

NUTRITION NEWS

WRITTEN BY: SHANNON DAVIS, RD, CDN

LAYOUT BY: LORI WATERBURY

SEPTEMBER 2020

Welcome, Fall!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

THE BENEFITS OF HONEY	2
FUNCTIONAL FOODS AND BRAIN HEALTH	3
HONEY CRUNCH PECAN PIE	4

Another season is upon us. Time to shift our thoughts to shorter, cooler days and indoor activities, like cooking and baking. Casseroles are a great fall dish, and adding vegetables to a casserole recipe is an easy way to increase your vitamin and mineral intake, as well as fiber.

Cruciferous vegetables are a good place to start! The vegetables in this family include kale, cabbage, collard greens, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and broccoli. The cruciferous vegetables share a similar nutrient profile. They are generally good sources of Vitamins C, A, and K, as well as potassium. They are also known for their pungent aroma and bitter flavor.

Cooking these vegetables can alter their nutrient content. For example, Vitamin C, which is water soluble, is dramatically reduced during cooking. But some antioxidants can actually be enhanced during the cooking process.

There are numerous health benefits to consuming cruciferous

vegetables. Multiple studies have shown that cruciferous vegetables can effectively reduce inflammation in the body. Systemic inflammation is thought to play a role in the development of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and cancer.

Other research shows that regular consumption of cruciferous vegetables is associated with a reduced risk of stomach cancer, colon cancer, rectal cancer, and lung cancer. This is due to the content of certain cancer-fighting compounds, such as selenium. Cruciferous vegetables may also improve glycemic control. They are high in fiber, so the absorption of glucose into the blood stream is slowed.

Cruciferous vegetables can be a vital part of a healthy weight loss plan. They are low in energy density (meaning that they are low calorie). They are also quite high in fiber, which means that they contribute to a feeling of satiety or fullness.

Back Leg Raises

Stand behind a chair. Slowly lift your right leg straight back – don't bend your knees or point your toes. Hold that position for one second, then gently bring your leg back down. Repeat this ten to 15 times per leg.



Lastly, multiple studies have shown that increasing your intake of cruciferous vegetables can improve several aspects of your cardiac health. Intake of these vegetables has been linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. It also improves lipid profiles, including reduced LDL, reduced total cholesterol, and reduced triglycerides. Eating these vegetables has also been endorsed by proponents of the DASH diet and the Mediterranean diets.

When incorporating these vegetables, remember they are versatile as well as nutritious. They can be added to casseroles and other dishes or enjoyed all on their own. Clearly the benefits are numerous! Try adding some into your diet!

September is National Honey Month. Raw honey has been used as a remedy for a number of different conditions for a



number of years. While the honey you find in the grocery store is pasteurized, many of the health benefits of honey is more pronounced in raw (unpasteurized) honey. While the high heat used in pasteurization

kills unwanted yeast, improves the color and texture, extends the shelf life, and removes crystallization, it also destroys many of the beneficial nutrients. Here are just a few benefits to using raw honey:

1. A good source of antioxidants— raw honey contains an array of plant chemicals that act as antioxidants. Some types of honey have as many antioxidants as fruits and vegetables.
2. Antibacterial and antifungal properties— research shows that raw honey can kill unwanted bacteria and fungus. It naturally contains hydrogen peroxide, which is an antiseptic.
3. Heal wounds— Manuka honey is used in medical settings to treat wounds because it is found to be an effective germ killer. It also aids in the regeneration of tissue. (Note that honey that is used in hospital settings is medical grade, meaning it is both inspected and sterile. Do not try to treat cuts with honey you buy in a store).
4. Phytonutrient power house— phytonutrients are compounds that are found in plants that protect the plant. Some may keep insects away; others shield the plant from ultraviolet radiation. The phytonutrients in honey are responsible for its antioxidant properties. They may also be the reason why raw honey has shown immune-boosting and anticancer properties.
5. Help for digestive issues— honey may be used to treat diarrhea and H. pylori. H. pylori is a common cause of stomach ulcers. Honey is also a strong prebiotic, meaning it nourishes the good bacteria that live in the intestines.
6. Soothe a sore throat— try a spoonful of honey the next time you have a cold. It is an old sore throat remedy. Add it to hot tea with lemon for a soothing drink as well. Honey may also function as a cough suppressant— just take one or two teaspoons by mouth.

Functional foods have become a growing topic of conversation in the nutrition world. Instead of focusing on weight loss, many people are looking for foods to help them “feel better and have more energy”, according to a recent study. While weight loss remained the second goal, other goals included health improvement, disease prevention, digestive health, heart health, brain function, and bone health.

One functional food group that is garnering some attention recently is the concept of a postbiotic. Many of us have heard of probiotics and prebiotics, but postbiotics are a relatively new concept. Postbiotics are defined as bioactive compounds produced by microorganisms during the fermentation process of a food or beverage which results in benefits in the gut. These benefits can include immune responses as well as changing the composition of gut flora which may enhance gut health. Other benefits may include anti-inflammatory properties, as well as lowering blood pressure and cholesterol. They may also increase antioxidant activity.

Another functional food that is being closely studied is mushrooms. Mushrooms have a long history of being used in medicinal purposes. Today, some mushrooms (including the species cordyceps, lion’s mane, chaga and reishi) are promoted for immune support as well as brain related functions. In addition supplements, these mushrooms can commonly be found in sports powders, protein powders, beverages, and snack bars.

Omega-3 fatty acids are another group of functional foods that are touted to enhance brain

health and prevent cognitive decline because of their phospholipid composition. Multiple studies from the National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements demonstrate that the consumption of omega -3’s in supplements or in fish has been shown to improve certain aspects of cognitive function, including attention, processing speed, and recall. It is important to note that the effects were not seen in individuals who are already diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease. But it did appear to improve function in people who have shown a slight cognitive decline. Other studies show that consuming omega-3’s can also reduce depression. Omega-3’s are commonly found in fish and walnuts and are added to fortify foods such as eggs and milk.



Lastly, melatonin is being more and more widely studied for its benefit as a functional additive. Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone that modulates our sleep patterns. Brain related benefits include recovery from jet lag, improvement in certain sleep wake disorders and reduced anxiety before surgery. Melatonin has been added to a handful of food and beverage products, including chocolates, waters, and ready to drink lattes. It is more commonly found as a supplement.

As society continues to move toward a more holistic approach to health management, the role of functional foods and additives will likely increase. Defining health by how we feel as opposed to clinical measures will also ensure a larger role in nutrition and enhanced products.

Here's a fun, delicious recipe that incorporates honey!

Honey Crunch Pecan Pie

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup shortening
- 6 tbs cold water
- 1 tsp distilled white vinegar
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt

HEAP

If you received HEAP last year but have not yet received an application for this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

If you did not receive HEAP last year but want to apply this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

**HERKIMER COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING**

109 Mary St., Herkimer, NY 13350
 Phone: 315-867-1121
 Fax: 315-867-1448
 Email: hcofa@herkimercounty.org
 Web: www.herkimercounty.org; then 'departments' then 'Office for the Aging'

Funding for this newsletter is from the NYS Office for the Aging & Herkimer County

- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 2 tbs butter, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 tbs bourbon
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tbs butter
- 3 tbs honey
- 1 1/2 cups pecan halves



Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. To make crust: in a medium bowl, mix together flour and 1 tsp salt. Cut in shortening until mixture is crumbly. Gradually add water and vinegar.

Cut together until mixture will hold together. Press dough into a ball and flour each side lightly. Wrap in plastic and chill for 20 minutes. Roll out between wax paper into a circle 1/8 inch thick and press into a 9 inch pie pan.

To make filling: in a large bowl, combine eggs, 1/4 cup brown sugar, white sugar, 1/2 tsp salt, corn syrup, melted butter, vanilla extract, and chopped pecans. Add bourbon if desired. Mix well. Spoon mixture into unbaked pie shell. Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes. Remove and cover edges of pastry with foil. Return to oven for 20 minutes. For topping: combine 1/3 cup brown sugar, butter or margarine, and honey in medium saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves. (about 2 minutes) Add pecans. Stir just until coated. Spoon evenly over pie. Keep foil on edges of pastry and return pie to oven for additional 10 to 20 minutes, until topping is bubbly and golden brown.