

Health Connection Newsletter



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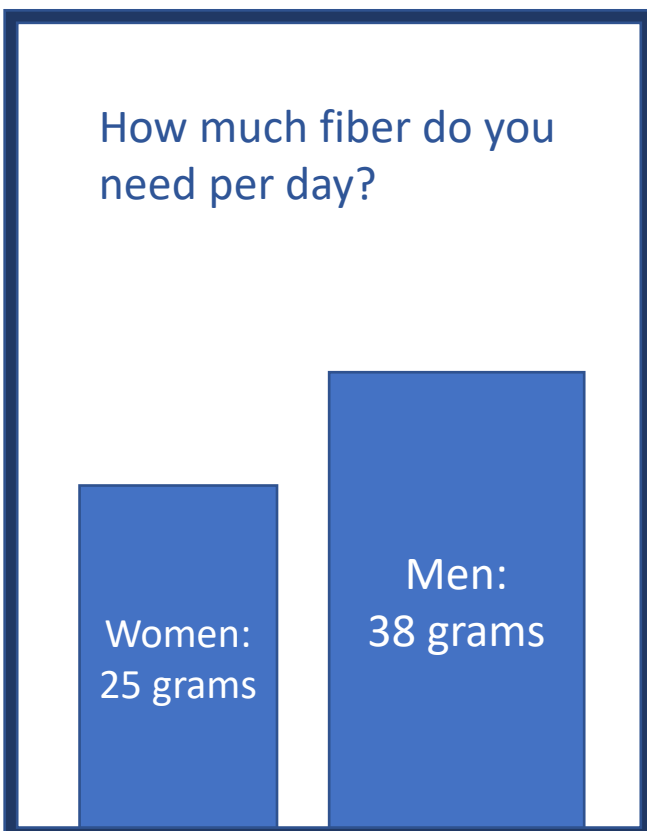
COVID-19 & Nutrition 101

While supplement companies may be trying to sell you a bill of goods to keep your immune system humming while COVID-19 spreads, your best defense is likely in your pantry.

Put Your Plants On

For starters, how much fiber are you eating? According to the USDA, fiber recommendations are 38 grams per day for men and 25 grams per day for women up to the age of 50. After the age of 50, these numbers drop slightly to 30 grams daily for men and 21 gram per day for women. Eating more fiber has been found to be beneficial to good health.

One big reason why fiber is so important to your immune system comes down to 2 words: gut health. When high-fiber foods are fermented in the gut, they produce short chain fatty acids which help modulate the immune system. Short chain fatty acids improve nutrient absorption and reduce transit time in the colon, which helps rid the body of harmful byproducts of metabolism, along with other toxins. In addition, diversity of gut microbiome (the DNA of microbial communities in the gut) impacts the risk of obesity.



A recent analysis of nearly 250 research studies suggested that individuals with a diet containing more fruits, vegetables and whole grains have **a lower risk of dying due to cancer and heart disease -- two chronic illnesses that raise the risk of serious cases of COVID-19.** Individuals with the highest fiber intakes cut their risk of death from cardiac disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and/or colon cancer by 16 to 24%, compared to individuals with lower fiber intakes.

This for That: Substitutions!

How often have you gotten ready to prepare your favorite recipe and found you were missing a key ingredient? You may have downloaded a great bread recipe online, but it calls for self-rising flour. Is there a difference? Yes, ingredients serve different functions in recipes. So, all is not lost. There are often easy substitutions for ingredients you can use that will have you baking in no time!

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QUICK INGREDIENT SUBSTITUTIONS

	DON'T HAVE	USE THIS	
	1 teaspoon baking powder	¼ teaspoon baking soda + 5/8 teaspoon cream of tartar	
	¼ cup bread crumbs	1 slice bread	
	1 tablespoon cornstarch	2 tablespoons flour	
	1 cup self-rising flour	1 cup all-purpose flour + 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder + ¼ teaspoon salt	
	1 fresh garlic clove	1/8 teaspoon garlic powder	
	1 tablespoon, fresh herbs diced	½ teaspoon ground, dried herbs	
	1 cup mayonnaise	1 cup sour cream OR 1 cup yogurt OR 1 cup cottage cheese that is pureed in a blender	
	1 cup skim milk	1/3 dried/powdered milk + water to make 1 cup	
	1 cup whole milk	½ cup evaporated milk + ½ cup water	
	1 small or ¼ cup chopped onion	1 tablespoon minced onion OR 1 ½ teaspoons onion powder	
	½ cup, packed brown sugar	2 tablespoons molasses + ½ cup granulated (white) sugar	
	1 cup powdered sugar	1 cup granulated (white) sugar + 1 teaspoon cornstarch**	
	1 cup vegetable oil	1 cup unsweetened applesauce or other pureed fruit ***	
	1 cup butter	1 cup regular margarine * OR 1 cup vegetable shortening (for baking) OR Equal amount of oil if the recipe uses melted butter	
	1 cup buttermilk	1 cup yogurt OR 1 tablespoon of vinegar OR lemon juice plus enough milk to make 1 cup. Let stand for 5 minutes before using	
	1 whole egg	¼ cup egg substitute OR 2 tablespoons mayonnaise (for cakes) OR ½ teaspoon baking powder + 1 tablespoon vinegar + 1 tablespoon liquid (only for baking)	

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References

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 Compiled by Jenna Anding, PhD, RDN, LD, Professor and Extension Specialist, March 2020.

* Regular margarine has 100 calories per teaspoon; if you use low-fat, fat-free, reduced-calorie, or vegetable oil spreads, the final product will likely be a lower quality

** Process the ingredients in a food processor until the ingredients are blended and powdery.

*** May need to adjust the amount of sugar in the recipe. If you are short the full amount of vegetable oil needed for a baked good, you can substitute the amount of applesauce or other pureed fruit to make the amount needed.

Spinach Sautéed Salad

Ingredients:

2 fresh plum or heirloom tomatoes, seeded and diced
2 garlic cloves
olive oil spray
1 bunch fresh spinach leaves, rinsed and dried
fresh basil leaves
black pepper to taste
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

Directions:

Prepare all ingredients as described above.

Heat a large nonstick saute pan over medium heat. Sauté the tomatoes and garlic lightly until the garlic is soft. Add the spinach and basil leaves and cover the pan for 2 minutes. Stir lightly.

Serve the spinach warm on a plate. It can be a vegetable side dish or a warm salad. It goes great over pasta or rice.

Chef's Tips:

You can use this spinach dish with baked fish or grilled seafood. Use it as a warm and delicious side dish!



Nutrition Facts:

Serves 4. Each 1 cup serving: 44 calories, 2g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 71mg sodium, 6g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 2g sugars, 3g protein.

5 Ways to Reduce Heart Disease



The American Heart Association (AHA) and the American College of Cardiology (ACC) have released updated guidelines on the important role of lifestyle choices in reducing cardiovascular risk.

The report details 5 ways to reduce cardiovascular disease:

1. Healthy food choices
2. Regular exercise
3. Do not use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes
4. Talk with your doctor about factors that affect your health, such as housing, food security, transportation, self-image, and culture
5. Talk with your doctor about whether aspirin for prevention is right for you

The scientific research clearly shows that routinely choosing foods that are high in animal fat and protein, low in fiber, and high in added sugars and processed foods are associated with increased cardiac risk.

- Emphasize plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruits, legumes (dried beans and peas such as lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, black beans, and pinto beans), nuts, and whole grains.
- These foods are high in fiber and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and a plant-based, Mediterranean style diet lowers cardiovascular risk compared to other types of eating patterns.
- Fill half your plate with vegetables or fruit at meals.
- Add legumes like chickpeas or pinto beans to salads, or choose legume-based soups like lentil, black bean, or vegetarian chili.
- Sprinkle nuts on oatmeal, in yogurt, or on salads.
- Choose whole grain breads, cereals and crackers; brown rice, and whole grain pasta.
- Choosing more lean protein foods such as fish or skinless chicken and turkey while eating less red meat and processed meats such as sausage, bacon, and lunch meats that are high in harmful saturated fat and sodium.
- Here are some ways to choose more lean protein...
- Cook chicken or turkey with the skin on, and then remove the skin before eating to enjoy flavorful and moist meat with less harmful saturated fat.
- Choose baked, broiled or grilled fish instead of seafood that is breaded and fried.
- Replace lunchmeats with nut butter or slice your own roasted chicken or turkey.
- Enjoy more foods that are less processed to reduce sodium, trans fat, and saturated fat.

According to the latest statistics from the AHA, heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death in the United States, responsible for an estimated 840,678 deaths each year – about 1 out of every 3. The focus of the guidelines is prevention of heart attack, angina, stroke, peripheral arterial disease, heart failure, and atrial fibrillation. The report clearly states that the most important way to prevent cardiovascular disease is through a healthy lifestyle. According to Donna Arnett, co-chair of the 18-person guidelines writing committee, making lifestyle changes before adding medication is important, because our daily food choices and exercise habits have a direct influence on cardiovascular health.

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC

Overnight Oats



What are overnight oats?

Oatmeal has always been a hot topic when it comes to nutrition. One of the latest crazes is actually “cold” oatmeal, otherwise known as overnight oatmeal or overnight oats. This really isn’t something new, it’s just a resurgence of a classic with a new name. Have you ever heard of muesli? This was the original overnight oatmeal!

The story goes that muesli was developed by a Swiss doctor for his patients back in the early 1900s. Originally, it was a diet food and served as an evening meal, but it has evolved into a breakfast food that is usually prepared the night before so that it is ready to eat cold in the morning. Overnight oatmeal is simply uncooked oatmeal mixed with other ingredients -- usually milk or fruit juice and fresh fruits, raisins, grains, and/or nuts that then all come together in the refrigerator overnight.

How do you make them?

There are many packaged varieties of muesli available in grocery and specialty stores. One version has fruit already mixed with the oatmeal and you simply add your milk or other liquid to the container and put it in the refrigerator. **Be sure to read the ingredients labels on these products for added ingredients that you may not want.**

For a less expensive (and more creative) way to make your own muesli, you can try a base recipe like this one and then vary the ingredients based on your personal preferences or what’s in your cupboard/refrigerator at the time.

- Oats, half cup
- Skim milk, to wet the oats
- Yogurt, half cup to make it creamy
- Fresh fruit, one cup
- Nuts, just a sprinkle!
- Mix, chill for at least an hour or overnight, serve
- Makes a great breakfast or dessert!

Overnight oatmeal can be a great ready-to-go nutritious breakfast. In a typical bowl, you get 4 grams of dietary fiber, 5 grams of protein, and only 3 grams of fat when you start with just a ½ cup of uncooked rolled oats. Then add your milk, fruits, and nuts for additional nutrition bonus.