

Health Connection

March 2018

Brought to you by

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Lorrie Coop
County Extension Agent
Family & Community Health
Knox County
PO Box 22
Benjamin, TX 79505
940-459-2651
ljcoop@ag.tamu.edu

Inside the March Edition

1. Roasted Chicken Stew by Judy Doherty, BS, PC II
2. Don't Fear the Potato by Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC
3. The ABCs of Fruits and Veggies by Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD
4. Taste and Aging: Keep the Flavor in Your Eating Pattern by Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC

Science or Fiction?

A new analysis of scientific evidence from lead author Dr. Andrew Freeman evaluated medical evidence associated with healthy eating habits and current popular diet fads in the US. Here are two of the most popular fads and why you may want to think twice before trying them...

Juicing: Juice lacks the fiber that's found in whole vegetables and fruits. Juice drinkers may also consume more calories but not feel as full, since the act of chewing provides a sense of fullness.

Coconut oil: Many people don't realize that the fat in coconut oil is one of the few fats that's over 90% saturated. The science backing coconut oil for weight loss and other conditions is simply lacking.

By Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD



Roasted Chicken Stew

Ingredients are roasted separately and then assembled at the last minute

Ingredients:

Vegetable oil spray

1 cup thinly sliced carrots (about 2)

1 thinly sliced onion (about 1 cup)

1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes

2 chicken breasts seasoned with salt, pepper, garlic powder, Italian seasoning

1 cup low-sodium chicken broth



Directions:

Season chicken breasts and roast for 25 minutes at 400 degrees F.

Place the vegetables in a nonstick pan with seasonings and spray with oil. Roast in oven at 400 degrees for 20 minutes.

When the vegetables are almost done, add the chicken broth. Place the vegetables back in the oven until ready to serve.

Slice the roasted chicken in strips and serve over cooked veggies in a bowl. Spoon broth over the top of the chicken.



Nutrition Information

Serves 4. Each 2 cup serving contains 272 calories, 3 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 85 mg cholesterol, 163 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber, 15 g sugars, and 37 g protein.



Don't Fear the Potato!

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC

It seems like no one wants to admit that they eat white potatoes, yet potatoes are the #1 vegetable crop in the world. While French fries and potatoes smothered in cheese, sour cream, and bacon certainly don't qualify as healthful foods, the humble white potato is packed with important nutrients.

According to an article published in 2013 in *Advances in Nutrition*, historically, fresh potatoes were consumed daily by most Americans. Over the past 50 years, fresh potato consumption declined by almost 50%, while processed potato consumption increased by two-thirds. The change is due to the increased

availability of French fries, other frozen potato products, potato chips, and dehydrated potatoes.

Potatoes are a good source of vitamin B6, vitamin C, and niacin. They contain the minerals potassium, copper, manganese, and phosphorus. In fact, white potatoes contain more potassium per standard serving than any other vegetable. Include the skin when you prepare potatoes, and they're also a good source of fiber. Furthermore, potatoes contain a variety of phytonutrients, which are nutrients produced by plants that help promote overall health.

Don't fear the potato!



Potato Myths!

Myth #1: *Eating potatoes causes obesity. The assumption that potatoes are an energy-dense food may be based on their high carbohydrate content. In fact, a 3-oz serving of baked potato, including the skin, has only 94 calories compared to a 3-oz portion of cooked pasta with 158 calories.*

Myth #2: *Potatoes aren't a good source of protein. In fact, one medium-sized baked potato contains 4 grams of high-quality protein. The quality of the potato protein, which reflects its digestibility and amino acid content, is between 90 and 100 and is higher than any other commonly-consumed vegetable protein.*

ABCs of Fruits and Veggies

By Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD

A Great Starting Place

It's National Nutrition Month! This year's theme is "Go Further with Food," and what better way is there to fuel the fun than with fresh fruits and vegetables? Sometimes it can be tough to know exactly where to start, so I like to break out the ABCs! In this case, that's asparagus, Brussels sprouts, and cantaloupe. I promise, you don't have to mix them together. Instead, with some fun facts and creative recipe ideas, this handout has everything you need to engage with some truly tasty fruits and vegetables.



Asparagus

Did you know that asparagus is a good source of inulin, a prebiotic fiber that may impact gut health? After eating asparagus, your urine may have a foul odor — that's due to phosphorus compounds! Asparagus can be eaten raw, but is more often steamed, roasted or grilled.

Brussels Sprouts

Brussels sprouts are an excellent source of vitamin K, a nutrient needed for blood clotting. They're also loaded with vitamin C and beta-carotene. Boiling Brussels sprouts for too long waters down the nutrient content... and taste. Brussels sprouts get sweeter when they're roasted with olive oil and a little salt.



Cantaloupe

Cantaloupe are among the most popular melons in the US. They are also known as musk melons, rock melons, mush melons, or Persian melons. Cantaloupe is an excellent source of beta-carotene, vitamin C, and potassium and can be eaten alone or added to smoothies, salads or salsa.

Taste and Aging: Keep the Flavor in Your Eating Pattern



One often overlooked effect of aging is a decrease in your senses of smell and taste. This can lead to diminished appetite and weight loss, malnutrition, impaired immunity, and worsening health.

Sense of taste and aging:

After age 50, we start to lose some of the over 10,000 taste buds that we're born with. While changes in taste buds contribute to decreased sense of taste, it's actually the decreases in olfactory function, or sense of smell, that play the most important role in taste. It's been reported that 75% of people over age 80 have major olfactory impairment.

How we taste foods:

There are five basic tastes: sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and umami, or savory. Umami is the taste of glutamate, an amino acid found in protein-containing foods including chicken, cheese, nuts, and meat. Glutamate taste is often described as brothy, full-bodied, meaty, and savory.

Glutamate is added to foods in the form of MSG, or monosodium glutamate, which breaks down into its component parts, sodium and glutamate.

Chewing food releases molecules into the mouth that flow up the back of the throat to the nose to stimulate smell receptors. The five tastes combine with texture, spiciness, temperature of food, and aroma to produce flavor. It's the total combination of the basic tastes and other senses that allow us to distinguish food flavors.

Possible causes of decreased sense of taste:

Elderly people often have several chronic diseases and routinely take multiple medications,

which leads to an increased risk of taste disorders. Many medications affect taste, smell, or the production of saliva, which can lead to changes in food preferences and eating habits.

Other potential causes of or contributors to loss of taste include poor oral hygiene, radiation treatment to the head or neck, head or facial trauma, smoking, and nutrient deficiencies, including a lack of zinc, copper, B12, or niacin.

Decreased taste can lead to health problems:

Some people eat less because of this loss of taste and subsequent decreased enjoyment of food, which in turn can lead to undesired weight loss and inadequate nutrition. Others try to compensate by adding salt or sugar to food to increase its flavor. Adding more sugar can lead to weight gain or an increased risk of chronic disease or even poor management of diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. Adding more salt can contribute to higher blood pressure levels.

Improve the taste of foods in a healthful way:

Use a variety of fresh or dried herbs, or salt-free herb blends, to flavor foods without adding salt. You can also include flavorful hot peppers in recipes, or sprinkle hot sauce on foods like chicken, fish, or eggs for a burst of flavor. Or try roasting cut-up vegetables in the oven to bring out a naturally sweet, more intense taste. And as a last flavor boost, squeeze lemon or lime juice on vegetables, fish, and chicken.

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC