

Health Connection

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EXTENSION

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Spotlight on Precursor Cells

New research suggests that fat cells can be altered by the fatty acid palmitic acid (found in palm oil, dairy products, and meat) and tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF-alpha), a hormone associated with inflammation.

Cells that have not fully matured are known as “precursor” cells. These cells have the potential to become muscle, fat, or other cells. When exposed to palmitic acid and TNF-alpha, they become dysfunctional fat cells later in life.

TNF-alpha is a pro-inflammatory hormone that is elevated with illness. A healthful diet and lifestyle may stave off production of pro-inflammatory fat cells and precursor cells may have a chance to become healthy tissue.

By Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD



Chicken Pho

This dish takes a page from the Vietnamese cooks for a vegetable-rich meal that is so

Ingredients:

- 2 tsp grated fresh ginger root
- 1 clove or a pinch of ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 3 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth + 2 cups water
- 3 ounces dried rice noodles
- 1 cup cooked and diced chicken breast (skinless)
- 4 cups sliced fresh vegetables: sliced carrots, sliced mushrooms, sliced broccoli and cauliflower, bok choy
- 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce
- fresh herbs: mint, basil
- fresh lime wedges



Directions:

Place the ginger, clove, coriander, broth, and water in a pan and bring to a boil. Add the rice noodles then remove from the hot broth. Do not discard the broth.

Place the chicken, vegetables, noodles, and fresh herbs in four bowls, arranging nicely.

When ready to serve, pour the hot broth/water liquid in the bowl. Allow to set for 2-3 minutes. Serve hot.

Chef's Tips:

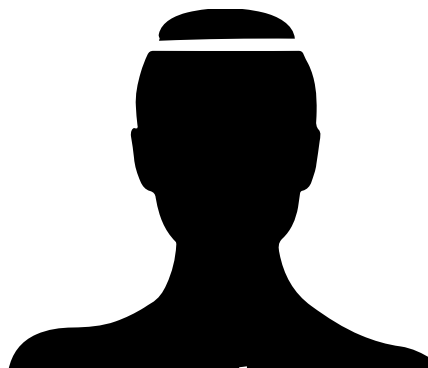
You can vary the ingredients to make your own creative Pho dish. Pho usually consists of fresh veggies, lean protein, herbs, and a hot broth. It is served like a soup and is always the entree of the meal. Salad goes well with this dish.



Nutrition Information

Serves 4.

Each 2.2 cup serving contains: 251 calories, 3 grams of fat, 1 grams of saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 19 mg cholesterol, 323 mg sodium, 44 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 3 g sugar, and 14 g protein.



Preventing Dementia: A New Strategy

By Lisa C. Andrews, MED, RD, LD

A Mediterranean-style pattern has not only been found to reduce high blood pressure and the risk for heart disease and diabetes, but also may be linked with a reduction in the risk of developing dementia.

Pharmaceutical treatments thus far have fallen short in terms of prevention of the disease, so researchers are investigating lifestyle modifications.

A systematic review of 12 studies found that subjects adhering to a Mediterranean diet experienced lower rates of cognitive decline, improved cognitive function and lower risk of Alzheimer's disease.

Previous research on diet and dementia has focused on individual nutrients such as antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids, but more current research suggests that a synergistic interaction between nutrients may be more profound.

A systematic review of human studies published in *Advanced Nutrition* found that compliance with a Mediterranean eating pattern is associated with reduced cognitive decline, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease. The review included 6 of 12 longitudinal studies, 4 of 6 cross-sectional studies, 3 meta-analysis, and 1 trial.

Put That Strategy Into Action!



Think: "More plants, less cow."

