



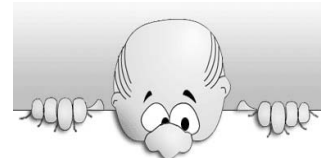
HERKIMER COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

NUTRITION NEWS

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March is National Nutrition Month

Eat Right!

National Nutrition Month

March is National Nutrition Month. Have you ever stopped to think about how many different conditions are affected by the foods we eat? Nutrition is also one of the factors that we have some control over, as opposed to genetics. Taking an active role in your nutritional health can have long lasting, life changing effects.

Through the years, many nutrition fads have come and gone. From the cabbage soup diet for weight loss, to the Atkin's (high protein low carbohydrate) trend, to gluten free diets, it seems that there is always some nutrition hot topic on the horizon. But the recommendations that have stood the test of time are the ones that suggest gradual change while eating real food.

They may not be flashy or attention getting but the basic recommendations still hold true for preventing disease and maintaining a healthy body weight. Limiting your intake of fats, (especially saturated fats) salt, and high sugar foods and drink and increasing

your intake of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are the most effective recommendations to improve your overall nutrition.

Nutrition plays a role in diabetes, cardiovascular health, and cancers. Keeping in mind these 6 tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is a good place to start.

- ◆ Focus on fruits. Strive for 2 cups of fruit daily.
- ◆ Vary your vegetables. Eat more orange and dark green vegetables for added nutrients.
- ◆ Get your calcium rich foods.
- ◆ Make half your grains whole. "Whole grains" offer more benefits than more refined products.
- ◆ Go lean with protein. Choose lean meats and poultry.
- ◆ Know the limits on fats, salt, and sugars.



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Monthly Exercise

Sit up straight in a comfortable chair, hands resting lightly on your thighs. Breathe deeply and comfortable, and as you exhale, lean forward until you can feel the stretch in your lower back. As you near the end of your range of forward motion, twist your shoulders to one side, allowing your head and neck to turn with your shoulders and spine. Inhale slowly as you twist back toward facing forward and sit up to your starting position. On the next exhalation, repeat the motion, only turn to the opposite side. Reverse the movement again as you inhale, returning to the starting position. Complete up to 10 full cycles on each side.

As I mentioned on the previous page, there is a lot of information on nutrition. And unfortunately, much of that “information” is actually “misinformation.” Here are some common nutrition “myths” debunked.



1. Eating too much sugar causes diabetes. While eating too much sugar may contribute to obesity (which in turn can contribute to diabetes), simply eating too much sugar does not cause someone to become diabetic.
2. You cannot overeat “good” food. Even though the food you are consuming may be considered “healthy”, you can still overeat. This can cause weight gain just as any excess calories can cause weight gain. Your body cannot differentiate the source of the calories; it will just store the excess calories to be used at a later time.
3. Healthy foods are expensive. Fresh fruits and vegetables may appear to be expensive but consider this. Do you hesitate to spend almost \$4 on a bag of chips? Why then is the same price for fresh raspberries considered expensive?
4. All overweight people are unhealthy and all thin people are healthy. Research actually suggests that overweight individuals who are active may live longer than their sedentary, thin counterparts.
5. There are many foods that diabetics “can’t eat.” While it is true that diabetics must pay close attention to the amount of food they eat, as well as the spacing of certain foods throughout the day, there are no foods that are absolutely off limits for diabetics. Knowing the proper portions of high carbohydrate foods and spacing them evenly throughout the day

can help control your blood sugar without depriving you of foods you may enjoy.

6. You need to ban carbohydrates in order to lose weight. Again, all foods can fit into a moderate diet. Eliminating an entire category of food is not sustainable. Instead, try to eat a healthy ratio of carbohydrates to protein to fat.
7. High fat foods are bad for you. Fats, especially healthy fats, (such as those found in fish, avocado, and certain nuts) can be incorporated into a healthy diet. They can even be incorporated into the diet of an individual who is trying to lose weight. Fat promotes a feeling of satiety which may prevent you from scrounging around for more food and empty calories to satisfy you.
8. All sugar is bad for you. Again, this is simply not true. There are sugars in everything from fruit to milk. As always, eating a moderate amount of sugar can be a reasonable part of your daily intake.

There are many other nutritional myths floating around. If you have questions regarding something you have heard, contact a registered dietitian for clarification. It is also important to recognize that there is research going on continually in the field of nutrition. Some of these myths haven’t been around for long enough to determine if they are fact or not. It is sometimes better to stick to the recommendations that haven’t changed for years: a moderate diet, regular sleep, no smoking or tobacco use, alcohol in moderation, and regular physical activity. These three factors can help you maintain an overall healthy lifestyle.



One trend that has certainly taken off in the last few years is the gluten free craze. But many people aren't even aware of what gluten is. In simplest terms, gluten is a wheat protein. Gluten helps food maintain its shape and acts as a glue that holds foods together. Gluten is mainly found in wheat, barley, and rye. Because of this, common foods that may need to be restricted are breads, baked goods, pastas, and cereals.



Reasons for limiting gluten vary from individual to individual. Medically, the only group of people that “need” to be gluten free are those who suffer from celiac disease. If you have celiac disease, eating gluten triggers an immune response in your small intestine. Over time, the reaction damages your small intestine’s lining and prevents absorption of some nutrients. Symptoms may include diarrhea, fatigue, weight loss, bloating, and anemia. It may also cause bone softening, a blistering skin rash, mouth ulcers, and joint pain.

Gluten free diets have also been popular recently as some people believe they improve the symptoms in children that suffer from autism or autism spectrum disorders. Other people think that gluten free diets can augment weight loss. There are noticeably more gluten free products on the market now. From pastas to baked goods, manufacturers are offering options to people who need or choose to be gluten free.

So what can you eat if you are gluten free? In addition to wheat, barley, and rye, gluten is found in bulgur, durum, farina, graham flour, malt, semolina, and triticale. Hidden gluten can be found in foods, medications, and nonfood products, including the following: modified food starch, preservatives, and food stabilizers,

prescription and over the counter medications, vitamin and mineral supplements, herbal and nutritional supplements, lipstick products, toothpaste and mouthwash, envelope and stamp glue, and play-doh.

Safe foods that are allowed include:

- * Fresh meats, fish, and poultry that aren't breaded, batter coated, or marinated
- * Fruits
- * Dairy products
- * Potatoes
- * Vegetables
- * Wine and distilled liquors, ciders, and spirits

Grains that are allowed include amaranth, arrowroot buckwheat, corn, cornmeal, gluten free flours (rice, soy, corn, potato, bean), pure corn tortillas, quinoa, rice, and tapioca.

Choosing to follow a gluten free diet when it isn't medically necessary comes with some warnings. Like lactose, if you stop eating gluten, you may find that your body adjusts its production of the enzymes needed to digest it. Therefore, you may find that you are intolerant of it when you try to reintroduce it into your diet. Introducing it slowly may improve your tolerance— your body will adjust again and begin to increase its production of the necessary enzymes. Meeting with a registered dietitian can help you transition smoothly from a regular diet to a gluten free and even back again if necessary.

This dish can be served with either rice or pasta. Complete your plate with a side of green beans almonidine!

Braised Balsamic Chicken

- 6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried rosemary
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme



Season both sides of chicken breasts with garlic salt and pepper. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat; cook seasoned chicken breasts until chicken is browned-about 3 to 4 minutes per side. Add onion; cook and stir until onion is browned, 3 to 4 minutes.

Pour diced tomatoes and balsamic vinegar over chicken; season with basil, oregano, rosemary, and thyme. Simmer until chicken is no longer pink and the juices run clear, about 15 minutes.

Green Bean Almonidine with Cranberries

- 1 tbs butter
- 1 cup green beans
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- Salt to taste
- 2 tbs sliced almonds
- 2 tbs sweetened dried cranberries
- 1 splash orange juice
- Ground black pepper



Heat butter in a small skillet over medium heat until it starts to brown and smell nutty. Add green beans, garlic powder, and salt; cook and stir until tender. Add almonds and cranberries; toss lightly to combine. Pour orange juice over beans and season with pepper.

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