



Strengthening Oklahoma Families

Eat right for your stage in life

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends people adjust their eating habits to address the nutritional needs of their bodies during all stages of life. With March being National Nutrition Month, it is a great time to focus on the changes a person's body needs through various stages of life.

Janice Hermann, Oklahoma State University Extension nutrition specialist, said what worked in a person's 20s won't necessarily work on their 50s.

"As you age and evolve, so do your health and nutritional needs. That's why it's so important to eat right for life," Hermann said.

This year's National Nutrition Month theme is Personalize Your Plate and promotes creating nutritious meals to meet individuals' cultural and personal food preferences. The Academy encourages everyone to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits they can follow all year.

Hermann said the new 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for American provides research-based advice to help people of all ages meet their dietary needs while limiting added sugars, sodium and saturated fat.

DGA guidelines for healthy eating include:

- Teens to 20s: Build bone density by eating and drinking calcium-rich foods and beverages such as fat-free or low-fat dairy milk or yogurt or calcium-fortified soy beverages. Some non-dairy options for calcium include fortified cereals, beans, some leafy



greens and canned salmon with bones.

- 20s to 30s: Eat more dietary fiber, including whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds in an effort to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity. Women of childbearing age should include sources of folate, such as beans, peas and leafy greens, as well as consume foods that are fortified with folic acid, such as breads, cereals and other grain products.

- 30s to 40s: At this age, continue with a wide variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables, whole grains and beans, as well as peas and lentils. These foods contain essential vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and dietary fiber.

- 40s to 50s: Continue incorporating regular physical activity. This is important because the body is changing due to fluctuating hormones and slowing metabolism. In addition, fine tune your healthful eating habits. Limit foods and beverages with added sugars, salt and saturated fats.

- 60s and beyond: A variety of protein-rich foods are a must to maintain bone strength in this stage of life. Try to incorporate strength-building

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Meatless Meals Weekly (source: eatright.org)

Going vegetarian for one day a week for dietary or religious reasons is a small change in your diet that can improve your health and the environment. Going light on meat was the norm a few generations ago when meat often was consumed in side dish portions, while nutrient-rich beans and lentils, vegetables and whole grains took center stage.

Don't Just Cut Back, Add to Your Diet

Eating no meat one day a week is not only about subtracting from your diet, but adding to it. Tweet this Eating more whole grains, beans and lentils and vegetables on your meatless day offers many health benefits.

Whole-grain, unprocessed carbohydrates — such as whole-wheat bread, whole-grain pasta, brown rice, oats, buckwheat, quinoa and millet — can help prevent heart disease, certain cancers and diabetes. Experimenting with a new grain choice on your next meatless day can provide fiber for normal bowel function, along with a variety of vitamins and minerals that contribute to the nutrient density of your diet.

Americans regularly eat more than enough protein, and adding beans or lentils to your meat-free meal also maintains an adequate protein intake. Providing about 16 grams of protein per cup cooked, beans and lentils also are a great source of fiber, folate, iron and potassium. These nutrient-rich foods are good sources of manganese, magnesium, copper, and thiamin.

Vegetables are nutrient powerhouses and add color and texture to your meals. Try leafy greens such as kale, collards, bok choy and broccoli for good plant sources of calcium.

Good for the Environment

Consuming a plant-based diet can benefit the environment. According to the Food and Agricultural Organization, livestock was estimated to contribute to 14.5 percent of global human-caused greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). In the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that livestock contributes to more than one-third of methane emissions, one type of GHG. Eating less meat by going meatless one day a week can contribute to efforts to reduce GHG.

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activities to help maintain muscle. Good sources of protein include seafood, lean cuts of meat, eggs, beans, tofu and nuts. Animal-based protein foods also provide vitamin B12, which can be a concern for older adults. Check with your healthcare provider about a vitamin B12 supplement.

National Nutrition Month[®] was initiated in 1973 as a week-long observance. It became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to the growing interest in nutrition.

Hypertension: Understanding a Silent Killer

Chronically high blood pressure — or hypertension — can cause damage to your blood vessels and internal organs including your heart. Currently affecting nearly half of adults in the United States, hypertension has been called a silent threat because the condition itself has no symptoms. However, the effect on your body can be life-threatening over time. Engaging in healthy lifestyle behaviors at all stages of life can help to decrease your risk.