Eat more dark green leafy and dark orange vegetables such as spinach, kale, broccoli, sweet potatoes, carrots, and squash. Choose whole grains like oatmeal, quinoa, bulgur, whole grain pasta, couscous, and brown rice over processed grains. Include berries, apples, pears, melon, citrus and other whole fruits in your diet. Add fish to your diet twice a week such as salmon, cod, tuna and tilapia. Eat more beans and legumes by adding them to soup, salad and

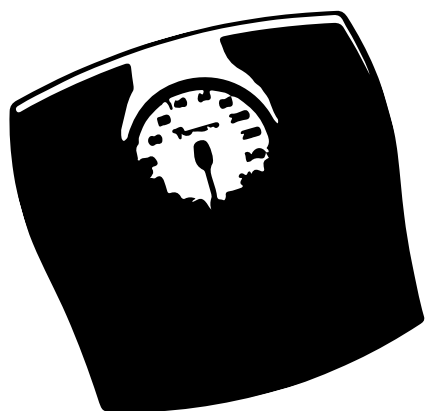
Intermittent Fasting

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC

fasting

What is Intermittent Fasting?

Also known as alternate day fasting, intermittent fasting can take many forms. Some of the most common include reducing calories by 50-70% every other day, or perhaps two days in a row followed by a day or two of regular eating. Some protocols recommend a fasting day followed by a “feast” day, where participants eat as much of any food that they want. However, the majority of programs recommend healthy eating on the non-fasting days.



Is Intermittent Fasting a Good Way to Lose Weight?

One study followed 100 people for one year, and found that those who used an alternate-day fasting program lost about the same amount of weight as people eating an overall lower calorie diet.

Is Intermittent Fasting Healthy?

A few studies found overall good results including reduction in visceral body fat (the type of fat associated with increased risk of heart disease and diabetes), fasting insulin levels, and insulin resistance. However, using this approach for a long period of time could lead to decreases in muscle mass without strength training.



Is Intermittent Fasting Safe?

One study of 59 subjects using alternate day fasting for 8 weeks showed that while a few people reported constipation, weakness, dizziness, and bad breath, these were not reported as serious side effects. There were no increases in eating disorder symptoms and overall participants reported improved mood. People with diabetes on medication or insulin need to consult with their physicians before attempting an alternate day fasting program.

New Restaurant Nutrition Labeling Guidelines



As we dine out more often and use more prepared foods, our food choices have a larger impact on nutrition and health. It's difficult to estimate the calories in restaurant meals, and next to impossible to know the amount of nutrients such as fiber, sodium, calcium, and various vitamins. We now have the opportunity to use the calorie and nutrition information in restaurants to help us make thoughtful choices about our food.

We're used to seeing calorie information on menus and menu boards in many restaurants, yet until May 7, 2018, there were no standard national guidelines that applied to restaurants across the United States. According to Scott Gottlieb, MD, Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Congress gave the FDA the responsibility to develop a uniform, national standard to ensure consistent access across the country to science-based calorie and nutrition information on restaurant menus and takeout foods in more than 200,000 restaurants.

Who exactly does this rule apply to?

The FDA rule applies only to restaurants and retail food establishments that meet four criteria:

The restaurant must...

Have 20 or more locations

Be doing business under the same name, regardless of the type of ownership (such as individual franchises)

Sell substantially the same menu items

Sell restaurant-type foods (defined, in part, as food that is usually eaten on the premises, while

walking away, or soon after arriving at another location)

What nutrition information must be available?

The FDA rule requires that the number of calories per serving of food must be displayed on menus and menu boards. Businesses also must be able to provide written information for total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrate, sugar, fiber and protein on request.

In addition, businesses must display two statements:

Written nutrition information is available upon request.

2,000 calories per day is used for general nutrition advice, but individual calorie needs may vary.

Daily specials and temporary or seasonal foods are exempt from the new regulations.

Why is calorie and nutrition information in restaurants important?

We currently consume about one-third of our calories away from home. A study by the RAND corporation found that people tend to choose foods with lower calories when they have access to calorie information. Routinely choosing foods with fewer calories can help reduce body weight, which is an important factor in health.

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC