals for the perfect crunch.
- Mix nuts into your favorite smoothie for a richer, creamier texture.
- Put nut butter on your morning toast instead of butter or margarine.
- Slivered almonds are a tasty addition to sautéed green beans.

Sources:

Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/nuts/art-20046635)

Harvard Health (www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/nuts-for-the-heart)

Peanut Butter Balls

Serving Size: 2 balls | Serves: 25

Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 ounces) great northern beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 1/4 cups peanut butter
- 1 1/2 cups quick cooking oats

Instructions:

1. Mash the beans with a fork in a bowl until smooth.
2. Add honey and vanilla. Stir.
3. Add peanut butter. Stir until blended.
4. Stir in the oats.
5. Wash hands. Use a tablespoon to scoop up some of the peanut butter mixture. Shape each spoonful of the mixture into a ball (makes 50 balls).
6. Store leftover balls in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Nutrient information per serving:

130 calories, 7g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 100mg sodium, 12g total carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 5g sugar, 4g 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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Counties served: Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Grundy, Howard, Tama and Winneshiek

Serv Safe:
Oct 14 in Waterloo
Oct 21 in Iowa City (teaching due to an open position)
Nov 11 in Fayette

Fresh Conversations:
Oct 9 in Dumont-Sept session, Oct 16 in CF, Oct 24 in Greene, Oct 30 in Dumont

Childcare Training-Infant Feeding in Allamakee on Oct 10
Just a Bite on Oct 17 in Toledo.

Food Preservation 101-All About Apples in Fayette on Oct 22.

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Animals in the Kitchen

Owning a pet may be great for your mental health, but pets may also carry harmful germs through their fur, feces, and saliva. The risk of getting a foodborne illness from a pet is low for most people. However, young children, older adults, pregnant women, and those with weakened immune systems have an increased risk.

If you cannot keep pets entirely out of your kitchen, here are ways to guard the safety of your food:

- Always wash your hands after touching your pet and before handling food.
- Clean your pet's paws after it plays outside or has been in the litter box before entering the kitchen.
- Keep your pet off of counters and tables.
- Don't eat or drink while playing with animals.

We all love our pets, but it's important to be aware of the risks that come with them.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/healthypets/health-benefits)

Yoga: Health Benefits Beyond the Mat

The purpose of yoga is to build strength, flexibility, and awareness. The muscle stretching in yoga can lessen arthritis pain, backache, and headaches. Yoga has many benefits for your heart and lungs as well. It lowers your blood pressure and slows your heart rate. Yoga may also help increase muscle strength, lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and improve breathing and energy.

Aside from the physical benefits, yoga can help manage stress. Yoga involves paying attention to your breath, which can improve mental well-being. Regular yoga practice creates mental clarity and calmness. It relieves chronic stress patterns, relaxes the mind, and sharpens concentration.

More than 100 different types of yoga exist. There is a form of yoga for everyone! Your size or fitness level does not matter. Every yoga pose can be modified. Beginner classes are available in every style. If you're new to yoga, practice these 12 basic yoga poses to get started at WebMD (www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/ss/slideshow-yoga-pose-basics).

Sources:

Harvard Health (www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/yoga-benefits-beyond-the-mat)

American Osteopathic Association (www.osteopathic.org/what-is-osteopathic-medicine/benefits-of-yoga)