What You Can Do about High Blood Pressure

The first thing you can do is visit your doctor for routine checkups. Even though high blood pressure rarely shows symptoms, the abnormal force of blood through the arteries, over time, can cause damage to your organs, including your heart, blood vessels and kidneys. Thus, chronic hypertension increases the risk for cardiovascular disease and other serious health issues.

Know your blood pressure and have it monitored. Regular physicals will determine if your blood pressure is within the healthy limits. A blood pressure of less than 120 over 80 is considered healthy. The top number, known as systolic pressure, often gets more attention when discussing the severity of high blood pressure. However, it's important to keep both numbers in the healthy range. If necessary, your doctor will discuss treatment options and supportive health care. Meanwhile, a registered dietitian nutritionist can provide you with guidance on a healthy lifestyle to help lower your blood pressure.



Age and other Risk Factors

High blood pressure tends to increase with age. Additionally, non-Hispanic Black Americans also are at higher risk of developing pre-hypertension and hypertension than non-Hispanic whites, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, and Alaska Natives. Social determinants of health and access may play a role.

However, anyone can be at risk, especially people with diabetes or those with overweight or obesity.

Healthy Lifestyle Choices to Reduce Risk of Hypertension

Focusing on lifestyle changes can help reduce your risk of hypertension. Getting regular physical activity, limiting alcohol intake, avoiding tobacco and focusing on a healthful eating style are all ways to help reduce risk.

Individuals at risk of high blood pressure may be advised to follow the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension diet to lower their blood pressure. The DASH diet is rich in fruits and vegetables and low in saturated fat and sodium. Studies show that the DASH diet can help lower your blood pressure.

Since most Americans are getting too much sodium from the foods they eat, it's important to learn ways to reduce it. Simply lowering sodium intake may have a significant impact on blood pressure and thus improve overall health.

Keeping up with regular health appointments is also important, especially if you have a chronic condition like diabetes. Remember that high blood pressure rarely shows symptoms, so following a healthy lifestyle can help to lower your risk.

Keeping Salad Greens Fresh *source: Texas Agrilife Extension*

Salad greens are among the most perishable produce items, and keeping them crisp and fresh until consumed can be a challenge. Salad greens are delicate and have a relatively short lifespan, and it takes some effort to keep them crisp and attractive.

It is important to purchase the freshest possible greens from a trusted location. Once greens are purchased, they should be brought home as quickly as possible and put into the refrigerator.

Buying high-quality produce from a reliable vendor or grocery store not only helps ensure you are getting the freshest possible product, it also helps ensure you are getting the maximum nutritional benefit from that product and are better protected from the possibility of foodborne illness. For maximum crispness, it's usually best not to wash the greens until you are ready to use them.

The best method of preserving greens is to place them in a perforated or regular plastic bag or hard-sided container, then store them in the refrigerator crisper. If you have a salad spinner and plan to use the greens soon, you can clean them, spin off any excess moisture, then cover the spinner and place in the crisper for storage. Placing the greens in a plastic container or other hard-sided box also provides the added benefit of protecting the greens from being crushed or bruised by other foods in the same area.

Generally speaking, it's possible to keep most salad greens fresh for at least a week if you buy them at peak freshness and take the proper steps for storing them in your refrigerator. When preparing greens, whether peeling the leaves from a head of iceberg lettuce or chopping up arugula or romaine, wash the produce under cold running tap water to remove any lingering dirt. This also reduces the presence of any bacteria that may be present.

Both the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration recommend washing produce under cold running water to get the best results. Consumers should not wash produce with detergent or soap.

Once rinsed, gently shake or agitate the leaves and thoroughly pat them dry between papertowels or spin-dry them in a salad spinner.

It is not recommended to rewash produce that is prewashed and packaged. At the store, you may find produce like bagged salads labeled 'pre-washed' or 'ready-to-eat.' If you see this label, then you can safely use the produce without further washing.

However, she said, if consumers do choose rewash produce already marked as such, be sure it does not come in contact with unclean surfaces or utensils, especially those that have touched raw meat, poultry or seafood or their juices. This will help to avoid cross-contamination.

Here are some other tips on storing different salad greens:

- Whole heads of iceberg, romaine, bibb and other lettuce will stay fresher longer than leaves or chopped pieces. Heads of raw lettuce should be kept intact and left unwashed until ready to use. For romaine and bibb, remove any damaged or wilted outer leaves, place in a plastic bag or container and store in the crisper. For iceberg lettuce, keep the whole head wrapped in its original packaging and place in the crisper drawer until ready to consume.
- Kale is best if eaten soon after purchase, but it should keep for up to a week in the refrigerator. Store kale unwashed with leaves close together and wrap them in dry paper towels, then place in a perforated plastic bag or plastic container and put in the crisper.
- Spinach, Swiss chard and collard or turnip greens should all be stored in a plastic bag or container in the refrigerator crisper. These greens usually stay crisp for four days or longer if properly stored.

Loaded Sweet Potato Nachos, serves 4

2 medium to large sweet potatoes cut into thin slices

1 1/2 tbsp olive oil

1 pinch salt and pepper

3/4 cup canned black beans drained and rinsed

1/2 cup red bell pepper diced

1/2 cup yellow bell pepper diced

1/4 cup red onion diced

1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

1 large green onion finely chopped

Preheat oven to 400F. Wash, peel, and slice sweet potatoes into very thin round slices. Place sweet potato slices in a large bowl and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Arrange sweet potatoes on a sprayed baking sheet (or two) and place in the preheated oven. Roast for 15 minutes, remove from oven to flip sweet potato slices, and then roast for another 15 minutes until browned and crispy.

While potatoes are roasting, drain/rinse beans, prep veggies and cheese. When potatoes are done, arrange roasted potato slices in the middle of one baking sheet and top with beans, veggies and cheese and place back in the oven for 5 minutes.

Remove nachos from oven and top with green onions (optional) diced avocado. Serve with salsa and plain greek yogurt (extra protein!) for dipping

Nutrition info per serving: 192 calories, 10 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 14 mg cholesterol, 325 mg sodium, 18 g carbohydrate, 4 g dietary fiber, 8 g protein

Spicy Mango, Black Bean & Avocado Tacos, serves 4

4 corn tortillas, lightly charred or warmed

1 cup cooked black beans, drained and rinsed

2 limes, divided

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon chili powder

2 cups shredded green cabbage

1/2 avocado, thinly sliced

1/2 mango, diced

2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

2 tablespoons crumbled feta or cotija cheese

sliced serrano pepper and additional sriracha, for serving, optional*

In a small bowl, combine the black beans with 1 tablespoon of lime juice, 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon chili powder, and 1/4 teaspoon salt.

Make the spicy mayo: In a small bowl, stir together the mayonnaise and the sriracha.

Toss the cabbage with a squeeze of lime (1 teaspoon or so) and a few pinches of salt.

Fill each tortilla with the cabbage, avocado slices, black beans, mango, cilantro, the spicy mayo, and feta cheese. For spicier tacos, serve with sliced serrano peppers and extra sriracha. Serve with lime slices on the side.

spicy mayo: 1/3 cup mayonnaise, 2 tsp sriracha

** to reduce fat and calories, swap mayo for salsa or plain, nonfat greek yogurt.

Nutrition info per serving: 431 calories, 20 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 938 mg sodium, 51 g carbohydrate, 12 g dietary fiber, 15 g protein



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OHCE NEWS

The 2021 NE District HCE Meeting was a success! Thank you to all the members from Lincoln County and Creek County who served on the planning committee, helped present or lead during the business meeting, and registered for the meeting.

The business meeting was held live via Zoom. There were four workshops that can be accessed via YouTube. Two demonstrations included Overall Boy and Houseplant Care. The two hands-on workshops were Fabric Christmas Ornament and Mandala Art (a painting). The Lincoln County members who registered were Eileen VanSteenwyk, Deidre Bishop, Rena Johnson, Ariel Gimondo, Pam Cronk, Casey Batson, and Dawn Kincaid.

Paid registrants received a kit for the two hands-on workshops and links to the Youtube videos. If you did not register but would like to view the videos, please call or email Jessica.

The Lincoln County Spring meeting will be held April 1st at the American Legion Hut in Chandler at 10:30 am. We are still unable to hold a potluck lunch, but members are welcome to bring a sack lunch.

Sincerely,

Jessica Riffin
FCS Educator, CED



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